

By Erin Saunders, PIIC Communications Coordinator

PIIC hosted its Fall Professional Learning Opportunity (PLO) from October 17-19, 2011. The PLO provided professional development to over 85 school administrators, coaches, mentors, and regional mentor coordinators. This was the first PD for many since the PIIC expansion occurred in July 2011. In addition, session # 5 of the PIIC Act 45 course was held.

Day 1 started with *Voices from the Field*, an informative session in which IU 8 coaches Cassie Grassmyer, Brandi Orner, Andrea Conrad, Mary Sabatino, and Jessica Diehl discussed their instructional coaching experiences working with the PIIC BDA cycle of coaching. The day continued with *Literacy Across the Curriculum*, facilitated by PLN Director, Joe Ginotti. In classic PIIC fashion, day 1 ended with personal and group reflections.

*Understanding and Applying the BDA Cycle of Coaching*, introduced the general session on Day 2. Divided into three groups, veteran mentors facilitated the sessions: the Red Group was facilitated by Nancy Neusbaum and Chris Caton; the Blue Group was facilitated by Karen Macartney and Amy Walker; and the Green Group was facilitated by Jessica Jacobs and Laura Yaeger. The next session, *The Art of Questioning* by Nancy Neusbaum, reinforced the BDA cycle of coaching by delving more deeply into the communication process.

The day concluded with two of three Carousel of Learning session rotations. Participants selected three of four topics online prior to the PIIC PD. After spending 50 minutes at a given topic, participants rotated to their next selection. The topics covered a wide range of interests: *Writing and the Common Core State Standards* (facilitated by Pam Wolff, IU 14 PIIC Mentor); *Read the Book – Book Studies and PLCs* (Beaver County HS Librarian, Laura Cipriano); *Using Reading/Literacy CDTs to Impact Instruction* (IU 7 PIIC Mentor, Cindy Shaffer); and *Differentiated Instruction and Assessment* (IU 29 PIIC Mentor, Evelyn Wassel). Participants ended the day with group reflections and reports out.

On the last day, participants moved into their respective Red, Blue, and Green groups for the final general session of the PIIC PD, *Problem Solving Scenarios*. The session enabled participants to apply what they learned over the previous two days.

Feedback from the PIIC online evaluation was very positive:

"I like how it [PIIC] continues to provide something new to those who have frequented these PIIC meetings as well as provided a framework for those who are newbies. I never fail to come away from these sessions with new ideas. It really is an energizing and empowering professional development approach."

-School/District/Regional Instructional Coach

"It is always refreshing to come to these. It reaffirms what we need to do. This is important because as you work within your school, it is easy to get off track. You wear many hats and we need the focus to come back to our model of coaching. Thanks!"

-Elementary Coach

"The networking and collaborating help my coaches feel energized about the work they are doing. I also learned I need to stay the course and continue to support my coaches in their journey!"

-IU PIIC Mentor

The agenda from this event is available on our [Past Professional Development Conferences](#) page. Our next PIIC Professional Development will be January 9-11, 2012 at the Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. Details are listed on our

[Events](#)

page.