

PIIC started the New Year with the largest Professional Learning Opportunity (PLO) in PIIC history from January 11-13, 2016 at The Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. The PLO stayed true to this year's theme, "The BDA cycle in practice," which was threaded through every session. Over 160 instructional coaches, administrators, IU PIIC Mentors, and Regional Mentor Coordinators (RMCs) from 24 PIIC-participating Intermediate Units (IU) attended the three-day conference.

PIIC Executive Director, Ellen Eisenberg, welcomed the group after lunch on January 11. Participants were randomly assigned tables to engage in a collaborative activity with their colleagues from across the state.

Following the table talk activity, participants attended pre-selected breakout sessions. Participants registered for breakout sessions using an online registration form prior to the PLO. Sessions offered included:

- *Coaching 101.5*, required for participants attending their first statewide PLO and facilitated by Ellen Eisenberg;
- *The Instructional Learning Visit*, facilitated by PIIC Associate Director Bruce Eisenberg and educational consultant Skip McCann;
- *Coaching Understanding of Nonfiction Texts through Questions and Signposts*, facilitated by IU 23 Program Administrator Amber Molloy and IU PIIC Mentors Stephane Schwab and Heather Moschetta;
- *Personality Traits and How they Influence Instructional Coaching*, facilitated by PIIC Senior Advisor and Evaluator Elliott Medrich and PIIC RMC Tom Sebastian;
- *What Happens in the "B"?* facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU PIIC Mentors Barb Wilkinson and Deb Goff;
- *Are you Listening?*, facilitated by PIIC RMC Gen Battisto and IU PIIC Mentors Kathleen Eich and Carol Adams.

Participants took a short break and returned to the general session, *The Research on Writing 9.0: Nurturing Effective Classroom Practice*, facilitated by Penn Literacy Network (PLN) Director Joe Ginotti. Participants ended the day with reflections.

Day 2 of the PLO started with momentum. After a short introduction and self-reflection, participants moved into their first round of breakout sessions for the day. Participants chose one of the following sessions on the online registration form:

- *The Fundamentals of PLN*, required for participants attending their first statewide PLO and facilitated by PLN Director Joe Ginotti;
- *What Happens in the "D"*, facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU PIIC Mentors Deb Goff and Demetrius Roberts;
- *iNeed, iLearn, iShare: The Power of In-House Professional Development*, facilitated by Randolph Township SD Instructional Coaches Adriana Coppola, Brett Cox, and Lena Wasylyk;
- *Driving Coaching Conversations through Quality Questions*, facilitated by PIIC RMC Tom Sebastian and IU PIIC Mentors Lori Ceremuga and Gail Porrazzo;
- *Beyond the Fun of Tech Tools: Using Technology to Engage Adult Learners and Enhance the BDA Cycle of Coaching*, facilitated by Annville Cleona SD Instructional Coach Keith Royer and IU PIIC Mentor Terri Lewis;
- *Extreme Makeover/Professional Development Edition: A Story of One School's Success*, facilitated by Lower Dauphin SD Instructional Coaches Vickie Feinstein and Stacy Kreitzer, and Assistant to the Superintendent for Secondary Education Todd Neuhard.

After taking a break, participants attending their first PLO this school year attend the concurrent session, *Staring at the Blank Page... How do I Start?* a repeat of the October 2015 concurrent session. IU PIIC Mentors Cindy Shaffer, Lorian Hoffman, and Diane Hubona and PIIC RMC Gen Battisto facilitated the session in two different rooms. October participants attended the concurrent session, *Meeting the Challenge: Coaching Writing through the BDA Process*. IU PIIC Mentors Terri Lewis, Missy Petrilak, Tish Hockensmith, Kathleen Eich, Heather Moschetta, and Teri Everett facilitated the sessions in three different rooms.

After the concurrent sessions and a lunch break, participants attended the second round of breakout sessions for the day. Breakout sessions offered included:

- *Using Data to Improve Practice*, facilitated by FHI360 Director Ivan Charner and PIIC Senior Advisor and Evaluator Elliott Medrich;
- *What Happens in the "A"?*, facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU PIIC Mentors Demetrius Roberts and Rae Ann Crispell;
- *Literacy Design Collaborative and the Coach: A Supportive Partner in Module Design and Implementation*, facilitated by Manheim Township SD Instructional Coach Kim Steinman

and SD of Lancaster Instructional Coach Amanda Schlee;

- *Transforming Professional Development into BDA Professional Learning*, facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Diane Hubona, Cindy Shaffer, Denise Ross, and Donette Porter;

- *Close Reading with Non-Traditional Texts*, facilitated by IU PIIC Mentor Teri Everett, PIIC RMC Kathy Gori, and Bradford Area SD Instructional Coach Karen Macartney;

- *Keep Calm: Cross your T's and Dot your I's.*, facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Loriann Hoffman, Missy Petrilak, and Lisa Kelly.

To end the day, participants met with their IU teams for a mentor-led reflection using a three-column reflection document. Participants were asked to reflect on three different prompts: describe your learning experiences so far; reflect on that learning experience; and generate questions you may have about the experience or about using your learning in the BDA cycle with teachers.

On the third day of the PLO, participants attended the *World Café* session, developed by IU PIIC Mentor Heather Moschetta. In this session, participants spent time at one of five tables to answer a reflective question before moving to the next table of their choosing. Because of the large number of participants at the PLO, the session occurred simultaneously in five breakout rooms. Participants were randomly assigned rooms and answered five questions at each of the five tables. Each breakout room had the same questions.

After the World Café, participants attended the Afterthoughts session. Topics discussed during the Afterthoughts sessions were developed by the participants and were intended to continue discussions from the sessions facilitated during the first two days of the PLO.

Feedback from the PLO was positive:

"I was trying to figure out what made this some of the best PD I've ever attended. The presenters were good, no doubt, but it was more than that. I believe this was the first time that I ever attended professional learning when all of the attendees were truly excited to be there. There was full participation in every session I attended, the conversations never stopped until someone had to limit the time, the questions were plentiful, and the attitudes were over the top positive. There is something almost magical about being a part of a group like that. It makes me feel like our job – our mission – is possible. Thank you so much for the inspiration and the

opportunity to be a part of this."

-Instructional Coach

"The training was the best I've ever received. I liked the flexibility of choosing breakout sessions and the time given to collaborate with the other coaches in my IU. I think the relationships I developed with the other instructional coaches will be extremely valuable."

-Instructional Coach

"Thank you for an amazing three days and for these much needed words of inspiration! I want to truly thank each and every one of you. I needed this experience so badly to remind me of what is most important about coaching. I am grateful to each and every one of you!"

-Instructional Coach

You can read more feedback from this PLO on the [Testimonials](#) page. The PLO agenda is available on our [Past](#)

[Professional Learning Opportunities](#)

page. You can also find photos from the event in the

[PIIC Photo Gallery](#)

. Our next PIIC Professional Learning Opportunity will be May 2-4, 2016 at the Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. Details can be found on our

[Events](#)

page.

Click here to return to the [PIIC News Page](#)