PIIC started the 2015-16 school year with high energy and great enthusiasm as they hosted the October 12-14, 2015 Professional Learning Opportunity (PLO) at The Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. This year's theme is "The BDA cycle in practice." Over 150 coaches, administrators, IU PIIC Mentors, and Regional Mentor Coordinators (RMC) from 24 PIIC-participating Intermediate Units (IU) attended the three-day conference.

PIIC Executive Director, Ellen Eisenberg, welcomed the group on October 12 and gave participants a chance to engage in conversations with colleagues from across the state. Participants were randomly pre-assigned tables, creating networking opportunities for participants across IUs. They collaborated and collectively problem-solved on a variety of challenges that are often experienced by instructional coaches.

Following the table talk activity, participants attended pre-selected breakout sessions. Participants selected breakout sessions via an online registration form. Participants selected one of the following sessions:

- Participants attending their first statewide PLO attended *Coaching 101,* facilitated by Ellen Eisenberg;
- *Instructional Learning Visits*, facilitated by PIIC Associate Director Bruce Eisenberg and educational consultant Skip McCann;
- *Coaching + Math = Yes, you can!* facilitated by Dauphin County Technical School Instructional Coach Sharon Deiling and IU PIIC Mentor Kathleen Eich

- *Establishing PLCs: the Nuts and Bolts*, facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Amy Walker and Diane Hubona;
- *Personality Traits and How they Influence Instructional Coaching,* facilitated by PIIC Senior Advisor and Evaluator Elliott Medrich and PIIC RMC Charley Territo;

- *What Happens in the "B"?* facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and PIIC Mentors Barb Wilkinson, Steph Schwab, and Deb Goff.

After a short break, the day continued with the general session, *Research on Writing: Why students need to write* , facilitated by Penn Literacy Network (PLN) Director Joe Ginotti. The day concluded with time for reflection in IU groups

Day 2 began with time for self-reflection to process learnings from the previous day. After reflecting on the previous day's activities, participants move to the first round of breakout sessions. Participants preselected to attend one the six sessions mentioned below:

Participants attending their first statewide PLO attended *The Fundamentals of PLN*, facilitated by PLN director Joe Ginotti;

- "*Yes, You Can": Part Time Coaching in a Full Time World,* facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Loriann Hoffman and Amy Walker;

- *What Happens in the "D"?,* facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU PIIC Mentors Deb Goff and Barb Wilkinson;
- *Not a Tech Coach? Adding Technology Tools to your Instructional Coaching Toolbox,* facilitated by Dauphin County Technical School Instructional Coach Alicen Hoy and IU PIIC Mentors Kathleen Eich and Breanne Scears;

- *Coaching in the Block,* facilitated by PIIC RMC Gen Battisto and Harrisburg SD Instructional Coach Evelyn Wassel;
- *I Used to Say… But Now I Say" Part II,* facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Stephanie Schwab, Carol Adams, and Heather Moschetta.

After the breakout sessions and a short break, participants attended the concurrent session*, "Staring at the Blank Page… How do I Start?*
" facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Kathleen Eich, Terri Lewis, Amy Walker, Diane Hubona, Heather Moschetta, Cindy Shaffer, Loriann Hoffman, Missy Petrilak, Tish Hockensmith, and Teri Everett. The concurrent session required the IU PIIC Mentors to co-plan and co-facilitate the session which took place in five different rooms throughout the conference center. Participants were randomly assigned rooms, and mentor pairs facilitated the session in each room.

After the concurrent session and lunch break, participants attended the second round of breakout sessions for the day. Participants chose to attend one of the following sessions:

- *BDA and DATA: The Role of Data in the BDA Process,* facilitated by Senior Advisor and Evaluator Elliott Medrich and PIIC Executive Director Ellen Eisenberg;

- *What Happens in the "A"?* facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU PIIC Mentors Demetrius Roberts and Rae Ann Crispell;
- *Transforming Professional Learning into Student Results: How to Design and Facilitate*

Professional Learning, facilitated by IU PIIC Mentors Cindy Shaffer, Diane Hubona, Breanne Scears, and Denise Ross;

- *Getting on the Same Page: Coaches and Administrators Sharing their Vision,* facilitated by Indiana Area SD Instructional Coach Sarah Kovach, Marion Center SD Instructional Coach Emily DuPlessis, and IU PIIC Mentors Teri Everett and Jeremy Gabborin;

- *The Art of Questioning in Coaching Conversations,* facilitated by PIIC RMC Tom Sebastian and IU PIIC Mentors Lori Ceremuga and Gail Porrazzo.

To finish the day, participants met in their IU groups for a mentor-led reflection in which participants and mentors discussed questions on a three column reflection sheet. Tablemates discussed their learning experience at the PLO, reflected on that learning, and generated questions about their experience or about using the BDA cycle with teachers.

On Day 3, participants attended the *World Café* session, planned by IU PIIC Mentors Heather Moschetta and Amy Walker. *World Café* is a session in which participants spend time at a table to answer a reflective question before moving on to the next table of their choosing. Due to the number of participants, the session occurred concurrently in five breakout rooms. Participants were randomly assigned a room and answered five questions/shared thoughts at five tables in their respective rooms. Each breakout room asked the same questions.

After a short break, participants attended the Birds of a Feather session, which is an activity where participants meet in groups to discuss topics of their choice to continue conversations that started during PLO sessions. Participants create the topics themselves, and anyone interested in the topic may join. The day finished with Chat and Chew: IU Team Time and Lunch. This session was designed for IU groups to come together and discuss how they will use what they learned over the course of the three days back at their districts.

Participant feedback was positive:

I really enjoyed the networking with like-minded individuals. It is invaluable to spend three days with people who, like me, want the best for our schools. It is an amazing experience!
-Part-Time Coach

The pacing was just right! In addition to sessions, we had opportunities to network with table words, IU groups and five distinctly different groups in the *World Cafe*. This deeply enriched the reflection and improved networking, in my opinion. The concurrent session gave us time to deepen the learning from the general session and it was excellent in terms of both content and format.
- Full-Time Coach

Administrators can help to support coaching with confidentiality, scheduling, vision, knowledge, excellent communication, and support. And each and every one of us can improve how we approach one or more areas.
-Building Administrator

The World Cafe really gave the participants a chance to network with others and to have conversations; more importantly it gave the coaches a chance to reflect on their learning from the PLO.
-IU PIIC Mentor

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 January 11-13, 2016 at the Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. Details can be found on our Events page.

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