

CREATING A NEW PROTOCOL: Filling the Buckets

By Jill Randall, CFG Coach in California, randall@hamlin.org

Editor's Note: This article describes an example of how NSRF-certified CFG coaches may create or adapt protocols and activities for their needs. We encourage Connections readers to help this author and NSRF by trying out the protocol described here and [reporting your results](#) both to the author and to NSRF. After the protocol has been polished through this testing process, we'll be able to formally add it to our library of resources.

I was first introduced to NSRF's Critical Friends Group work a few years ago and participated in a CFG at my school. I found the work to be exciting and applicable. When the opportunity presented itself for The Hamlin School to host a new CFG Coaches Training in June 2013, I was eager to sign up. (*Editor's Note: The Hamlin School will be hosting an [open training for CFG Coaches](#) this summer in San Francisco.*) As an arts teacher, the CFG language easily translated and supported arts classes as well as academic classes.

Many of the existing NSRF protocols and activities can be used to discuss arts lessons, units of study, and student work. However, I was seeking a protocol that could unpack one of our culminating events. How could a protocol discuss both the micro and the macro – the logistics as well as the student learning? At The Hamlin School, we organize so many great events, but the pace of the school year limits the time for reflection. How might a community honor an event through reflection rather than rush to the next?

During the June 2013 training week, I took a shot at creating a new protocol. We are giving it a test run this school year, with positive results so far. At our K-8 school in San Francisco, we organize many events and activities that could benefit from this kind of reflection and documentation. To my surprise, the list of yearly events became long:

- Dance, theater, and music performances
- Art shows
- Grandparents/Special Friends Day
- Learn about Hamlin Admissions Day
- Halloween Assembly
- Thanksgiving Assembly
- Family Fitness Night/Title IX Night
- Earth Week
- Spring Musical

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- Field trips
- New parent orientation sessions
- Parent coffees
- Curriculum Night (i.e. Back to School Night)
- Outdoor education trips

We also cycle through grade-level events including:

- 4th Grade Famous American Women Project
- 5th Grade Greek Day
- 6th Grade Symposium of the Centuries
- 6th Grade Presidio Partnership
- 8th Grade Rising to the Challenge Project
- 8th Grade Poetry Performance Project

Recently, we used the protocol to discuss my Winter Dance Assembly, which involved the 7th and 8th grade dance elective and the chorus. This 45-minute original production was presented on December 20th in front of the entire school. The audience (students and parents) totaled around 450 people. As the dance teacher, this was one of my largest projects here to date. I was excited but nervous to present this new project.

The protocol did just what I wanted it to accomplish – it provided the time, space, and structure to discuss an arts event and capture notes for future use. After using the protocol with my peers, I can now take these ideas and meet with my division head to conclude the conversation for this school year.

I hope that you can find use for this protocol at your K-12 school as well. Please email me with questions or comments at randall@hamlin.org.