

Research Forum Report

Ross Peterson-Veatch, Indiana

The 3rd Annual NSRF Research Forum ushered in a new day for our fledgling research group. Some solid themes emerged from our disparate work in various places. While the themes we explored were as diverse as “Conflict in Our Collaborative Community” and “Interrogating the Culture of Protocols: Developing a Research Plan,” there were three issues that clearly cut across everyone’s work.

1. The role of the participant observer/action researcher – many of us are interested in exploring what the appropriate role is for us as both facilitators/coaches and researchers. Most participants presented research on their own CFGs and our questions about what roles we ought to play in these groups was of critical importance both to us as researchers and for us as an organization that is moving more towards generating high-quality research on CFGs.
2. The importance of using conversation structures to change the culture of a school – many of us were concerned with the shifts that were or were not possible using structure to affect the culture of a group, a building or an entire district. Ellen Ballock and Kevin Fahey both addressed this question directly in their presentations.
3. The reframing of equity from being a side issue to being the central issue – many of us were working to examine what methods and what avenues we could identify that might support a shift in school and teacher cultures from equity as an issue that might “complicate things,” to equity as the lens through which teachers examine their work. This was especially evident in the sessions hosted by Donna Reid and Katy Kelly, and Doug Elder and Doug Wager.

These three themes represent the beginnings of a research program for us at NSRF and are an exciting step forward from past years’ meetings to a new kind of research meeting. Next year’s meeting promises to be even more exciting as we begin to roll out more longitudinal work and new connections between our work and achievement measures. I would encourage any and all who are interested in research to participate – no matter what your role at home may be. This year we benefited from the participation of K-12 teachers and administrators, and higher-ed faculty and administrators. ■

If you have any interest in this work, please contact NSRF Research Coordinator Kevin Fahey at kfahey@verizon.net.

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Invite, Include, Inspire

New Opportunities for Growing NSRF

Scott Hutchinson, Indiana

Gandhi once said, “You must become the change you wish to see in the world.” We must invite the educators we wish to see in the NSRF movement to our CFGs, trainings and meetings. The Winter Meeting, January 15-17th, 2009, is the next opportunity. Our national and local promotional activities need to reach these new faces.

We must include these new faces in the planning, discussions, activities behind-the-scenes, and speeches from the podium that shape the quality of NSRF experiences.

Our membership structure was created to preserve the tradition that NSRF resources are free. The National Center encourages us to donate to the Faith Dunne and Nancy Mohr Scholarship Fund to include those in our national meetings who cannot afford them.

I work with NSRF to raise money available for scholarships. This includes private contributions and grants from corporations and foundations. I encourage all of us to open our CFGs once a year in October to invite new people to our work, to demonstrate our protocols, and to raise money for memberships and scholarships. This “October Protocol” might just be the fundraiser your CFG is looking for. Feel free to contact me for more information. ■

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