

Tri-State Consortium Report June 2011

**Striving for Improvement
Through a Strategic Question**

Chappaqua Central School District

**Lyn McKay, Superintendent of Schools
September 27, 2011**

Board of Education Strategic Question

How can the District ensure that all students think deeply, support their thinking, apply problem-solving skills, and actively participate in their learning as they acquire content knowledge?

Do we see students:

- *generating ideas rather than reporting?*
- *generating questions and solving problems?*
- *making choices and monitoring their own learning?*

Purpose of Tri-State Visit

1. To report on Chappaqua's progress in implementing the Board of Education teaching and learning strategic question.
2. To help Chappaqua determine next steps for implementation.

Description of Visit

- 3-day visit (March 23-25, 2011)
- 18-member visiting team
- Classroom visitations
- Focus group meetings with varied stakeholders
- Evidence review

Observations

- Classroom video clips representative of critical and creative thinking
- Language arts and visual arts offering much choice
- Varied classroom instruction
- Thinking communities with a continual improvement focus
- Strong professional development support
- Teacher Action Research Project – a powerful tool

Commendations

- Courageous district aims well beyond state requirements.
- System honors innovation.
- Faculty eager to learn and willing to change.
- TARP has been transformative for many teachers.
- Students express that they feel well-prepared for post-secondary school.

Commendations

(contd.)

- Students recognize and appreciate the district's emphasis on higher-order thinking.
- Many opportunities are available for high school students to make choices in course selection.
- Professional development is well-coordinated.

Recommendations

1. Design a more explicit, purposeful, and consistent professional vocabulary.
2. Develop a shared understanding of teaching and learning indicators across grades.
3. Create local assessments reflective of critical and creative thinking.
4. Consider repurposing classroom clips for professional development.

Recommendations

(contd.)

5. Provide even more differentiated professional development.
6. Develop a structure for students to monitor their own thinking (to make thinking and learning more visible).
7. Align report cards to reflect critical and creative thinking.

Thank You