



Progressive
Education
NETWORK
National Institute

January 26, 2017

Dear High Meadows Staff,

Watch-Talk is a process for sharing observations around a shared experience, a provocation, a wondering or a question that provides a voice to all members of the group in a manner that controls for time. Each person has 10 seconds to one minute to respond without comment or questions from other members of the group. The “watch” in Watch-Talk refers to how the member of the group sharing is being times on a stopwatch by the member to his or her right. As a result, the timer is passed around the circle to the next person for his or her turn to time the next member. We wanted to share with you the things that our cohort of educators witnessed in this amazing school yesterday; in sharing, we hope that you will celebrate your community for what it so very clearly is: a place where students can immerse, learn, communicate, share, experience hiccups and mistakes, and have a chance to start again with their friends. You are amazing. We appreciate you. Thank you for having us.

Theresa & Chris



NIPEN 4.0 Cohort (l-r) standing: Vivien Rosa-Vaccarelli, Renee Miller, Sue Elliott, David Gundale, Laury Raff, Gail Albert, Jaime Katz, Ronelle Swagerty, Derek Czajka, Max Weinberg, Debra Amling, Katie Benton. Sitting: Katherine Habansky, Margaret Jones, Jennifer Hannah, Allie Chen, Linling Cai, Bella Patel, Tasha Hernandez, Shelley Hughes, Elen Gatchalian, Katie Coplin, Val Ginnan.

Group Question: What did you notice, hear, see during your immersion experience yesterday (Friday, January 25, 2017)?

- ...a wonderful sense of comfort among the students
- ...parents sharing a story
- ...my culture (Chinese) being respected
- ...a kid holding a door for me
- ...children sharing their favorite places in the garden
- ...across preK-8, engaged students and lots of discussion
- ...authentic units, sensory options as needed for children
- ...ponies, chickens, sheep, goats, oh my!
- ...the word “autonomous” used with young students

...a math investigation where kindergarten children were thinking deeply, quietly for 15 minutes; an example of the kind of rigor I want with my students
...energizing and inspired thematic units
...co-teaching that was beautiful
...refugee/immigration unit where a student responding to what he might bring with him if he were a refugee replied, “a journal so I could write about” what I saw
...intellectual and energetic interplay among students
...focus on process rather than product
...organic accommodations
...great ideas to get kids talking more
...seeing the general theme being carried out with care
...respectful conversations with children
...teachers “seeing” children as individuals in multiage classrooms in how children were grouped together
...nooks and crannies to explore
...lots of choices
...open, curious, and polite students
...children exploring what is the same among us
...similarities across grade levels
...learned the story of how this place came to be
...a parent presentation that pivoted based on children’s questions
...children very comfortable engaging in critical thinking skills
...purposeful chaos; energy and passion from kids and teachers
...humane handling of a disciplinary incident where two boys were welcomed back to the classroom community seamlessly; a second chance ethos “You get to try again here”

...meeting a 4th/5th grade boy on the path to learning something cool in math:

“Where are you headed? What are you working on?”

“I’m learning something new and this is exciting!”

...“I could have stayed in pre-kindergarten all day.”

... “I have many highlights. Discovering together (sitting beside a student) made my heart full.”

...“Open, curious, polite students”

... “It’s okay to take time to think.”

...ENGAGEMENT (so many times this word was shared as a hallmark of what folks saw)

... “a treat to see the theme of care”

... visible effort to really listen and talk to kids in respectful, validating ways.

... the kids didn't want to stop what they were doing.

...High-Quality, seamless co- teaching that worked beautifully.

...Quiet, caring, slow supportive learning: "This is the kind of rigor I want my students to have."

... Thoughtful conversations about what it means to be from a place.

...welcoming, joyous students; quick to lead us, engaged in a variety of activities.