

PIIC kicked off the 2013-2014 school year with its first Professional Learning Opportunity (PLO) on October 29-31, 2013. PIIC's largest conference to date, over 150 participants attended the conference from 20 PIIC-participating Intermediate Units (IU) across the state. Over 10% of the participants were administrators!

PIIC Executive Director Ellen Eisenberg formally welcomed the participants, which was followed by mixed conversations among coaches, administrators, mentors, and Regional Mentor Coordinators (RMCs). The randomized format of the table talk session created networking opportunities for participants across IUs.

After the table talk, participants attended preselected breakout sessions. Participants registered for breakout sessions prior to the conference via an online registration form. Participants new to PIIC attended *Coaching 101: PIIC Instructional Coaching Model, the BDA Cycle and the 4 Quadrant Framework*, facilitated by Ellen Eisenberg. Returning PIIC participants attended one of the following sessions: *Coaching the Brain*

*Beyond Surface Comprehension*

, facilitated by IU 18 Director of Literacy Jessica Jacobs, IU 18 PIIC Mentor Loriann Ruddy, and PIIC RMC Gen Battisto;

*Coaching to the Math Core: Supporting Rigor and the PA Core Math Standards and Practices*

, facilitated by IU 20 PIIC Mentor Melissa Petrilak and IU 16 PIIC Mentor Mike Derman;

*Instructional Learning Visits: How Coaches Lead the Process*

, facilitated by PIIC Associate Director Bruce Eisenberg and educational consultant Skip McCann; and

*Coaching Teachers to Understand Text Complexity*

, facilitated by IU 4 PIIC Mentor Amy Walker.

The last session of the day was *Understanding the SLO Process Through the Coaching Lens*, a general session facilitated by O. David Deitz, Educational Consultant/SLO Project Lead for The Pennsylvania Department of Education. The session was followed by a short reflection among coaches, mentors, and RMCs.

Following a brief introduction and agenda review, day 2 of the PLO started with preselected breakout sessions. Participants new to PIIC attended *Literacy: Building a Foundation through PLN*, facilitated by Joe Ginotti, Director of PLN. Returning participants attended one of the following breakout sessions:

*Coaching the Brain Beyond Coaching Comprehension*

, facilitated by Jessica Jacobs, Loriann Ruddy, and Gen Battisto;

*The Art of Questioning: Inquiring Minds Want to Know*

, facilitated by IU 15 PIIC Mentor Nancy Neusbaum, IU 16 PIIC Mentor Mike Derman, and IU 22 PIIC Mentor Carol Adams;

*What's in your RWS&L Coaching Toolbox,*

facilitated by PIIC RMC Virginia Glatzer and IU 1 PIIC Mentor Stevie Kline; and

*Small-Group Coaching: Making the Most of Limited Time*

, facilitated by PIIC RMC Kathy Gori, Indiana Area School District instructional coach Erin Fullton, and IU 28 PIIC Mentor Jeremy Gaborin.

*Educator Effectiveness and the Language of Coaching*, a general session facilitated by IU 3 PIIC Mentor Chris Caton and Hampton Township School District instructional coach Andrew Halter, followed the breakout sessions. After time for reflection and lunch, the group reconvened for one last session, A

*Winning Formula for Math Literacy: What Really Matters*

, facilitated by Joe Ginotti.

Day 3 began with a short agenda review, followed by breakout sessions. All participants had the opportunity to attend one of the following sessions: *What's in your RWS&L Coaching Toolbox,* facilitated by Virginia Glatzer

and Stevie Kline;

*Coaching: Making the Most of Limited Time*

, facilitated by Kathy Gori, Erin Fulton, and Jeremy Gaborin;

*The Art of Questioning: Inquiring Minds Want to Know*

, by Nancy Neusbaum, Mike Derman, and Carol Adams;

*Coaching Teachers to Understand Text Complexity*

, facilitated by Amy Walker, and

*Making Connections to Supporting Implementation of the ELA PA Core*

, facilitated by IU 8 PIIC Mentor Diane Hubona, IU 7 PIIC Mentor Cindy Shaffer, and IU 10 PIIC Mentor Bethann McCain.

Feedback from participants was positive:

"I saw connections between instructional coaching and the PDE initiatives at this PLO. Our coaches have so much on their 'coaching menu.' I think this conference stimulated deeper thinking about their role as a coach and how they can tackle the initiatives and continuing coaching with fidelity."

-IU PIIC Mentor

"The PLO has so many opportunities for learning and growth. The professional dialogue with teachers, administrators, coach mentors, and PIIC representatives provides a layered understanding of how to improve my practice. After I complete a conference at PIIC, I find the reflection and processing time period to be extensive. I have discovered that I need to schedule time to review my notes and apply the new information/understanding to the current work with teachers. I immediately utilize my learning to create and lead PD within my district and PLCs with grade levels. PIIC is the heart of my work."

-Full-Time Coach

"Overall, the conference helped me re-energize and re-focus. The coaches in our district have become very entrenched in facilitating curriculum and benchmark/common assessment writing. Throughout the course of my time at this PLO, my colleagues and I were able to develop a plan for trying to bring our administration (and through them, our teachers) back to a focus on shifting instruction itself."

-Part-Time Coach

The agenda from this event is available on our [Past Professional Development Conferences page](#) . You can also find photos from this event in our [PIIC Photo Gallery](#) . Our next PIIC Professional Learning Opportunity will be January 8-10, 2014 at The Penn Stater Conference Center in State College, PA. Details can be found on our [Events page](#).