

November 18, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Looking for a thought-provoking, engaging, enjoyable presenter that will have direct impact on students' learning in your district? Robert Kaplinsky is your guy! Our district 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers had the privilege of learning from Robert recently as he led a day of professional development focused on problem-based learning, Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice, questioning strategies, reflecting on student thinking, examining student work, and considering the depth of knowledge of the questions we present in our classrooms.

In the six hours Robert facilitated the learning, he successfully convinced the room of teachers and leaders that problem-based learning was not only engaging for students, but an essential piece of math learning. He changed the mindset of many from focusing all classroom time on procedural fluency, to providing a balance of procedural fluency, conceptual understand, and critical thinking in mathematics.

During our training three teachers in separate conversations shared, "This is the best professional development I have ever attended." And many more shared similar sentiments after the training day. Robert's humor, approachable personality, and honest sharing from classroom experiences made learning from him fun, inspiring, reliable, and real. He attended to all participants' questions and feedback throughout the day, soliciting feedback frequently and encouraging us to challenge him on his thoughts. Based on our feedback, questions, and interests he adjusted his presentation to meet our specific needs.

Since the training, I have visited classrooms and noticed major changes in the math lessons based on the insight shared from Robert Kaplinsky. Multiple teachers have implemented problem-based lessons, leading to a high level of student energy and conversation around mathematics. Almost every teacher who attended the training has made a noticeable change in their questioning strategies with students. And teachers across the district, even those not at the training, have begun conversations about increasing the critical thinking opportunities we are offering students during their classroom experiences.

As you plan professional learning experiences for math teachers, I strongly encourage you to invite Robert Kaplinsky to lead a central part of the learning.

Sincerely,

*Susan C. Bergman*

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