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In my opinion, one of the goals of Common Core – Math is to make math more engaging, relevant and rigorous for our students. In general, our students are able to accurately calculate math problems, but they struggle applying those skills when asked to solve authentic problems with math. Because of this, the Wentzville School District is committed to providing our teachers with professional development to meet this Common Core – Math goal.

The training Robert Kaplinsky provided all of our middle school and high school teachers hit the target in meeting the goal of making math more engaging, relevant and rigorous for students. On the first day, he engaged the teachers in solving real world problems as students. They were highly engaged and experienced the benefit of participating in discussions with small and whole groups. The strategies and framework presented are easily implemented and meet the 8 Mathematical Practice standards. The resources on Robert's website (<http://robertkaplinsky.com/>) allow teachers to select a task and implement it with much of the work already done. Teachers also found the DOK discussion using the www.openmiddle.com/ website very enlightening on strategies and verbiage used to select DOK 3 problems requiring strategic thinking. A survey after the training showed that 92% of the teachers agreed/strongly agreed that "I will utilize the information presented."

Day 2 of the training involved strategies and rich discussions on how to facilitate the tasks presented on the first day. Teachers analyzed how to organize student work to meet the intent of the lesson as well as the standards being addressed. Robert exposed the teachers to possible issues that can occur in the implementation of tasks and encouraged a pre-mortem analysis of the activities to be better prepared to move the conversations along and meet the intent of the lesson.

Robert Kaplinsky has an engaging personality. He uses humor and our true reality to deliver engaging professional development that can easily be implemented in the classroom. He comes across as very credible and approachable as he shares the good and bad of his experiences in his classroom as a math teacher. I highly recommend his trainings and invite you to contact me if you have additional questions.

Best regards,

Dr. Karen Hill

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