

The High AIMS February Update

February 2024 by Tom Burton & Dr. Mari Phillips

A Message From Tom Burton, Executive Director



February signifies Black History Month, a dedicated period to honor the achievements, contributions, and rich heritage of African, Caribbean, and Black Americans. This year's theme, "African Americans and the Arts," underscores the significant influence of Black Americans across diverse artistic domains, such as visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, film, music, and cultural expression, creating a moment for collective cultural celebration.

In commemorating Black History Month, it is essential to recognize the indelible impact of visionary educators who have played a pivotal role in shaping our society. Among these transformative leaders are renowned figures like Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King Jr., who left an enduring mark in the arts and fueled the civil rights movement through their unwavering leadership and advocacy.

Harriet Tubman, an iconic abolitionist and conductor of the Underground Railroad, exemplified courage and resilience. Her dedication to freedom and justice serves as a beacon for aspiring leaders. Martin Luther King Jr., a prominent civil rights leader, eloquently championed equality and justice, leaving an indelible mark on American history.

Expanding our tribute to Black educators, it is crucial to acknowledge the contributions of influential figures such as Carter G. Woodson: Known as the "Father of Black History," Woodson was a pioneering historian and educator who played a crucial role in establishing Black History Month. His commitment to highlighting African American history and culture laid the foundation for future generations. (Source: Carter G. Woodson, "The Mis-Education of the Negro," 1933). Mary McLeod Bethune: A visionary educator and civil rights leader, Bethune founded Bethune-Cookman University and was a tireless advocate for the advancement of Black women's rights and education. (Source: Mary McLeod Bethune, "My Last Will and Testament," 1955). W.E.B. Du Bois: A

sociologist, historian, and co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Du Bois made significant contributions to African American literature and fought for civil rights and equality. (Source: W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Souls of Black Folk," 1903).

By delving into the legacies of these remarkable figures, we draw inspiration and guidance on the fundamental elements of leadership: taking action, inspiring others, and displaying resilience in the face of adversity. Black History Month serves as a poignant reminder to use these lessons to uplift and cultivate new leaders committed to equity and unity.

As we collectively honor the legacies of these pioneers, let us join hands in building a more inclusive future. Black History Month is a powerful call to action, urging us to contribute to a world that embraces diversity and stands on the strong foundations laid by these trailblazing individuals. Together, we can forge a better world for all, continuing the journey towards justice, equality, and unity.

In Unity,
Tom

How to Provide Teachers with Relevant and Engaging Professional Development Opportunities

High AIMS Members,

One of the main reasons why professional development is crucial for educators is because education is constantly changing.

Instructional methods, curriculum guidelines, and educational standards are continually being improved.

Undoubtedly, orchestrating engaging and pertinent professional development (PD) programs presents a significant challenge.

However, it is imperative to note that when PD initiatives for educators are targeted, beneficial, and foster collaboration, teachers are more inclined to engage in their ongoing journey of learning and growth.



Michelle Schweckhardt from SMEKENS Education Solutions, Inc. succinctly states, "... when professional development activities for teachers are focused, useful, and collaborative, educators are more likely to embrace the journey of lifelong learning."

To this end, I would like to draw your attention to the article "[9 fun professional development activities for teachers](#)," which provides valuable insights into delivering and reviewing relevant professional content. The activities outlined in the article include:

1. Choice
2. Digital Assessments
3. On-Demand Learning
4. Walk & Talk
5. The ABC Chart
6. Timed Mingle
7. Walk, Chalk, Talk
8. Movement

9. Memory Toss

It is noteworthy that these activities not only serve as practical tools for teachers' professional learning but can also be adapted for use with students, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience within our institution.

AASA Update

To ensure every child has access to fair, rigorous, and meaningful educational opportunities, the AASA Leadership Network supports a diverse pipeline of school superintendents and educational leaders as they develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for highly effective leadership. Please take a look at the message below from AASA, The School Superintendents Association.



Message from Assistant Executive Director Dr. Ann Levett, AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

It's the second semester, and before you know it, we will all be donning our graduation regalia in celebration of the Class of 2024! Schedules are already filling up, so please don't miss out on the following events that are critical to your professional development. These are special opportunities offered to our Learning 2025 district partners:

The Winter Gathering of Learning 2025 Districts will be held on February 14, 2024, at NCE in San Diego! You are invited to join us as we celebrate our latest Lighthouse School Systems and Systems to Watch and hear from thought leader Alex Kotran. We will begin with lunch and convene from 12 Noon to 4:00 PM. Contact Ann Levett @alevett@aasa.org if you wish to attend. Complimentary for High Aims members.

AASA and the Grable Foundation will host an important meeting in Pittsburgh, PA.- a National Town Hall on the Future of Public Education May 7-9, 2024. Registration is complimentary for High Aims members. Please register to attend May 8 & 9 [here](#). **Learning 2025 Superintendents are encouraged to join us on May 7 for an afternoon of learning with one another starting at 2 pm.** We will have facilitated discussions about how you and other Demonstration Systems in the Learning 2025 Network are building more Student-Centered, Equity-Focused, *and Future-Driven* education. [Please register here for the May 7](#) learning session. Questions: Contact Vtruesdale@aasa.org. 703.7746930

Assistant Principal Cohort Spotlight

The High AIMS Assistant Principal Cohort's Dynamic Role of Nurturing Student Success

During the Assistant Principal Cohort meetings in January, it became evident that the job responsibilities of assistant principals can vary depending on the district and the clientele they serve.



Nevertheless, all participants concur that they are uniquely positioned to cultivate relationships with students, observe group dynamics, and proactively address conflicts. They collectively acknowledge that serving as an Assistant Principal presents diverse challenges, requiring them to balance administrative tasks, staff oversight, and managing student behavior. They recognize their crucial role in students' academic journeys, offering guidance and support to enhance their well-being. The cohort group understands the need to have empathy. They know they are successful when they adopt an empathetic approach, actively listen to students' concerns, understand their emotions, and discern unspoken cues. They appreciate the opportunity to mentor and support teachers in refining their instructional practices, thereby fostering student growth and learning.

The cohort group emphasizes the importance of collaboration and teamwork in creating a positive learning environment under the leadership of the Principal. Through their multifaceted roles as Assistant Principals, they contribute significantly to the school's operational efficiency, ultimately enriching the educational experience for students.

Thank you for the fantastic work you do for students and staff. Attending the January Cohort meeting were:

Will Amburgey - Forest Hills - Anderson

John Hart - Loveland

Jen Schlosser - Goshen

Laura Wilder - Princeton

Randi Isaacs - Goshen

John Wilhelm - Princeton

Zach Larson - Goshen

Sarah Blair- Reading

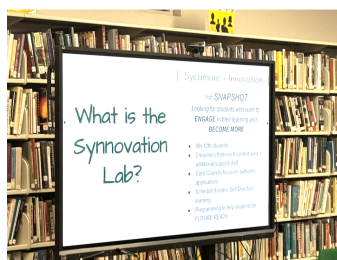
Caleb Keeton - Kings

Jessica Jones - Springboro

Jane Miller - Loveland

Jimmy Aker - Springboro

Cohort Updates



The Curriculum Leaders Cohort visited the Synnovation Lab at Sycamore High School.



Synnovation Lab students shared their experience as a Synnovation Lab student.



The Synnovation Lab is an innovative approach to secondary instruction utilizing personalized and project-based learning to

enhance student's
education.



High Aims Instructional Coaches listen to the Indian Hill Elementary instructional coaches talk about STEM education and how their school is recognized best in the state by the ODE and the Ohio STEM Learning Network for implementing STEM practices.



Instructional coaches learn about Indian Hill Elementary School's coaching cycle model. Indian Hills [Coaching Cycle](#) supports individual growth with a more personalized plan of study, implementation, and reflection.



Indian Hill Elementary School Principal Whitney Buell said, "Students are actively discussing content, given a choice in how they demonstrate mastery and engage in real-world interdisciplinary problem solving in every classroom at Indian Hill Elementary School."

Upcoming Cohort Meetings

February 13, 2024 - High School Principal Cohort - Harrison High School - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
February 29, 2024 - Curriculum Leaders Cohort - HCESC - 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Invitations and Agendas will be emailed to members.

Inspiring Change in the Workplace

"A bend in the road is not the end of the road... Unless you fail to make the turn."



High AIMS Team

Tom Burton, Executive Director

Email: burtontdb@gmail.com

Mobile: 440-708-4800

Dr. Mari Phillips, Cohort Lead

Email: mphillips.highaims@gmail.com

Mobile - 513-673-0432

Administrative Assistant - Mary Slaughter

Email: maryslaughter.highaims@gmail.com

