WELCOME to our
Book study – Session 2

TRANSFORMING BROCKTON HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS, NO EXCUSES

Susan Szachowicz
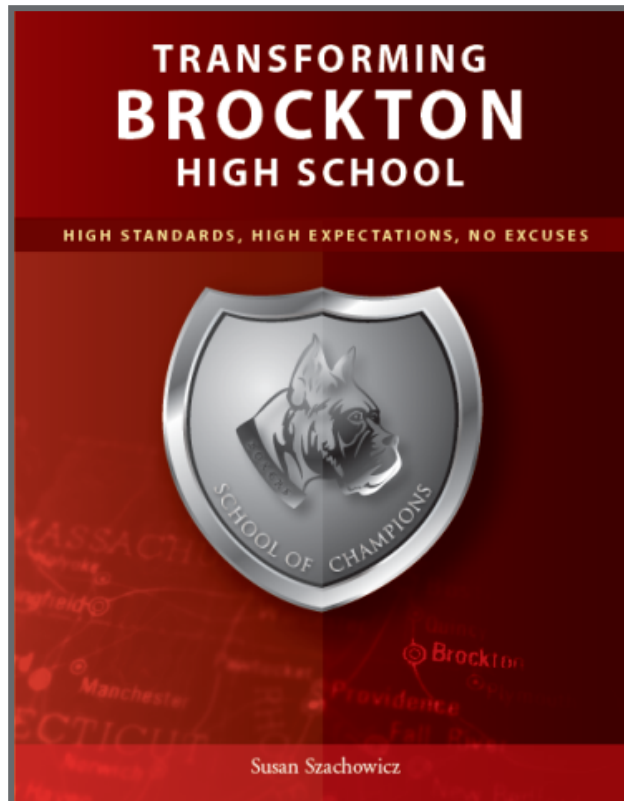
An opportunity to experience the story of Brockton High's transformation, to gain instructional leadership strategies, to discuss the challenges of educational change, and to share your own experiences.

Session 2 Agenda

3:00-3:07

3:07-3:15

3:15-3:25

3:25-3:30

3:25-3:30

3:30-3:40

I. Brief Recap to Session 1
II. Using Data Effectively
    A. Lesson Learned the Hard Way/ Shifting the Focus
    B. Your Turn: Your best data questions/ advice
    C. Let's Share
III. The Power of a School Wide Initiative
    A. Defining the Focus
    B. Your Turn
    C. Let's Share
    D. Getting Buy-In Discussion

Session 2 Agenda (cont)

3:40-3:50	IV. Key to Success: Adult Learning
	A. Strategies for "We ALL Do It This Way"
3:50-3:57	B. Resistance Grows (Mr. Artist)
	C. Your Turn
	D. Let's Share
3:57-4:00	V. Wrap Up/Next Session
4:00-4:30	**OPTIONAL: Time for anyone who wants to stay on for additional questions/discussion**

Recap to Session 1

Why are we doing this?

Goals of the Book Study:

❖ Share the story of a grassroots school turnaround effort that has continued for over a decade

❖ Share strategies that can be implemented in your own school or district

❖ Share with each other – there are no right answers!

Our best intentions...

Four webinars scheduled for this book study, each based upon various sections of the book. I'll send out the reading sections and themes prior to each session.

BUT…

You may not have had a chance to complete the suggested reading. Please know that it's still OK to participate!

How this will work

I'll share some ideas, themes, specific strategies, then ask you to reflect, and if you are with a group, discuss.

Then we'll share with each other.

INFORMAL! Let's talk!

How this will work

Michelle will open everyone's microphones:

- **Be aware of any background noise**
- **Please state your name, your school and position**
- **Then let's talk**
- **Technology???**

What happened? The turnaround:

We went from this:

To this:

75% failing MCAS

Nearly all passing

Culture of low expectations/ students have a right to fail

High standards/High Expectations/NO Excuses

Not our fault, what are we supposed to do?

We are ALL responsible for success of EVERY student

Success by chance. Are you lucky enough to get the teacher who teaches writing?

Success by design. School wide initiative. Literacy for ALL, every class!

Negative image in our city/ failing school/ cesspool

National Model School, awards, "jewel of the city"

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What happened? The turnaround:

We went from this:

To this:

MCAS 1999 | The results

Failing scores

Last month, the Board of Education voted to make 220 the passing score for the MCAS exam. The class of 2003 will be the first students in the state required to earn a 220 in both math and English in order to earn a diploma. A 220 is one point above failing in the 'needs improvement' category. If the MCAS test were a graduation requirement today, the following districts would have the highest number of students who would not be able to graduate. The Globe analysis is based on this year's 8th grade test results because those students will be members of the class of 2003.

Rank/District	Score
121 FALL RIVER	1996
122 BROCKTON	1993
123 LOWELL	1992
124 CHELSEA	1989
125 NEW BEDFORD	1988
126 LYNN	1984
127 BOSTON	1977
128 SPRINGFIELD	1964
129 HOLYOKE	1948
130 LAWRENCE	1944

English

District	1999	1998
HOLYOKE	40	40
SPRINGFIELD	34	29
Seven Hills	33	23
LAWRENCE	32	33
CHELSEA	29	26
LYNN	29	27
NEW BEDFORD	28	25
FITCHBURG	27	24
WORCESTER	27	24
BOSTON	26	29
LOWELL	26	30
FALL RIVER	24	24
Greenfield	23	20
BROCKTON	22	21
Webster	22	17
Renaissance	21	34
HAVERHILL	20	16

Math

District	1999	1998
Seven Hills	79	62
HOLYOKE	77	83
LAWRENCE	76	75
SPRINGFIELD	74	72
LYNN	71	69
NEW BEDFORD	68	64
BROCKTON	66	68
Sabis International		45
FALL RIVER		
LOWELL		
Renaissance	65	
CHELSEA	64	
FITCHBURG	63	60
Palmer	63	56
CHICOPEE	60	60
REVERE	60	63
TAUNTON	60	63
	59	68
	59	49
	58	60

Globe staff chart

the districts

Turnaround at Brockton High
The Boston Globe

Emphasis on literacy brings big MCAS improvement

Principal Susan Szachowicz, shown chatting at lunch with Yiriam Lopez, is in many ways the school's biggest cheerleader. (Essdras M Suarez/ Globe Staff)

MCAS SCORES
10th-graders scoring "proficient" or higher at the state's four largest high schools:

ENGLISH
- Brockton 78%
- Lowell 68%
- Fall River 67%
- New Bedford 58%

MATH
- Brockton 60%
- Lowell 65%
- Fall River 48%
- New Bedford 46%

SCIENCE
- Brockton 54%
- Lowell 40%
- Fall River 48%
- New Bedford 26%

SOURCE: Mass. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education   GLOBE STAFF
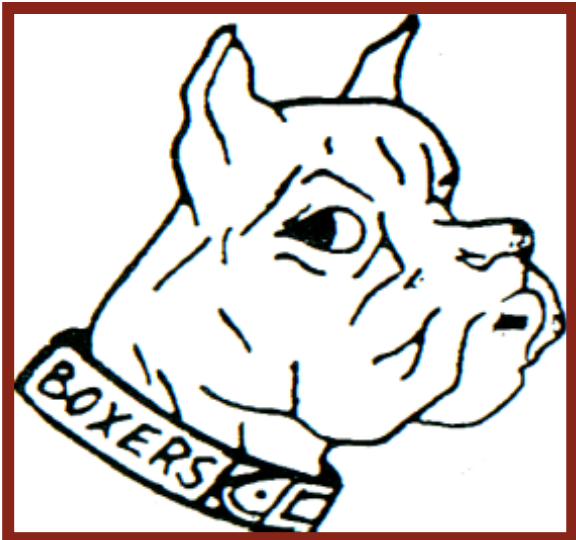
By James Vaznis Globe Staff / October 12, 2009

BROCKTON - Brockton High School has every excuse for failure, serving a city plagued by crime, poverty, housing foreclosures, and homelessness.

Almost two-thirds of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and 14 percent are learning to speak English. More than two-thirds are African-American or Latino - groups that have lagged behind their peers across the state on standardized tests.

But Brockton High, by far the state's largest public high school with 4,200 students, has found a success in recent years that has eluded many of the state's urban schools: MCAS scores are soaring, earning the school state recognition as a symbol of urban hope.

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And after over a decade!

Massachusetts School and District Profiles
Brockton High

2016 Accountability Data - Brockton High

Organization Information

District:	Brockton (00440000)	School type:	High School
School:	Brockton High (00440505)	Grades served:	09,10,11,12
Region:	Commissioner's Districts	Title I status:	Non-Title I School (NT)

Accountability Information

About the Data

Accountability and Assistance Level

Level 1	Meeting gap narrowing goals

This school's overall performance relative to other schools in same school type (School percentiles: 1-99)

All students:	36

Lowest performing — Highest performing

This school's progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps (Cumulative Progress and Performance Index: 1-100)

Student Group (Click group to view subgroup data)	On Target = 75 or higher -		View Detailed 2016 Data
	Less progress	More progress	
All students		82	Met Target
High needs		95	Met Target
Econ. Disadvantaged			-
ELL and Former ELL		78	Met Target
Students w/disabilities		74	Did Not Meet Target
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.			-
Asian			-
Afr. Amer./Black		87	Met Target
Hispanic/Latino		67	Did Not Meet Target
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.			-
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.			-
White		85	Met Target
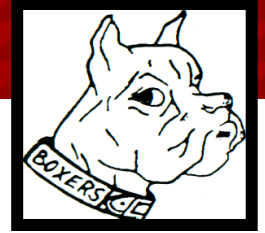
NO secret sauce
NO silver bullets
NO magic formula
NO special programs

If we can do this, ANYONE can!

Our FOUR transformation steps:

1. Empower a team
2. Focus on LITERACY for ALL
3. Implement with a plan, and with fidelity
4. Monitor like crazy

We will get to all of these throughout the book study.
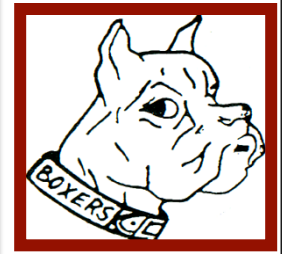
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Using Data Effectively

Last time we talked about the problems we had with beliefs about what the students could do, AND how the team (Restructuring Committee) came together to lead the improvement.

Step ONE: Empowering a Leadership Team

Restructuring Committee – our "think tank"

- **Every department represented with a mix of teachers and administrators**

- **Balance of new teachers and veterans, new voices, and voices of experience**

- **Selection criteria: Trust, Communication Skills, Collaboration, Humor**

- **Go after people!!!**

We looked at the data:
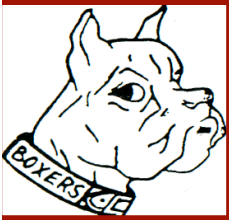## Lesson learned the hard way

Let's figure out the test

The result of that:

The Great Shakespearean Fiasco

After the Shakespearean fiasco, the Restructuring Committee realized we could not outguess a test, and instead went back to the data

Review/Read pp. 21-22, *Back to the Data:*

◆ Review how Brockton developed the literacy focus, particularly the questions the Restructuring Committee used to develop the focus on literacy – what struck you most about the questions?

◆ What is/are the BEST data questions or advice you'd share with others that have helped you utilize data most effectively?

LET'S TALK...

The Power of a School Wide Initiative

Defining the Focus:

What does LITERACY actually mean?

What does it look like?

Let's think about LITERACY...

p. 31 *"The Literacy Charts represented a significant intellectual change within the institution. They defined the school's academic expectations for student learning in specific measurable ways and gave Brockton a school wide focus for the first time. Certain reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills - long viewed as the responsibility of a few departments - now were the responsibility of all teachers and departments, challenging the traditional segregation of content areas in the high school setting."*

YOUR TURN: Let's think about LITERACY

Let's take FIVE minutes to review the visuals of the Literacy Charts on pages 27-29.

➢ Have you defined a school wide focus – something that EVERY teacher and EVERY student understands is an academic priority for instruction in every class?

➢ If yes, please share what you have developed?

➢ If no, what would you like to see as your school's focus?

LET'S TALK…

BUT, please don't think that everyone was HAPPY about this literacy focus…

The resistance was building!!!

Getting Buy-In

Let's take 5 minutes and read/ review page 32, particularly regarding the negativity. Then let's discuss:

➢ Your reaction to some of the faculty comments

➢ Your reaction to the "clever strategy" to minimize negative voices. Would you try it?

LET'S TALK...

The Key to Success: Adult Learning

Strategies for "We ALL Do It THIS Way"

When you have a chance, review the process we used (pages 95-98). And there are many sample Literacy Workshop scripts included for you review, adopt, even implement.
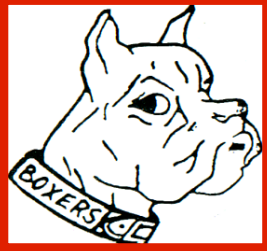
Literacy Workshop Strategy:

◆ Restructuring Committee determines topic based on data, our needs

◆ Restructuring Committee develops script, we all review and practice

Here's the general structure of the Literacy Workshop:

➢ Introduce topic/ Always use an Opener

➢ WHY are we doing this (provide some data/ research)

➢ Model the steps that teachers will then teach to the students

➢ Provide guided practice of the skill

➢ Independent practice of the skill

➢ Opportunity for questions/Next steps

➢ Closer

LITERACY WORKSHOP:
OPEN RESPONSE WRITING

WHAT IS IT? Students must read a passage, and then write a response to a question about that passage.

WHY START WITH THAT? Easily crosses all disciplines, is authentic, and is measurable.

Students demonstrate writing skill AND understand the content.

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2016

BOXERS

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OPEN RESPONSE WRITING STEPS

1. ACTIVELY READ QUESTION BY CIRCLING AND UNDERLINING KEY WORDS.

2. RESTATE QUESTION AS THESIS (LEAVING BLANKS).

3. ACTIVELY READ PASSAGE.

4. MAP OUT YOUR ANSWER.

5. WRITE YOUR RESPONSE CAREFULLY, USING YOUR MAP AS A GUIDE.

6. STRATEGICALLY REPEAT KEY WORDS FROM THESIS IN YOUR BODY AND IN YOUR END SENTENCE.

7. PARAGRAPH YOUR RESPONSE.

8. REREAD AND EDIT YOUR RESPONSE.

The **student creates a map** in order to **organize** the response:

In this reading ….. (look at the flipped question and restate by filling in the blanks)

Transition: One . . .
Topic
Supporting evidence
Explanation connecting to thesis

Body Paragraph 1

Transition: The next . . .
Topic
Supporting evidence
Explanation connecting to thesis

Body Paragraph 2

Transition: The final . . .
Topic
Supporting Evidence
Explanation connecting t thesis

Body Paragraph 3

To conclude… (connect to thesis)

Final Step: The Rubric

This rubric provides the students with the criteria upon which they will be assessed.

OPEN RESPONSE ASSESSMENT

WRITER'S NAME_____ DATE_____

CONTENT	FORM	
8 • Response contains a clear thesis and insightfully answers all parts of the question. • Response provides relevant and specific textual evidence. • Explanations of evidence are clear and accurate, and demonstrate superior understanding of the material.	**4** • Response contains sophisticated and effective use of transitions and strategic repetition indicating complete control of the material. • Response is logically and effectively organized in its thesis, paragraphing, and sequencing of examples. • Response contains clear sentence structure with few or no errors.	
6 • Response contains a clear thesis and adequately answers all parts of the question. • Response provides relevant but general textual evidence. • Explanations of evidence are mostly clear and accurate, and demonstrate good understanding of the material.	**3** • Response contains adequate but simplistic use of transitions and strategic repetition. • Response is organized in its thesis, paragraphing, and sequencing of examples. • Response contains clear sentence structure with no distracting errors.	**LEGIBILITY** **1** • Easy to read **0** • Difficult to read
4 • Response contains a thesis but only partially answers the question. • Response provides a mix of accurate and inaccurate textual evidence. • Explanations of evidence are vague and/or demonstrate limited understanding of the material.	**2** • Response contains some inappropriate use of transitions and strategic repetition. • Response demonstrates lapses in the organization of its thesis, paragraphing, and/or sequencing of examples. • Response contains lapses in sentence structure that interfere with the clarity of thought.	
2 • Response contains a thesis but only minimally answers the question. • Response provides insufficient and/or largely inaccurate textual evidence. • Explanations of evidence are unclear and/or demonstrate minimal understanding of the material.	**1** • Response contains incorrect or inadequate use of transitions and strategic repetition. • Response reflects minimal organization of its thesis, paragraphing, and/or sequencing of examples. • Response contains major errors in sentence structure.	**LENGTH** **1** • Sufficient **0** • Insufficient
0 • Response is incorrect. • Response contains insufficient evidence to show understanding of the material. • Response is off-topic and/or contains irrelevant content.	**0** • Response contains no evidence of transitions and strategic repetition. • Response reflects no organization. • Response contains little to no evidence of sentence structure.	

Evaluated by: Self   Peer   Teacher   (Circle One)

Comments:

SCORING
13-14 = Advanced
11-12 = Proficient
8-10 = Needs Improvement
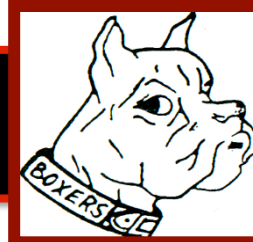0-7 = Failing

So then what…
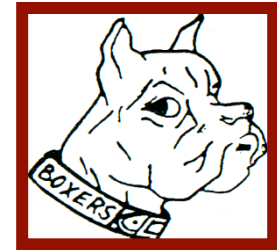
Follow up the Interdisciplinary Training.

Next step – HOW to bring this into the classroom

- Lessons developed
- Implemented according to a calendar

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We didn't leave it to chance!

Everyone was trained to teach the targeted Literacy Skill. The implementation was according to a specific timeline. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

Success by DESIGN, not by chance!

The Open Response calendar of implementation:

Nov 2-6: Social Science, Social Sci Biling.
Nov 30-Dec 4: Wellness, JROTC
Dec 14-18: Science, Science Bilingual
Jan 11-15:   Business, Tech, & Career Ed.
Jan 25-29:   Math, Math Bilingual
Feb 22-26:   Foreign Lang, Special Ed
Mar. 7-11:   English, ESL, Guidance
Mar 20-24:   Family &Cons. Sci, ProjGrads
Apr 5-9:   Music, Art

The key:

We infused literacy skills into EVERY area rather than doubling up on English and math classes. The content provides the context.

And with the Open Response Writing Literacy Workshop implementation, the resistance grew!

The Resistors: Meet Mr. Artist

We had begun the first school wide writing initiative in the hope of improving students' performance on the state assessment. Everyone has been trained; every teacher has an assigned time for implementing this. You (principal) have been told that Mr. Artist, one of the best art teachers in the school, has covered up the Literacy Objectives with student artwork, and mocked the writing assignment to his students. He is your AP art teacher, most of his students receive outstanding scores on the AP art exam, and he is well respected by his colleagues.

Let's talk about this kind of resistance

➢ Let's talk about how you should handle this as an administrator (remember, there are no "right" answers!).

➢ How about if you're a teacher and Mr. Artist is your colleague. Should you say/do anything?

Let's share…

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Wrap Up/Next Steps

THANK YOU!!!

Next session: Tuesday, 12/6

Topics: *Monitoring the Literacy Initiative

*Dealing with Resistance
*Sustaining the Initiative/ Staying the Course

Pages 45-75

Prior to the session we will send out another message and provide some themes, questions, and issues to think about.

OPTIONAL

We will remain available for an additional optional thirty minutes for anyone that would like to ask additional questions or discuss any issues further.

To everyone else I say THANK YOU for participating!!!