

Roads to Reform: Freedom Area Senior High School

Describe the ISSUES (facts, problems, and opportunities) in the case. Look for underlying issues as well as obvious problems the characters face.

- Rusty Staub comments on the difficulty of training teachers during the school year. How is Freedom addressing this issue?
- What challenges might the teachers encounter as they attempt to implement technology-supported project based learning in a standards based environment?
- One problem the teachers face is how to appropriately assess student learning. Just how do you assess students when they are “thinking for themselves”?
- Freedom is really redefining the role of the teacher. What challenges and opportunities might arise during the process of this change?
- Freedom’s reform focuses on rigor, relevance, and relationships. What are the challenges associated with keeping content relevant for students?

Consider the PERSPECTIVE of each character or group presented in the case. What is their unique take on the issues? What informs their point-of-view? What insight do you gain into issues by considering others’ opinions?

- How are student attitudes about teaching and learning changing at Freedom?
- The role of the teacher is changing both in and out of the classroom in terms of their teaching as well as their leadership. How do you think they might feel about their new role?
- Rusty Staub believes career education is crucial. What do you think? How is your school addressing career education and counseling?
- How might community members feel about both the increased use technology and project based learning at Freedom? How might their past experiences with the school inform their views?

What KNOWLEDGE might inform how to address issues in the case? Which sources of knowledge might you consider (professional, experiential, empirical)? What more would you like to know before proposing any actions or next steps?

- In general, what types of knowledge do the teachers need in order to be able to implement technology supported project based learning?
- What types of knowledge do the students gain in a class such as Communications or Television Production?
- Where might the teachers at Freedom turn to learn more about assessment in a student-centered environment?
- Freedom seems to be updating the traditional vocational education program. What additional knowledge might help them as they move forward with the Project 720 grant?

What ACTIONS might you recommend characters in the case take to address issues? What possible next steps might occur?

- What actions might Rusty Staub take to support Tom Hickey, the technology coach, so he can keep up his own skills?
- One consequence that Hickey has already seen is increased teacher comfort level in using technology. What actions might he take to continue this process?
- How can Staub support a teacher like KK, as he moves into his new role as facilitator?
- Now that they have the new programs in place, what actions will the Freedom administrators and teachers need to take to keep the process going?

What are the CONSEQUENCES of proposed actions? What might happen, short- and long-term, intentionally and unintentionally, of following your suggestions? What else might you consider as possible results of suggested actions?

- What lessons can be learned from Freedom High School's experience of the change process, particularly as it relates to the implementation of project based learning through the use of technology?
- What might be the intentional or unintentional consequences of making learning more relevant to students?
- What might be the short-term or long-term consequences of the creation of the Communications class that focuses on media literacy?