

# Plymouth Whitemarsh High School

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

- What challenges accompany comprehensive school reform at both the school and district level?
- Why did Plymouth Whitemarsh choose to focus on literacy as part of the school reform?
- What are the benefits or limitations of this type of intensive literacy program?
- What problems and opportunities do the teachers encounter as they integrate technology into their classrooms?
- What challenges and opportunities are part of adopting a program like AVID?

**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?**

- The administrators recognized that they had to develop teacher leaders if the reform was going to be successful. Imagine the range of teacher responses to this approach to reform.
- The extended learning day developed by the math department is part of the ongoing reform. How might other departments react to the success of this program?
- The focus of reform at Plymouth Whitemarsh is on students who are often overlooked? How do you think these students feel as they are placed in special classes like Reading Rock and Roll or program like AVID?
- What might community members offer to the comprehensive school reform at Plymouth Whitemarsh? How might their past experiences with the school inform their views?
- How might a teacher in another department feel about the extensive investment in technology in the social studies department? How might they feel about “giving up their chalk”?

**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?**

- On what types of knowledge did Plymouth Whitemarsh draw as they began the process of reform?
- What lessons can be learned from the way that Plymouth Whitemarsh implemented comprehensive school reform?
- In general, what types of knowledge do the teachers need in order to be able to integrate literacy skills in their content-area classes?
- Plymouth Whitemarsh uses a coaching model for both the literacy and technology programs. What knowledge is necessary in order to make this model work?

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

- Superintendent Vincent Cotter believes that in order for change to be successful, everyone must be involved. What actions are he and Monica Sullivan taking to provide that support? What additional actions might they take?
- The social studies teachers are integrating technology in a variety of different ways. What actions should they and other school leaders take to disseminate their work to the rest of the faculty?
- What actions might the reading specialist take to help more teachers integrate effective literacy practices?
- As a result of the knowledge you have gained from this case, what actions do you plan to take in your own school setting?

**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 might be some of the consequences--intended, unintended, positive and negative--of comprehensive school reform?
- What lessons can be learned from Plymouth Whitmarsh High School's experience of the change process, particularly as it relates to literacy and the use of technology?
- How might Plymouth Whitmarsh further support the students in the middle?