



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Project Zero Institute at Harvard University  
**Name:** Mark Cwenar

**Other Team Members:** none

**Program:** Greater Houston Area Program

**Trip Dates:** 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001  
**Location Visited:** Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 01

**Project Summary:** This summer I attended the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero 2010 Summer Institute. My goal was to gather new and more effective instructional practices involving leading students to a deeper understanding of grade level content. I was inspired to attend this institute because my students, though I generally have high success rates on standardized tests, don't seem to retain what they learn or have the disposition to use any of it. I was truly inspired by the lead faculty, course instructors, and group facilitators at Harvard. They made their dedication to everyone's learning very apparent. Methods and practices suggested were supported by evidence of their effectiveness. Large group, small group, and available mini courses all complimenting each other demonstrating the cohesiveness of the whole project directed towards a few large goals.

Although much of the institute focused on leading students to deeper understanding, I believe the "Teaching for Understanding" framework will have a greater impact on my students than some of the other ideas presented. It begins with a generative topic which should be personally engaging. Next are termed the throughlines, which in statement or question are the over arching goals for the course or year. I think the critical attributes of the framework reside in the performances of understanding and the ongoing assessment.

**Career Impact:** I was personally challenged at the institute by the questions we were encouraged to create. Everyone in our study group chose a dilemma they face in their respective situations. My goal continued to be the move to deeper understanding for my students. Everyone took time to refine their question. Other group members had similar challenges, so collectively we tackled them all. From young on I always had a passion for learning. Attending Harvard reinvigorated that desire. I have participated in many professional development activities, none as intense and informative as this.

**Classroom/Community Impact:** The main influence on my students will come from some changes in my instructional practice. This is also an entry point to collaboration with my colleagues, sharing with them many of the best practices which I have acquired. This is where I think these experiences can expand to the greater good of the community, going beyond the classroom. Teacher reputations are built on the successes they perpetuate in their classroom. Once I share my learning with the faculty, and more in depth with my grade level the benefits become more far outreaching

**Open Response:** My hope is to present my learning to peers during a faculty inservice. Since not all members are always attentive, it will also be distributed by email. Many conversations concerning learned material will also take place during grade level meetings, where we meet regularly to share best practices. Before attending the institute I found a web site on our district portal (Houston ISD) describing a fellowship group for those having attended workshops at Harvard. My intention is to join this group, if possible. As a result of the learning students will engage more frequently in demonstrating their learning using engaging performances.

**Quote:** Harvard provides an educational experience like no other.

Photos:



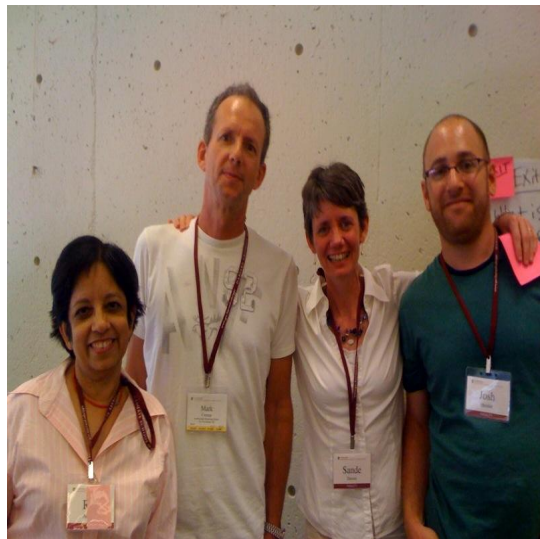
Traveling to Cambridge, MA



FFT Colleagues at Harvard



Howard Gardner at Harvard



Study Group at Harvard



FFT Colleagues at Harvard



Harvard Study Group



Harvard Institute Reflection



Harvard Institute Reflection