

Finding Time for Training and Collaboration

Participants in the Iowa Professional Development Model Orientation Session on September 16, 2003 generated this list of ideas for finding time for collaboration and training. To make these suggestions a reality, PD Leadership teams will need to clearly articulate why additional time is needed and carefully assess past practices and routines to determine the best way to improve schedules and capture additional time for collaboration.

Ideas for Adding Professional Development Days

- ❑ Fund additional day(s) for professional development using Teacher Quality Resources

Ideas for PD Learning Opportunities/Early Release/Late Start

- ❑ Early outs (or late starts) scheduled weekly or every other week. When using early outs or late starts, make adjustment so the schedule by increasing instructional time to the other days of the week. Do not shorten instructional time experienced by the students. Be sure to inform the public about how time is used, the rationale for changing the schedule including the benefits to students.]
- ❑ At high school level develop an early-release schedule that avoid cutting the same period each time students are released early, i.e. one week periods 1, 3, 5, 7 and next week periods 2, 4, 6, 8
- ❑ Stagger 1/2 day PD sessions with elementary scheduled on one day and secondary scheduled on a different day
- ❑ Very focused agenda and build in additional 9 days of professional development by:
 - +1/2 hour 1 morning per week
 - +1 hour after school per week
 - +1 common planning time per weekBased on 37 weeks + 9 additional DAYS of planning time

Ideas for Modifying Teacher Schedules during Student Day [Make adjustments that are consistent with how students are scheduled.]

- ❑ Block scheduling provides more possibility of flexibility
 - Get rid of non-essential “clutter” for students
 - Individual time for appropriate content learning for students
 - Digital learning for students
 - Leaves more time for collaborative work for teachers
- ❑ Merge classes for assemblies/films/common activities with fewer adults supervising.
- ❑ Schedule common planning time for learning teams or other appropriate groups
- ❑ All teachers at each grade level have one common planning time a week
- ❑ Schedule back-to-back sessions where teachers are released on a scheduled basis
- ❑ Interdisciplinary teams set time aside for professional development, reflection, coaching
- ❑ Expand idea of mentoring program so everyone has an “innovation buddy”
- ❑ Make student lunch hour longer and build in collaborative teacher time

Ideas for Time Beyond School Day/Week/Year (Work with the Teacher Quality Committee to address hours beyond the workday.)

- ❑ Collaboratively plan summer course work and other collaborative learning activities
- ❑ Late afternoon potluck or pizza—nice change; something to look forward to after working together; incentive
- ❑ Potluck breakfast—teachers come before contract or during lunch
- ❑ Plan at another place; fresh environment (coffee house, restaurants, if allowed by district policy.)

Ideas for Efficient Use of Time

- ❑ Pre-plan professional development sessions; share plans and agendas in advance; have participants read ahead; timeline for completion; etc.

- Discontinue practices no longer needed; time audit to determine amount being spent
- Teachers involved in scheduling; they will find time if they look—teachers are creative;
- Use faculty meetings for collaboration and team training instead of information sharing. Trade building meeting time that could be handled in memos e-mail, etc. and redirect to PD.
- Use 1-2 prep times a week or use teacher shared planning time for new learning
- Bring professional articles to department meetings to read and discuss

Ideas for Use of Technology

- Web-based tools:** Interactive journal (could be e-mail) with learning partner; Web-based training and/or video classes that model the strategy being studied; Videoconferencing, video stream, threaded discussions, i.e. bulletin board [needs to be carefully structured to include attributes of effective collaborative team meetings]
- Use videos/articles to read and reflect, then process with whole faculty
- Videotaping in building for demonstrations to be used in study groups

Ideas for Support Resources to Generate Teacher Time

- Substitute teachers: Rotate several substitute teachers through the building
 - Substitute teacher has lesson for large group of students; associates provide support in implementation of task
- Principals cover classes during professional development and collaboration
- High school teachers cover for each other
- Link with colleges/universities to free up time

Ideas for Collaborating with Other Districts

- Coordinating calendars for PD collaboration for multiple districts [with same PD focus]
- Use multi-district leadership teams for planning
- Regional coordination of schedules so districts share professional development when PD priorities match, use ICN
- Team with neighboring districts to develop agreements for subs

Ideas for Leadership Role(s)

- Teacher participation in leadership team and culture can be motivational; teachers will often see it as professional renewal and spend time on their own
- Clearly define principal's roles, schedule time for principals to be closely involved with PD
- Professional Development Leadership Teams and staff generate ideas for finding time

Ideas for Incentives and Ways to Increase Motivation (Work with Teacher Quality Committee)

- Allow professional development credit for learning related to district PD goals done on contract time
- Comp time/flex time offered
- Offer on-site university classes for credit [that align with district PD focus]
- Make time useful to teachers so they see value in time they are committing
- Provide bonus classroom supplies, software, technology to staff who attend all PD sessions
- Make sure teachers are aware that their input is routinely used to design the PD sessions

Ideas for Financial Support

- Local business support, business partnerships that offer stipends
- Title II funds for PD
- Teacher Quality PD funds
- Use extra resources, i.e. grants, foundations, legislated funding, indirect costs, etc.

