Creating Effective Teacher Professional Development in Tough Economic Times

Webinar sponsored by: Blackboard K-12
Moderator

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www.teachermagazine.org

www.teachersourcebook.org
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CREATING EFFECTIVE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES
FOCUS ON STUDENTS
ensure effective teaching every day.
FOCUS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
EXAMINE RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES
CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS

- Learning
- Application
- Assessment
LEVERAGE TEAM LEARNING
TERMINATE DISTRICT-WIDE TEACHER ASSEMBLIES
SUPPORT SUBJECT-AREA NETWORKING
MAKE GREATER USE OF OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES
At school everyone’s job is to learn.
Continuing to Improve Teaching Quality During Tough Economic Times

Education Research Strategies, Inc.
WEBINAR for Education Week | March 26, 2009

Regis Anne Shields, Director
Turning tough times into opportunity

**Districts must:**

- Continue to invest in improving teaching quality
- Rethink ALL professional development (PD) resources and shed some “sacred cows”
- Align human capital practices and external partnerships to support PD in leveraged “low-cost” ways
- Use stimulus funds to support a long-term strategy in sustainable ways
New spending has increased the **number** of staff, but not its **quality**

Since 1970, per pupil spending has doubled from $3,800 to $8,700

Source: Digest of Education Statistics 2007: Tables 61, 64, and 66
Resources must be fundamentally restructured away from quantity of staff towards quality of instruction

Students assigned to effective teachers dramatically outperformed students assigned to ineffective teachers

In tough times, districts usually hunker down ...

- Across the board spending cuts
- Cut “non-classroom” spending
  - Teacher professional development, coaches
  - Collaborative planning time
  - Data systems
- Layoff junior teachers without regard to teacher results or contribution

*Less support for teachers
Less support for students*
How to continue to improve teaching quality in tough economic times

**STEP 1**
Clarify long-term PD strategies for improving student performance

**STEP 2**
Map current spending against (1) long-term strategies and (2) best practices

**STEP 3**
Quantify large opportunities for reallocation to support long-term strategies

**STEP 4**
Ensure that all internal and external actors and systems are aligned
A *Professional Development Strategy* is the heart of a district-wide improvement strategy

“Our district is required by the state to submit a professional education plan ... A lot of it is redundant and overlapping. Everyone does their own professional development...”

- Central office staff
Map ALL investment that builds knowledge and skills of professional staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Non-Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>PD days</td>
<td>Compensation (mentors, coaches, teacher leaders, admin, support)</td>
<td>Education lane increments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Collaborative planning time</td>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>Sabbaticals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Admin allocation</td>
<td>Stipends</td>
<td>Tuition reimbursements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td></td>
<td>Substitutes and coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
<td>Materials</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Travel and conference</td>
<td></td>
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Source: Education Resource Strategies, Inc.
Districts already spend significant dollars to provide professional development.

**District PD Spending as % of Total Operating (including PD Days)**

- **District A**: 3.9% (2.1% of total budget)
- **District B**: 2.7% (2.4% of total budget)
- **District C**: 1.2% (2.8% of total budget)
- **District D**: 1.5% (4.6% of total budget)
- **District E**: 2.2% (5.5% of total budget)

**#/PD Days**
- District A: 10
- District B: 11
- District C: 7
- District D: 5
- District E: 9.7

**$/ Teacher**
- District A: $6.3K
- District B: $5.3K
- District C: $5.6K
- District D: $6.8K
- District E: $9.3K

*Source: ERS analysis*
The largest component of spending is often considered an entitlement rather than a resource

This district spends $63 million annually in teacher salaries for educational attainment, $28 million to teachers who have more than a master’s degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PD Initiatives</th>
<th>Contracted PD Days</th>
<th>Estimated Salary Increments for Coursework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$57.9M</td>
<td>$40.6M</td>
<td>$63.4M</td>
</tr>
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</table>

36%  
25%  
39%  

District Z: Total Spending on Professional Development (SY07-08)
However, PD initiatives are often not integrated with a system-wide strategy for building teaching quality.

**District X: PD Spending By Source and Department**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Local 44%</th>
<th>Federal 32%</th>
<th>Private 19%</th>
<th>State 5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Schools</td>
<td>CLD</td>
<td>Cohort II</td>
<td>Cohort III</td>
<td>Cohort III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLD</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>Bilingual Education</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>Student Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort III</td>
<td>Title I</td>
<td>Cohort III</td>
<td>CLD</td>
<td>STC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Teacher</td>
<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
<td>Curriculum and Instructor</td>
<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This fragmentation is driven by:

• Priorities determined by grants
• Spending controlled by union contractual provisions
• Too many “priorities” resulting from a lack of understanding of need
• Budgeting practices that award all departments and schools a pot of money for PD
• Continuing to honor the scared cows
Many districts invest in only one or more of the essential components of effective school-wide instructional improvement.

- School-Based Expert Support
- Formative Assessments
- Collaborative Planning Time
- Each school's specific curricular, faculty and student needs

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Many urban districts provide expert support through “coaches,” but don’t implement effective coaching models.

**Missing Elements**

- Rigorous selection process
- Equitable distribution
- Adequate investment
- Focused training
- Access to time and teachers
- Evaluation linked to job

**School-based Expertise Spending per Teacher**

![Bar graph showing spending per teacher in Districts C to E, with categories for Lead Teacher and Coaching. Dollars have been adjusted for CWI and Inflation.](chart)
Resources supporting PD that are not aligned should be reallocated

**Good professional development is not the same thing as a good professional development strategy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT</th>
<th>DESIRED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One size fits ALL</td>
<td>Differentiated professional development based on need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional independent structures</td>
<td>Integrated PD system where all pieces fit together to support the highest priorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If PD reallocation is not sufficient, districts should look to other areas where resource use may not be effective.

Small reductions in class size make little difference in student performance unless class sizes are reduced to 13-17 student or lower; and can even work against teaching quality efforts.

Class size reduction = Need for MORE high quality teachers + $ for additional PD
The Class size vs. Teaching Quality Tradeoff

Should District Y reduce class size in 4th and 5th grade from 23 to 20?

Invest in Teacher Quality

- Coaches
- Teacher leaders
- Reduced load for new teachers
- Principal mentors
- Support for low performing schools

OR

50 additional teachers

$3.2 million

Source: ERS analysis
Aligning other internal practices can support professional development strategies without additional investment.

**District Z: % of Teachers New to a School**

- **Stable 25%**: less than 24.5% of 2008 staff were transfers or new hires over past two years.
- **Middle 50%**: schools whose 2008 staff consists of between 25% and 49% new hires and transfers from past two years.
- **Unstable 25%**: more than 49% of 2008 staff were transfers or new hires over past two years.

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**Staffing practices can further or impede school professional learning communities.**

*Average of % new hires, 07/08*

*Average of % in district transfers, 07/08*
Align all internal and external policies and practices that impact teaching quality

High Quality Teaching

- District
- State
- Unions
- Universities
- Federal
For example, states and district can work together to make continued licensure requirements more effective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE REQUIREMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers earn 180 hours of PD every 5 years</td>
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</table>

**OR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATION TO TEACHER, DISTRICT AND SCHOOL NEEDS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOOSE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher determined:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Individual workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- University courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summer Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TIGHT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Classroom coaching and observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaborative planning time</td>
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<tr>
<td>- School-based content initiatives</td>
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The economic stimulus package represents an unprecedented opportunity

- Schools are bracing for budget cuts from 5-10%
- After federal stimulus goes away, economists estimate that districts will still face 4-7% gaps in funding

**Districts and states can use the stimulus to mitigate budget cuts and prevent layoffs**

**But they MUST also make a down payment on reforms that will pay off for students after the stimulus program has ended**
Use "one time" funding to build the foundation rather than create structures that will require annual on-going expenditures

A few ideas:

• Evaluation systems, including teaching standards and rubrics, processes and professional development
• Data systems to track student progress and teaching effectiveness
• Infrastructure to support the implementation of a school instructional improvement model – collaborative planning time and formative assessments
Rethinking Resources for Student Success

www.educationresourcestrategies.org