

## Best Practices for Effective Professional Development

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### Session Overview

- The Investment of Professional Development
- Adult Learning Theory: It can't be overlooked
  - 12 Principles for Effective Adult Learning
- Rules for Engagement
- Pulling it All Together

### "My Best & Worst PD Experiences"

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Think about one of each, share in a small group, & maybe with the everyone...

### Professional Development is an Investment...

- Public school systems typically budget between 3% & 5% of their annual operating budget for staff development activities.
  - Money spent on improving instruction and outcomes related to NCLB (Langley & Divine, 2008)
- Teacher participation in PD Activities
  - 59% *Public* vs. 43% *Private* (NCES, 2000)

### Professional Development is an Investment...

- Ongoing PD (Zubay 2006)
  - Needs to be Institutionalized and challenging
  - Needs to be engaging and energizing
  - Needs to be base on current trends
- In Christian schools, PD needs to promote the teachers roles as content expert and spiritual mentor (Evearitt, 1998; MacCullough, 2002)

### PD Should Promote Adult Learning Ideals

- Adults learn differently than children (Knowles 1999; Brookfield, 2007; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007)
- Adults...
  - Bring life experiences to the table
  - Know their needs and deficits
  - Pursue what they need to learn (self-directed)
  - Need to see the relevance of what they are learning
  - Make connections with prior learning

## 12 Principles for Effective Adult Learning

*(Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach, Vella, 1994, 2002)*

### Principle 1: *Needs Assessment:*

Adults should have a say in what they wish to learn: for teachers these needs may come from outside sources, but generally, for buy-in, they should be consulted.

### Principle 2: *Safety:*

Trust in the competence of the facilitator, design of the course (program), feasibility of the objectives, sequencing of activities, and safety of the environment (mistakes)

## 12 Principles (continued)

### Principle 3: *Sound Relationships*

Involve respect, safety, open communication, listening, and humility

PD facilitators should promote these ideals

### Principle 4: *Sequence & Reinforcement*

Concepts and ideas should build from simple to complex and group-supported to solo efforts

Reinforcement opportunities (practice) concepts/ ideas should be built in

## Twelve Principles (cont'd)

### Principle 5: *Praxis*

Action with Reflection A process of doing-reflecting-deciding-changing-new doing

Invites open-ended questions

### Principle 6: *Respect*

Adults have previous ideas and experiences and the environment should be one that acknowledges these.

Questions about applying learning should be asked

## Twelve Principles (cont'd)

### Principle 7: *Ideas, Feelings, & Actions*

Learning should involve the cognitive (ideas), feelings (emotions/opinions), and actions (psychomotor/activities).

### Principle 8: *Immediacy*

Skills, applications, and concepts learned on Friday should be easily put into practice on Monday.

PD should be relevant and easily executable in the classroom.

## Twelve Principles (cont'd)

### Principle 9: *Clear Roles*

The roles of facilitator and participants should be established early-on. Although the PD leader may be an expert, they should be approachable.

### Principle 10: *Teamwork*

PD should integrate teamwork whenever feasible.

Teams should be self-selected and, whenever possible, should involve those who collaborate in the "real world"

## Twelve Principles (cont'd)

### Principle 11: *Engagement*

Activities should be meaningful and allow teachers to get into the work "deeply."

### Principle 12: *Accountability*

The integration of the previous principles leading to action.

PD should foster learning and action and teachers should be held accountable for their learning and acting upon the new concepts.

### Rules for Engagement

Planning for effective professional development should be a team effort to include:

- Administration
- Teachers
- Board

Professional development should be approached as a “must have” and not an “If we have...”

### Rules for Engagement

The National Board for Teacher Standards (NBTS) offers essential components for PD:

1. Occurs over time (months to years)
2. Is Job-embedded
3. Causes teachers to examine their practice and reflect on their own teaching, and
4. Provides collegiality (working with teammates)

(Education Week, Feb 7, 2007)

### Rules for Engagement

Avoid the “Short Term” or “One Time” approach

Effective PD should include opportunities for teachers to:

1. Learn a concept
2. Practice the concept
3. Reflect on the concept
4. Be involved in follow up about the concept

(Richardson, 2003)

In a recent survey of Science teachers, fewer than 1/4 of respondents reported a positive effect of PD on their classroom practice. (Hill 2009)

### PD Offered in Christian Schools

<u>Activity Type</u>	<u>%</u>
ACSI sponsored Meeting/conf.	17.3
College courses	5.7
<b>School In-service</b>	<b>60.1</b>
Conferences/self-study	16.8

(Finn, Swezey, & Warren, 2009)

In-services mentioned were theme-based, content-centered and Bible instruction/integration.

### PD Offered in Christian Schools

Self-directed PD

- Self study or examination of topic(s) by a practitioner
  - Sometimes called “Practitioner Research” or “Qualitative Research”

### PD Offered in Christian Schools

Lesson Study: Groups examine an educational concept(s) and make efforts to integrate them into instruction.

Sometimes involves evaluating instruction of other team members to improve professional practice.

Lesson Study is credited by some for an increase student-centered instruction

### Pulling It All Together

What does this all mean for Christian Schools?  
Following some basic principles of adult learning theory and the 12 principles for Effective Adult Learning will lead to effective Professional Development opportunities for Christian School teachers.  
Want to weigh in? Participate in a regional online study through the Regent University School of Ed:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=vITPoDPyob4iiWNZibgoTQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=vITPoDPyob4iiWNZibgoTQ_3d_3d)

### Action Plan: Next Steps...

Below, list any new insights you have gained about PD and steps you might take to help integrate these concepts into your school...

Questions/Discussion?