

Tool 5.2

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 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.
- ❑ Schedule early outs (or late starts) weekly or every other week. When using early outs or late starts, you may decide to make adjustment to 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 the secondary level develop an early-release schedule that avoids 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.
- ❑ Make very focused agendas and build in additional days of professional development:
 - +1/2 hour 1 morning per week
 - +1 hour after school per week
 - +1 common planning time per week
 - Based 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 for more possibility of flexibility
 - Elimination of non-essential “clutter” for students
 - Individual time for appropriate content learning for students
 - Digital learning for students
 - Leave more time for collaborative work for teachers.

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- Merge classes for assemblies/films/common activities with fewer adults supervising.
- Schedule common planning time for learning teams or other appropriate group.
- 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.
- Arrange a late afternoon potluck or pizza—a nice change; something to look forward to after working together; an incentive.
- Arrange a 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; audit time to determine amount being spent.
- Involve teachers 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 professional development.
- Use 1 to 2 prep times a week for new learning, or use teacher shared planning time.
- Bring professional articles to department meetings to read and discuss.

Tool 5.2, Finding Time for Training and Collaboration, continued (page 3 of 4)**Ideas for Use of Technology**

- Use web-based tools, such as:
 - Interactive journal (could be e-mail) with learning partner
 - Web-based training and/or video classes that model the strategy being studied
 - Video-conferencing, video streaming, threaded discussions such as a 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.
- Videotape in the 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

- Multiple districts coordinate calendars for professional development collaboration (with same professional development focus).
- Use multi-district leadership teams for planning.
- Regionally coordinate schedules so districts share professional development when PD priorities match; use Iowa Communications Network (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 professional development.
- Professional development Leadership Teams and staff generate ideas for finding time.

Tool 5.2, Finding Time for Training and Collaboration, continued (page 4 of 4)**Ideas for Incentives and Ways to Increase Motivation (Work with Teacher Quality Committee)**

- Allow license renewal 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, and technology to staff who attend all professional development sessions.
- Make sure teachers are aware that their input is routinely used to design the professional development sessions.

Ideas for Financial Support

- Identify local business support, business partnerships that offer stipends.
- Use Title II funds for professional development.
- Use Teacher Quality professional development funds.
- Identify extra resources: grants, foundations, legislated funding, indirect costs, etc.