

Focus on Professional Development (2010-11)

Important Notes about FLEX PD:

- Offerings will be available ONLY through the Curriculum and Instruction Office
- A Flex PD offering is equivalent in time to a full in-service day
- Flex PD only occurs during non-contract hours (after school)
- Participants MUST attend ALL sessions in order to be excused from the May 27, 2011 in-service

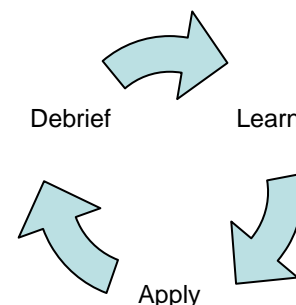
What is Flex PD?

Flexible Professional Development (Flex PD) offerings were introduced during the 2008-2009 school year with a small pilot led by Liz Lien. In 2009-2010, nearly 150 faculty members participated in Flex sessions that focused on formative assessment, inclusive practices and technology. We hope to expand our Flex PD program this year to include many more offerings throughout the year.

The benefit of Flex PD is that they provide an ongoing set of adult learning experiences in a learn-apply-debrief cycle. Flex PD sessions are designed at the district level to connect to district priorities and goals while also giving teachers an opportunity for differentiated learning based on grade level or

content area needs. A Flex PD offering is generally made up of four 1.5 hour after-school sessions. All four sessions are equivalent to a full-day in-service program. Participants who complete ALL Flex PD sessions will be excused from one designated in-service day. Last year, the participating teachers were excused from the May 28th in-service day.

An initial set of potential sessions is included in this document. Please review the offerings and consider participating. Final details and additional offerings will be posted on Monet, Important PRS News throughout the school year.



Flex PD provides a continuous learning cycle to Learn, Apply, Debrief in a collaborative setting.

NEXT STEP FOR FLEX:

1. Speak with your supervisor or principal about the Flex PD that best matches your Professional Growth Plan.
2. Look for final details about the 1st round of offerings on Important PRS News.

Flex PD — Potential Initial Offerings

CROSS-CONTENT/ INTERDISCIPLINARY

Creating Google Earth Trips for your students
Pre-K - 12 any discipline
Learn the nuts and bolts of creating a Google Earth Trip. Outcome includes implementing a lesson that includes a Google Earth Trip that you have created.

Integrating Podcasting into your classroom
Grades 6-12 WL, Science, Social Studies, Special Education
Learn how to create podcasts. Outcome will be a lesson during which your students will create their own podcasts.

Migrant Workers - creating an interdisciplinary post-AP project.
AP World, AP French, AP Spanish, and AP Art History teachers
Create and implement a post-AP exam project for students of AP World, AP French, AP Spanish, and AP Art History that explores a period in Art History. Outcome involves creating a virtual museum by students that explains in three languages the historical and cultural significance of several pieces of art.

Additional offerings listed on pages 4 and 5

The 3 Big Ideas of PLCs are:

1. Focus on Learning
2. Culture of Collaboration
3. Focus on Results

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Writing is a district-wide focus in 2010-2011!

“Enabling teachers to meet together everyday does not make them a professional learning community. Becoming a professional learning community requires intention, a focus on learning, a focus on results, a commitment to collegiality, and a willingness to reshape the school’s culture.”

Tracy Crow, 2008



Multiple forms of thinking include: critical, creative, and metacognitive, among others.

Focus on Professional Development (2010-11)

Professional Development Goals: 2010-2011

District Goal 1: To increase student achievement overall while narrowing the gaps among groups of students, especially students of poverty and students of color when compared to aggregate or majority achievement

PD Goal: To increase student achievement in writing in the four genres of writing using literacy portfolios, writing logs (and other self-assessment strategies), and writing rubrics to document improved learning by our students.

District Goal 2: To build a connected PK-12 curriculum that is standards based, clearly articulated for implementation among all schools and across all grade levels, and provides for the academic growth of all students

PD Goal: To identify gaps and repetitions in our curriculum and its alignment with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

District Goal 3: To develop a system to closely monitor individual student achievement PK-12 via regular formative and standardized assessments in order to create specific learning profiles on which interventions, supports and extended learning opportunities can be based.

PD Goal: To increase student achievement in Core Content areas by using common and/or district benchmark assessment results.

District Definition of “Student Achievement”

In 2009-2010, the NJDOE designed a new format for professional development planning across New Jersey. Because the plans require that teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as part of their professional development program, it is important to recognize the underlying philosophy of PLCs. Rick DuFour outlines the three big ideas as:

1. A Focus on Learning
2. A Culture of Collaboration
3. A Focus on Results

Because PLCs operate with a foundation based on student learning, one requirement of the planning process was to create school and district definitions of student achievement to focus educators on a common understanding of student learning.

Members of each school community were involved in the process of developing definitions during February and March 2010, and included them in their School Professional Development plans.

The Local/District Professional Development Committee (LPDC) reviewed all six school definitions, found common elements and formed a district definition that reflected the priorities of all schools.

The district definition states that students will:

1. acquire increasing levels of independence for lifelong learning,
2. utilize multiple forms of thinking, and
3. demonstrate evidence of learning in academic, social and emotional pathways.

Welcome Back!

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) - in Brief

The research base that defines Professional Learning Communities is vast. The following provides a brief framework describing the key elements of PLCs as found in the research literature:

Shared Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals:

Hord (1997) describes an effective PLC as one that maintains a vision of student learning that is consistently articulated with clear benchmarks to guide the teaching and learning process.

DuFour and others (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006) state that a school PLC holds a shared mission, vision, values and goals such that the community agrees to the core areas of what students must know and be able to do, and further, makes that public to each other and beyond the school community.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement:

Similar to our work with the Tri-State Consortium, the work of Professional Learning Communities must be committed to a cycle of advancing the teaching and learning process. See www.tristateconsortium.org for more information.

Collaborative Culture:

Shellard (2002) articulates that the collaborative culture among educators must focus on learning for all students and use data to assess and make improvements in the instructional process, among other components.

Collective Inquiry:

Simply stated, this is the need for reflective dialog among professionals within a school-based learning community. Wood (2008) explored the challenges to sustaining teacher learning communities. Among her conclusions, she found that “more time was devoted to community-building efforts than to critical inquiry aimed at improving practice.” The focus of collaborative inquiry will be a goal for PRS in the upcoming years.

Supportive and Shared Leadership:

The role of the school leader as a facilitator of learning for all members of the learning commu-

nity is critical. According to Hord (1997), the school leader must also participate in learning as a member of the community. Further, leadership must be shared among formal and informal leaders throughout the community (Phillips, 2003)

Supportive Conditions:

It is critical for conditions such as time to be created for embedded teacher learning. PRS has had some existing structures (PHS Wednesdays and JW House system) and has created time in the Monday schedule for elementary teachers along with a revised elementary schedule that should permit one or two times per month for elementary teachers to meet during the school day.

Results Orientation:

There is a balance between teacher-led inquiry based and structured administrator-led approaches to Professional Learning Communities (Jacobson, 2010). Both approaches are used in schools and it will be our challenge to find the balance. As we include more common assessments in our ongoing instructional program, we will need to integrate the results into our professional learning communities. See Jacobson’s models to the right.

DuFour, R., DuFour, R, Eaker, R., & Many, T. (2006). *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Hord, S. (1997). *Professional learning communities: Communities of continuous inquiry and improvement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Retrieved September 12, 2006, From <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/change34/2.html>

Jacobson, D. (2010). *Coherent instructional improvement and PLC’s: Is it possible to do both?* *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91 (6), 38-45.

Phillips, J. (2003, Spring). *Powerful learning: Creating learning communities in urban school reform*. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 18(3), 240-258.

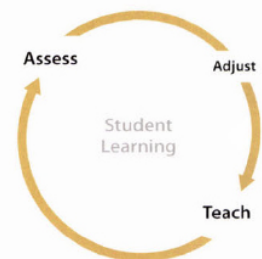
Shellard, E. (2002). High-achieving schools: What do they look like? *The Informed Educator Series*. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

Wood, Diane. “*Teachers’ Learning Communities: Catalyst for Change or a New Infrastructure for the Status Quo?*” *Teachers College Record* 109, no. 3 (2007): 699-739.

“These everyday formative assessments may be quizzes, tests, and essays, but they also include student responses to open-ended questions, informal observations, and perhaps the collective level of fidgeting in the classroom. (see *Basic Teach-Assess-Adjust Feedback Loop* below)”

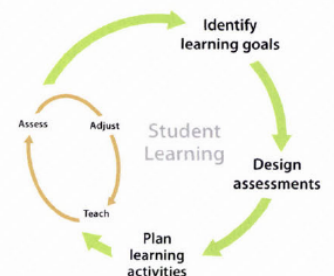
Jacobson (p. 41)

Basic Teach – Assess – Adjust Feedback Loop



Jacobson illustrates the cycle of good lesson design below.

Plan Backward, Teach Forward





Focus on Professional Development (2010-11)

FLEX PD — Potential Initial Offerings, continued from page 1

If you attend all sessions of an approved Flex PD offering, you will be excused from the May 27, 2011 in-service!

ESL

Using iPods to support English Language Learners

K-12 ELL teachers
Experiment with the various applications to support ELLs in order to target specific needs of your ELL students. Outcome includes evidence of use of tools by students.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Online Writing Tools for Language Arts in the elementary school classroom

Pre-K-5 Language Arts and Special Education Teachers
Explore the possibilities of student technology use in the language arts classroom (e.g., wikis, blogs, Google docs). Outcome includes implementing a lesson including at least one technology tool used by students.

Electronic Portfolios in the Language Arts classroom

6-12 Language Arts
Implementing electronic portfolios for writing. Outcome includes electronic portfolios for continued collaborative discussion among language arts teachers.

MATH

Curriculum Connections

K-12 Mathematics
Sessions will focus on the new Common Core Standards and how they relate to our district curriculum. Sessions will focus on student work related to the discussions.

Building Strong Problem Solving in K-5 Children

K-5 Math & Special Education
Sessions will focus on constructed tasks and rubrics. Teachers will develop strategies for problem solving related to the new standards and will share their students' work related to those tasks.

Building Strong Problem Solving in 6-12 Students

6-8 Math & Special Education
Sessions will focus on constructed tasks and rubrics. Teachers will develop strategies for problem solving related to the new standards and will share their students' work related to those tasks.

SCIENCE

Science Research

K-6 classroom and Science teachers
These workshops will assist teachers in integrating research fundamentals into their science instruction and walk them through classroom lessons and the steps of the research process. Four 1.5 hours sessions on Tuesdays: 11/16, 11/30, 12/7 and 12/14

Creating and sustaining a Virtual Learning Community

K-5 Science teachers
Create a virtual learning community to support curriculum development of the elementary science program. Outcome includes a sustained virtual learning community with a warehouse of resources supporting the elementary science program.

Creating Online Resources for middle school students

6-8 Science
To create the structure and building the materials for an online resource section of the science website(s) to allow students to revisit experiments that are hard to replicate (or see for the first time if they were absent). Outcome includes published website of resources for student use.

Creating Online Resources for high school Science students

9-12 Science
To create the structure and building the materials for an online resource section of the science website(s) to allow students to revisit experiments that are hard to replicate (or see for the first time if they were absent). Outcome includes published website of resources for student use.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Implementing Online Tools in the Social Studies Curriculum

Two sessions: K-5 Social Studies, 6-12 Social Studies
Explore the possibilities of student technology use in the social studies classroom (e.g., wikis, blogs, tools for global communication). Outcome includes implementing a lesson including at least one technology tool used by students.

Additional offerings listed on pages 1 and 5

Questions to Frame Our Work—Planning Process

- What are the causes of low student achievement?
- How can we identify and maintain a focus on the key priorities within the school?
- How will we achieve consistency and rigor in relation to our expectations for the learning of all students?
- How will we provide the necessary ongoing adult learning to support student learning?

Welcome Back!

FLEX PD — Potential Initial Offerings, continued from page 4



Technology, inclusive practices and formative assessment are areas of focus for Flex PD offerings.

Questions for Learning Teams:

- What is essential for students to learn?
- How will we know if they have learned it?
- What will we do if they don't learn?
- What will we do if they already know it?
- What do teachers need to know to support student learning?



In early 2011, look for information about our Summer 2011 Institutes

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Using Technology to support communication in Autism classrooms

Pre-K-12 Autism Teachers

Exploring methods of supporting communication using assistive technology including applications of iPods and electronic whiteboards. Outcome includes evidence of use of tools by students.

Using iPods to support special education students

K-12 Special Education

Experiment with the various applications to support the specific needs of your students. Outcome includes evidence of use of tools by students.

PE/HEALTH

Implementing Fitnessgram.

PE/Health Teachers

Course to cover how to implement the Fitnessgram Software Program on an iPod. Outcome will be evidence of Fitnessgram used as an assessment tool.

VISUAL/PERFORMING ARTS

The Jazz Period

Pre-K to 8 Visual and Performing Arts

Creating a cross-discipline unit on the Jazz Period. Outcome to include online student resources and an online gallery of student work.

Digital Portfolios for Visual and Performing Arts

9-12 Visual and Performing Arts

Creating a portfolio system for student work that is consistent with what higher education institutions require of their applicants in the fields of visual and performing arts. Outcome includes digital portfolios for students applying to schools as majors in visual or performing arts.

Additional offerings listed on pages 1 and 4

Professional Development Updates

SUMMER 2010

Writing: PRS offered two successful Writing Institutes for K-2 and 3-5 teachers this summer. The presenter, Monique Lopez, provided many strategies and insights into the writing process. We hope to have Monique return in Summer 2011 for continued work in this area.

Mathematics: PRS offered a series of Math Institutes for teachers of all grade levels to explore questioning in the mathematics classroom.

Technology: Liz Lien provided numerous workshops for faculty and staff throughout the summer.

2010-2011

Writing: A district goal is to focus on writing for our professional development work. While much of this will take place in the language arts classroom, we know that students need to write in all of their academic areas. This district goal should achieve consistency in our expectations for writing in all disciplines.

At the K-5 level, teachers will have opportunities to work together to learn about and apply the Teachers College Writing Workshop model. We are in the process of planning ten days of workshop and school-based professional learning opportunities during the 2010-2011 school year.

Professional Learning Communities: During the 2010-2011 school year, faculties will be engaged in school-based work as Professional Learning Communities.

Keeping Learning on Track (KLT): Existing KLT Teacher Learning Communities will continue with the second of a two-year professional learning plan.

PowerTeacher: JW and PHS will continue to provide support in this area, especially as we prepare for the opening of the Parent Portal.



Visit the NJDOE website for specific NJ requirements for professional development

A new 5-year professional development cycle begins for all teachers in 2010-2011.



JW Teachers will continue their KLT work on early dismissal days.

Welcome Back!

5 Year Cycle of Professional Development for Teachers

From the NJDOE:

The current five-year cycle for professional development, which began on September 1, 2005 will end on August 31, 2010. Each teacher will need to have accrued the appropriate number of hours by August 31, 2010, depending on the number of years the teacher has been in the current cycle. A chart that describes the requirement for each year in the current cycle and each year in the new cycle has been placed on the professional development website at www.nj.gov/education/profdev/pd/teacher.

5-Year Cycle Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. What is the district's responsibility for teachers who have not met the 2005-2010 cycle requirements?

A. In October 2010, the New Jersey Department of Education will ask all districts, charter schools, and other public agencies providing educational services and implementing these regulations to report the names and positions of teachers who have not met the requirement for the 2005-2010 cycle, the hours they have accrued for that cycle, and the actions the teacher will take to complete the requirement in a timely manner.

Q. If a teacher has met the 100-hour requirement before August 31, 2010, may s/he use professional development hours accrued during 2010 summer professional development opportunities for the cycle beginning on September 1, 2010?

A. Yes. Once a teacher has met the 100-hour requirement for the 2005-2010 cycle, the teacher may begin to accrue hours for the 2010-2015 cycle of professional development during the summer of 2010. Many districts are beginning to implement the new professional development plan this summer or are working on district priorities in curriculum, assessment and instruction. The department feels that those teachers who have met the requirement should have the incentive to begin the new cycle. However, teachers may not use a summer learning experience to fulfill requirements for both cycles.

Q. Does a teacher have to accrue 20 hours yearly?

A. No, teachers can accrue any number of hours in a year as long as they are making progress each year in meeting the professional development requirement and have accrued the required hours at the end of their cycle. In other words, there is no specific hourly requirement each year except in the last year of a cycle where a teacher new to the profession or a veteran teacher new to the state must accrue 20 hours.

Q. Is the 100-hour requirement a recertification requirement?

A. No, the 100-hour requirement is aligned to the Professional Development Plan (PDP) and is monitored through the annual PDP summary conference.

It is the responsibility of each individual teacher to document and record all PD hours.

Professional Development — 2010-2011

In-service days:

- January 14, 2011
- February 18, 2011
- May 27, 2011

Content Area Schedule for K-5 Early Dismissal Days:

	10/18	11/15	3/21	5/2
K-1	Science	LA	Math	SS
2-3	LA	Science	SS	Math
4-5	LA	SS	Science	Math

Focus on Professional Development (2010-11)

Focus on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

What is a PLC at PRS?

As our district begins a systematic journey of collaborative professional learning, the way we look at PLCs will evolve over time. For 2010-2011, many learning teams within each school-based PLC will begin by developing collaborative norms and team goals during the first months of school. Once team norms and goals have been established, teachers will move into the real work of PLCs, looking at student learning. See below for a brief view into "Looking at Student Learning."

Are there examples of Learning Teams at PRS?

KLT: In 2009-2010, many PRS teachers participated in *Keeping Learning on Track* Teacher Learning Communities. These professional learning teams have been structured with training for team leaders, a research-based set of materials and structured time for the teams to learn. The process for learning followed a PLC format such that each team created ground rules or norms and followed a specific set of learning modules related to research-based "Assessment for Learning" techniques and strategies. After each meeting, the team members explored the formative assessment strategies with their students and debriefed with team members at the next KLT meeting.

Lesson Study: In past years, some teachers at Littlebrook and Riverside conducted lesson studies that focused on a particular concept in mathematics. Those teams worked together to establish the goal area, plan a lesson or set of lessons together, observe the teaching of those lessons and debrief after each public lesson.

Action Research: Many teachers have conducted action research projects for graduate courses or their own interest. Action research projects can be considered work of a PLC if the work is done as a collaborative team.

Does all PRS professional development take place within the PLC work?

No. Professional learning resources will be offered throughout the year to support teachers in their multi-faceted professional learning work. For example, at the elementary level, PRS offered Summer Institutes in Writing and Mathematics. The learning from the Summer Institutes will certainly flow into the learning teams in which the participants are involved. We will continue the elementary Teachers College Writing Workshop training throughout the school year. We have already started planning for Summer 2011 Institutes for the Writing Workshop and Mathematics. Early dismissal and Flex PD sessions will be offered to complement the work of learning teams.



5 Key Strategies of KLT:

- 1) Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success,
- 2) Engineering effective classroom discussions that elicit evidence of learning,
- 3) Providing feedback that moves learners forward,
- 4) Activating students as instructional resources to each other,
- 5) Activating students as the owners of their own learning.

ETS

Looking at Student Learning

Many protocols exist for the process of looking at student work. A website with a variety of methods for looking at student work is: www.lasw.org/methods.html.

Some of the methods listed are:

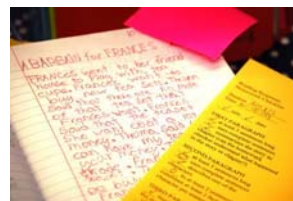
- Art Shack
- Atlas Learning from Student Work
- Charrette
- Collaborative Assessment Conference

- Consultancy
- Describing Students' Work
- Slice
- Standards in Practice
- Success Analysis
- Tuning Protocol

PRS administrators worked with the Success Analysis protocol during the 2009-2010 school year. During 2010-2011, they will review other methods to bring to their school and department communities.

Tri-State Consortium Professional Development (Indicator #5)

The professional learning plan is based on current student and teacher needs linked to district goals. Professional learning is embedded, collaborative and reflective. The district is attentive to providing the time and resources for this learning to take place. Professional learning is evaluated using a supervision and evaluation process that focuses on the efficacy of instruction and attendant growth in student learning.





Welcome Back!

September 2 — Focus on the Elementary Schedule

During the Spring of 2009-2010 school year, elementary principals and teams of teachers reviewed and revised the schedules at the elementary level. The main objectives were to:

- 1) Create clear blocks of time for instruction, especially with a focus on Language Arts,
- 2) Reduce the times when students are pulled out of the classroom instruction, and
- 3) Create monthly opportuni-

ties for elementary teachers to participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

The revised schedule has created blocks of uninterrupted instructional time for classroom teachers, a period for grade level pull-out programs and time for teacher collaboration.

In August, teams of teachers attended a planning session to learn how other schools have used the model for pullout programs to address the needs of all students.

The teams of teachers have planned presentations for each elementary school on September 2nd.

The presenting teachers will reconvene during the first semester to continue the planning process for this new instructional opportunity.

The teams will have additional opportunities to work together in January/February and June to continue developing the PRS concept of this learning opportunity for students.

Thanks to our K-5 Teacher Leaders for their planning and presentations on September 2nd!

PowerSchool

Princeton Regional Schools



Thanks to our JW and PHS Teacher Leaders for their assistance with the PowerTeacher training!

September 1 & 2— PowerTeacher Refresher

Princeton High School and John Witherspoon Middle School began using the PowerTeacher component of the PowerSchool student information system for the purpose of grading during the 2009-2010 school year. In preparation for the opening of the Parent Portal, a team of administrators and teachers at Princeton

High School met throughout the year to discuss the processes and procedures for using the PowerTeacher gradebook.

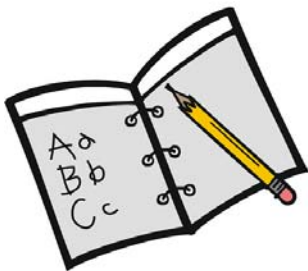
On September 1st and 2nd, JW and PHS teachers will have another opportunity to review the use of PowerTeacher for grading.

The Parent Portal has opened to parents as a pilot, to provide school information. The Portal will also allow parents to review their children's contact and other demographic information. In the near future, grade and attendance information will be made available through PowerSchool's Parent Portal.

K-5 Report Card

Our goal is for 2010-2011 to be the last year of NCR Report Cards at the elementary level!

PowerSchool has the ability to utilize Standards-Based Report Cards, so we have secured a consultant to work with us to learn more about PowerSchool's features for reporting progress in elementary schools. Look for more information later this year.



Tri-State Consortium

If you have participated in the Tri-State Consortium training during the past three years, please consider attending a Tri-State visit to one of the other member districts.

The visits provide a wonderful opportunity to learn about another district and their best practices in a particular content area. The teachers and administrators who attended a visit have found

it to be an excellent professional learning experience.

Members of 'visit teams' must notify the Curriculum and Instruction Office well in advance of the actual visit. Reimbursement for travel can only be done with advance approval, so please be sure to contact Betsy Gilbert or Giovanna Byzewski at least two months prior to the actual visit.