Keys for Professional Development in Gifted Education

Fall Directors’ Meeting

Diane Cassidy
the buffet
Low Reading Achievement

- Lack of materials
- Whole class instruction
- Lack of rigor

- Buy materials
- Small groups
- Workshop

- No improvement in achievement
BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD
Event
Keys

have one of these?

get one of these
Addresses ONE specific performance challenge, for ONE subgroup of students

Gifted language arts students in middle school score below the MGP on Reading and Writing state assessments. Jacob’s Ladder professional development will be provided to middle school language arts teachers.
Professional Development

- Addresses a district initiative for all educators and/or all students

- Thinking Maps will be implemented in all schools.
Professional Development

- Addresses a specific group of educators and/or population of students

- Gifted resource teachers will attend the Depth and Complexity workshops.
Unlock the Door

Professional development opportunities are meant to unlock the door to new learning.
UIP Action Plan
Year from now...
Keys to Success

Professional Development → Teacher Growth → Student Growth
Leaders of Gifted Education

Best practices in gifted education

Needs of gifted students
Gifted Leaders

PD

District Leaders
Gifted Education
Professional development is defined as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skill and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students.

Guskey, 2000
1. It is an intentional process
2. It is an ongoing process
3. It is a systemic process
Intentional

1. Begin with a clear statement of purpose and outcomes. *(What will participants be expected to do after the event)*
2. Ensure that outcomes are worthwhile.
3. Determine how outcomes will be assessed.
The purpose of the Depth and Complexity Project is to *increase capacity of educators to differentiate depth and complexity in their lessons and units.*

Improved teacher effectiveness and student achievement are the goals of this long-term, systemically supported professional development.
Teachers will . . .

Demonstrate increased effectiveness through the use and understanding of the depth and complexity framework as they

- plan and implement standards based, interdisciplinary lessons
- facilitate learning for students to study a topic from the concrete to the abstract, and from the known to the unknown
Students will . . .

Demonstrate a “deep and complex” understanding of content as they

- apply skills and knowledge showing understanding of standards
- think independently and reflectively
- match thinking and problem solving skills to those used by professionals and scholars
Ongoing

- Not a one-time event
- Job-embedded
- Tied to professional growth
- Opportunities for discussion and feedback
- Formative evaluation
- Progress monitoring
- Extended timeline
Level I and II workshop
Monthly district PLCs
Professional goal for performance evaluation
Principal to use feedback forms for informal evaluations
Teachers complete a monthly self-assessment
Measure student outcomes using observations and formative assessments
Systemic

- Leadership support for implementation
- Consideration of individual and organizational development
Administrative Units/Districts will . . .

- Demonstrate support for the implementation of the Depth and Complexity Framework and provide time for collaborative reflection and sharing of implementation practices and materials.
What’s wrong with PD

- Drive-by workshop
- One-size-fits all workshop
- “Been there, done that” topic
- Little to no modeling of what is taught
- Focus on rotating fads
- Lack of follow up or implementation

Strickland, 2009
What’s wrong with PD
1. Focus on student learning
2. Rigorous measurements of adult practices
3. Focus on people and practices, not programs

Reeves, 2010
Professional Development

Implementation
Key to Implementation

The development of a systemic action plan!
Implementation

Evidence of:
- Student results
- Improved teacher practices
- Leadership decisions
- Systems-level learning

Reeves, 2010
District Action Plan Improvement Strategies

- Implement Thinking Maps throughout the district.

How will this improvement strategy be tied to improving gifted performance or growth?
Gifted Education
Help make the link to gifted education
- Share ideas during workshop/PLC/teacher meetings
- Provide teachers with a “Ideas for Gifted Learners” handout
- Show examples aligned to gifted learners

Follow-up with gifted personnel
- How are you implementing strategies?
- How are you sharing your work?
- How do you measure student results?
Thinking Maps Example:

THE BRIDGE MAP

Relating Factor

First Pair

Second Pair

as
Thinking Maps Example:

Jonathan Livingston Seagull

Johnathan became an instructor

- he learned to fly faster and better
- he learned how to catch 10 feet under water
- he learned how to find better food
- he became free from the other gulls

Event

- almost killed two gulls
- Did not act like the others
- Disobeyed other gulls

Causes

- he taught other gulls to fly better
- Fletcher Lynn was his first student
- Ziang made him an instructor
- He with other gulls very hard

Map developed by
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Jon Stirewalt
Carly Swanson
Justin Wallace
Lizzy Shao

6th Grade LA at
Northwest Middle School
Cabarrus Co., NC
Thinking Maps Example:

How does the character change over time?

“Flubble” Map

Beginning → Middle → End
Thinking Maps Example:

During monthly gifted resource PLC, teachers will:
- Bring examples of student work using Thinking Maps
- Share lessons where Thinking Maps were implemented
- Identify a focus for following month
- Discuss and show data on how Thinking Maps is impacting gifted student learning
1. Participants’ reactions
2. Participants’ learning
3. Organization’s support and change
4. Participants’ use of new knowledge and skills
5. Student learning outcomes
Participants’ Reaction

Beyond the end-of-workshop survey

- Was the time well spent?
- Was the information relevant?
- Did the topic address an important need?
- How will you apply what you learned?
- Was experience worthwhile?
Participants’ Learning

- Did participants acquire the planned knowledge, skills, and attitudes or beliefs?
Cognitive Goals:

- Understanding of content
- Rationale for new ideas or innovations
- Practices necessary for implementation
- Procedures for implementation
- Expected outcomes
Psychomotor Goals:

- What I am able to DO with what I have learned
Affective Goals:

- What are my attitudes, beliefs or feelings about the new ideas or innovations?
Organization Support and Change

Changing School Culture

1. Providing necessary resources
2. Protection from intrusions
3. Openness to experimentation and alleviate fear
4. Principal/Central Office leadership and support
5. Recognition of success
6. Provision of time
Participants’ Use of New Knowledge and Skills

- Implementation is progressive and ongoing
- Everyone will implement at a different level
Methods to Assess Participants Use of New Knowledge and Skills

1. Direct observation
2. Teacher interview/conference
3. Supervisor interview/conference
4. Student interview/conference
5. Questionnaire
6. Focus group
7. Implementation logs, journals, lesson plans
8. Teacher portfolio
Student Learning Outcomes

- Cognitive (knowledge and understanding)
- Affective (attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions)
- Psychomotor (skills, behaviors, and practices)
Action Planning Steps

- Provide professional development
- Obtain essential materials and resources
- Assess participants’ reactions and learning
- Clearly communicate expectations
- Develop an implementation timeline
- Provide time for planning and collaboration
- Implement instructional practices
- Model lesson for a peer
- Peer-coaching
- Formative assessment
- Informal observations/feedback
- Formal evaluation (teacher, student, leader, organization)
Year 2 – “Progress Monitor”

- Yearly timeline
- # meetings/PLCs/conferences
- Product/process review
- # informal observations
- Type of data that will be collected
- Process for data analysis
- Plan for intervention/support/coaching
- Type of formal evaluation
Take Two

- Principal support and commitment
- Tied to teacher professional growth
- Broke big ideas into smaller parts – 7 steps to advanced literacy
- Presented one strategy at a time
- Teacher time to implement, return to class to share and discuss
- Time for lesson planning
- Time for co-collaboration
- Informal visits and feedback
- Principal rubric for walk through
- Multiple levels for data analysis throughout year
In conclusion...

- Professional development must have a **unified** and **coherent** focus
- Professional learning must be **owned**
Thank You

Keep Educating Yourself
Reflections

- What practices have you found to be successful for professional development implementation and evaluation?
- What road blocks have you experienced?
- How might your Action Plan be strengthened or enhanced by the information heard today?
Resources

- *Transforming Professional Development into Student Results*, Douglas Reeves, 2010.