



School District #33 (Chilliwack)
"Partners in Learning"

Professional Development

COLLABORATIVE

MODEL

2010-2011

Compiled by the District Learning Committee

What is it and why?

As we work together to build a learning community across the district, collaboration and professional development are critical to our success. The after school collaboration sessions are designed to provide an opportunity for us to do this in an ongoing way. Research tells us that when we share and learn together on a regular basis, we build our knowledge and skills and develop into a cohesive and trusting team. This type of professional development is a change from traditional formats for learning that reflects the increasing complexity of our work, addresses the need for collegial work and gives value to what we instinctively do in vibrant schools. We all work with students and our common goal is their success.



When?

For the upcoming 2010/11 school year, staff will have the opportunity to attend 10-12 hours of after-school Pro-D sessions in lieu of 2 school days.

The district wide days in lieu days for 2010-2011 are identified on the district calendar and are as follows:

Friday, November 12, 2010

Thursday, April 21, 2011

(NOTE: Spring Break in 2011 is March 14–25)

How will the sessions be planned?

The primary purpose of these sessions is to allow school and department teams to meet collaboratively to build their expertise and to share their experiences. Each staff will have the opportunity to determine the frame and floor plan of their own professional development. Working out the details across staff groups and across diverse schedules is a challenge but one we believe we are making good progress in addressing. It is expected that sessions will be jointly planned and designed by a school based professional development team. Every staff member has the opportunity to be involved in the planning of the collaboration activities at your school. Be prepared to participate in the Pro-D Committee in order to have your voice heard. Learning to work in a complementary and shared way will help us all to be more effective in dealing with the challenges we face.

The Pro-D Committee:

Where one is not already in place, each school needs to establish a Pro-D Committee to determine the professional development needs of their staff. Participation on this committee is voluntary and open to CTA and CUPE members and administration. The purpose is to determine the direction of the 6 after-school Collaborative Pro-D in-lieu sessions. The choice of broad, inclusive topics will ensure greater relevancy to all staff.

Job alike opportunities:

In the third year of our plan we want to establish some opportunities for those of you who have expressed a desire to collaborate in job alike cohorts without significantly impacting the ability to do ongoing work with your school or department staff. For this reason we are again going to designate district wide suggested collaboration days which will facilitate cross school collaboration. The *starred date, March 30, 2011 is designated for cross school or job alike collaboration. This will facilitate coordination between groups that want to work with other school staffs or departments. The other dates are for school-based Pro-D, whether whole staff or grade/department groups.

SESSION DATES for 2010-2011

The suggested dates for all work sites for the 2010-2011 school year have been set for the last Wednesday of the following months:

September 29, 2010
November 24, 2010
February 23, 2011

October 27, 2010
January 26, 2011
March 30, 2011*

** March 30, 2011 is a recommended date for facilitation of cross school or job alike collaboration*

Staff are requested to avoid scheduling other activities such as sports games, in-service, or union meetings for these afternoons.

Questions/Answers Regarding the Collaboration Pro-D Model:

How do we get started?

Prior to the end of the school year, the Pro-D Committee at each school should meet to make a proposal for the upcoming year. This should be presented to the entire staff for approval.

What are we supposed to do during this time?

Groups should be working on common goals throughout the after-school collaboration. This allows for follow-up and reflection—a cornerstone of effective professional development.

What about the other things that I do in my own time?

Other after-school activities or in-service that may occur during the year do not factor into this accumulation of time towards the 2 days in lieu. Those activities tend to be individual in nature and the intent of the collaborative model is to allow groups to work together.

Can I do self-directed on the Wednesday collaboration days?

No. Collab dates as scheduled are designed for collaborative group work. Teachers who choose to do self-directed Pro-D activities are reminded that these happen on November 12th and April 21st, not during the after school session times.

Can I work at home on November 12 or April 21 if I am doing self-directed?

No.

Who gives approval to us?

Once the staff Pro-D Committee has determined the topic (or topics if departments are involved) they need to send a brief outline to the District Learning Committee (DLC) c/o Ruth Wiebe at the SDO. We expect that all the proposals will follow the guidelines of effective professional development as outlined in the BCTF Members' Guide and the CTA Professional Development handbook. We do not anticipate the need to 'approve' or 'disapprove' proposals. Feedback indicated that a method of sharing the work of groups across the district was desired and by collecting this information it is hoped that the Curriculum Department will be able to facilitate this.

What about staff who choose not to attend these sessions?

We encourage all staff (CTA, CUPE, CAA) to participate in this valuable collegial Pro-D model. However, it is voluntary. Teaching staff choosing not to participate are responsible for planning their own professional development for November 12th and April 21st. There will be no district planned activities organized for these days. Teachers must provide copies of their self directed forms to their administrator and the CTA Office, as per the policies in the CTA Professional Development handbook. CUPE staff should consult with their supervisor.

What if I am absent on a Collaboration Day?

If you are absent from school on the day of a scheduled after-school session due to illness or emergency leave, you do not have to make up time for the day in lieu. However, missing the session for involvement in sports, union, personal or other reasons will impact your time towards the day in lieu. Unique circumstances need to be discussed with the individual's supervisor.

What about staff who want to be part of a discrete group?

It may be beneficial for some staff to meet as focus groups to satisfy their Pro-D goals. The same parameters apply: collaborative work over 10-12 hours outside of regular scheduled hours, through a series of 4-6 sessions. Discrete groups at school sites (ie. primary, intermediate, Humanities, Science) must discuss topics with their principal prior to the collab dates. These plans need to focus on improving student progress and have a method of reporting back to the larger staff.

What about support staff?

The feedback received indicates that although some support staff have found great value in the school based sessions, many clerical and custodial staff have found that the current format is not meeting their learning needs at this time. They have expressed a desire to meet as district wide focus groups. The District will work with supervisors and principals to schedule district wide sessions for these staff groups across the year. Input will be sought on suggested topics and the opportunity to participate in the planning sessions will be available to interested staff. Participants will be asked to share their group learning with their own school staffs and supervisor. Individual clerical or custodial staff may choose to participate in a combination of their school's collaborative group and the district group.

Good luck in your Pro-D Planning!



Building Teamwork: Some things to keep in mind ...



- ◆ The most powerful forms of staff/professional development occur in ongoing teams that meet on a regular basis.
- ◆ All students in the school are the collective responsibility of the whole staff.
- ◆ Building an effective, respectful team is the first step and valuable work in itself.
- ◆ It is important to set norms or guidelines for meetings.
- ◆ Be respectful: understand that conflict is healthy - give everyone a voice.
- ◆ Look at current practice and project where you'd like to be in the future.
- ◆ Set attainable goals, not too many.

Types of Activities:

Any activity that the Pro-D Committee at your school/site jointly agrees to and that follows good Pro-D practices and guidelines is an appropriate activity.

Some examples of topics/activities include the following areas:

- nutrition/healthy schools
- technology
- BCeSIS
- numeracy
- school goals
- philosophy
- effective communication systems
- autism
- DPA
- fine motor
- EBS
- vertical integration
- team building
- inclusiveness
- resource exchange
- ABELS training
- student success
- formative assessment
- departmental consistency
- behaviour strategies
- student motivation
- literacy
- action schools
- restorative practices
- oral language





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