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ABSTRACT

        This publication assembles the most current research on
professional development and change for teachers looking to accelerate their
professional growth and the improvement of student learning. Designed as a
how-to resource, it reviews the stages of building an effective professional
development system. The seven chapters are: (1) "Developing a Vision of
Effective Professional Development"; (2) "Creating a Context for Change"; (3)
"Planning for Professional Development"; (4) "Investing in Professional
Development"; (5) "Providing Continual Assistance"; (6) "Assessing and
Monitoring Progress"; and (7) "The 1998 National Awards Program and Winners"
(Christy Casbon). There are six appendixes: "Evaluating Current Professional
Development Opportunities"; "Steps in Using Self-Directed Change Model";
"Evaluating Professional Development: A Tool for Staying on Track"; "Features
of Effective Learning Experiences"; "Shifting the Paradigm of Professional
Development"; and "National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff
Development." (SM)

Achieving Your Vision of
Pr★fessi★nal
Devel★pment

How to Assess Your Needs and Get What You Want

Also included in this Publication:
The 1998 National Awards Program and Winners

NSDC Book of the Year
1998

SERVE

Improving Learning through Research & Development

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Achieving Your Vision of
Pr fessi nal Devel pment

How to Assess Your Needs and Get What You Want

Written for SERVE by
David Collins

Chapter on the 1998 National Awards Program and Winners by
Christy Casbon

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Foreword

*P*rofessional development programs and models tend to focus on the individual teacher as the key to school improvement, reform, restructuring, and the attainment of national goals for education including the number-one issue on most people's minds—student achievement on standardized tests. Commitment to higher academic standards is strong both nationally and locally. At last year's National Education Summit (1996), the nation's governors and business leaders reaffirmed their 1989 commitment to the national education goals and encouraged states and districts to develop academic standards to improve student performance. These goals address school readiness, high school completion, student competency in nine academic areas, preparation for responsible citizenship and productive employment, school safety, teacher professional development, and parental involvement in schools. This type of national approval and encouragement to reach higher levels is important. It is also important that teacher professional development made their list. Just as students cannot achieve what they have not been taught, teachers cannot teach what they do not know.

By most accounts, the brand of inservice training we have been offering teachers and administrators has not proven to be effective for helping them gain the deep content knowledge, classroom management and interpersonal skills, technological know-how, understanding of schools as organizations, and other concepts and attitudes required by an increasingly complex educational context. The wake-up call that now has been sounded regarding the critical role teachers' professional development will ultimately play in the accomplishment of our fundamental national goals for education must surely lead us to focus our attention on adopting and developing a significantly different context for the planning, delivery, support, and evaluation of professional development. At least three features of the new context have emerged clearly. The first of these is the alignment of state and local policies on professional development with national goals. The second is the development of well-designed systems to support the adoption, implementation, and institutionalization of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes enhanced or changed through professional development. The third feature of a new and more productive context is national, district, school, and community recognition of professional development as an essential

component along the entire continuum of teacher development that must be embraced as a mutual responsibility of parents, students, teachers, community members, district educational leadership, and those who develop and facilitate professional development activities.

Professionals at the state and local level are coming to understand the obvious—goals, standards, and assessment alone do not improve student performance, and the professional development of teachers, though critical, is not all that needs developing. Continually improving performance occurs in continually improving systems staffed by professionals who are continually improving. Thomas Corcoran reports that a number of experts and organizations have suggested that the most promising professional development programs are those that:

- Stimulate and support site-based initiatives—Professional development is likely to have a greater impact on practice if it is closely linked to school initiatives to improve practice.

- Support teacher initiatives as well as school or district initiatives—These initiatives could promote the professionalization of teaching and may be a cost-effective way to engage more teachers in serious professional development activities.

- Are grounded in knowledge about good teaching—Good professional development should encompass expectations educators hold for students, child-development theory curriculum content and design, instructional and assessment strategies for instilling higher-order competencies, school culture, and shared decision making.

- Model constructivist teaching—Teachers need opportunities to explore, question, and debate in order to integrate new ideas into their repertoires and their classroom practice.

- Offer intellectual, social, and emotional engagement with ideas, materials, and colleagues.

- Demonstrate respect for teachers as professionals and as adult learners.

- Provide for sufficient time and follow-up support for teachers to master new content and strategies and to integrate them into their practice.

- Are viewed as an integral part of teachers' work rather than as a privilege granted to "favorites" by administrators.

Dr. Collins demonstrates in *Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development* that he inherently understands all of this, and he reflects in each chapter his belief that effective professional development will have a major impact on school improvement. He uses the term "professional development" because he also believes that you as a professional have personal and individual needs and that you are not just a cog in the wheel of school improvement. As you read, you will become increasingly aware that Dr. Collins has "been there" and that he wants you to personally reap the benefits of his experience in your pursuit of your important professional goals. The rest of the world will improve as a result of your hard work. Why shouldn't you?

I hope that this book will also be read by policymakers, decision makers, and those who have the power to increase the financial support for professional development, as well as teachers who would take their destiny into their own hands by seriously engaging in the planning and implementation of an individual professional growth program or a schoolwide program of professional development for their school. I hope that it will be used as a medium to stimulate discussion, reflection, and collaboration. This book is carefully designed to lead, and it is both comprehensive and to the point. It includes methods for developing a vision (your vision) of professional development, preparing a set of personal and professional decisions for action, working collaboratively with each other, and evaluating content, quality, and results. I invite you to enjoy and profit from this book, as I have, and to allow Dr. Collins to support you in achieving your vision of professional development.

Betty V. Fry

Betty Fry
Director of School Development and Reform
SERVE

Introduction

Anna, a middle school science teacher, and Wayne, an elementary teacher, sit together in the stands at the Little League field, where their children play on the same team. After catching up on family news, the two begin talking about their passion—teaching.

"Wayne, I want to tell you about a new series of professional development activities my school is offering," Anna tells Wayne. "I'm so excited because I can see that it is already making a difference in my teaching and in how well my students are learning."

Anna describes how the faculty chose their own topics to study—topics that reflected areas of student achievement that were schoolwide concerns. She and her fellow teachers spent a lot of time up-front researching strategies and practices that were proven to produce the results they wanted for their students. They attended training in teams, and the members of these teams supported one another in a variety of ways as they implemented the new practices.

"Wow," Wayne comments. "The professional development activities I attended during pre-planning were pretty dull and ineffective compared to what you're describing."

On the first day of pre-planning, Wayne had received a flyer with available sessions. The presenter had been enthusiastic and even included activities that could be described as practical and hands-on. Wayne took notes and collected handouts, but he decided to wait until the students were settled into a routine before experimenting with the new strategies. He soon realized that he had forgotten almost everything that he had heard at the workshop. With no one to talk to about how he could get started, Wayne decided to continue with the strategies he had always used.

Anna's principal had rearranged the school's schedule to provide more time for the teams to plan together and exchange ideas about the new strategies. "The best part," Anna says, "is the feeling that we are involved in something together. Relationships among teachers have never been better! There is this whole new level of professionalism because we're working together

on important aspects of teaching and learning, and that's more exciting than any afternoon session with a motivational speaker!"

"How can we get that kind of professional development going at my school?" Wayne asked.

Anna smiled. "You're in luck!" She pulled out her ever-present bag of papers to grade and handed Wayne a book: *Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development: How to Assess Your Needs and Get What You Want.*

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Purpose and Organization

Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development is written for you if you wish to:

❧ Develop a clear picture of effective professional development. *What should I expect from professional development experiences?*

❧ Plan and conduct school-based professional development activities. *How can I apply best practices in professional development?*

❧ Evaluate the content, quality, and results of professional development experiences. *How can I be sure this professional development experience will produce, or has produced, the results I want for me, my fellow teachers, and our students?*

Six strategies for successful change identified by Hord and Huling-Austin (1986) were adapted to serve as the organizing framework and chapter headings for this Hot Topic. They describe what is needed to bring about significant change in the professional development activities in which you participate. These strategies for successful change are:

❧ Developing a Vision of Effective Professional Development. *What does effective professional development look like?*

❧ Creating a Context for Change. *How does a learning community support change?*

❧ Planning for Professional Development. *What goes into providing effective professional development?*

❧ Investing in Professional Development. *How can I get the most out of professional development?*

❧ Providing Continual Assistance. *What kind of help do I need to make real change in my practices?*

❧ Assessing and Monitoring Progress. *How can I know if professional development will or has made a difference?*

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Developing a Vision of Effective Professional Development

*T*he purpose of this chapter is to supply the foundation for a new and different vision of professional development that is individually owned by teachers and not a "one-shot" experience. If a vision is "a compelling picture of the future that inspires commitment" (Mendez-Morse, 1993), then a vision of effective professional development will provide an image that encourages you to seek out professional development experiences that possess these characteristics. This chapter provides an overview of effective professional development through the following nine sections: "How Adults Learn," "Trying Something New," "Making a Wise Choice," "Five Ways to Learn," "Working Together," "Data-Driven Decisions," "A Starring Role," "Finding the Time," and "Fitting in With Other Efforts." A brief activity at the end of this chapter will lead you through the development of your own vision of effective professional development. Your vision can be used to evaluate current professional development activities and to guide the planning of future efforts.

How Adults Learn

As an adult learner, you will learn more effectively when:

- Your learning is directed at solving a specific, job-related problem (Snyder, 1993).

- You are involved in selecting the content and, where possible, the development of the learning experiences or process to be used (Little, 1993).

- You are involved with your colleagues in solving problems that represent collective concerns (Brookfield, 1986).

Key Idea
Adult learning is enhanced when adults are allowed to work with colleagues to solve a work-related problem which they identified and that represents a collective concern. Adult learners are able to achieve extremely high levels of implementation when support is provided after initial training.

- You believe you are being prepared for tasks and responsibilities that are more challenging or complex than current tasks (Sprinthall and Sprinthall, 1983).

- You are provided with opportunities for carefully guided reflection about your performance of new competencies (Sprinthall and Sprinthall, 1983).

- Your concerns are understood and used to provide appropriate support as you learn about and implement the new practices (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall, 1987).

- You are given support after initial training in the form of coaching, study teams, and opportunities to learn by watching your colleagues perform (Joyce and Showers, 1988).

However, if the support for what you have learned ends with the initial training, there is only a one-in-ten chance that you will be able to engage in sufficient practice on your

Table 1.1
Comparison of Competency Acquisition and Components of Training

Competency Acquisition (Boyatzis)	Description	Components of Training (Joyce and Showers)
Recognition	Study and explication of the theoretical base, usually through a formal presentation by the trainer or presenter.	Presentation of Theory
Understanding	Portrayal of the theory in visible examples, usually through participant or trainer demonstrations or on videotape.	Modeling
Self-Assessment, Experimentation, and Practice	Practice of the new skill in a safe environment, analysis of the behavior of others, and the opportunity to receive constructive criticism.	Practice (within the training setting)
Job Application	Incorporation of the new skill into the classroom setting, application of knowledge to deal with specific problems, and the use of coaching/mentoring/teaming to enhance implementation.	Coaching (Teaming)

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own (Joyce and Showers, 1995). These findings fit well with the work of Richard Boyatzis on competency acquisition (1982). The steps Boyatzis identifies are compared to the components of training recommended by Joyce and Showers in Table 1.1.

Trying Something New

All learning involves change. When you sign up for a professional development activity, you are expressing an intent to learn new knowledge (a change in what you know), to acquire a new skill (a change in what you can do), or to develop new attitudes or values (a change in what you believe). Therefore, the professional development in which you participate should be consistent with what is known about change.

When you are engaged in change, you will experience specific concerns (i.e., thoughts, feelings, and reactions) as you try to put new practices into use. These concerns have a significant impact on your use of the new practices. They can also provide guidance in determining the most useful types of assistance to support you as you work with the new strategies or practices. Hall (1979) identified seven levels of concern through which individuals progress in a predictable sequence. While you may feel concern from more than one stage at any time, the most intense concern you are experiencing will indicate what type of assistance would be most appropriate at that time. Table 1.2 labels each stage, provides an example of the concerns felt at that stage, and describes one form of appropriate assistance.

Making a Wise Choice

Research-Based

"Not all educational innovations are created equal" (Guskey and Sparks, 1991). Selecting a program for implementation that has not been proven to produce gains in student learning is a risky undertaking. There is a difference between programs that have been proven effective in well-designed studies and those that "should be effective" because the authors studied relevant educational research prior to developing their program.

Key Idea

Numerous models exist for structuring professional development activities. Each has strengths and weaknesses relative to specific outcomes. No matter which model is used, the activities should (1) focus on reducing the gap between actual and desired levels of student achievement, (2) involve participants in identifying the content and objectives, (3)

Make Sense

New practices must make sense to teachers. While it is not necessary for teachers to be totally committed to a program prior to training (Guskey, 1986), new practices that violate or disregard teachers' understanding of the principles of teaching and learning are not likely to be used in the classroom.

Relevant to Needs

The content of professional development activities should reflect the needs and interests of teachers and students. Your needs can be identified effectively through self-assessment. Needs identified through efforts to understand and improve your own practice bring out the deepest commitment to change and the most meaningful participation in professional development activities (Duke, et al., 1994).

Student needs should be identified through the collective study of student performance. Information sources for identifying student needs include grades, discipline referrals, standardized tests, teacher-made tests, and work samples. Information from these sources can be analyzed more readily by displaying the data in a table, chart, or graph that breaks down the data by gender or race. The importance of basing the selection of content for professional development activities upon inquiry into student learning cannot be overemphasized.

Five Ways to Learn

Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) organized descriptions of effective professional development strategies into models that depict important attributes of each strategy. Each of their models represents a set of assumptions about how teachers learn. The models may also serve as patterns to guide the design of professional development activities.

Individually-Guided

In this model, you and your fellow teachers design and conduct learning experiences to meet identified needs. It assumes that you are able to identify your own needs more accurately. It places a high value on the motivation you and your fellow teachers derive from setting your own objectives

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and using self-directed learning to achieve them. The following basic steps make up this model:

- A need or interest is identified by an individual or group.

- A plan for meeting that need or exploring the topic is developed, and objectives are identified.

- Learning activities are designed and completed.

- An assessment is conducted to determine if the objectives were met.

help participants develop a theoretical as well as practical understanding of the new practices, (4) include follow-up and support, and (5) be linked to a comprehensive change process that focuses on student learning.

Table 1.2
Stages of Concern and Appropriate Assistance

Stage of Concern	Example	Appropriate Assistance
0—Awareness	I am not concerned with this change.	Involve this person in discussions about the change; share enough information to arouse interest, but don't overwhelm them.
1—Informational	I would like to know more about this change.	Use a variety of ways to share information; help this person see how the change relates to current practices.
2—Personal	How will this change affect me?	Let the person know everyone feels these kinds of concerns; connect him or her with those whose personal concerns have diminished.
3—Management	I am spending all my time getting ready for the next lesson.	Provide answers that address specific "how-to" issues; demonstrate exact and practical solutions.
4—Consequence	How is my use of these new practices affecting my students?	Provide opportunities for the teacher to visit other settings where the practices are in use; encourage a study team to look at the effectiveness of the practices.
5—Collaboration	I am concerned about relating what I am doing with what other teachers are doing.	Bring together others who are interested in collaboration; use these people to provide technical assistance to someone who needs help.
6—Refocusing	I have an idea that might work even better.	Encourage this person to experiment with his or her ideas.

Observation/Assessment
Direct observations of teaching performances are used to collect information that becomes the basis for developing a plan for improvement or growth. Analysis of observational data and teacher reflection upon this data are at the heart of this model. While this model can be perceived as too much like traditional teacher evaluation, it has benefits for both the teacher and observer. When you observe another teacher, you benefit from seeing a demonstration of specific strategies, from analyzing what was demonstrated, and from comparing it to previous demonstrations or your own teaching. The teacher you observe gains access to data about his or her teaching performance that would not be available without the aid of an observer. Finally, you both benefit from talking with each other about what happened during the lesson.

Involvement in a Development/Improvement Process

This model involves you and your fellow teachers in designing or redesigning curriculum or instructional programs, solving a curriculum or instructional problem, or creating an action plan to reach a school-improvement objective. You will typically work as part of a team, sharing leadership roles and utilizing group process techniques. When you are involved in a curriculum-development or school-improvement project, you benefit in at least two ways. You learn about the content of the program, and your involvement may require you to learn new skills such as planning, research, or group-process skills, in order to complete the project. This model utilizes your participation in activities that are considered part of your professional responsibility as a means of producing professional growth. Adult learning theory supports this model as an effective vehicle for teacher learning because you are trying to solve a problem that is relevant to you and your colleagues.

Training

The most current version of the training model involves a "workshop" design that describes what should happen during training sessions and a "workplace" design that describes what should happen when you return to your classroom (Showers, Murphy, and Joyce, 1996). The work

shop design has three components: (1) activities to develop theoretical understanding, (2) demonstrations that provide behavioral examples of the new practices, and (3) initial practice in the workshop setting. Understanding the conceptual basis of new practices enables you to move beyond repeating what was demonstrated in the training session. Those demonstrations, the "fulcrum of training design," help you see the practices as they might be used in your own classroom. Showers, et al., recommend a minimum of 20 demonstrations in training teachers to use practices that are moderately complex. Initial practice during the workshop should include getting the lesson started, a frequent trouble spot when learning a new skill.

Training that stops at this point will enable fewer than 10 percent of the teachers to engage in enough practice to add the new strategies to their repertoire (Joyce and Showers, 1995). An effective workplace design greatly increases the transfer of what you have learned to the level of mechanical use and eventually executive control. The three key rules of an effective workplace design are:

- ❦ Practice in the classroom must be immediate. If you wait a longer period before beginning to practice, you will find your understanding has eroded.

- ❦ Practice must be sustained. Showers, et al., indicate 20 to 30 uses of new practices are necessary before teachers become comfortable with them.

- ❦ Companionship and peer coaching will significantly improve your implementation of new practices. Study groups in which you observe one another, talk about what you observed, and develop a sense of community in your efforts to learn new practices will enable all teachers to reach, at the least, a mechanical level of use.

Inquiry
As in several of the other models, the inquiry model begins with the identification of a problem or need. In the second step, you will measure important aspects of the problem and/or collect data that will help you gain insight into how

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it might be addressed. This step might include reviewing research findings or collecting data firsthand. Next, you will analyze the information you collected and develop and implement a plan for changing instructional practices or some other aspect of the problem. Finally, the results of your action plan are evaluated, so the new strategies can be revised and/or shared with other teachers. The key characteristic is that you and the others who are working with you use a structured inquiry method to find the answer to this question: *What would be the results if we did it this way?*

Working Together

Working together is critical to producing improvements in student learning. But, what is involved in "working together?" Working together requires a commitment to the following ideas:

❧ Everyone shares responsibility for student learning (Little, 1996).

❧ Actions are based on collective inquiry into student learning and how those actions impact student learning (Calhoun and Allen, 1996).

❧ Collective action is required to make significant improvements in student learning (Showers, Murphy, and Joyce, 1996).

❧ Collegiality is needed to support the use of new practices (Joyce and Showers, 1995).

❧ An understanding of how individuals approach (or avoid) learning experiences and how groups develop into effective, collaborative teams is important in building and maintaining study groups (Joyce and Showers, 1995).

❧ Collegiality will develop to the degree to which teachers perceive the group's work to be meaningful and challenging (Showers, Murphy, and Joyce, 1996).

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Teachers exercise shared responsibility for student learning through collective inquiry into how changes in curriculum and instruction impact student learning. This form of study is frequently referred to as "schoolwide action research." It is defined by Calhoun and Allen (1996) as "cooperative, disciplined inquiry by school faculties acting as a collective." The group develops or identifies an idea for a change (a new strategy for teaching reading or a program for improving thinking skills) and creates a plan to implement the innovation and test its effectiveness. The new practices are implemented and their results studied. A collective decision is made to continue or discontinue the new practices. Then, the faculty members begin the process again with another idea for improving student learning.

Learning to work as a team takes time. Study teams, like most groups, will move through several stages or phases as they develop their working relationships (Tuckman, 1965 in Johnson and Johnson, 1982). The first phase, *forming*, involves getting the group members oriented to the purpose of the group and the roles and tasks they will be expected to fulfill. Expect questions and some anxiety at this stage.

The next phase is called *storming* because group members engage in conflicts as they clarify goals, start task assignments, and work through feelings of confusion. This is a normal part of learning to work together. Groups that move to the third stage, *norming*, begin to see an increase in collegiality and trust. Confidence grows, and procedures no longer seem arbitrary. Groups at this stage are productive, and group members develop greater skill and understanding related to the problem(s) being addressed.

The final phase is labeled *performing*. Collaboration and shared leadership are more evident. The group's focus is on completing the task with a high degree of competence and quality. They are more efficient in their use of time and more effective in applying interpersonal skills to group work. Success leads to celebration, and completion may lead to the end of that particular group's work.

effective teams. Groups that view their work as meaningful and challenging will develop higher functioning and higher levels of collegiality.

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Groups of teachers who see the tasks on which they collaborate as significant develop deeper levels of collegiality. Showers, Murphy, and Joyce (1996) describe the importance of meaningful work in producing effective collegial support for teacher learning:

> We are convinced, however, that collegiality will develop only in conjunction with meaningful and challenging reasons for collaborative work, such as efforts to improve curriculum and instruction for increased student learning.

Data-Driven Decisions

Your implementation of valid strategies is the key to improving student learning. Data concerning degrees of implementation are vital if you are to be confident of what you are evaluating. Comparisons of baseline data and "post-test" data should be used to draw conclusions about the effects of any innovation.

These important decisions in professional development should be based on valid data:

* Selecting a meaningful problem

* Choosing a strategy or program that is likely to produce strong, positive results

* Implementing it fully

* Assessing its impact on student learning

Selecting a meaningful problem for study involves comparing data about some aspect of student performance with the faculty's collective ideal. There are several points that can be helpful to remember in selecting data for study.

* It is important to use a range of types of data in identifying meaningful problems. Relying on a single type of data may lead you to define the problem inaccurately.

Data-driven decisions are made throughout the process of identifying a problem, selecting a solution, implementing it, and assessing its results. Collective examination of data will be a new experience for most teachers and is likely to produce some conflict. However, the value of data-driven decisions far outweighs the difficulties in learning to use them. Data-driven decisions force you to face the realities of problems and your efforts to solve them.

- Standardized test data should be broken down by race, gender, and any other criteria you see as relevant to your student population.

- Because standardized test data is not available on an on-going basis throughout the year, you will want to be sure to include data sources that are available more frequently. (Student work samples, teacher-made tests, assessment materials that accompany textbooks and other resources, surveys, and non-academic data such as discipline referrals and absentee data are examples of data that are available to you throughout the year.)

Once you have identified a problem, decisions about possible approaches to solving it should be based on valid data. As noted in an earlier section, "Not all educational innovations are created equal" (Guskey and Sparks, 1991); a program or strategy you are considering should be investigated thoroughly. Proven results make a much stronger case for a particular innovation. If you and your colleagues create your own solution to a particular problem, it should be examined collectively in light of what is known about principles of learning and child development.

"Implementation is the key. Powerful instructional strategies, *when implemented*, produce student achievement" (Joyce, Showers, and Izumizaki, 1996). Data related to implementation is important to inform those who are supporting you and to aid in the interpretation of effects of the new practices. Assessment of the effects of a new strategy or program are useless without data on the implementation of the strategy or program. Without implementation data, it is impossible to know what is being evaluated. Data on implementation may be collected through a variety of sources:

- Direct observation of teaching by peer coaches or other knowledgeable professionals

- Journals or planbook notations

- Videotaped teaching episodes

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- ☙ Minutes or notes of study team meetings and discussions

- ☙ Interviews using tools such as Innovation Configuration Matrices or Levels of Use (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall, 1987)

When you assess the impact of new practices on student learning, you should compare data collected after you have been using those practices using the same measurement tools you used earlier to identify the problem. For example, if a problem related to students' expository writing was identified through collective examination of samples of students' writing, then the effects of new practices aimed at improving the problem should be measured by the same type of collective analysis of new samples. Using the same measures allows the comparison of "apples to apples."

A Starring Role

Lieberman (1995) identifies three examples of new roles for teachers in professional development: teacher leader, peer coach, and teacher researcher. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) identify teacher leaders as "those interested in playing a larger leadership role" in efforts to produce change. Teacher leaders should consider these tasks as they apply to professional development:

- ☙ Helping others look critically at proposed professional development activities to determine if they address a priority need and if they have proven effective in similar settings.

- ☙ Helping the group stay focused on a limited number of change initiatives or professional development projects— "If everything is attempted, nothing will succeed."

- ☙ Interacting with the administration to determine and/or influence the level of support for the project.

- ☙ Assessing faculty interest in the project.

- ☙ Involving faculty members in collaborative exchange and experimentation that builds a collaborative culture.

Key Idea

Professional development that truly enhances your learning will provide opportunities for you to be involved in leadership activities that focus on direct interaction with your fellow teachers, peer-coaching study teams, and action research. These roles expand your responsibility for your own learning and your sharing of the responsibility for student learning. They contribute to the construction of a learning community

Continued

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In addition to these tasks, Fullan and Stiegelbauer point out two potential pitfalls. As a teacher leader, you should be alert to tasks that distance you from your fellow teachers. The tasks listed above primarily involve direct interaction with teachers. However, there is a tendency for the teacher leader's time to slide from direct involvement in helping teachers to "participating in various planning and decision-making activities at the district and building levels..." (Smylie and Denny, 1989). Secondly, Fullan and Stiegelbauer remind the teacher leader to avoid becoming more of an advocate for the project than a supporter of teachers who are implementing the project. Commitment to the project is important, but it must be balanced with an understanding of how change impacts individuals and how they respond to change. In any change effort, the most important variable is the individual implementing the change (Hord, et al., 1987).

A second role that contributes to effective professional development is the peer coach. The purpose of peer coaching has traditionally focused on supporting the implementation of new practices to the extent their impact on student achievement can be assessed. However, Joyce and Showers (1995) have refined the roles and purposes of peer coaching to expand its purpose to include "building permanent structures for collegial relationships...." Peer coaching involves these activities:

☞ Sustained use of the new practices being implemented as a part of the professional development activities

☞ Help and support of your fellow teachers through shared planning, setting objectives, and developing materials and lesson plans

☞ Collection of data on the implementation of new practices and the effects on student learning

Shared planning involves time for teachers to talk about objectives and the types of lessons, activities, and materials needed to reach those objectives. In such interactions, you and your fellow teachers reflect on what you want your

where you and your colleagues model the types of learning in which you want students to become engaged. Performing well in these roles will enable you to make significant contributions to school improvement.

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You and your fellow teachers need more time to participate in high-quality professional development activities. Additional time can be provided by adding time to your regular schedule, reorganizing how your time is currently allocated, and/or using school staff in new ways. Professional development activities should be held when teachers are fresh and when blocks of uninterrupted time are available. They should be scheduled during the school year so you can work on problems in "real-time" (job-embedded inquiry should not have to wait until vacation time). Teachers are capable of creative ideas and suggestions for finding additional time, especially when they feel it will be used in productive work.

students to learn and identify ways to "divide up the labor" involved in creating lesson plans and materials. This shared planning is the primary activity of peer-coaching study teams.

Joyce and Showers include observation as an important activity for peer-coaching study teams, but they have dropped the use of technical feedback following the observation. Removing feedback from the peer-coaching model has not reduced its effectiveness in supporting implementation of new practices (Joyce, et al., 1989). They have also redefined the meaning of the term *coach* as it applies to classroom observation. In such observations, "the one teaching is the coach and the one observing is the coached" (Joyce and Showers, 1995). In this type of relationship, you learn from watching one another teach rather than from technical feedback you receive after being observed.

The role of teacher researcher is based on these assumptions (Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1987):

- Teachers are inclined to search for data to answer questions that have direct application to a pressing problem in their classrooms and to reflect on the data to formulate solutions.

- By contributing to or formulating your own questions, and by collecting your own data to answer them, you will develop new understandings that will contribute to your professional growth.

Finding the Time

It is widely acknowledged that teachers need more time to be engaged in professional development (Wildman and Niles, 1987; Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1987; Raywid, 1993; National Governor's Association, 1995; and Joyce and Showers, 1995). Three potential sources of additional time have been identified:

- Adding time to your workday and/or contract year in the form of additional "staff development days"

❦ Rescheduling or reorganizing your time by revising the school's schedule to "find" time during the school day

❦ Utilizing staff in new ways to allow you to spend more time in professional development activities

Raywid (1993) identifies four guidelines for allocating and scheduling time for professional development activities. These activities should be (1) held when teachers are fresh and capable of active participation, (2) in uninterrupted blocks of time, (3) primarily during the school year, and (4) balanced between regular school days and non-student-contact days.

You and your colleagues are the ones most capable of finding ways to reorganize or reschedule your activities to provide time for professional development. One way that your ideas and suggestions might be collected is to use Raywid's article as a starting point for discussion, then involve the group in a problem-solving strategy session to generate possible alternatives for finding time for professional development (Joyce and Showers, 1995).

Fitting in with Other Efforts

There are at least five compelling reasons for aligning individual, school, and district professional development efforts:

❦ Priorities must be set if competing issues and needs are to be addressed in a logical, coherent manner that allows significant resources to impact the reform of instruction and curriculum (Corcoran, 1995; Joyce, et al., 1993). Conflict in priorities across the teacher, school, and district levels will inhibit gains at any of the three levels.

❦ There is a natural intersection of interests and needs among the three levels. Professional development, when seen as "a strategy for specific instructional change and a strategy for basic organizational change" (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991) is in the middle of that intersection.

Key Idea
Professional development is a shared responsibility for teachers, schools, and districts. Setting priorities is necessary to produce an effective response to competing needs. Looking at the needs of other levels helps everyone have the broad perspective necessary for wise decisions. Connecting plans for professional development across levels makes them more effective and more likely to receive the support needed to be successful.

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❧ "Professional development places classroom practice in the larger context of school practice and the educational careers of students" (Little, 1993). Professional development allows you to see how your classroom practices impact students in terms of preparing them for future school experiences and opening up greater opportunities beyond formal schooling.

❧ Professional development activities are more effectively designed if they are "...integrated with a comprehensive change process that deals with impediments to and facilitators of student learning" (Hawley and Valli, 1996).

❧ Alignment with broader levels (teacher-to-school and school-to-district) makes available additional resources and organizational support.

The ever-increasing number of "critical" needs for professional development makes prioritizing those needs more important than ever. The process of aligning individual, school, and district needs can expand your perspectives and makes school and district perspectives more democratic. Sharing data for use in setting priorities is a useful way to participate in this process. Teachers and schools benefit from looking at district-wide data at the same time districts gain a clearer understanding of their own data through the richer detail of data collected at the school level.

Joyce suggests that individual professional development projects that are disconnected from an overall plan to improve student learning may have less effect on school improvement than those that are contributing to an integrated plan (1993).

The Role of National Standards in Creating a Vision of Professional Development

Groups of educators at the national level have collected and analyzed the characteristics of effective professional development experiences, just as you are doing as you read through

and think about the *Key Ideas* discussed in this chapter. The results of these national-level studies of effective professional development are referred to as *standards*. These standards may be used to develop or clarify your vision of professional development, to evaluate currently available professional development activities, and to plan future professional development experiences. Not all schools will use all of the standards, but many will find them to be useful aids in planning and/or improving professional development.

Secretary Richard Riley of the United States Department of Education has produced the following set of standards that prescribe seven characteristics of effective professional development. "Standards for Staff Development," a set of standards developed collaboratively by the National Staff Development Council, the National Association of Elementary Principals, and the National Association of Secondary Principals, appear in Appendix F.

Recommendations for Professional Development Activities

Professional development activities should:

- Stimulate and support site-based initiatives

- Draw upon a valid knowledge base of teaching and learning

- Model constructivist teaching

- Offer intellectual, social, and emotional engagement with ideas, materials, and colleagues

- Demonstrate respect for teachers as professionals and as adult learners

- Support teachers' initiatives; provide sufficient time and follow-up support for the mastery of new content and strategies and the integration of these into practice

- Be accessible, inclusive, and viewed as an integral part of teachers' work

Activity 1.1
Creating Your Vision of Professional Development

Directions: The *Key Ideas* paragraphs from Chapter One have been reprinted below. Read each paragraph and draft a single phrase that captures the ideas you feel are most important. These phrases may be woven into a single paragraph that describes your vision of effective professional development, or they may be used in list form. "Starter" statements are printed below. These statements can be used to get you started in writing and achieving your own vision of effective professional development.

"Starter" Statements

1. I want to participate in professional development that

2. Professional development that would inspire my interest and commitment would

3. My colleagues and I deserve professional development that

4. Student learning will be enriched by professional development for teachers that

5. Professional development should

6. Effective professional development will

    •

    •

    •

Summary of Key Ideas from Chapter One

Adult learning is enhanced when adults are allowed to work with colleagues to solve a work-related problem that they identified and which represents a collective concern. Adult learners are able to achieve extremely high levels of implementation when support is provided after initial training.

Change is a long-term process, not a one-time event. Change produces concerns in everyone. With appropriate support, individuals progress through the different stages of concern in a predictable sequence. Effective professional development addresses an individual's concerns through support that is appropriate for each person and his or her immediate concerns.

Selecting the program or practices that will be studied and implemented is an extremely important decision. The major investments of time, energy, and other resources that go along with professional development activities require that

this decision be a thoughtful one. The selection of content should be based on 1) a strong research-base that proves the effectiveness of the program in producing student learning, 2) a review of the program to ensure it makes sense to teachers, 3) its match with student and teacher needs, and 4) its compatibility with current practices, programs, and policies.

Numerous models exist for structuring professional development activities. Each has strengths and weaknesses relative to specific outcomes. No matter which model is used, the activities should (1) focus on reducing the gap between actual and desired levels of student achievement, (2) involve participants in identifying the content and objectives, (3) help participants develop a theoretical as well as practical understanding of the new practices, (4) include follow-up and support, and (5) be linked to a comprehensive change process that focuses on student learning.

Meaningful, effective collaboration is more likely to occur when you and your colleagues share responsibility for major tasks of teaching and for student learning, when you are committed to collective inquiry into student learning and collective action in improving it, and when you support one another in ways that involve elements of coaching. Individuals differ in how they seek out or avoid learning experiences. These differences have implications for group functioning. Groups require time to develop into more effective teams. Groups that view their work as meaningful and challenging will develop higher functioning and higher levels of collegiality.

Data-driven decisions are made throughout the process of identifying a problem, selecting a solution, implementing it, and assessing its results. Collective examination of data will be a new experience for most teachers and is likely to produce some conflict. However, the value of data-driven decisions far outweigh the difficulties in learning to use them. Data-driven decisions force you to face the realities of problems and your efforts to solve them. Your implementation of valid strategies is the key to improving student learning. Data concerning degrees of implementation are vital if you are to be confident of what you are evaluating. Comparisons of baseline data and "post-test" data should be used to draw conclusions about the effects of any innovation.

Professional development that truly enhances your learning will provide opportunities for you to be involved in leadership activities that focus on direct interaction with your fellow teachers, peer-coaching study teams, and action research. These roles expand your responsibility for your own learning and your sharing of the responsibility for student learning. They contribute to the construction of a learning community where you and your colleagues model the types of learning in which you want students to become engaged. Performing well in these roles will enable you to make significant contributions to school improvement.

You and your fellow teachers need more time to participate in high-quality professional development activities. Additional time can be provided by adding time to your regular schedule, reorganizing how your time is currently allocated, and/or using school staff in new ways. Professional development activities should be held when teachers are fresh and when blocks of uninterrupted time are available. They should be scheduled during the school year so you can work on problems in "real-time" (job-embedded inquiry should not have to wait until vacation time). Teachers are capable of creative ideas and suggestions for finding additional time, especially when they feel it will be used in productive joint work.

Professional development is a shared responsibility for teachers, schools, and districts. Setting priorities is necessary to produce an effective response to competing needs. Looking at the needs of other levels helps everyone to have the broad perspective necessary for wise decisions. Connecting plans for professional development across levels makes them more effective and more likely to receive the support needed to be successful.

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Sample Vision Statement

I will "get the professional development I want and need" when it

- ✿ Is based on what is known about adult learners

- ✿ Supports me in the change process as well as the change itself

- ✿ Presents content that has proven value in increasing learning for my students

- ✿ Is delivered through appropriate models

- ✿ Builds engagement in collegial learning

- ✿ Is data-driven

- ✿ Provides opportunities for teachers as leaders, peer coaches, and researchers

- ✿ Provides adequate time for inquiry, implementation, and joint work

- ✿ Aligns the efforts of teachers, schools, and the district

Additional Activities

The *Key Ideas* in Chapter One can be used to evaluate current professional development opportunities. A two-page survey designed for this purpose appears in Appendix A.

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Creating a Context for Change:
The School as a Learning Community

rofessional development is about change—change in what you know and believe about teaching and learning and in what you can do in the classroom. Part of bringing about real change is creating a context or climate in which change is less difficult. According to Roland Barth, a school that has a strong context for change resembles a "community of learners," and he describes such a learning community as "...a place where all participants—teachers, principals, parents, and students—engage in learning and teaching. School is not a place for important people who do not need to learn and unimportant people who do. Instead it is a place where students discover, and adults rediscover, the joys, the difficulties, and the satisfactions of learning." This is an exciting concept. This chapter describes what a learning community looks like, how a learning community can benefit you and your fellow teachers, how to create a learning community at your school, and the conditions that keep a learning community going.

A school that has turned itself into a community of learners is filled with daily examples of people learning from each other, sharing what they are learning, and being excited about and participating in what others are learning. These examples may include a group of teachers who together are studying how students reveal their preferences for learning through one or more of their five senses, two students trying to figure out how to catch the interest of potential readers for a story they co-authored, or the principal and a teacher reading and talking about how to compose questions that stimulate higher-order thinking.

Key Idea

The identifying characteristics of a learning community are that everyone is involved in learning and that this learning is highly visible.

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Teachers "...learn by doing, reading, and reflecting (just as students do); by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see" (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995). This description of how teachers learn is corroborated by a list of sources teachers rely upon to provide the knowledge and skills they need to be successful (Smylie, 1989). The following were the four highest-rated sources:

- ❦ Direct experience as a teacher (learning by doing)

- ❦ Consultation with other teachers (collaborating with other teachers)

- ❦ Study and research pursued on one's own (reading and reflecting)

- ❦ Observation of other teachers (sharing what they see)

A learning community offers opportunities for you and your fellow teachers to engage in joint work (Little, 1990). This type of collaboration involves teachers in shared responsibility for important aspects of teaching. It can begin with a collective concern which prods you and your colleagues to collective investigation and leads to collective action.

The concept of continual improvement assumes you will continue the examination and refinement of your skills throughout your career and that you will always be involved with your colleagues in looking for better ways to teach. Learning communities view continual improvement as a normal part of life. They expect the members of the community, you and your fellow teachers, to be committed to and participate in this ongoing cycle of collective investigation and action.

Students in a learning community have before them a consistent model of lifelong learning. They see significant adults seek out learning opportunities, put substantial effort into those experiences, and enjoy the satisfaction of acquiring useful, new knowledge. The kind of thoughtful inquiry

Key Idea

Participation in a thriving learning community will provide you with higher-quality learning experiences. Having visible models of these types of experiences, and having worked through them yourself, makes it far easier to design similar experiences for your students.

that is at the heart of a learning community provides a good example of a rational, data-driven, collaborative approach to solving problems.

When you are facing challenges you feel unprepared to meet, you will find moral support and tangible assistance in a learning community. Milbrey McLaughlin (1994) describes the benefits of membership in a learning community in these words:

> As we looked across our sites at teachers who report a high sense of efficacy, who feel successful with today's students, we noticed that while these teachers differ along a number of dimensions—age and experience, subject area, track assignment, and even conceptions of pedagogy—all shared this one characteristic: membership in some kind of a strong professional community. Further, almost without exception, these teachers singled out their professional discourse community as the reason that they have been successful in adapting to today's students, the source of their professional motivation and support, and the reason that they did not burn out in the face of some exceedingly demanding teaching situations.

These suggestions are compiled from studies on school renewal and professional learning communities. They are not sequential steps to follow. They represent a collection of ideas; some will fit your school and your fellow teachers; others will not.

❧ Engage others in discussions of teaching practices. Share your ideas with others by inviting them to observe your teaching. Ask them to tell you what they observed that they believe they might use in their own classrooms.

❧ Look for ways to work collaboratively. Initial efforts at collaborative planning can be structured by a sequence of questions adapted from those developed by Joyce and Showers (1995). Assemble a group of teachers who share a subject area or grade level and work through these questions:

Key Idea
Creating a learning community at your school involves making teaching more public by talking about what and how you teach as well as the results your teaching produces, sharing with your fellow teachers the responsibility for important aspects of teaching, making decisions collectively, and taking collective action.

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- Within a specific subject or course, what do you want your students to know or be able to do by the end of the year, semester, or grading period? List those long-term goals that are the same or similar for more than one teacher in the group.

- What objectives will you need to accomplish during the next six weeks/grading period to help your students reach your common long-term goals?

- What instructional strategies, activities, and materials are most appropriate for the objectives you have set for the next six weeks or grading period? What will you use to teach to these objectives?

- If teachers in your group share some of the same objectives and/or will be using similar strategies, are there ways you can "divide the labor" and develop materials, activities, or assessment tools you can share with each other?

❧ Agree to continue to meet and talk about how these strategies, materials, activities. and assessment tools are impacting your students' achievement of the objectives you identified as common objectives.

❧ Find ways to involve the entire faculty in making important decisions such as selecting the focus and procedures of collective inquiry or the content of professional development activities. Deciding together what will be studied, how it will be studied, and what will be done with the results make a strong statement of shared responsibility and commitment to one another's learning (Joyce and Showers, 1995).

❧ Encourage strong teacher leadership to step forward and help the group build consensus on important issues (McLaughlin, 1994). Because most schools lack experience with shared decisionmaking, strong leadership is necessary to "build faculties into the collective problem-solving groups that can influence the shape of education of children and also the shape of the workplace."

- ❦ Reinforce leadership that emphasizes problem-solving over problem-hiding or assigning blame. Speak positively about efforts to experiment with new ways of teaching and new approaches to solving long-standing problems.

- ❦ Encourage shared responsibility for student learning. Collaborative planning and teaming are strong methods for developing shared responsibility.

- ❦ Engage in collective inquiry and collective action. It is likely that your fellow teachers are working to solve the same problems you face in your classroom. Bring your concerns and questions out in the open and tackle them as a group. Then share the results openly.

Little (1996) identifies "traditions of privacy and individualism" as an aspect of a school's professional culture that create roadblocks to teacher learning. These norms make it harder for teachers to talk with candor about their teaching practices and the values and beliefs which guide them. A school culture based on these norms will make teachers reluctant to ask for advice or offer insights that might be construed as criticism. Here, collegiality and collaboration stop at the classroom door. Teachers in these schools feel isolated and unsure of whether their practices are as effective as they could be, but they are constrained to continue without the help of their peers. Seeking help by revealing your own teaching practices or offering help by appearing to look at the practices of others is strictly forbidden.

These three suggestions will serve you well in supporting an ongoing learning community in your school.

1. **Build on the belief that all members of the school's faculty share responsibility for student learning.** Schools in which the culture supports this belief provide teachers with strong incentives to learn and to help others learn. When you are involved in the "...systematic, sustained, collective study of student work....," you expand how you learn from your own teaching. You go beyond the informal trial-and-error that occurs in day-to-day teaching. You and your fellow teachers should

Key Idea
You can support the continued success of a learning community in your school by building on the belief that you and your fellow teachers share responsibility for student learning, by spending time together dealing with professional issues, and by demonstrating leadership that builds consensus on important issues.

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strive to become involved in more structured inquiry into the academic performance of students and the factors that impact the level of student performance. Your study should look for what makes a difference in how well students learn.

2. **Spend time together on professional issues.** It is not simply the amount of planning and preparation time that promotes teacher learning: how it is organized contributes to its productive use in professional development projects and joint work. An extra hour spent alone (while it might sound wonderful) is not as productive as a shorter period engaged with colleagues who share responsibility for student learning. Time spent together will be more productive if the purposes are tied directly to your daily work.

3. **Be a leader of learners.** School leaders (both official and informal leaders) influence the amount of support the school's culture provides for teacher learning. When you hold a leadership role in building a community of learners, you should demonstrate "...care and encouragement; support for help-seeking and help-giving; celebration of struggle and accomplishment; [and] principled and well-informed criticism" (Little, 1996). You should work to avoid "contrived collegiality" and to build a sense of shared responsibility for student learning that produces genuine collaboration and enhanced teacher learning.

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Activity 2.1
Creating a Learning Community at Your School

Step 1
Review the description of a learning community that follows these directions and the list of activities that are characteristic of learning communities (Figure 2.1). Check the activities that take place consistently at your school. This will provide an analysis of the extent to which a learning community already exists at your school.

Step 2
Look carefully at the list of benefits associated with these activities and determine if any additional benefits have been generated by the "learning-community activities" taking place in your school. If so, add them to the list.

Step 3
Examine the list of activities you did *not* check in step 1 and identify those you feel could be instituted at your school. Discuss the potential costs and benefits of the activities you selected and determine which activities you will initiate at your school.

Step 4
Develop an action plan for initiating those activities at your school.

What is a Learning Community?
A learning community exists when a group of people commit themselves to continual learning and to supporting others in continual learning. A learning community stimulates ongoing, collective inquiry into teaching and learning. It involves everyone in highly visible learning experiences. You learn from each other, with each other, and for each other. You share the knowledge that is gained, the excitement and challenge that comes with learning difficult material, and the benefits your learning produces.

A strong learning community provides you with the kinds of learning experiences you want to provide for your students. It models for students lifelong learning and the production of useful knowledge. It provides a sense of efficacy and self-confidence for you and your fellow teachers as you face increasing challenges. A learning community improves your professional life and that of your fellow teachers and produces higher student achievement. A learning community legitimizes change and makes it an accepted part of life at your school.

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Figure 2.1

How is My School Like a Learning Community?

Learning Community Activities	Direct Benefits
using shared planning to develop units, lessons, and activities	divides the labor; saves time because no one has to do it all; increases quantity and quality of ideas
learning from one another by watching each other teach	provides concrete examples of effective practices; expands the observer's repertoire of skills, stimulates analytical thinking about teaching
collectively studying student work to identify weaknesses and plan new ways to teach to those weaknesses	increases quantity and quality of insights into student performance; focuses efforts on "the bottom line"—student learning; increases professionalism and self-esteem of learning community members
sharing articles and other professional resources for ideas and insights; conducting book studies of books on teaching and learning	expands pool of ideas and resources available to members of the learning community
talking with one another about what and how you teach and the results your teaching produces	decreases feelings of isolation; increases experimentation and analysis of teaching practices; increases confidence of teachers; provides teachers with greater access to a range of teaching styles, models, and philosophies
providing moral support, comradeship, and encouragement	enables teachers to stick with new practices through the rough early stages of learning to use new skills; decreases burnout and stress; increases team members' willingness to try new methods and to share ideas and concerns with other members of the learning community
jointly exploring a problem, including data collection and analysis; conducting action research	improves quality of insights and solutions; increases professionalism
attending training together and helping each other implement the content of the training	helps learning community members get more out of training; enables them to go to one another with questions or to get clarification about what was presented during training
participating in continual quality improvement activities	creates more efficient use of time; takes advantage of particular talents or interests of learning community members
using collective decision making to reach decisions that produce collective action	improves quality of instruction, student performance, and school operations
providing support for "help-seeking" as well as "help-giving"	makes a strong statement of shared responsibility and commitment to one another's learning
sharing the responsibility for making and/or collecting materials	helps learning community members feel secure in asking for help and advice; enables the giving of assistance and advice without establishing one-up/one-down relationships

*Note: Most of these learning community activities cost nothing to implement.

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Planning for Professional Development

*A*t present, you may participate in professional development activities without being involved in planning them. However, as professional development becomes more focused on school-based initiatives, you may have opportunities to plan professional development activities for yourself and others at your school. Also, understanding what is involved in planning these activities will help you become a better-informed consumer of professional development.

Planning for professional development involves decisions concerning four major components: content, objectives, activities, and evaluation. This chapter serves as a guide for making decisions related to the first three components. Concepts and practices related to evaluation may be found in *Chapter 6: Assessing and Monitoring Progress*. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the planning process for professional development. The remainder of this chapter identifies key ideas for using the sources of information listed in the table to plan effective professional development activities.

The *Key Ideas* that follow in this chapter describe two ways to identify the most appropriate content and objectives for professional development activities, how to connect your needs with schoolwide needs and the objectives of your school's improvement plan and how to select the model of professional development that is best suited for the outcomes you want to achieve.

By studying the impact of your teaching on student achievement, you can discover how to improve both teaching and learning. The study of student learning begins with collecting information about student achievement—evidence of what students have learned and how well they have learned it.

Key Idea
Identifying content and objectives for professional development should involve the systematic study of student work and the impact of instructional practices on student learning.

Figure 3.1
Overview of the Planning Process

Component	Primary Decisions	Sources of Information
Content	What knowledge, skills, strategies, and/or values and beliefs need to be studied?	• Analysis of students' work or performance • Teacher self-assessment • School or district programs or practices • National standards*
Objectives	What will participants know and/or be able to do as a result of their participation in professional development activities? What is the desired impact on student learning?	• Analysis of students' work or performance • Professional growth goal-setting • School or district programs or practices • National standards*
Activities	What will participants do to achieve the identified objectives?	• Five models of professional development • National standards*
Evaluation	How will the results of the professional development activities be measured?	• Changes in knowledge, beliefs, values, skills, or practices of participants • Changes in student achievement, behavior, attitudes, or other characteristics

*NOTE: "Standards for Staff Development," developed by NSDC, appear in the appendix.

The next step involves the *collective* analysis of this evidence—you and your fellow teachers working together to analyze and interpret the student work you collected. These steps explain how to analyze three types of student data or evidence of student learning.

- Collective analysis of samples of *student work*
  - Select work samples representing high, average, and low levels of student achievement (homework or classwork assignments, tests, or projects).
  - Collectively review the samples, comparing them to standards, where available, and draw inferences or conclusions about areas needing improvement.

- Collective analysis of *assessment results*
  - Use a variety of assessment tools, including those available for use throughout the school year such as teacher-made tests, assessment materials that sup-

port the textbook or other instructional materials, or district checklists and tests. NOTE: Standardized test data may be collected only once a year and therefore may not be as easy to use in monitoring student learning.

- Break down the data by relevant characteristics—gender, race, and/or socio-economic level—to determine if there is a difference in student achievement between males and females or among students of different racial or economic backgrounds.

- Use a variety of ways to display the data. Charts, graphs, and tables can be helpful in spotting patterns or trends.

- Collectively review the data, comparing them to standards where available, and draw inferences or conclusions about areas needing improvement.

❧ Collective analysis of *non-academic data*

- Select non-academic data that impact student learning—absentees, tardies, discipline referrals, homework completion.

- Break down the data by relevant characteristics—gender, race, socio-economic level.

- Use a variety of ways to display the data.

- Collectively review the data and draw inferences or conclusions about areas needing improvement.

The areas needing improvement will provide you with direction in selecting the content and/or objectives for your professional development activities (see *An Example of the Study of Student Work*). Once the areas needing improvement have been identified, your study of student learning should continue. The data used to identify areas for improvement become baseline data against which future data is compared. For example, if you use teacher-made tests to identify areas of weakness, then the same type of tests should be used to judge how much improvement has resulted from your efforts to improve those weaknesses. Thus, the cycle of study—experiment—study continues.

An Example of the Study of Student Work

A study group was formed from teachers at a Southeastern high school to examine students' writing. The group represented every department and included more than one teacher from some departments. They agreed to meet every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon for six weeks to study ways to improve student writing.

Samples of students' writing were collected, students' names were removed, and the samples were organized by the type of writing each represented. Clusters of samples were created under the categories of narrative, expository, and technical writing. A rubric used by the English Department was presented to the group as a standard for evaluating students' writing. The group agreed to use the rubric, but asked for a brief overview so each member felt comfortable using it. At their second meeting, the group divided itself into pairs and each pair reviewed one-third of the samples. The pairs of teachers made notes of weaknesses they found in individual samples. When all had finished reviewing their assigned samples, a list was made of the weaknesses they had identified. The three most common weaknesses were (1) lack of organization, (2) poor mechanics, and (3) awkward wording.

The teachers began their third session by using a problem-solving strategy for finding the root causes of problems. They eventually identified three problems they felt were significant causes of the weaknesses: (1) lack of a consistent standard or set of expectations for students' writing, (2) lack of specific feedback to students on their writing, and (3) low motivation or interest in writing assignments.

The group developed a plan to address these problems through a school-based professional development project. The project's objectives were:

❧ To enable all teachers to apply a consistent standard for students' writing

- To improve the quality and effectiveness of feedback provided to students about their writing

- To develop writing assignments that motivate students to invest greater effort in their writing

Teachers continued to meet for several weeks with a district language arts specialist until they felt confident that all of their objectives had been achieved. At their final meeting, the teachers shared how much improvement had resulted from their experimentation with the new strategies they had learned. Their ratings of student writing samples were much higher, and students seemed more interested and enthusiastic about writing.

Self-assessment is a process in which you examine and reflect upon important aspects of your work to make judgments about the following:

- What you know and believe about teaching and learning

- The competencies you are able to perform and how well you perform them

- Your roles and relationships as a member of your profession

- The impact of your teaching on students and student achievement

Needs identified through teachers' efforts to understand and improve their *own* practice bring out the deepest commitment to change and the most meaningful participation in professional development activities. Duke, et al., (1994) describe the impact of enabling teachers to identify professional development goals that are based on self-assessment in this way:

> When empowered to select professionally and personally meaningful goals, our teachers demonstrated a wide range of needs and interests, a strong commitment to improving classroom effectiveness, and a keen sense of collegiality and teamwork.

Key Idea

Self-assessment is the process of examining your own knowledge, skills, attitudes, interactions, and performance in order to make judgments about their quality that will guide your efforts to improve.

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This process of self-assessment occurs in four phases (Airasian and Gullickson, 1995):

❧ Focusing the self-assessment on a particular topic(s)

❧ Collecting information about the targeted practices or ideas

❧ Constructing meaning from the information collected

❧ Planning and/or selecting the most appropriate professional development activities

In addition to the ideas listed above, self-assessment is important as a process for identifying areas for growth and study through professional development for these reasons:

❧ Awareness of one's teaching practices and their impact on students is essential in determining the need for change.

❧ Teachers have a professional responsibility to improve their own practices.

❧ Self-assessment has the capacity to make teachers willing to examine their own practices critically.

❧ Self-assessment increases commitment to improvement as well as teamwork and collegiality.

❧ Self-assessment aligns professional development with what is actually happening in classrooms.

Figure 3.2 illustrates a model for self-directed teacher change that was adapted by Betty Fry from the work of Richard Boyatzis. It is included here as a way to describe how you can use self-assessment to identify content and objectives for professional development activities.

The model leads you to begin with a review of actual practices used in classrooms and ideal practices as described by benchmarks or the knowledge base of instructional prac-

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Figure 3.2
Self-Assessment and a Self-Directed Change Model

Steps in Using Self-Assessment	Components of a Self-Directed Change Model
1. Identify practices to be studied. 2. Identify standards or criteria for judging targeted practices (these criteria describe ideal teaching practices). 3. Identify methods for collecting information about targeted practices. 4. Collect information. 5. Compare real practices with standards or criteria for ideal practices.	Real Teaching Practices — Ideal Teaching Practices → Discrepancy
6. Identify priority areas for more in-depth study and professional growth (What are the most significant differences between the real and the ideal?).	Felt Need for Change
7. Identify the desired outcomes of the professional development activities.	Goal
8. Plan the professional development activities, including follow-up activities, that will address the targeted practices.	Plan
9. Implement the plan; assess and monitor its progress periodically.	Action
10. Use feedback to determine the extent to which the professional development activities achieved the desired outcomes; continue or modify the activities as necessary or identify new practices for study.	Feedback

tices. Once you have selected the practices you will study, you will select methods of collecting information related to those practices. Information about real classroom practices may be collected through a variety of means. Surveys, self-reporting checklists, analysis of videotapes of actual teaching practices, observation records, and student achievement data are just a few examples.

These are some specific sources for identifying best practices:

- *School Improvement Programs* (Block, Everson and Guskey). A detailed description of effective programs that produce improved student outcomes.

- *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, 3rd Edition (Wittrock). A compilation of research findings related to instructional practices.

- *Handbook of Research on Improving Student Achievement* (Cawelti, G. (Ed.)). A collection of concise descriptions of important teaching strategies organized by subject area.

- *Teaching for Effective Learning* (Cameron Harrison). An excellent source for learning about effective teaching strategies.

Ideal practices may be identified in professional journals. graduate classes, research literature, and sound craft knowledge. It is recommended that you put together a comprehensive picture of your current practices so a comparison with the ideal practices will result in challenging goals that will have a significant impact on your students' achievement. Time spent on describing real practices and identifying ideal practices will be time well spent.

The second component of the model involves comparing your description of your actual practices with what you learned about ideal practices. In this component, you analyze what you are actually doing in the classroom against the standards or criteria associated with ideal practices. A thorough, thoughtful comparison is likely to identify points where actual practice

differs from ideal practice. The magnitude of these differences will be a key factor in determining which points will become the focus of your professional development activities.

The model calls for you to identify your own feelings of the need for change. This need serves as the motivation for setting challenging goals and the development and completion of an action plan to reach those goals. This is based on the theory that movement toward an ideal produces feelings of self-worth in an individual.

Finally, the model continues through the assessing and monitoring of your progress and the impact on your practices. This feedback is used to make repeated comparisons over time between real and ideal practices until there is little or no difference between the two. At that point, you may want to identify a new set of real classroom practices and begin the self-directed change process again.

A more detailed list of key points to remember in using the Self-Directed Change Model is found in Appendix B.

Teacher Self-Assessment in Action.

Some educators argue that professional development should serve as a tool for achieving the broad goals of the school or school system. Others believe that professional development is *teacher* development and therefore should focus on the needs of individual teachers. Fortunately, these two sets of priorities often overlap. What seems most beneficial for teachers and students is a balance that recognizes that school goals cannot be met unless teachers participate in professional development activities they find personally meaningful and that build their capacity to contribute to those goals. This section provides an activity to illustrate the use of teacher self-assessment and schoolwide student achievement data to reach that balance.

Key Idea
Professional development is a shared responsibility for teachers, schools, and districts. Setting priorities is necessary to produce an effective response to competing needs. Looking at the needs of other levels helps everyone to have the broad perspective necessary for wise decisions. Connecting plans for professional development across levels makes them more effective and more likely to receive the support needed to be successful.

Activity 3.1
Connecting Your Professional Development Needs
to Student Achievement Needs

There are at least two ways in which you may view your own needs for professional development in relation to the priority needs of the school. One approach involves correlating your needs with schoolwide student achievement data. The other approach focuses on linking your needs with school improvement goals and objectives. This activity will illustrate how to combine the analysis of student performance data with the self-assessment of teaching practices to identify priority topics for professional development.

Step 1
Using the blank grid provided on the next page, rank the topics you and your fellow teachers identified through self-assessment activities (see the sample grid below).

Step 2
In this same way, prioritize areas of need in schoolwide student achievement.

Step 3
Compare the topics on both lists to identify where they match. Priority topics for professional development would be those that are ranked highly on both lists.

Sample Grid
Comparing Self-Assessment Needs to Student Achievement Needs[1]

Topics Identified through Self-Assessment	Topics Identified through Analysis of Schoolwide Student Achievement Data
Strategies for teaching reading to at-risk students	Reading comprehension
Strategies for assessment that pinpoint student needs	Application of math concepts and skills in problem-solving
Content knowledge in science and math	Application of scientific concepts
Classroom management techniques	Math computation skills
Teaching for application	Reading vocabulary
Use of technology	

[1] Professional development activities that address teaching reading comprehension to at-risk students and instructional strategies for teaching for application of science and math content would be priority topics at the school where this sample grid was completed.

Comparing Self-Assessment Needs to Student Achievement Needs

Topics Identified through Self-Assessment	Topics Identified through Analysis of Schoolwide Student Achievement Data

Key Idea

School improvement goals and objectives represent the consensus of the school community as to priority needs of the school and its students. You should consider these goals a significant source of direction, along with self-assessment, in identifying your own professional development needs. Conversely, teacher self-assessment should provide a rich source of goals and objectives for school improvement.

The following example illustrates how these two processes influence one another.

An Example of Correlating Professional Development Needs with School Improvement Plan Objectives

As next year's school improvement plan for Northwestern Middle School is being developed, the school advisory council identifies reading and writing as high-priority needs. After reviewing the needs assessment data collected for the plan, the teachers agree to emphasize aspects of their own teaching that contribute to student literacy in identifying the professional development activities in which they will participate during the upcoming year. When the school improvement plan's objectives and action plans are being created, teacher representatives help the council integrate appropriate professional development activities into the plan. Having these activities included in the school improvement plan ensures that the resources needed to complete the activities will be provided.

While working with the school advisory council, the faculty of Northwestern Middle School share their interest in multiple intelligences as a topic that would improve their effectiveness in helping a wide range of learners. Council members are intrigued by the presentation the teachers make at the council meeting and make a study of multiple intelligences a key objective in the school improvement plan.

In this example, teachers used the needs assessment conducted by the school advisory council to identify priority needs, and they influenced the school advisory council's planning by sharing information from their own investigation of current needs. The two groups worked in concert to identify what needed to be done.

Activity 3.2
Connecting Your Professional Development Needs
to School Improvement Plan Objectives

You can adapt the same grid you used to look for connections between your self-assessment and schoolwide needs identified through the analysis of student achievement data to find the same kind of connections with your school's improvement plan objectives. Here are the steps to identify where these two sets of needs overlap.

Step 1
Using the blank grid that follows the sample grid, rank the topics you and your fellow teachers identified through self-assessment activities. List those topics in order in column 1.

Step 2
Match the objectives from your school's improvement plan to the topics listed in column 1. If more than one objective is related to a single topic, write both objectives in the same cell.

Step 3
Priority topics for professional development would be those that are reflected in the school improvement plan and are ranked highly on your list of topics.

Sample Grid
Comparing Self-Assessment Needs to School Improvement Plan Objectives[1]

Topics Identified through Self-Assessment	School Improvement Plan Objectives
Strategies for teaching reading to at-risk students	To improve student achievement in reading by June 30, 1999
Strategies for assessment that pinpoint student needs	
Content knowledge in science and math	To improve students' ability to apply science concepts by June 30, 1999; to improve student achievement in math by June 30, 1999
Classroom management techniques	To reduce incidences of classroom disruption by June 30, 1999
Teaching for application	To improve students' ability to apply math skills to problem-solving situations by June 30, 1999
Use of technology	

[1] Professional development activities that address teaching reading comprehension to at-risk students and instructional strategies for teaching for application of science and math content would be priority topics at the school where this sample grid was completed.

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Comparing Self-Assessment Needs to School Improvement Plan Objectives

Topics Identified through Self-Assessment	School Improvement Plan Objectives

Models of Professional Development

Five models of professional development were idc itified by Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989). They represent ways of organizing teacher learning. Each is useful and honors teachers as professionals. They differ in terms of the activities that are involved and the specific outcomes for which they are best-suited. The five models are listed here and described in detail in the pages that follow:

* Individually-Guided

* Observation/Assessment

* Involvement in Curriculum Development/School Improvement Process

* Training

* Inquiry

Selecting an appropriate model of professional development is an important decision. For example, if your study of student learning generates curiosity concerning the use of a particular learning theory with your students, you might benefit more from activities based on the inquiry model than from those based on the training model. This section will help you make better-informed decisions regarding the model of professional development that is best suited to your needs. It will also include an example of how teachers have used each model. Figure 3.3 is included at the end of this chapter to provide an estimate of the effectiveness of each model in producing specific types of outcomes. To use this table, identify the outcome(s) you are seeking and locate the model with the highest effectiveness estimate for that type of outcome. The cell that is shaded indicates the model with the highest effectiveness estimate for each type of outcome. This estimate of the effectiveness of the five models will enable you to compare the "fit" between each model and the type of outcome you are seeking.

Individually-Guided Model of Professional Development
Activities that you initiate, design, and carry out on your own fit into the category of individually-guided professional

Numerous models exist for structuring professional development activities. Each has strengths and weaknesses relative to specific outcomes. No matter which model is used, the activities should (1) focus on reducing the gap between actual and desired levels of student achievement, (2) involve participants in identifying the content and objectives, (3) help participants develop a theoretical as well as practical understanding of the new practices, (4) include follow-up and support, and (5) be linked to a comprehensive change process that focuses on student learning.

development. This type of professional development assumes that you are able to diagnose your own needs more accurately than can be done by others. It also assumes you are capable of designing activities that will enable you to achieve your objectives. It places a high value on the motivation you derive from using self-assessment to determine your own learning objectives and using self-directed learning to achieve them. An additional benefit is the customized nature of the activities. Because you design them yourself, the activities can be tailored to your specific needs, context, or learning style.

If there is a downside to individually-guided professional development, it is the amount of time you must spend in diagnosing needs and planning learning activities. Yet it is these tasks that produce a major portion of the benefit you derive from using this model.

The following are the basic steps or elements that make up individually-guided professional development activities:

- A need or point of interest is identified by an individual or group. This is accomplished through the study of student learning, teacher self-assessment, or a combination of the two processes.

- A plan for meeting that need or exploring the topic of interest is developed, including objectives that describe changes that will result from the study or what the participants hope to learn. The objectives may be expressed as changes in student learning or teacher practices or beliefs.

- Learning activities are designed, planned, and completed by the individual or group. These may be self-study activities, training sessions, and/or joint work projects.

- An assessment is conducted to determine if the participants met their objectives. That is, what were the changes in student learning or teacher performance?

Analysis of an Individually-Guided Project
Directions: Read this example of an individually-guided
professional development project and talk through the
discussion questions that appear following the example.
Sample answers to each set of discussion questions appear at
the end of this chapter.

Tom's Questioning Project

During Tom's annual assessment conference, his principal
shared data collected during a classroom observation that
indicated the questioning strategy Tom was using was causing
confusion for some students. Tom told his principal he had been
concerned for some time that his students were not participating
in class discussions. They agreed it could be the way he asked
questions that was causing this problem. He decided to begin an
individually-guided study of questioning techniques and to
experiment with several strategies until his repertoire included a
number of effective ways to ask questions.

Tom's plan for carrying out his study included these activities:

- Ask other teachers to explain the strategies they use to
  ask questions.

- Look up strategies for asking questions in textbooks
  used in teacher education programs at the local college
  of education.

- Review four or more research studies dealing with
  questioning strategies.

- Create a "strategies file" to keep a record of the ideas
  and strategies he identifies.

- Experiment with the different strategies, and use a video
  camera to capture how students respond to each one.

- Ask his principal to review selected videotaped examples
  of his use of the various techniques and provide Tom
  with feedback on his effectiveness and the students'
  response to the new strategy.

❧ Prepare a brief summary of his study to share with other teachers at the school.

In talking with his fellow teachers about the strategies they used to ask questions, Tom discovered many were not satisfied with the strategies they were using, but a few offered suggestions for promising alternatives. Through two senior interns who were completing their final internship with other teachers at Tom's school, he was able to get his hands on several textbooks that described effective questioning strategies. He also used the college's library to find several research studies on questioning strategies. From all of this study, Tom was able to identify three promising strategies.

He outlined the strategies on 3 x 5 cards and practiced using them while recording his practice attempts on an audiotape. When he felt comfortable with each strategy, he began to try it out with his students. Tom understood that his initial efforts with each of the new strategies might be rough, so he allowed several weeks for practice and experimentation. At the end of that period, Tom brought in a video camera and set it up, so it could take in the entire classroom. Then he videotaped several lessons, using a different questioning strategy in each one. He asked his principal to sit alongside him as he watched the tapes and provide Tom with feedback on his use of the strategies and their impact on student responses.

Tom and his principal found that his students responded well to all three of the new strategies he used. They seemed less confused, and their answers were longer and included more details. He decided he would continue his experimentation with all three strategies and look for ways in which the strategies produced different results, so he would learn under what conditions each strategy would be most appropriate (gaining executive control). Tom refined his use of these strategies over a period of several months. Then he asked the principal for a few minutes during one of their faculty meetings to share the results of his study. Tom was pleased that his colleagues showed a great deal of interest in his study and asked many questions. Several asked for help in learning to use Tom's three new strategies in their own classrooms.

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Discussion Questions

- How did Tom identify the focus of his project?

- What was Tom's objective for this project?

- Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did Tom select the most effective model for his project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?

- How could Tom have involved other teachers in this project beyond asking them for suggestions?

Observation/Assessment Model of Professional Development

In this model, an observer records (usually on paper) what you say and/or do while teaching a lesson. The scope of what is recorded may be focused on a specific set of teacher behaviors, or it may be more global. The recorded information is analyzed by the observer (sometimes jointly with the teacher being observed), and then a post-observation conference is held. During the conference, you reflect on the information and its implications for changes in your instructional practices. The observer usually participates in a dialogue with you concerning the analysis and interpretation of the data. You may develop an action plan or growth plan on your own or jointly with the observer. Subsequent observations provide feedback on changes in the teaching behaviors you targeted for further study or improvement.

These steps make up the observation/assessment model:

- During a pre-observation conference, the teacher and the observer agree on the purpose of the observation, what type of information will be recorded, when it will take place, and how the information will be analyzed. The teacher provides an outline of the lesson, so the observer will be able to focus on collecting the desired information.

- An observation is conducted, and the data is analyzed and interpreted by the teacher and/or the observer. A post-observation conference is held.

❦ An action plan or growth plan is developed and monitored, sometimes through additional observations.

Analysis of an Observation/Assessment Project
Directions: Read this example of an observation/assessment professional development project and talk through the discussion questions that appear following the example. Sample answers to each set of discussion questions appear at the end of this chapter.

Elaine's and Michael's Higher-Order Question Project:
Two high school mathematics teachers, Elaine and Michael, attended a workshop on using higher-order questions during pre-planning. They agreed to use the observation/assessment model to diagnose their current use of higher-order questions and to monitor their growth in using this type of question. Elaine suggested the observer use a legal pad to record verbatim each question asked by the teacher being observed. Then they would use the information they learned at the workshop to identify the higher-order questions. In a pre-observation conference before Michael's lesson, he explained to Elaine the sequence of activities and lesson objectives so she could focus on the questions he asked during the lesson.

Before the observation, Elaine practiced writing down what she heard by listening to an audiotape of her own teaching so she would be sure to get an accurate record of Michael's questions. During the observation, Elaine concentrated on recording the questions word for word. After the lesson, she and Michael reviewed each question and classified it as higher or lower order. Then she helped Michael draw some conclusions about his use of higher-order questions and create a plan to increase the ratio of higher-order to lower-order questions. Elaine told Michael that listening to his use of questions and trying to analyze them made it easier for her to use higher-order questions in her own lessons.

Michael's subsequent observation of Elaine's teaching revealed she was using more higher-order questions than she had expected to use. This seemed to be a result of her work in observing Michael and conferencing with him about his use of higher-order questions.

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They each developed a plan to extend their growth in using higher-order questions, and during the remainder of the school year, they continued the cycle of observation and feedback. As the year progressed, their use of higher-order questions became more natural, and their focus moved to using these questions to expand the quality of students' thinking about the content of their lessons.

Discussion Questions

❧ How did Elaine and Michael identify the focus of their project?

❧ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did Elaine and Michael select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?

❧ How did they involve aspects of the training model in this project?

❧ How could they have involved other teachers in this project?

Curriculum Development/School Improvement Process Model of Professional Development

Involvement in the work of developing new curricula, materials, programs, or policies can lead you to reach for new insights and deeper understanding of critical elements of teaching and learning. Similarly, participating in a school improvement effort can lead to increased capacity on the part of individual teachers and whole faculties. The following are the key steps involved in these two types of professional development activities:

❧ A problem or need is identified.

❧ A plan of action to address the problem or need is developed.

❧ New skills and/or knowledge needed to implement the plan of action are identified, and plans for acquiring the new knowledge or skills are added to the plan.

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❧ The plan is implemented.

❧ The results of the plan's implementation are assessed.

The following conditions increase the likelihood that participation in a development or improvement project will impact the teacher's job performance:

❧ Allowing the participating teachers sufficient freedom and authority to set their own objectives and to implement the plan they create

❧ Strong support of the principal and other faculty members

❧ Sufficient time to work productively on the task (includes time for meetings, reflection, study, and development of new skills and knowledge)

❧ Adequate resources (includes access to expertise beyond what is available at the school, funds to purchase needed materials and to pay for substitutes)

❧ Integration of this project with other school improvement or professional development activities and projects so that teachers see a connection between this project and other important efforts

Analyzing a Development/Improvement Model Project
Directions: Read this example of a development/improvement professional development project and talk through the discussion questions that appear following the example. Sample answers to each set of discussion questions appear at the end of this chapter.

Captiva Bay Middle School Curriculum Frameworks Project
A new set of statewide curriculum frameworks was developed by the state department of education. Teachers at Captiva Bay Middle School participated in the training program offered by regional education department staff but felt the frameworks did not provide adequate guidance for classroom teachers. They took their concern to the school's principal and asked for support for efforts to bridge the gap between the frameworks and the classroom level curricu-

lum. The principal was in complete agreement and asked the group to seek additional faculty involvement. Having a larger group would prevent the task from becoming too burdensome and allow more teachers to benefit from first-hand involvement with the project.

When all of the teachers who would participate in the project got together for their initial meeting, they decided to use a problem-solving strategy called "corrective action." They began by describing the problem with this statement:

> The state curriculum frameworks do not provide adequate detail to guide instruction at the classroom level.

The teachers agreed the frameworks were not intended to guide instruction at the classroom level and that a more accurate description of the problem would read like this:

> No document exists currently to interpret the state curriculum frameworks at the level of detail needed to direct classroom instruction.

The next step of the corrective action model involved identifying the root cause(s) of the problem. They determined it was appropriate for the state to leave the adaptation of the frameworks to the classroom level to schools and school districts. Therefore, the root cause of the problem in this case was merely that no one had taken responsibility for completing the task begun at the state level.

Next, the group brainstormed the steps that would need to be completed to create an interpretive guide for the frameworks. In doing so, they discovered several of the tasks on their list required skills and knowledge no one on the faculty possessed. They decided to establish a sub-committee to locate the training they would need to complete the task each group had been assigned. This sub-committee included the principal because she was quite adept at securing resources for her teachers.

Over the next few months, as the teachers developed their interpretive guide for the frameworks, they kept a careful record of all of their activities. This record would be used to

document their requests for inservice credit for working on the project. As they completed each section, the teachers who were responsible for that section made a brief presentation of their drafts to their fellow teachers. The feedback they received proved very helpful. They also exchanged ideas and information with other groups who were involved in similar projects around their region.

Finally, they presented the faculty with the completed interpretive guide to the state frameworks. They asked their fellow teachers to use the guide for six weeks and then to complete a brief evaluation of it. The evaluations were analyzed, and the teachers' responses were used to revise the guide to create a final draft.

Discussion Questions

❦ How did the teachers identify the focus of their project?

❦ What was their overall objective for this project?

❦ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the teachers select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?

❦ How did they involve aspects of the training model in this project?

Training Model of Professional Development

The training model, as defined by Joyce and Showers (1995), makes a distinction between what you should expect from workshops or training sessions and what you need in terms of follow-up to enable you to help one another master what you learned in the workshop setting. High-quality workshops or training sessions will include these three components:

❦ *Understanding of the theory* supporting new practices is essential if you are to apply these new practices in situations that differ from those made visible during modeling or demonstrations. A deep understanding of

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the conceptual base of a particular strategy also helps you know what to expect in terms of student outcomes.

☙ Joyce and Showers refer to *modeling* or *demonstrations* as "anchoring the theory in clarified behavior." They suggest 20 demonstrations to develop adequate skill in the use of a teaching strategy of medium complexity. They also recommend the use of videotaped demonstrations in real classroom settings so that you can see the crucial early phases of a lesson in which the teacher organizes students and gives directions or instructions. Involving participants in role-playing can be an effective method of demonstrating, but videotapes of actual classroom use of the strategies are much more effective. These "real-life scenes" are important because they give you concrete examples to follow when you return to your classroom.

☙ *Practice within the workshop setting* gives the trainer an opportunity to follow-up with additional demonstrations that focus on problems or rough spots in your early attempts to use the new strategies or techniques.

These three components will develop adequate skill for you to begin practice in your own classroom. However, if the follow-up components are forsaken, fewer than ten percent of the participants will sustain practice attempts long enough to add the new strategies to their repertoire (Showers, Murphy, and Joyce, 1996). These follow-up components involve immediate and sustained practice, sharing, and peer coaching.

Practice in using new strategies should begin immediately upon returning to your classroom. If you try to avoid the anxiety associated with trying something new by delaying practice, you will lose understanding and may never actually attempt to use what you have learned. Sustaining practice for 20 to 30 attempts is necessary to achieve the desired levels of confidence in the new strategies (Joyce and Showers, 1995). Most of the anxiety you feel will fade after six to eight trials, so you should persevere through the rough early stages and continue to practice until you have successfully added the new strategies to your repertoire.

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Before attending workshop training, you should join a study group to provide peer support or peer coaching. The purpose of peer coaching has traditionally focused on supporting the implementation of new practices. However, Joyce and Showers (1995) have defined the roles and purposes of peer coaching to expand its purpose to include "building permanent structures for collegial relationships...." Joyce and Showers refer to these new practices as "peer-coaching study teams" to set them apart from their earlier forms of peer coaching. Peer-coaching study team members agree to commit to three tasks:

- Sustained use of new practices that are being implemented as a part of the professional development activities

- Help and support of fellow teachers through shared planning, setting objectives, and developing materials and lesson plans

- Collection of data on the implementation of new practices and the effects on student learning

Shared planning involves time for peer-coaching study teams to talk about objectives and the types of lessons, activities, and materials needed to reach those objectives. In such interactions, you and your fellow team members reflect on what you want your students to learn and identify ways to "divide up the labor" involved in creating lesson plans and materials. This shared planning is the primary activity of peer-coaching study teams.

Joyce and Showers include observation among other activities for peer-coaching study teams, but they have redefined the meaning of the term *coach* as it applies to classroom observation. In such observations, "the one teaching is the coach and the one observing is the coached" (Joyce and Showers, 1995). Teachers teach each other by demonstrating their use of new practices. The observer benefits by comparing the observed performance to demonstrations provided during the original training and/or to his or her own use of those strategies.

They have also dropped the use of technical feedback following the observation. Learning to provide this kind of feedback was quite time-consuming, and removing it from the peer-coaching model has not reduced its effectiveness in supporting implementation of new practices (Joyce, et al., 1989). Teachers in this type of peer coaching relationship learn from watching one another teach rather than from technical feedback they receive after being observed.

The impact on teacher learning and classroom use of these five components of the training model is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Impact of Training Components

Training Components	Impact of Training Components on Teacher Learning and Use		
	Concept Understanding	Skill Attainment (mechanical use)	Application
Presentation of Theory	85%	15%	5-10%
Modeling by Trainer(s)	85%	18%	5-10%
Practice and Low-Risk Feedback (in the training setting)	85%	80%	10-15%
Coaching	90%	90%	80-90%

Figure 3.3 reflects information from the following sources:

- "Characteristics of Adult Learning," a paper prepared by Theodore E. Andrews, Andrews-Bryant, Inc., 1239 D Street NE, Washington, D.C. (1979)

- *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* by Benjamin Bloom, Cognitive Domain, New York: McKay (1956)

- *Power in Staff Development* by Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers, ASCD Stock Number 611-83304 (1983)

- "Implications for Training" outline prepared by Charles Ahearn and Betty Fry, SERVE, 1997

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Figure 3.3
Effective Professional Development

Strategies for Skill Development	Implications for Training and Expectations for Outcomes
Theory Learners participate in the study of the theoretical basis or the rationale for the skill.	**Implications for Training** Lectures, self-assessment exercises, group discussions, question-answer sessions, panels, handouts. **Creates Awareness** Learners can be expected to recall some specifics and generalizations. At this point in skill development, a few (5%) will be able to apply the skills. Awareness is a necessary step in the developmental process.
Demonstration Learners observe the modeling of the skill or competency.	**Implications for Training** Trainer demonstrations, films, case studies, questions. **Promotes Comprehension** Learners can be expected to more effectively discuss the skill or competency and summarize, restate, or explain it and infer need. A few (20%) will be able to apply the skill at the training site. Demonstration is a necessary step in the developmental process.
Practice/Feedback Learners demonstrate/ practice the new skill in a protected environment. Learners practice analysis of the behavior of others and offer constructive criticism.	**Implications for Training** Structures must be provided so that participants have the opportunity to demonstrate the skill in a safe environment. Trainers must have the skill to reinforce appropriate behavior, identify but dignify inappropriate responses, offer alternative positive behaviors, and maintain the self-esteem of participants. **Completes Comprehension and Simulates Application** Learners can be expected to interpret skill or competencies, illustrate or demonstrate skills, identify and evaluate the skill or competency in others, and provide assistance for improving. At this point, most learners (up to 95%) will be able to demonstrate the skill or competency at the training site, but the majority will not use this skill or competency at the work place without benefit of coaching and/or a support team.
Coaching/Teaming Learners coach one another as they work the new skill or competency into their repertoire. They provide each other with ideas and feedback.	**Implications for Training** Training must recognize the need for follow-up in terms of coaching and teaming and provide participants with the skills or resources to develop teams or networks and to serve as effective coaches. **Completes Application and Incorporates Analysis and Evaluation** Most learners (75-95%) who are part of a support team will apply the new skill on the job. Through the supportive process, they will also analyze and evaluate the behavior of other learners and offer viable recommendations for improvement in an acceptable format.

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Working in peer coaching study teams will begin to build collegial relationships that extend beyond the implementation of new practices. They foster norms of experimentation through which you will feel more comfortable taking risks associated with trying something different and studying its effects in an open, public forum. Because experimentation is acceptable, teachers are more willing to talk about their attempts with others—stimulating them to try new approaches that build upon the experiments of their peers (Little, 1990). These relationships will also help you and your fellow teachers develop a common language for talking about teaching and learning.

Analysis of a Training Model Project
Directions: Read this example of a training model professional development project and talk through the discussion questions that appear following the example. Sample answers to each set of discussion questions appear at the end of this chapter.

New Teacher Induction Project
The principal at Davis Island Middle School hired seven first-year teachers over the summer to fill vacancies created by increased enrollment. She knew from experience that getting new teachers off to a good start was very important. To help them in their "induction" into the profession, she arranged for them to receive training in how to plan for a successful beginning of the school year. She identified a consultant who specialized in preparing new teachers for their first real classroom experience and invited the teachers to attend a workshop presented by the consultant during the week before the other teachers reported for pre-planning.

The new teachers met the consultant in the school's media center for their first session. The consultant outlined the agenda they would follow over the next three days as they developed a plan for getting off to a good start with their students. The activities on that first morning were designed to achieve several objectives. one of which was to enable the new teachers to do a self-assessment of their own readiness for the first day of school. This self-assessment was a real "eye-opener" for the new teachers and made them even

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more motivated to learn the content the consultant planned to cover with them. Their self-assessment revealed they were unsure of how to set up reasonable rules, routines, and expectations for students—one of the new teachers listed 37 classroom rules he planned to enforce. This gave the consultant some important clues as to what should be emphasized during the remainder of the training. A second objective for the day was to prepare the new ,achers to join a peer-coaching study team when the other teachers reported for duty. To prepare them for this kind of peer-support activity, the consultant designed several collaborative planning activities.

Later on that first day, the new teachers got to practice some of what they had learned by formulating their own set of procedures for certain classroom routines. The consultant gave each person individualized feedback on his or her first draft of the classroom procedures. They also discussed them with one another as a peer-coaching study team and modified them until they felt comfortable the procedures were reasonable and well-planned.

They spent nearly the entire second day looking at how to organize their classrooms and establish a simple set of rules and consequences. The consultant used videotaped examples of teachers using effective strategies for working with difficult students and had the new teachers role-play how they would handle similar situations. Throughout the second day, the consultant gave encouragement and constructive feedback to the new teachers as they experimented with the strategies the consultant presented.

The last day was spent looking at ways to plan practice activities that were appropriate for students with different levels of ability. The consultant helped them see how to work collaboratively with their peers in planning for instruction. They concluded the day by reviewing what they had learned and how they planned to use it to get off to a good start in their first classroom. The consultant explained she would not be available for follow-up activities, but emphasized the importance of getting help from their fellow teachers and the principal through the peer-coaching study-team approach. Finally, the consultant administered the

same self-assessment the teach·rs had completed on the first morning, and everyone was excited to see how much more prepared they were to face that first day of school.

Discussion Questions

❦ How did this project utilize the three workshop components of the training model?

❦ What was their overall objective for this project?

❦ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the principal select the most effective model for this project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?

❦ How did they involve aspects of peer coaching in this project?

Inquiry Model of Professional Development

Professional development activities based on the inquiry model begin with the identification of a need or problem, as is the case with several of the other models. The subsequent phases distinguish the inquiry model from other models of professional development. In the second phase, participants measure important aspects of the need or problem and/or collect data that will help them gain insight into how it might be addressed. This phase might include reviewing research findings or actually collecting data on what is happening in their own classrooms. The third phase involves teachers in the analysis of the information they have collected and the development and implementation of an action plan for changing instructional practices or some other aspect of the problem. Finally, the results of their action plan are evaluated so the new strategies can be revised and/or shared with other teachers.

Diverse activities can be structured as inquiry, for example, when a school faculty works with a university-based researcher to conduct a formal research study on cooperative learning or when an individual teacher is experimenting with a new idea for teaching the formula for calculating the area of a triangle. This model most closely resembles action

research. The key characteristic is that the participants use a structured, scientific method to find the answer to this question: *What would happen if we did it this way?*

Participating in professional development based on the inquiry model produces several benefits for teachers in addition to improving the practices being studied. These include feeling more comfortable experimenting with "research-based" practices, seeing their own teaching more clearly and objectively, and developing stronger professional relationships with fellow teachers who are also involved in the inquiry.

The following are the basic elements of the inquiry model:

 The identification of a problem or need

 An in-depth study of the problem or need that may include measurement or other forms of data collection to gain insight into how the problem might be addressed

 Analysis of the information collected to produce a plan and the implementation of that plan

 An evaluation of the completed action plan's results

Analysis of an Inquiry Model Project
Directions: Read this example of an inquiry model professional development project and talk through the discussion questions that appear following the example. Sample answers to each set of discussion questions appear at the end of this chapter.

Pre-Reading Activities Project

A group of teachers at Peachtree Elementary School became concerned that their students were not reacting positively to the newly adopted basal reader. To investigate this problem, they agreed to begin to categorize the errors their students made in reading aloud. The data they collected led them to focus on the influence of background knowledge on reading success.

One of the teachers asked, "Would our students be more successful if we spent more time on pre-reading activities that laid a foundation for understanding the story they were

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about to read?" Opinions varied widely among the teachers in the group, so they decided to conduct an informal experiment. Teachers at three grade levels would participate in the experiment. They divided themselves evenly into two groups at each grade level. One group would begin to spend an extra six-to-eight minutes on pre-reading activities while the other group would move directly to the reading assignment. Both groups would use the same stories and the same practice activities. The experiment would last six weeks and include ten stories from the basal reader. They would compare the results using students' grades on the practice activities.

At the end of the sixth week, the teachers in the group that put extra time into pre-reading activities felt confident their students were more successful than they had been previously. A comparison of students' scores on the practice activities confirmed their prediction. The pre-reading activities had contributed to a significant improvement in student performance.

The success of their experiment created a greater interest in research on the use of pre-reading activities. Several members of the original group of teachers began searching for research studies to expand their understanding of how to use this strategy more effectively. They shared the findings they read with their fellow teachers and continued with informal discussions on using this strategy to improve student performance in reading.

Discussion Questions

❧ What did the teachers at Peachtree Elementary do to identify the root cause of the problem of their students' difficulties with the new basal reader?

❧ What was their overall objective for this project?

❧ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the teachers select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?

❧ How did the process the teachers followed compare to the action-research model?

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Alternatives to the Typical Training Model
Judith Warren Little (1993) expresses the view that the training model is not adequate for guiding teachers through the challenges of current reform initiatives. She states that professional development "should engage teachers in the kinds of study, investigation, and experimentation required to understand and undertake the multiple challenges... [of reform initiatives]." These reforms paint a picture of teaching and learning that looks far different from what teachers have known, believed, practiced, and experienced themselves. Reforms that demand significant changes in curriculum and instructional practices (new mathematics standards, integrated science, authentic assessment), reforms focusing on equity among a diverse population of students, restructuring, and the professionalization of teaching require more than the "implementation of an innovation." While acknowledging the "increasingly greater sophistication" of the training model, Little recommends consideration be given to alternative approaches.

Teacher collaboratives and other networks deepen teachers' knowledge of content and increase their influence on curriculum reform. The Philadelphia Alliance for Teaching Humanities in the Schools, or PATHS, involves teachers in methods of inquiry used by social scientists, museum and art curators, and literary scholars. Just as important to the project's success, it involves teachers *with* these professionals. Participating teachers conduct research into topics that will result in a "genuine curriculum in the humanities—not watered down, dumbed down, or packaged..." (Little, 1993). These experiences give teachers an opportunity to see "behind the scenes" how curators and others conduct their own work with primary materials and to work with those materials themselves in the same manner as the "experts." Teachers are involved in "the *construction* and not mere *consumption* of subject matter teaching knowledge."

Subject matter associations offer teachers opportunities to extend their professional community beyond their school and district. *Collaborations targeted at school reform* also connect teachers with resources outside their school or district. For example, Chicago-area teachers work with faculty from National-Louis University in a program that

focuses on engaging teachers in "doing mathematics," deepening teachers' understanding by working as mathematicians rather than teachers of mathematics.

Special institutes and centers provide teachers with experiences which offer depth, extended time for working with ideas and materials, a "sense of doing real work rather than being 'talked at,'"and direct contact with subject-area experts.

Common Design Principles

Each of the five models of professional development possesses strengths that make it appropriate for specific outcomes. Figure 3.4 lists those strengths relative to typical outcomes. The model most highly recommended for each outcome is identified by a shaded cell within the table.

As with any process, the steps comprising each model should be given thoughtful consideration in planning professional development activities. Neglecting an element of the model selected for a particular project may severely impact the project's success. For example, Joyce and Showers (1995) state that training activities that do not include provision for follow-up and support will enable fewer than ten percent of the participants to add the target strategies to their teaching repertoire.

All of these models can be useful and effective methods for structuring teacher learning. Hawley and Valli (1996) synthesized a comprehensive list of design principles that can be used to guide the design of professional development activities employing any of these five models. These design principles are listed here in brief form.

- The objectives and content of the professional development activities are guided by an analysis of the discrepancy between actual student performance and desired levels of student performance.

- Participants are involved in identifying the content and objectives of the professional development activities and, when possible, in the design of learning experiences to achieve those objectives.

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Figure 3.4

Effectiveness Estimates for Five Models of Professional Development

Desired Outcome	Individually-Guided	Observation/ Assessment	Development/ Improvement Process	Training	Inquiry
mastery of a simple, specific teaching skill	Medium: requires more time to plan than other models	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90 %	Low: better suited for broader outcomes	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	Medium: less efficient than other models
implementation of a complex set of teaching strategies	Medium: less efficient than other models	Medium: harder to observe complex strategies	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: more complex outcomes make follow-up more important	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90 %
gaining insight into how students learn	Medium: includes professional reading, observation of students	Low: focuses on observing teacher's behavior, not students'	Medium: less efficient than other models	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: effective in testing hypotheses
mastery of new classroom management skills	Medium: less efficient than other models	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90 %	Low: better suited for broader outcomes	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	High: adding peer coaching can increase application to 90 %
implementation of new assessment procedures	Medium: includes collaboration with others	Medium: assessment procedures are not always observable	Medium: less efficient than other models	Highest: recommended components make it very effective	High: effective, but time-consuming
solving a complex problem dealing with improving student achievement	High: flexibility allows activities to be designed specifically for this outcome	Low: better suited for giving feedback than problem-solving	Medium: can be adapted to problem-solving tasks	Low: better suited for supporting implementation than creating new knowledge	Highest: effective in solving complex problems, generates a great deal of learning
acquiring group leadership skills' working as a team to solve a problem	Medium: allows group members to learn what they need, when they need to know it	Low: these skills developed outside the classroom, less observable	Highest: leadership opportunities abound in this model	Low: better suited for supporting implementation than building leadership skills	Medium: less efficient than other models
increasing knowledge of content or subject matter	Medium: include professional reading and contact with subject matter experts	Low: focuses on teacher's behavior, not content knowledge	Highest: important element is acquiring new knowledge to solve a problem or meet a specific need	High: effective in helping teachers acquire new knowledge, especially in applying it	Medium: less efficient than other models, focus is creating new knowledge, not acquiring knowledge

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- The activities are school-based and linked to school operations.

- Professional development activities are organized around collaborative problem-solving.

- The activities include continual assistance and support beyond the initial training that provides for observation, sharing, and sustained practice.

- Participants use multiple sources of information to evaluate student learning and how it is impacted by the new practices and to monitor the processes that support the implementation of the new practices.

- The activities help participants develop a theoretical understanding of the new practices.

- The professional development activities are linked to a comprehensive change process that focuses on student learning.

Sample Answers to Discussion Questions

Tom's Questioning Project

- How did Tom identify the focus of his project?
  Tom identified the focus of his project through observational data collected by his principal and his own observations of how students responded to his questions.

- What was Tom's objective for this project?
  To identify and add effective questioning skills to his teaching repertoire.

- Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did Tom select the most effective model for his project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?
  Tom's project dealt with identifying and gaining "executive control" over specific teaching skills. While the training model is more effective and efficient in producing this kind

of outcome, if no formal training was available on Tom's topic, his use of the individually-guided model was very appropriate.

❦ How could Tom have involved other teachers in this project beyond asking them for suggestions?
Tom might have invited other teachers to "divide up the labor" in researching questioning techniques, and he could have asked to observe some of his fellow teachers during their use of questioning techniques they found effective.

Elaine's and Michael's Higher-Order Question Project

❦ How did Elaine and Michael identify the focus of their project?
They became interested in the topic at a workshop during pre-planning.

❦ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did Elaine and Michael select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?
The observation/assessment model is highly rated for this type of outcome (mastery of a simple, specific teaching skill). Because they applied peer coaching to their use of this model, they increased the effectiveness of the model significantly.

❦ How did they involve aspects of the training model in this project?
They attended training together to develop a common understanding of the strategy they planned to implement. They also acquired a common language for use in describing and discussing the strategy.

❦ How could they have involved other teachers in this project?
Elaine and Michael could have shared their project and its results with other teachers to stimulate interest in joining their study. They could have observed other teachers' use of higher-order questions to broaden their own understanding of how that type of question could be used.

Captiva Bay Middle School Curriculum Frameworks Project

❦ How did the teachers identify the focus of their project?
Their analysis of the frameworks revealed they did not provide adequate detail to guide application at the class-room level.

❦ What was their overall objective for this project?
To create an interpretive guide to enable teachers to apply the curriculum frameworks in their classrooms.

❦ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the teachers select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?
This model is rated highly for "increasing knowledge of content or subject matter."

❦ How did they involve aspects of the training model in this project?
When they discovered "several of the tasks on their list required skills and knowledge no one on the faculty pos-sessed," they located and participated in training to acquire the needed skills and knowledge.

New Teacher Induction Project

❦ How did this project utilize the three workshop compo-nents of the training model?
The consultant used a considerable amount of modeling through videotaped examples and provided practice within the workshop setting. The description of the training implies that there was also presentation of theory, but it does not describe it in detail.

❦ What was their overall objective for this project?
To prepare new teachers for a successful beginning of the school year.

❦ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the principal

select the most effective model for this project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?
The training sessions focused on mastery of new classroom management skills, an outcome for which the training model is very effective.

✼ How did they involve aspects of peer coaching in this project?
The consultant used collaborative activities similar to the activities of a peer-coaching study team. The sessions also featured shared planning, a primary activity of peer-coaching study teams.

Pre-Reading Activities Project

✼ What did the teachers at Peachtree Elementary do to identify the root cause of the problem of their students' difficulties with the new basal reader?
The teachers collected data on the types of errors their students were making in reading aloud. This preliminary investigation enabled them to narrow the focus of their inquiry to the aspect of the problem that held the most promise of producing positive results.

✼ What was their overall objective for this project?
To identify instructional practices that would produce an improvement in student performance in reading.

✼ Using the effectiveness estimates from the table which appears at the end of this chapter, did the teachers select the most effective model for their project? If not, what would have been a more effective model?
This type of problem, solving a complex problem dealing with improving student achievement, is accomplished effectively through the inquiry model.

✼ How did the process the teachers followed compare to the action research model?
Of the five models of professional development described in this chapter, the inquiry model is the most similar to the action research model. Table 3.2 highlights the similarities between these two kinds of activities.

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Table 3.2
Comparison of the Inquiry Model and the Action-Research Model

Steps of the Inquiry Model	Steps of the Action-Research Model*
Identification of a problem or need	Faculty members select an area or problem of collective interest.
An in-depth study of the problem or need that may include measurement or other forms of data collection to gain insight into how the problem might be addressed	Faculty members collect, organize, and interpret on-site data related to the area or problem.
Analysis of the information collected to produce a plan and the implementation of that plan	Faculty members take action based on their interpretation of the data.
An evaluation of the completed action plan's results	Faculty members assess the results of the implementation of their action plan.

* These steps for the action research model were taken from *The Self Renewing School* by Joyce, Wolf, and Calhoun.

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Investing in Professional Development

*T*his chapter looks at two important resources that are "invested" in professional development: time and money. It also provides suggestions for getting the "highest return" on the investment made in professional development activities.

Finding Time for Professional Development

Teachers need more time. You need more time to gain the skills and knowledge to deal effectively with an expanding curriculum and more diverse student population, more time to plan and prepare, more time to work directly with students, and more time to work collaboratively with your peers. One way successful schools differ from less successful schools is the amount of time teachers spend on tasks such as those just listed (Little, 1982).

You also need time to reflect on what you learn from professional development activities. You need time to practice new skills and get feedback on those early attempts at using new skills. And, you need time to exchange ideas and discuss results with others (Raywid, 1993; National Education Commission on Time and Learning, 1994; National Governors' Association, 1995). According to Fullan and Miles (1992) finding additional time for teachers to become involved in professional development and school reform has been the critical issue identified in every analysis of school change for the past ten years.

There are a limited number of options for finding additional time for professional development. Time may be added to

Key Idea

Investing in professional development includes providing teachers with the resources they need to learn and helping them use those resources wisely. The primary resource teachers need is time. Additional time can be provided by adding to a teachers' workday or school year, reorganizing their schedule to provide more time for professional development, and/or changing how staff are utilized to give teachers more time for

Continued

the teacher workday or school year, teachers' time may be rescheduled or reorganized, and school staff may be utilized in different ways to provide release time for teachers. These three categories will be used to organize the following ideas collected from a review of the literature on time for professional development.

Adding Time

❧ Gardendale Elementary Magnet School in Merritt Island, Florida, adopted a year-round calendar with three-week intersessions between terms. Teachers are paid an additional stipend for attending two- or three-day training/planning sessions during intersession.

❧ Funds used to pay substitutes to release teachers to attend professional development activities may be spent more effectively if they are paid to teachers for participation in professional development during the summer months or on weekends.

Rescheduling or Reorganizing Time

❧ Teachers at Mohegan Elementary in the Bronx working on a joint project are scheduled for the same daily lunch period and a common planning time immediately following their lunch time—giving them a total of 90 minutes of shared time each day.

❧ One morning of every week, students at Central Park East Secondary School in Manhattan participate in community service activities through local volunteer agencies. This frees their teachers for professional development and other activities until noon when students return to the school.

❧ Students at the Urban Academy in Manhattan take part in volunteer community service activities each Wednesday afternoon. This gives teachers additional time for planning, parent conferences, and professional development.

❧ School districts that provide non-contact professional development days may consider allowing teams of

teachers to divide up the hours from those days and spread them out throughout the year. For example, a district that pays teachers for four eight-hour professional development days may reserve two of those days for district-wide professional development and allow teacher teams to use the remaining 16 hours in two-hour blocks across several weeks. When the scheduled professional development days arrive, those teachers who used the time earlier would not report for duty on those days but would receive their regular pay.

❧ Many districts in Florida dismiss students one hour early on Wednesdays and assign a specific use to the extra hour of non-contact time. In Orange County, for example, the first Wednesday of each month is reserved for district-wide professional development activities. How teache s use the other Wednesdays is a school-based decision.

❧ When the teacher duty day extends thirty minutes or more beyond the student day, teachers may be dismissed along with students two days a week in exchange for remaining at school an additional hour on a third day to participate in professional development activities.

Changing Staff Utilization

❧ Art, music, physical education, exceptional education teachers, and other student support teachers at Kapaa Elementary in Hawaii put together a series of half-day programs which are offered to each of the six school-within-school teams. This provides a half-day of non-contact time for each team every two-and-a-half weeks.

❧ Administrators and other certified staff who do not have regular classroom assignments can cover classes for teachers to release them for professional development activities such as peer coaching.

❧ Larger-than-normal classroom size instruction can be effective in special situations. Joyce and Showers (1988) cite an example in which a teacher who is an expert in children's literature conducts a special hour-and-a-half

program once a week for half of the students from either the primary grades or upper grades. Her programs bring children in contact with important literature, and their teachers put their release time to effective use. Pairs of teachers might undertake a similar practice by joining the two classes under the direction of one teacher for a special topic while the second teacher is involved in peer coaching or some other form of professional development.

❧ Students may be able to perform independent study or research in the library or media center under the supervision of the media specialist, giving their teacher release time.

Raywid (1993) identifies four guidelines for allocating and scheduling time for professional development in ways that make it more productive:

❧ Professional development activities should be scheduled for times when teachers are fresh and capable of devoting the level of energy needed to get the most out of these activities.

Teachers cannot be expected to conduct serious collective examination and reflection concerning curriculum and instructional practices or new programs at the end of a regular school day. The expenditure of energy needed to teach in today's schools leaves little in reserve—far too little to produce the level of collaborative effort these activities require.

❧ Time must be allocated for professional development activities in uninterrupted blocks of substantial length.

A single planning period or an extra thirty minutes here or there are not sufficient to enable teachers to produce the kind of concentrated effort that is needed.

❧ Some professional development activities can be conducted during the summer months, but most professional development should occur during the school year.

There are at least two problems associated with holding all professional development activities during the summer months. First, teachers need to be able to address issues and concerns when they arise. Most needs teachers want to address require immediate action. Waiting until the summer months to begin studying an issue would prove unacceptable to teachers in many instances. Second, many teachers use the summer months to recharge their batteries through non-school-related activities or to work a second job. Placing professional development activities out of the reach of these teachers may cause a number of difficulties. Also, the success of many professional development activities depends on wide participation among faculty members. Professional development should occur when all teachers can participate.

👻 Time for professional development should be balanced between regular school days and non-student-contact days.

Raywid writes "...in finding the time for substantial, continuing teacher collaboration, two opposing concerns must be kept in mind: (1) it is neither fair nor wise to ask teachers to deduct all the time needed from their personal lives (like weekends and holidays), even with compensation; and (2) conscientious teachers are reluctant to be away from their classrooms for an extended time unless they can feel confident about what is happening in their absence." Thus, schools need ongoing, carefully planned programs for classroom coverage.

Obtaining Funding for Professional Development

Funding for professional development often includes money for substitutes, materials, stipends for teachers to participate outside of their regular workday, and consultants' fees. Sources of funding for these expenses vary from district to district but typically include the following:

👻 School-based professional development funds

Key Idea
Competition for limited financial support requires you to be diligent in searching for possible sources of funds, to state a strong case (including supporting data) for funding your project, and to conduct a careful evaluation of the outcomes you obtain.

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Activity 4.1
Finding Additional Time

The grid that follows was used by teachers at an elementary school to brainstorm ways to find additional time for professional development.

Directions: Read over the sample grid. Use the blank grid to come up with your own categories (you may use any or all of the ones on the sample grid), and then brainstorm some possible actions to obtain additional time for your own professional development activities. Remember, in brainstorming, it is the quantity of ideas that count. The more ideas you come up with, the better the chances of coming up with ideas that will really be effective.

Finding More Time for Professional Development
Our Guiding Principles: No reduction in instructional time, no increase in use of substitutes, no sacrifice of academic learning time

Categories of Solutions	*Possible Ways to Get More Time for Teachers (Elementary)*		
Rework or rotate the schedule	Place art, music, and PE classes next to lunch period to give teachers extended non-contact time at least three times per week.	Dismiss students directly from art, music, and PE at the end of the day rather than returning to their regular classrooms to give classroom teachers extended non-contact time.	Rotate ideas 1 and 2 so that all teachers will have extended non-contact time at least part of the school year.
Share responsibilities	Share extracurricular duties so that half of the teachers are "duty-free" at any given time.	Look for projects or activities in which two classes can be supervised by one teacher and a non-instructional staff member.	
Obtain additional resources	Write grants to pay for stipends for teachers to participate in professional development evenings and weekends.	Recruit parent and community volunteers to do non-instructional duties such as photocopying and filing.	
Extend teachers' day	Dismiss teachers 30 minutes early two days per week to gain an extra hour on a third day.		
Extend teachers' year	Ask school board to put money saved on substitutes into a fund to pay for an extra day or two of professional development.	Explore use of distance learning to provide additional instructional time.	
Improve efficiency	Form a "process study team" to look at various procedures and create ways to save time and money.		

Finding More Time for Professional Development
Our Guiding Principles:

Categories of Solutions	Possible Ways to Get More Time for Teachers		

- District-funded projects and grants

- School improvement funds

- External agency grants and programs

Your initial efforts to secure funding should be aimed at funds already designated for professional development at the school or district level. Projects that cannot be funded through these sources may require you to develop a grant proposal or make a presentation to district staff or an external agency. Guidelines for grant proposals are available directly from the sponsoring agency. If you develop a presentation designed to persuade a funding source to invest in a professional development project, you should include the following elements:

- A statement of need (Supporting data might include an analysis of student-performance trends or other evidence that indicates the strength of the need. Visual aids such as charts or graphs can add to the presentation but should not overwhelm the audience with too much detail.)

- A clear statement of the purpose or objectives of the project (including the results you expect the project to produce)

- An outline of project activities (These should show an efficient use of funds and list who is responsible for carrying out each activity.)

- A projected budget

- A process for monitoring the activities and budget (This should include conducting a summative evaluation at the end of the project.)

- A timeline (including a final report to the funding source of the impact of the project)

Questions for Investors in Professional Development

Professional development activities represent a significant investment of time, energy, and money. Like any important investment, there are questions you should answer before you commit your resources. Once your questions have been answered, how much of a return you get depends on how much you invest. Here is a list of questions that can help you make a wise investment and a few suggestions for how to get more out of professional development by putting more into it.

❦ What are our priority needs?

❦ Who should be involved in planning the professional development activities that will address the priority needs?

❦ How will we communicate with others as we are planning the activities?

❦ Who can help us identify programs or services that are available and that meet our priority needs?

❦ Do we need to obtain a commitment from those who will participate before we conclude our planning?

❦ What are our objectives for these professional development activities?

❦ Who will take responsibility for identifying and communicating with the presenter(s)/trainer(s)?

❦ How can we help teachers prepare for the activities?

❦ How can we provide continual assistance to teachers after they complete these activities?

❦ How will we evaluate the impact of these professional development activities?

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Key Idea
You can increase the impact of professional development activities by preparing thoroughly before the activity, participating actively during the activity, and putting what you learned to use as soon as possible.

Getting the Most from Your Investment

There are several things you can do to get the maximum benefit from your investment in professional development. These suggestions are a detailed expansion of the Before-During-After Model (Pike, 1994), identifying what you can do before, during, and after professional development activities. They are divided by roles, and suggestions are included for participants and principals or professional development coordinators. Expectations for the person delivering the activity are also included. If you are responsible for making arrangements with the presenter, you should let the him or her know well in advance of the first session what you expect.

Participants

Before the Activity

* Make sure your input is used in the planning of the activity. If you have completed a self-assessment, be sure this information is provided to those who are planning the activity.

* Become familiar with the topics to be covered during the activity. Find at least one article or book dealing with the topics. Read it and share it with someone else who will be attending with you.

* Keep a list of questions that come up as you read about the topics. Discuss your questions with others who will be attending this activity.

* Plan your schedule carefully so no last-minute surprises will keep you from attending. If your class will be covered by a substitute, contact that person in advance and go over your plans and routines. Tell him or her what you expect a substitute to do and whom he or she can call if help is needed during the day.

* Remind your principal or department chairperson you will be attending the activity.

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During the Activity

- Arrive early so you can be sure to find the room and be ready to start on time. Look for an agenda and other materials that may be available for you to pick up as you enter the room. Greet others as they come in, and talk about what you expect to learn. You may want to look for someone to work with you on implementing what you learn when you return to school.

- Look over the agenda to see if the presenter has planned to address any of the questions you thought of as you prepared for the activity. Asking your questions at the right time will help everyone get more out of the experience. Asking them at the wrong time could be distracting.

- Participate actively and encourage others to do so. If you are given opportunities to practice new skills, use those opportunities to get feedback from others on how well you are able to follow the model that was presented.

- Think about how the topic could be applied in your classroom. Make notes to help you remember as much as possible. During breaks, ask others how they plan to apply what they are learning.

- Write out what you intend to do to put what you have learned into practice in your classroom.

After the Activity

- Find someone who will work with you as a peer coach or partner as you implement the new practices you learned.

- Think about breaking down the new practices into manageable pieces and put them into action on a planned schedule.

- Stay in touch with others who attended the same activity. Talk with them about how you are using what you learned, and ask one of them to watch you use the new practices and talk with you about what they see.

Principals or Professional Development Coordinators

Before the Activity

- ❦ Make sure teachers' input is used in the planning of the activity. If they have completed a self-assessment, be sure this information is provided to those who are planning the activity. Touch base with the presenters often.

- ❦ Plan to attend the sessions yourself, and let others know you will be there. Put announcements and reminders where everyone can see them. Stop by and speak to each person who has signed up, and let them know you are pleased they will be participating.

- ❦ Become familiar with the topics to be covered during the activity. Find at least one article or book dealing with the topics. Read it and share it with those who will be attending the activity.

- ❦ Keep a list of questions that come up as you read about the topics. Discuss your questions with those who will be attending this activity.

- ❦ Plan your schedule carefully so that no last-minute surprises will keep you from attending. Make sure arrangements are made for all of the teachers who signed up to attend.

- ❦ Remind your direct supervisor you are attending the activity.

During the Activity

- ❦ Arrive early so you can be sure to find the room, and be ready to start on time. Look for an agenda and other materials that may be available for you to pick up as you enter the room. Greet others as they come in, and talk about what you expect to learn.

- ❦ Look over the agenda to see if the presenter has planned to address any of the questions you thought of as you prepared for the activity. Asking your questions at the right time will help everyone get more out of the experience. Asking them at the wrong time could be distracting.

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🐞 Participate actively and encourage others to do so. If you are given opportunities to practice new skills, use those opportunities to get feedback from others on how well you are able to follow the model that was presented. Teachers will appreciate that you are willing to try new ideas in front of them and others.

🐞 Think about how the topic could be applied by your teachers. Make notes to help you remember as much as possible. During breaks, ask others how they plan to apply what they are learning.

🐞 Write out what you intend to do to help teachers put what they have learned into practice in their classrooms.

After the Activity

🐞 Help teachers find someone who will work with them as a peer coach or partner as they implement the new practices they learned.

🐞 Think about how to break down the new practices into manageable pieces, so teachers can put them into action on a planned schedule.

🐞 Give teachers an opportunity to share what they learned with others on your faculty.

🐞 Go over the session evaluations.

Presenters or Facilitators

Before the Activity

🐞 Make sure teachers' input is used in the planning of the activity. If they have completed a self-assessment, be sure this information is provided to you in time to put it to use in planning. Tailor your presentation to the group.

🐞 Practice modeling the skills you will be presenting. Ask someone to watch you and give you feedback on how well your performance matches the model. Read as much as you can about the skills you will be presenting so you are knowledgeable as well as experienced in using them. Anticipate the questions you will be asked,

especially "what do you do if..." questions that focus on practical application.

* Find out who will be among the participants. Contact them if you can to find out what they expect and if they have any questions.

* Make a list of materials and equipment you will need, and make sure everything is ready and working well in advance.

* Set the room up ahead of time so that you will be comfortable and can concentrate on greeting the participants as they enter.

* Let the participants' principal know who is attending the activity and what you expect them to be able to do when they have completed the activity.

During the Activity
* Arrive early so you can be sure to find the room, and be ready to start on time. Set out an agenda and other materials for them to pick up as they enter the room. Greet the participants as they come in, and talk about what they expect to learn.

* Go over the agenda and let them know you plan to address the questions they thought of as they prepared for the activity. Start on time!

* Encourage plenty of participation. Don't dominate the discussion, and don't read overheads to them Model the skills you want them to learn.

* Be accessible during breaks and lunch. The informal discussions that occur then can be very helpful.

* Write out what you intend to do to help teachers put what they have learned into practice in their classrooms. Ask them to write what they intend to do and who they think can help them.

- After the Activity
  - ♥ Offer to help teachers find someone who will work with them as a peer coach or partner, someone to talk with as they implement the new practices they learned.

  - ♥ Establish a way for participants to contact you with questions. Be prepared to offer a refresher if asked.

  - ♥ Talk with the principal about ways to improve the transfer of new practices to the classroom and ways to help teachers feel secure in taking the risks associated with trying something new.

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Providing Continual Assistance

*T*his chapter explores two of the most promising forms of continual assistance: peer coaching and a robust form of collaboration called joint work. These ideas are promising because they are productive and cost-effective. If some form of continual assistance is necessary as research and teacher experience tell us, then effective and relatively inexpensive methods of providing it are worth pursuing.

Continual assistance involves you in interacting with one or more of your fellow teachers or other resource persons to provide you with the following:

- Clarification or additional information about aspects of new skills or knowledge

- A high-quality model or demonstrations of new skills or knowledge

- Collection and analysis of information on how students are responding to new materials or instructional practices

- Collaborative planning and sharing of materials

- Ideas for applying new skills or knowledge in new ways and new situations

- Ideas for materials and how to use them effectively

- Encouragement, support, and (to some extent) pressure

The justification for providing continual assistance is based on several points. First of all, "...practitioners often need more than one year to grow comfortable with any change.

Key Idea

Continual assistance is necessary to help teachers implement, refine, and master new practices successfully. It should be characteristic of the school's culture and climate that this kind of assistance is available and that teachers are expected to participate in providing and receiving it.

For the majority of teachers, the first year is a time of trial and experimentation" (Guskey, 1990). Support during this period of experimentation is essential. Without it, Guskey (1986) reports, many teachers will not be able to see the potential benefits of a new strategy or program and are less likely to stay with the new strategy long enough to refine their use of it. They "...will abandon their efforts and return to the old familiar strategies they have used in the past." Joyce and Showers (1988) make a similar claim that learning a new strategy "...will require 20 or 25 trials and the assistance of someone who can help us analyze the students' responses and enable us to stick with the process until we have executive control over our new skill." Immediate, sustained practice is needed for teachers to begin using a new skill in the classroom. Without support, it is unlikely that teachers will overcome the anxiety related to attempting new ways of teaching, and they may not even begin to practice (Joyce and Showers, 1995).

Continual assistance is important because teaching is a difficult, complex endeavor. Little (1996) supports this justification for continual assistance in this way:

> ...the need for ongoing learning, problem-solving, collaboration, and experimentation results not from the deficiency of the teacher but from the inherent complexity of teaching. And further, it assumes that good teaching and more uniformly high levels of student achievement cannot be accomplished by teachers working alone.

Two forms of continual assistance are discussed here in greater detail. Peer coaching and a type of collaborative activity described as "joint work" are examples of continual assistance that can produce multiple benefits for teachers and students.

Peer Coaching

"The actual organization of peer coaching is relatively simple—peer coaches need time to watch each other work and time to talk" (Joyce and Showers, 1988). In this brief statement, Joyce and Showers reveal key principles of peer coaching. First, peer coaches learn from *watching* each other

teach. As you watch a colleague's teaching performance, you mentally rehearse the model that was presented during training and compare it to what is being demonstrated in your partner's classroom. The act of analysis that is part of observing increases your understanding of the practices being demonstrated. When you observe a colleague teaching, *you* are learning from the teaching performance of your partner.

The coaching analogy drawn from athletic coaching, where an older, more experienced person instructs and critiques the performance of the younger athlete—while not actually performing himself/herself—is *not* the pattern for peer coaching. Feedback following observations of teaching has been omitted from the Joyce and Showers coaching model (Joyce and Showers, 1995). Providing technical feedback requires training that is beyond what could be reasonably expected of teachers who are attempting to learn to use the same practices they are observing others use. Also, eliminating feedback in coaching "has not depressed implementation or student growth" (Joyce, et al., 1989).

Another key principle is you and your colleagues need a common understanding of the theory and concepts that make up the teaching practices you are studying and a common language so your talk is more productive. These things are achieved through shared training experiences. In addition to building understanding of the theoretical base for new skills and knowledge, training provides opportunities for you and your fellow teachers to watch carefully as an expert demonstrates the performance of the new strategy and opportunities to practice in a relatively safe environment. The training experience precedes coaching and provides the language and skills you will need to continue to learn when you return to your classroom.

Joyce and Showers (1988) identify these characteristics that further describe peer coaching:

> Peer coaching is an extension of training. It brings the understandings gained through training to application and analysis in the classroom.

- ✤ Peer coaching is a continual study of teaching. When a particular skill or strategy has been mastered, another topic is identified, and the cycle begins again. Partnerships among individual teachers may end, and new partnerships may form, but the cycle of coaching is continual.

- ✤ Peer coaching is experimental. It involves trial and analysis of results related to all areas of teaching. You work toward "technical mastery" and the deeper understandings that guide the appropriate use (referred to as "executive control") of the new strategy or practice.

- ✤ Peer coaching is separate from evaluation. The information collected and analyzed in the peer-coaching relationship is not used to make summative judgments about the level or quality of performance of either partner.

What are the direct benefits to teachers of participating in peer coaching?

- ✤ Teachers who participate in peer coaching practice new skills more frequently and persist in using them through the difficult early stages of putting new skills into use. Teachers who are not involved in peer coaching may say they intend to use what they learned during training, but there is little evidence they actually follow through and make the new strategy a part of their repertoire (Showers, 1982).

- ✤ Peer coaches are able to apply new strategies to content and situations that differ from those they observed during training. Teachers who are not peer coaches are less able to transfer what they learned to new and different situations (Showers, 1984).

- ✤ Skills and knowledge are retained longer by peer coaches than by teachers who are not peer coaches. This is probably related to a lack of use over time by the "uncoached" teachers (Baker and Showers, 1984). With-

out the support of a peer coach, teachers frequently return to the strategies with which they are more familiar.

- ❧ Coaching facilitates the development of professional and collegial relationships that are based on shared language and a school culture that promotes continual improvement. It reduces isolation and encourages teachers to explore important issues together in an atmosphere of openness (Little, 1982; Garmston, 1987; Ponticell, 1995).

- ❧ Peer coaching provides teachers with a clearer picture of their own teaching performance and where it could be improved (Ponticell, 1995).

- ❧ Teachers scored significantly higher on variables associated with planning, instruction, and self-assessment as a result of participating in peer coaching (Phelps, 1986).

Collaboration and Collegiality

While there is strong evidence that peer coaching is effective in supporting teachers as they implement new practices and skills acquired through training, it is also appropriate for broader, more complex approaches to reform in which there are multiple innovations to be put into place. The elements of peer coaching and other strategies considered fruitful in supporting more complex reform initiatives build collegial relationships and norms of shared responsibility for teacher and student learning. Hargreaves (1995) writes that one of the most promising of "...these emergent strategies of teacher development is the principle of collaboration and collegiality."

What is the "principle of collaboration and collegiality"? This principle "...goes well beyond a loosely constructed sense of 'getting along' and 'working well together'" (Little, 1990). Collaboration and collegiality describe interactions among teachers that have these three characteristics:

- ❧ They involve a sharing of the responsibilities for tasks related to teaching and/or the improvement of teaching.

❦ They demonstrate a willingness to expose one's teaching performance as well as one's beliefs about teaching and learning to the scrutiny of others.

❦ They produce collective action.

When you and your fellow teachers develop a unit of instruction together, assigning some tasks to individuals or sub-groups so the final product is constructed of the work of many, and no one person was responsible for all of the pieces, then you have collaborated in the development of this unit. You shared the responsibility for creating it. Likewise, when teachers share the responsibility for certain outcomes, but individuals or sub-groups contribute different things to the effort, they are collaborating. For example, when a group of teachers from a middle school agrees to work toward improving students' ability to learn through reading in the content areas, they will not all take the same actions in supporting that goal. But, because they share the responsibility for achieving it, they are collaborating.

As teachers enter into an open exchange of ideas for improving students' ability to apply problem-solving strategies to real-world problems, they are opening themselves and their practices up to examination by their peers. This is another form of collaboration and collegiality. Finally, when teachers at an elementary school agree that they will begin each day by reading aloud to students to enrich their exposure to good children's literature, they are collaborating by acting collectively.

How does collaboration benefit teachers and their students? Advocates of collaboration and collegiality describe many worthwhile benefits from engaging in activities like those described above. Some of the benefits that pertain to improving the effectiveness of professional development activities are listed here.

❦ Collaboration and collegiality *provide moral support* for teachers who are experimenting with new strategies or participating in substantial reform projects. While moral

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support is described as a "weaker" form of collaboration, it can be significant when you feel you are moving in uncharted waters.

❦ Coordination of activities through collaboration *improves the efficiency* of school faculties or groups of teachers who are involved in overlapping tasks. It can help you and your fellow teachers *avoid duplication and redundancy* in your curriculum and instructional practices. Elementary teachers may find through collaborative study of their curriculum they are teaching units on dinosaurs in kindergarten as well as in second and third grades. Secondary social studies and language arts teachers may find they are both using historical literature as a theme to help students interpret the content of their courses. Coordinating these aspects of the curriculum can improve the quality of experiences for students.

❦ Collaboration can impact student achievement by bringing about improvement in your teaching practices. This *improved effectiveness* can result from being willing to take risks and try new strategies or from having access to a greater variety of strategies and approaches through collaboration with your peers. Collaboration may even improve teachers' sense of efficacy (Ashton and Webb, 1986).

❦ You are more likely to *reflect upon your own practices* if you are involved in collaborative dialogue about teaching. If the collaboration includes observing fellow teachers teach, then you are able to see your own teaching in the light of what you saw in your colleague's classroom. This makes reflection more useful in that you have concrete models with which to compare your own performance (Joyce and Showers, 1988).

❦ There are many features of schools that contribute to the isolation of teachers from one another. Elementary schools are referred to as having "insulated egg-crate classrooms" (Lortie, 1975). This rather descriptive phrase refers to the isolation of teachers within their

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own classrooms with little opportunity for contact with peers. Secondary teachers are segregated by department lines. Collaboration across these lines or across classrooms gives teachers *many more opportunities to learn.* Hargreaves (1995) shares these examples:

> ...teachers in one department who felt insecure and alone experimenting with changes like cooperative learning could be unaware that similar changes (and the sources of expertise and moral support that accompanied them) were available in other departments. Similarly, teachers facing a forthcoming provincial mandate to destream or detrack Grade 9, and unclear as to what destreamed classes would look like and what skills were required to teach them, were unaware that destreamed classes already existed in their own school in other subjects.

❦ Collaboration *promotes a norm of continual improvement.* Reflecting on current practice and seeking ways to do things better creates a culture that sees planned change as an expectation of the professional staff. It helps you view change as a never-ending process. You can see improvement as a journey, not a destination.

Using collaboration as a form of continual assistance is not without pitfalls or problems. If you want the benefits of collaboration, you should be aware of the following situations and use care to avoid them:

❦ Engaging in collaborative activities because it sounds so progressive, yet without a clear and direct link to professional development and the improvement of teaching and learning.

❦ Confining collaboration to providing moral support and the exchange of materials without interaction about their use—these are safe and comfortable areas that allow teachers to "collaborate" without addressing classroom practices or topics that might bring confrontation among peers (Little, 1990).

❧ Using collaboration to produce conformity rather than unity.

❧ Forcing collaboration as an administrative requirement—mandating that teachers collaborate during their planning periods is a sure way to make teachers lose interest in the shared work of teaching. Requiring the use of collaboration to aid the implementation of mandated programs is also a form of forced collaboration.

Judith Warren Little (1990) describes four types of teacher activities that can be labeled collaboration. She has ordered them from weakest to strongest in terms of their capacity to influence teaching and learning. Examining the three weaker types of collaboration will enable you to identify the critical features that make joint work the most powerful form of collaborative activity for teachers.

Story-Telling as Collaboration

This type of collaboration occurs when you use the exchange of stories about teaching, students, and other aspects of your professional life to obtain information and reassurance. You may seek an answer to a question or problem related to your own practices through this exchange, but the request may be hidden "between the lines." For example, a teacher who would like to learn more effective strategies for dealing with students who do not turn in their work may tell a story of a student's particularly humorous excuse for not having an assignment, hoping his or her colleagues will share similar anecdotes that include solutions that worked well for them.

In seeking reassurance, a teacher may share a vignette from his or her classroom that will elicit comments that reinforce the teacher's actions as described. This reassurance, the expression of agreement with the teacher's action, can solidify a pattern of behavior. Responses from fellow teachers that do not provide reassurance can cause a teacher to reexamine or even abandon a particular practice. Or, the teacher may give up on using story-telling to gain reassurance.

We know that story-telling exerts some influence on teachers' classroom practice, but this influence may be relatively weak. Three things work to reduce the impact of story-telling exchanges: first, the stories may offer "...only incomplete accounts of complex and subtle performances..." (Little, 1990). That is, teachers are rarely able to communicate through story-telling the depth of their thinking or the principles that guide their teaching. Second, story-telling may have purposes other than the improvement of practice. For example, the exchange of stories may be an attempt to excuse or defend teachers' practices that are under attack. Finally, a school where story-telling is the primary way teachers interact may have a culture that frowns on asking for or giving assistance. Story-telling then becomes a poor substitute for activities that provide an exchange of ideas on teaching.

Aid and Assistance as Collaboration

Collaboration that fits into this category ranges from a teacher asking another for help or advice to the more formal relationships found in teacher induction programs, mentoring programs, and career ladder plans. When advice can be sought without loss of professional standing and given without arousing indignation, stimulating questions and dialogue can increase the understanding of teaching practices for all teachers. (See the sections dealing with learning communities in Chapter Two for conditions that support this situation.)

Even in situations in which roles of help-seeker and help-giver are established by a formal program such as a new teacher induction program, the school culture can depress or enhance the exchange of information. The examples that follow show two different responses to the same request for help. One response comes from a teacher whose school culture encourages mutual assistance and one from a teacher who works in a very different culture.

Example #1

> **Beginning Teacher:** I'm having trouble keeping everyone's attention at the beginning of my lessons. It

seems like they're with me for a while, but before too
long some of them are tuning me out. Can you help me?

Mentor Teacher A: I have had trouble with that, too.
What strategies have you tried to keep their attention?

Beginning Teacher: I've tried using visual aids. I've
tried making the introductions short. I've even tried
using questions to get them involved right away. Noth-
ing seems to work for very long.

Mentor Teacher A: Maybe I can get someone to cover
my class so I can watch how you get your lessons
started. In the meantime, let's ask the others in our
department how they handle this situation. I'll bet we
can get some good tips!

Example #2

Beginning Teacher: I'm having trouble keeping
everyone's attention at the beginning of my lessons. It
seems like they're with me for a while, but before too
long some of them are tuning me out. Can you help me?

Mentor Teacher B: These kids! You just need to tell
them over and over again to pay attention. It's not your
fault. You're doing fine.

The response of the mentor teacher in the second example
reveals a school culture that has strong norms of privacy and
non-interference. At this school, new teachers learn quickly
that asking for help will make everyone uneasy.

Sharing as Collaboration
Sharing, as a type of collaboration, occurs when you allow
others to examine and/or use your materials and when you
participate in an exchange of ideas, opinions, and practices.
A primary benefit of sharing is an expansion of the pool of
materials and practices you can use in your classroom.
Additional benefits are gained when sharing provides you
with active, lively discussions of choices, priorities, and

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guiding principles. Sharing goes beyond asking for and/or giving advice in that it can provide a broader, more in-depth look at teaching styles and classroom decisionmaking.

Sharing may vary in how it is structured and what it produces. That is, sharing may arise from a need felt by teachers or be mandated by the department or team leader, principal, or district staff. Teachers may share their materials and ideas liberally, or they may keep their "best stuff" to themselves. Others may view sharing as a way to compete with other teachers to see who has the best ideas. Yet, with all of these possible shortcomings, sharing retains potential for influencing teacher motivation and practice that is greater than either storytelling or aid and assistance.

Joint Work as Collaboration

Joint work requires a deeper level of collaboration. When you share responsibility for multiple aspects of teaching such as planning, problem-solving, curriculum development, and assessment of student progress, you are participating in joint work. The product of this joint work may be the selection of a course of action all will follow or a list of principles that will guide the actions of individual teachers. For example, teachers at a middle school observed that students' ability to understand what they read in their textbooks was decreasing each year. They outlined a plan to investigate this decline and to develop a schoolwide response. They met regularly during the investigation into the problem to share insights they had gained. The plan they created involved every teacher in providing support to students through pre-reading activities and other ideas for teaching reading in the various content areas. Student progress was monitored and the feedback shared with all teachers. The *collective* nature of the original concern, the investigation and the action taken make this an example of joint work.

Teachers are motivated to participate in joint work when they feel success cannot be achieved by individual teachers acting independently. This is in conflict with widely accepted norms of autonomy for individual teachers. In joint work, your actions may be examined by others in a way that

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does not occur in other forms of collaboration. In other words, by becoming a part of a team effort, you sacrifice some degree of autonomy in order to gain the power and impact of collective action.

This example of joint work illustrates several key points that distinguish joint work from other forms of collaboration.

Example: Joint Work as Collaboration

Teachers in the English Department of a large, urban high school became aware students believed the journalism classes failed to provide meaningful opportunities to practice what was being taught. These teachers went to colleagues in the Social Studies Department and proposed a jointly-developed unit on local elections in which students of American government and journalism would study and report on local elections as if they were covering them for a local newspaper. They agreed to work together to develop a list of objectives for the unit that reflected the interdisciplinary nature of the project. They also agreed to use a type of joint work to develop, teach, and assess the unit. Here is a description of how they worked together to accomplish this task.

At their initial planning meeting, faculty members from both departments brainstormed a list of objectives for the unit. They looked for objectives that would incorporate desirable outcomes for both courses, American government and journalism. Then they prioritized those objectives, noting those that would be intermediate steps toward the broader objectives. Even though teachers from both departments had made a commitment to collaboration on this unit, there was some conflict at this first meeting. The wording of several of the objectives was debated at length. One group of teachers felt the objectives, as stated, were not going to be measurable. Another group was comfortable with the wording of the initial drafts, holding the view they would be able to determine when students had achieved those objectives even if the wording did not give clear direction on how they would be measured. The debate remained at a professional level, and by the end of the meeting, a

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consensus had been reached on wording that was measurable, without being too restrictive for those teachers who preferred a more open-ended way of assessing objectives.

The group saw from the decisions made at the first meeting some procedural guidelines might be helpful. They agreed consensus would be the goal for all decisions, but if consensus was not possible, the two department chairs and the assistant principal for instruction would try to reach a compromise. Despite the minor conflict over the wording of the objectives, there was a great deal of enthusiasm being generated by the project. Teachers from each department were excited about what they were learning from their colleagues. They began to realize there had been little communication between the two groups prior to this project, and they wanted to continue to learn from each other even after this unit was completed. Even with this excitement, some of the teachers were experiencing a certain amount of awkwardness at sharing their ideas in a forum where they might receive criticism. For many, placing their practices and suggestions for new practices out for open review was quite frightening.

At subsequent meetings, the activities and materials that would comprise the unit began to take shape. They continued to experience a mixture of conflict and cooperation as they worked through the planning of the unit. As the teaching phase of the unit approached, some teachers began to feel uncomfortable that their colleagues were prescribing how certain activities would be conducted. Also, the timing of many of the activities was decided by the group so a logical and necessary sequence would be followed. This caused further concern for those teachers who were accustomed to near complete control over their own planning and teaching. Because the group had established a policy of openness from the outset, these teachers felt little reluctance to express their concerns at the next team meeting. The discussion that followed was an intense exploration of what it

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meant to be a teacher and how to strike a balance between individual autonomy and collective planning and teaching. In the end, the teachers agreed to look for ways to maintain individual preferences for how lessons were taught while abiding by the collective decisions related to the unit. But if these were in conflict, they agreed the collective decision would take precedence.

As the unit began, teachers implemented the team's decisions on how the unit was introduced to students, the sequence in which activities would be conducted and who would conduct them, which materials would be used, how student learning was to be assessed and reported to the team, and how they would communicate with each other during the unit.

When the unit was completed, the team got together to talk about the unit and the process of joint work that was used to create and evaluate it. All agreed the objectives of the unit had been accomplished and students were motivated and engaged by the activities that took place. However, it was the process that had caught the teachers' imagination. It had energized them and caused them to reassess many aspects of their own teaching. They were eager to enter into new joint projects with other members of their faculty. They found in addition to producing greater student learning, the joint development of new curriculum and instructional practices had provided many unexpected benefits for the participating teachers.

Using joint work to support professional development and provide continual assistance

Using the five stages of the Development/Improvement model discussed earlier, Figure 5.1 illustrates the use of joint work as a backdrop for effective professional development.

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Figure 5.1

Illustrating Joint Work Using the Development/Improvement Model

Stages of the Development / Improvement Model	Joint-Work Activities
A problem or need is identified.	A group of teachers who share the same students meet to analyze student achievement data and prioritize the strengths and weaknesses they find.
A plan of action to address the problem or need is developed.	The teachers use a group problem-solving strategy to write a problem statement, identify possible root causes, and brainstorm a list of corrective actions.
New skills and/or knowledge needed to implement the plan of action are identified and plans for acquiring them are added to the plan of action.	Several study teams are formed to acquire new skills and knowledge needed to put the corrective actions into place. One team will attend a workshop and train the remaining teachers once they have mastered the skill themselves. Other teams already possess other skills needed to implement the new strategies, and they will share their expertise with their fellow teachers on a one-to-one basis.
The plan is implemented.	All teachers in the original group are involved in implementing the new strategies. They meet every other week to share successes and problems.
The results of the plan's implementation are assessed.	When the teachers have had adequate time to master the new strategies and have been using them long enough for students to be impacted, the group compares student achievement data with the original data collected prior to the implementation of their plan.

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Reading More about Providing Continual Assistance

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Activity 5.1
Evaluating the Continual Assistance Provided to You

Think of a recent professional development activity in which you learned a new instructional strategy. Use the list below to "check-off" which types of continual assistance were provided to support your use of the new strategy. Then respond to the questions that follow the list.

Examples of Continual Assistance I Received

❏ A teacher who attended the same training clarified some aspect of the strategy for me.

❏ I observed a teacher demonstrate the new strategy in his or her classroom.

❏ The trainer or another "expert" was available for questions and follow-up sessions.

❏ I worked with other teachers to collect and/or analyze information on how students were responding to the new strategy.

❏ I collaborated with at least one other teacher in planning to use the new strategy.

❏ Another teacher shared materials with me for use with this strategy.

❏ A teacher gave me an idea for applying the new strategy in a new way or in a situation different from the ones used as examples in the training activity.

❏ A teacher gave me an idea for using materials with the new strategy in a new way or in a situation different from the ones used as examples in the training activity.

❏ Someone gave me encouragement and/or moral support related to my use of the new strategy.

❏ Someone exerted pressure upon me to use the new strategy or to use it more effectively.

❏ I engaged in problem-solving related to the new strategy with other teachers.

❏ Someone made me feel less anxious so I would keep trying the new strategy, even when things weren't going well.

❏ Another teacher was very open in talking about his or her use of the new strategy.

❏ Other teachers made me feel like we were "in this together" when it came to using the new strategy.

❏ Planning and talking with other teachers about the new strategy made me think more objectively about my own use of the strategy.

❏ I joined a study group to help myself and to help others implement this strategy.

Discussion Questions
Why were some types of continual assistance not available to you?

Which types of continual assistance that you did not receive would have been the most useful to you? Why?

How can these types of continual assistance be provided for future professional development activities?

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Assessing and Monitoring Progress

he evaluation of professional development utilizes both formative and summative evaluation (Joyce and Showers, 1988; Guskey and Sparks, 1991; National Staff Development Council, 1995). The formative aspects provide information to those who are planning and providing professional development activities to enable them to monitor and improve the quality of the activities. As such, formative evaluation must occur prior to and during the activities. Summative evaluation addresses the impact or results of the activities. This type of evaluation involves comparing the situation that exists after you have completed the professional development activities, and sufficient time has passed for the results to appear with the situation that existed prior to the activities.

Joyce and Showers (1988) reported several reasons why the evaluation of professional development activities is difficult.

* The actual implementation of new practices is impacted significantly by the context or climate of the school. A school where teachers provide support for one another, share responsibility for student achievement, and engage in collective problem-solving is more likely to sustain the effort needed to bring about real improvements (Little, 1982). The evaluation of a professional development activity must take into account this context, or the results might be misleading.

* Professional development activities impact student achievement through a "chain of events." This chain begins with the identification of significant needs and continues with the selection of high-quality content and

Key Idea

The evaluation of professional development deals with determining the potential value of a program or activity, keeping the professional development activity on track as teachers work through it, and assessing its impact on teachers, students, and the school after teachers have had adequate time to implement new practices. Evaluation of professional development is made more difficult by the influence of the school's culture and the fact that professional development impacts student achievement through a "chain of

Continued

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the most appropriate delivery model, the provision of opportunities to practice with feedback and support, and adequate time to implement the new practices. If any link in this chain is broken, the impact on student achievement is reduced.

❦ Measuring the different variables is "technically difficult." For example, sometimes relevant data on changes in teachers' practices can be collected only through observation that requires extensive training. Also, assessment of student achievement on the specific objectives of the professional development program may require the development of new assessment instruments or procedures.

❦ Much of the current evaluation of professional development activities is based on the opinions of participants concerning their attitudes towards the activities and/or the presenters. Dramatic changes in how professional development is evaluated may not be readily understood or accepted.

Overcoming these difficulties will not be easy, but it is possible. To do so requires you to adopt a comprehensive approach to evaluating professional development activities. Such an approach is outlined here.

Guskey and Sparks (1991) have created a model that describes the relationship between student outcomes and professional development programs. It includes four major elements: program content, program quality, context, and student outcomes. The first three elements impact the professional development activity's ability to produce changes in the fourth element, student outcomes. These first three elements are the focus of formative evaluation activities. The following sections describe how you can conduct an evaluation of a program's content and quality as well as the context within which the professional development activity will be delivered.

Evaluating Program Content

Evaluating program content involves investigating the research evidence that supports an innovation or program "...before investing precious staff development resources in it" (Guskey and Sparks, 1991). The content of professional development activities should be research-based, make sense to teachers, be relevant to the needs of students and teachers, and be compatible with other aspects of teachers' practices.

Program content selected for implementation should be proven to produce gains in student learning with students similar to those in your school. The type of proof offered is significant. There is a difference between programs that have been proven effective in well-designed studies and those that "should be effective" because the authors studied relevant educational research prior to developing their program.

While it is true that teachers' commitment to a program frequently increases *after* they have begun using it, the program must make sense to teachers initially (Guskey, 1986). New practices that violate or disregard teachers' understandings of the principles of teaching and learning are not likely to be used in the classroom.

The content of professional development activities should reflect the needs and interests of you, your fellow teachers, and your students. Your needs can be identified effectively through self-assessment. Needs identified through efforts to understand and improve your own practice bring out the deepest commitment to change and the most meaningful participation in professional development activities (Duke, et al., 1994).

Student needs should be identified through the collective study of student work. That is, you and your fellow teachers should jointly study evidence of student performance. Information sources for identifying student needs include grades, discipline referrals, standardized tests, teacher-made tests, and work samples. You will find information from

these sources can be analyzed more readily by displaying the data in a table, chart, or graph that breaks down the data by gender or race. The importance of basing the selection of content for professional development activities upon this kind of thoughtful, collective inquiry into student learning cannot be overemphasized.

Program content should be selected with these needs in mind, but it is unlikely that an innovation will be able to meet those needs without some modification or adaptation to fit the context of the school. Little (1993) expands this idea when she writes:

> ...it requires that teachers and others with whom they work enjoy the latitude to invent local solutions—to discover and develop practices that embody central values and principles, rather than to "implement" or "adopt" or "demonstrate" practices thought to be universally effective. This assertion acknowledges both the uncertainty surrounding best practice and the complexity of local contexts.

Here are some questions to guide your evaluation of program content:

❧ What results have been achieved when this program content was implemented with students similar to ours?

❧ At what points is the program content in agreement with our beliefs about teaching and learning? At what points does the program content differ with our beliefs?

❧ What specific student and/or teacher need(s) does this program content address? Are these high-priority needs?

❧ At what points is the program content aligned with how we do things? At what points is the program content in conflict with how we do things?

Evaluating Program Quality

Program quality refers to how the program's design compares with what you know about effective professional

development activities. For example, a well-designed training activity will include a clear and specific presentation of the theory that supports the new practices, modeling or demonstrations, practice for participants in a low-risk environment, and coaching or other forms of support during application in the your classroom.

Here are some questions to guide your evaluation of program quality:

- Which model of professional development was used to design the program?

- Is this model appropriate for the intended outcomes?

- Are all elements of the model included?

- Does the program's design include inquiry into how learning can be improved?

- Does the program's design have a problem-solving focus?

Evaluating Context Factors

Context factors such as the level of support and trust that surrounds you when you are implementing the new practices, the amount of continual assistance that is provided, and the presence of collaboration and collegiality impact the success of professional development activities (Little, 1982). For example, a program that depends on collaborative planning among teachers who share the same students might not be implemented as effectively at your school if your schedule does not include time for such activities.

The following are questions to guide your evaluation of context factors:

- What actions demonstrate the extent of the faculty's shared responsibility for student learning?

- How and when is time provided for professional development activities, especially joint-work activities?

- What information is available to teachers concerning student achievement?

- What professional development resources (including books and journals) are available to teachers?

- How do teachers get feedback on their teaching performance?

- How would you rate the support from administration and fellow teachers for your learning?

There are two tools for formative evaluation of professional development activities included in this *Hot Topic*. The first serves as a screening of potential professional development activities or programs, so the limited resources available to support your professional development will be used most effectively. The *Selection/Planning Evaluation Instrument* looks at the first three elements of the model proposed by Guskey and Sparks. It measures the extent to which the activity/program addresses priority needs you identified, whether or not it will be delivered through a model that is appropriate for the intended outcomes, how well-designed the activity/program is, and whether or not the content is supported or validated by educational research. Finally, the form asks you to give a score to the context or climate of your school to determine how well the activity/program will be supported. A brief explanation or a reference to another section of this *Hot Topic* is provided for each item to help you arrive at a valid score for the activity/program being evaluated.

An Additional Formative Evaluation Tool

The second evaluation tool collects information *during* an activity/program so those who are providing or delivering the professional development activity can make adjustments in its structure, pace, content, and presentation. Obviously, this type of evaluation is of less use when the activity is a one-time training session where there is little opportunity for "mid-course adjustments." However, if the activity/program extends over several weeks or months, this type of evaluation can serve as a guide to keep the activity/program on track.

Activity 6.1

Practice in Evaluating Potential Professional Development Programs

Use the evaluation instrument to assess an upcoming or recently completed professional development activity. Compare your responses to those made by fellow teachers and discuss differences and similarities in your ratings.

Evaluating Professional Development: Selection/Planning Evaluation Instrument

Directions for Use: Record a score for each item in the box below the last alternative. Total the scores to give an overall rating to this activity/program. An explanation or a reference to the appropriate section of this document related to each item appears in the right-hand column.

Directions for Scoring: Add up the scores for each individual item. If the total score for a particular activity/program is between 0 and 7, it is likely to be less effective in producing the desired outcomes. A total score between 8 and 17 is likely to be effective in bringing about the desired learning. If the activity/program is given a total score between 18 and 25, it is likely to be highly effective.

Professional Development Selection/Planning Evaluation Instrument

Evaluation Items	*Reference*
1. This professional development activity or program will be responsive to the needs of the teachers at our school. ❑ This activity/program does not address priority needs identified by our teachers. (0) ❑ This activity/program was selected by someone outside our school, but it does meet at least one of the priority needs identified by our teachers. (1) ❑ This activity/program was selected by our principal and/or teachers, and it meets one or more of the priority needs identified by our teachers. (3) ❑ This activity/program was designed by our principal and/or teachers, and it is tailored to meet one or more of the priority needs identified by our teachers. (5)	*Refer to Chapter 3 for ideas on determining priority needs.* ☐ = Score for #1
2. This professional development activity or program will be delivered through an appropriate model. ❑ This activity/program will be delivered through a model that has a low estimate of effectiveness for the outcome(s) it is intended to produce. (1) ❑ This activity/program will be delivered through a model that has a medium estimate of effectiveness for the outcome(s) it is intended to produce. (3) ❑ This activity/program will be delivered through a model that has a high estimate of effectiveness for the outcome(s) it is intended to produce. (5)	*Refer to Chapter 3 for an explanation of each model and the matrix that appears at the end of the chapter to find effectiveness estimates.* ☐ = Score for #2

3. The model is well-designed and includes all of the elements or steps recommended for this model of professional development.
    ❑   This activity/program will be delivered through a model that is poorly designed and lacks the elements or steps recommended for this model. (0)
    ❑   This activity/program will be delivered through a model that is adequately designed and includes some of the elements or steps recommended for this model. (1)
    ❑   This activity/program will be delivered through a model that is well-designed and includes almost all of the elements or steps recommended for this model. (3)
    ❑   This activity/program will be delivered through a model that is well-designed and includes all of the elements or steps recommended for this model. (5)

Please refer to Chapter 3 for an explanation of the elements or components that should be used in each model.

☐ = Score for #3

4. The content of this professional development activity or program is supported or has been validated by sound research.
    ❑   The content of this activity/program is not supported or validated by research. (0)
    ❑   The content of this activity/program is supported by a limited amount of research. (1)
    ❑   The content of this activity/program is supported by a significant amount of research. (3)
    ❑   The content of this activity/program has been validated by research. (5)

Refer to Chapter 6. Content that "should be effective" is supported by research. Content that has been "proven effective" is validated by research.

☐ = Score for #4

5. Check the items from the following list that are in place to support this professional development activity or program *(each item is worth 1 point)*.
    ❑   There will be opportunities for teachers to discuss this activity/program and to work together on its implementation.
    ❑   Communication concerning this activity/program is open and frequent.
    ❑   This activity/program matches our school's vision.
    ❑   The principal is actively supportive of this activity/program.
    ❑   The faculty feels that this activity/program will benefit themselves and others and are looking forward to participating in it.

This item addresses the context that supports successful professional development. These elements contribute to a strong context for change or indicate that such a context exists.

☐ = Score for #5

Total Score = ☐

The *Tool for Staying on Track*, which can be found in the appendix, asks you to read nine statements and circle a rating of *disagree, agree somewhat,* or *agree strongly* for each one. Space is provided for comments or suggestions related to each statement. The ratings and comments can be used by those providing or facilitating the professional development activity to revise what is being provided according to your needs. The tool can be used with a sample of participants after each session or with all participants at strategic times prior to the last session.

Evaluating Program Outcomes

In addition to outlining these elements of a model for evaluating professional development, Guskey and Sparks identify three types of outcomes that should be evaluated: (1) changes in participants, (2) changes in the organization, and (3) changes in students. These outcomes are examined through summative evaluation, that is, evaluation that seeks to make judgments about the impact or effectiveness of the professional development activity.

The purpose of professional development is to produce a desirable or intended change. This change may be in what you know, believe, or can do, or it may be a change in the organization and how it operates. Ultimately, the change(s) must impact your students. Measuring the change produced by professional development activities requires that you measure what you hope to change, prior to and after the activities. Even then, you may be measuring the impact of more than the professional development activity itself. However, the best chance you have to estimate the impact of professional development is by measuring key aspects of the need or condition being addressed before and after the activity is completed.

The grid lists four key questions for each of the possible target groups. These questions focus on identifying the need or condition to be addressed, how it was identified as a need, what change is intended, and how much change is eventually produced. The grid is not an evaluation tool in

the same way as the instrument mentioned previously; it is a guide for developing your own evaluation process.

A sample grid is provided for your review, and a blank grid is included for use in evaluating your own professional development activities.

Figure 6.1
Evaluating the Impact of Professional Development

Sample Grid
Key Questions to Guide the Evaluation of Professional Development Activities

Target or Group	What need will this activity address?	How was this need measured?	What change is this activity intended to produce?	How will this change be measured?
Teachers	Teachers need training and practice in strategies proven to be effective in improving reading achievement for at-risk students.	A survey was conducted in which teachers prioritized their professional development needs. Training and practice in reading strategies for at-risk students was the highest-rated need.	Teachers will be able to use the identified strategies with a high degree of effectiveness.	A large sample of teachers will be interviewed using the "Levels of Use" instrument from the "Concerns-Based Adoption Model" materials.
Students	Student achievement in reading among at-risk students has declined for three of the past four years.	A norm-referenced achievement test is given to all students each spring. Scores f· · at-risk students were broken out and analyzed to reveal this trend.	Reading achievement of at-risk students will improve.	The same norm-referenced test will continue to be given each spring and the results broken out to reveal the achievement for at-risk students as a sub-group.
Organization	The school needs to be responsive to the needs of all students.	Test scores of at-risk students declined while scores of other groups improved or remained stable.	The school will improve its awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of all students.	Test scores will be disaggregated, and the performance of all sub-groups will be identified and analyzed.

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Key Questions to Guide the Evaluation of Professional Development Activities

Target or Group	What need will this activity address?	How was this need measured?	What change is this activity intended to produce?	How will this change be measured?
Teachers				
Students				
Organization				

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The Role of National Standards in Evaluating Professional Development

The United States Department of Education and the National Staff Development Council have each developed a set of national standards for professional development. These standards may be used to evaluate currently available professional development activities and to assess the potential of future professional development experiences. Individual teachers may use the standards to make decisions about participation in upcoming professional development activities. Schools and districts may use them to solicit recommendations for improving the professional development activities provided to teachers. The National Staff Development Council's "Standards for Staff Development" may be found in the appendix.

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The 1998 National Awards Program for Model Professional Development

by Christy Casbon

Honoring these schools fits with this administration's continuing effort to ensure a talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teacher in every classroom.

— **Dr. Richard Riley**
U.S. Secretary of Education

*I*n 1996, The U.S. Department of Education established the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development to highlight and reward schools and school districts with superlative professional development programs. The purpose of developing this national recognition program was to honor excellence in education by identifying individual schools and school districts that have raised achievement through continuous professional development and clearly understand that professional development must begin and end with a focus on improving student achievement. The program received a multitude of impressive applications from schools and districts that were committed to excellence in education. Ultimately, eight outstanding schools and districts were named.

- Ganado Intermediate School, Ganado, Arizona

- Geneva City Schools, Geneva, New York

- H.D. Hilley Elementary School, El Paso, Texas

- Hungerford School, Staten Island, New York

- International High School at LaGuardia Community College. Long Island City, New York

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- ❦ Lewisville Independent School District, Lewisville, Texas

- ❦ Montview Elementary School, Aurora, Colorado

- ❦ Shallowford Falls Elementary School, Marietta, Georgia

Criteria

Any public or private school or district in grades preK-12 that has made professional development a central part of its school culture is eligible for the program. The essential measure for eligibility, however, is demonstration of how the school or district's professional development programs improved student learning and increased teacher effectiveness and how their approach was consistent with professional development principles that are based on the best available research and exemplary practice.

Applicants also must address standards related to goals and outcomes, design, documentation and assessment of alignment among elements, evidence of success, and usefulness to others. These criteria originate in the statement of the Mission and Principles of Professional Development, which the U.S. Department of Education constructed in 1995 to promote excellence in teaching and learning. The Mission and Principles of Professional Development was developed in consultation with numerous educational organizations and practitioners in response to public comment. In addition, it was created to address the needs of all students and to ensure equity by establishing professional development practices that are accessible to all educators and free of bias.

Recognition in this awards program is based on how well applicants address criteria in these three major areas:

1. Evidence of success
2. Program quality
3. Usefulness to others

Winners not only help to improve practice and policy, but they also serve as models for schools and districts as they outline strategies to improve teachers' skills and knowledge of subject matter. And the notion of sharing is precisely why

this type of publication exists—to share ideas, promising practices, and success stories. The following summaries of the eight winning programs include reasons behind the success of each program, factors that make each program outstanding, and examples of the faculty's positive impact on their students.

The Review Process

The Department's regional laboratories coordinated a review process that included a first-round evaluation by a non-federal panel of experts, comprehensive site visits of the most promising applicants, and a final review by a seven-member blue-ribbon panel. The panel made recommendations to U.S. Secretary of Education, Dr. Richard Riley, who selected the final honorees. Each of the acclaimed programs received a privately funded monetary award to be used to support professional development activities and to help share strategies and lessons learned with others.

Investing in Teachers

Dr. Riley spoke at the Awards Ceremony on May 18, 1998, where he stressed the importance of ascertaining that teachers have the training and support to teach to high standards. Dr. Riley commented, "Unless we invest in teachers and their learning—ensuring that teachers are equipped to teach to higher standards to meet the challenges of today's classrooms—we will never reach our education goals." He expressed pleasure in recognizing the winning schools and districts because "honoring these schools fits with this administration's continuing effort to ensure a talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teacher in every classroom."

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The Winners of the 1998 National Awards

Ganado Intermediate School
Ganado, Arizona

We protect our professional development budgets in order to guarantee that teachers, support personnel, and the principal will have opportunity to develop their potential.

Ganado Intermediate School, a 515-student school serving predominantly Navajo children in grades 3-5, has an ongoing mission: to continually narrow the achievement gap between their students and more advantaged children. Ninety-eight percent of Ganado's students are Navajo, 64 percent of the students are limited English proficient (LEP), and 22 percent lack proficiency in both English and Navajo.

In 1992, the staff at Ganado was troubled that their students were continually scoring in the lowest quartile on the state-mandated Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Stanford 9 norm-referenced tests. Realizing that students scoring in the lowest quartile on achievement tests might not be granted equitable opportunity in academic, social, and economic systems, the staff decided to work collaboratively to increase student achievement. They focused on the design and execution of the following specific professional development issues:

- Implementing the Career Ladder

- Increasing incorporation of students' culture

- Increasing collaboration among staff

- Establishing partnerships with outside organizations

The entire staff worked collaboratively in creating the mission of developing competent learners, including children and adults.

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Components of the Program

The staff at Ganado Intermediate School set out to do three things. First, they decided on a five-year plan for student and adult learning in the school. They constructed a professional development program presenting all teachers and support personnel with the opportunity to become involved in continual learning in areas that enticed them and their students. Second, in the 1993-94 school year, the staff accepted the challenge of meeting state and national achievement standards and began to track and examine student assessment scores within the Arizona Student Assessment Program (ASAP). Third, the staff began to integrate curriculum and instruction with the district's curriculum model, Foundations of Learning, that describes Navajo values and ways of life, as well as academic readiness.

Since Ganado's student population consists mostly of American Indians whereas two-thirds of the teachers are Anglo, the staff decided it was imperative that they meet the cultural needs of their students by incorporating into the curriculum local values and Navajo culture. A second issue the staff tackled was the creation of professional development plans that included structured and self-directed teacher support (depending on the level of teacher expertise), as well as self-assessment through use of teaching portfolios, in which teachers monitor their progress based on student achievement. Another point the faculty addressed was collaboration among staff. Focusing on the importance of communication, the staff held regular grade-level meetings to review curriculum and student needs. During the meetings, teachers examined results of specific activities and then considered why they attained those results. By sharing specific stories about students, the teachers learned how to better serve students' learning styles. The final thing Ganado staff did was increase their partnerships with outside organizations. By doing this, the school was closely linked to the most current research and best practices in teaching and learning.

Evidence of Success

While test scores are not entirely indicative of student learning, they do help teachers see improvement trends in

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certain subject areas. At Ganado Intermediate School, the ITBS and Stanford 9 tests show an increase in the average score of Ganado students—even special education students. In addition, not only have LEP students made substantial achievements in reading and writing, but the gap in scores between genders has also narrowed.

Other progress has been made in the past several years as well. Since the professional development plan was implemented five years ago at Ganado, the school has progressed toward their goal of positive parent relationships in several ways. There has been an increase from zero to 24 part-time teacher aides on staff who offer tutoring to students, participate in site-based management, and are part of the shared decision-making process. In addition, the Ganado staff is elated by the fact that within the past two years there has been an increase in parent visitation from virtually none to an average of 85-percent parent involvement. Another encouraging piece of news is that students' reading and writing test scores have improved in terms of assessment goals.

Looking Ahead

Staff at Ganado Intermediate School is pleased with the results of their professional development efforts, and they look forward to keeping professional development as their priority. Through shared decision-making, Ganado Intermediate School has changed its professional preparation, their school as a whole, and most notably, their students' education. The program, which includes individual, collegial, and organizational learning, is going to maintain collaborative planning, keeping both student progress and faculty needs in mind. The faculty also plans on adding new components to their professional development program, such as increasing technology.

True dedication to improved learning means that participants not only have to be willing but eager to embrace new ideas and evolutionary changes. This is the mindset that the staff at Ganado Intermediate School has adapted. They have built their professional development program around the

idea that a community of learners breeds a creative atmosphere, which, in turn, produces an extraordinary school where all students can and will succeed.

Ganado offers the following findings/beliefs based on their experience with schoolwide change:

- In any change process, the people directly involved in identifying a need and in designing changes are most likely to successfully take action.

- Collaboration in aligning curriculum and student assessments lends clearer and shared comprehension of grade-level performance standards.

- On-site graduate courses in subjects named by teachers as critically vital to help them meets students' needs is an effective way to advance professional learning.

- Effective professional development for complex instructional strategies is clearly useful to teachers and entails sharing ideas and applicability to the classroom.

- Networks provide for extraordinary learning when supported by personal interaction and conferences with mentors.

Geneva City School District

Geneva, New York

The culture of schools is not universally one where people routinely share their successes and expect to learn from colleagues. Our advice is to provide support internally by meeting with each other just to share.

Geneva City School District, a proud district that has found the notion of change to be a challenging, rewarding, and stimulating experience, has also found that attaining positive change is possible only through the process of sharing and providing internal support. The district serves approximately 2,500 students and has unique demographics. The

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student population in the Geneva City School District varies along SES, racial, and cultural continuums; therefore, the district faces the same academic challenges that accompany both inner-city school districts and geographically isolated rural districts. Given the fact that the needs of the student population are so polarized, it was a great challenge to create a program that was applicable across gender, language, ethnic, and SES categories. The district realized that staff development aimed at improving learning for all students needed to be broad in scope.

The district was up for the challenge, and in 1993, recognizing that it had an aging teaching force and a fluid student population, Geneva City Schools chose to dedicate considerable time and energies to long-term professional development strategies. Since that time, professional growth has remained an emphasis in the district, and there have been noticeable differences in both students and faculty.

The infrastructure that supports staff development in the district involves an assortment of research-based effective programs.

- Focus with intent to improve student learning

- Active participation by administrators at all levels

- Compensation for participation in learning opportunities

- Linking of applications of learnings to teacher evaluation

- Scheduling for workday and extracurricular learning opportunities

- Orientations, expectations, and accountability for all district staff

- Interaction among all constituents

Components of the Program

Success is what the district wants for all students. The district deems that all students can achieve at high levels, which is why their focus for staff development has been to furnish teachers with the necessary means to address the needs of all students—regardless of background. The Geneva District feels that professional development involves all members of the learning community—everyone from teachers' assistants and aides to bus drivers. They believe that by including all of these people, students' specific needs can more readily be acknowledged.

The district's professional development program centers on organizational, individual, and collegial improvement. One thing they focus on is the shared decision-making model. When teachers share training responsibilities with outside consultants, when principals teach lessons with teachers in their classrooms, when study groups meet to learn new strategies and share plans they've prepared for students, and when the superintendent conducts workshops and meets individually with principals and new teachers, a common sense of purpose is bred. A real sense of collaboration is built when all of these people work together in a focused, aligned, and unified way.

Continuous improvement is imbedded in the daily life of the Geneva schools where teachers use their scheduled, shared planning time to build, critique, and revise ways to help students learn. Planning together and using each other's strategies helps teachers modify what they do and how they do it, and this, in turn, affects students. In addition, the district feels very strongly about testing new programs before adopting or rejecting them too hastily. Before the district chooses a professional development program, the program must first be proven to produce results. Continuous evaluation of student results drives changes in existing plans and is designed to cause and hold people accountable for student achievement. The district believes that by measuring both teaching *and* learning, it can easily be determined whether or not a program is worth continuing.

By measuring both teaching and learning, the district can more clearly see if there is movement toward the goal of improved student achievement. When there is no movement toward the goal, programs are discontinued or modified. For instance, a few years ago, the school psychologist ran a statistical analysis to determine the effectiveness of a program. After much review of the achievement data and gathering input from teachers, parents, and administrators, the program was abandoned because it was determined that the program was not meeting its proposed objectives.

Structures and resources are currently in place to maintain continued professional development. There is district support for ongoing commitments to organizations and occasions to present at conferences. In addition, teachers choose district-funded staff development opportunities in areas where they are concerned about student learning from regional course offerings. Plus, there are accessible competitive grants within the district from district funds and from private corporations that finance special projects.

Evidence of Success

Teachers and staff learn from one another, and the investment in professional development is paying off in a big way. Teachers claim that as they improve their teaching, students are acquiring higher test scores, are more inspired to learn, and are more self-disciplined. In addition, professional development has led to greater comprehension of strategies that work to meet the needs of a diverse group of students.

Over the past three years, there has been a tremendous rise in exit rates due to the addition of various computer-assisted instructional programs in the classrooms. Professional development was once again recognized as essential, and professional development time was scheduled to help teachers integrate their use of technology and learning styles.

Another way Geneva Schools have evolved into exemplary status is by administering needs assessments to both staff and community members. Doing this helps identify and resolve major areas of concern; plus, it empowers teachers

by allowing them to have a voice in such areas as curriculum development, scheduling, instructional time issues, and class size.

Looking Ahead

Geneva City Schools are looking toward the future and already making plans. One issue they are addressing is proactivity in the schools. For instance, they have come to realize that, in the past, summer school has taken a more reactive (rather than proactive) stance. Therefore, summer school has not been as beneficial for students. Hence, staff and administration at the secondary level are considering the development of teacher-staffed tutoring programs to assist students in meeting their academic needs as they become aware of them. Parents and students will be informed when the student is falling behind, and additional opportunities will be created for students who want to accelerate or catch up. The district is hopeful that such a program will be successful.

The broad goals of the district will remain the same—to provide rich, relevant opportunities that support all members of the school community in helping students learn, in realizing their potential as lifelong learners, responsible citizens, critical thinkers, and effective communicators who value diversity.

H.D. Hilley Elementary School

El Paso, Texas

Teachers at H.D. Hilley believe that improving student learning is the ultimate measure of success.

A common misconception in the educational realm is that professional development is something that comes as a result of mandatory response to legislative guidelines or as a reaction to a big problem in a school district. However, the Socorro Independent School District (ISD) does not see things that way. They see professional development as proactive—as a preventative maintenance program that keeps teachers and administrators fresh and in touch with their colleagues and peers in the field of education.

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Located in rural Western Texas is the Socorro ISD, one of the fastest growing school districts in Texas, which has a student body that is 90-percent Hispanic. In addition, 70 percent of the students come from economically disadvantaged homes. H.D. Hilley Elementary School serves 687 K-5 students. The staff at H.D. Hilley Elementary wanted to refute any negative stereotypical preconceptions concerning the learning capabilities of students from minority and economically disadvantaged homes so they increased their investment in professional development programs and, in turn, have noticed a significant and positive impact on student learning at the school. Staff at H.D. Hilley report that by implementing multiple programs that employ traditional and non-traditional approaches to professional development, a spirit of renewal and rededication to teaching has been generated among teachers and administration.

Components of the Program

H.D. Hilley Elementary is a superb example of the many gains and benefits a school's faculty and students can experience by adopting professional development programs.

In the Socorro district, there were several education and community-based organizations and elements that played essential roles in the district's commitment to the professional development and continuing education of teachers and administrators. These include the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence, the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso, the National Science Foundation Mentors Program, and the Socorro Teachers Academy.

Being a part of any decision-making process is, in essence, being a part of the team. One's input can quite possibly effect positive and lasting change. Where is the notion of collaboration more important than in the educational setting? At H.D. Hilley Elementary, staff believes in such collaboration. This is why they have developed School Improvement Teams, which includes parents, community members, teachers, and principals, to take an active role in the decision-making process. Once a week, the School Improvement Teams meet to discuss issues such as estab-

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lishing academic goals, developing the campus budget, selecting personnel, and implementing professional development programs. The School Improvement Team also created the following mission statement:

> H.D. Hilley Elementary School is a community of learners who strive to effectively prepare students for the future to be responsible, productive members of society through a quality education provided by staff, parents, and community members.

H.D. Hilley carries out this challenging mission through parental and community involvement, innovative curriculum development, curriculum-technology integration, and an ongoing commitment to professional development for both administration and staff.

There have been several professional development activities that have been established both at the district's Education Center and on the campus of H.D. Hilley. One activity was launched at the University of Texas at El Paso's College of Education. In 1993, in an effort to better prepare pre-service teachers, the College of Education revamped the college's teacher preparation program and significantly modified the curriculum so that when students finished their necessary coursework, they could spend more time student-teaching.

A second constructive professional development activity that teachers are taking part in at H.D. Hilley is the awarding of a Challenge Grant for Technology Innovation in Education from the U.S. Department of Education. In 1995, the Socorro ISD and the University of Texas at El Paso jointly applied for and were granted funding to support the jointly designed *A Community of 21ˢᵗ Century Learners* project. The program has been implemented through a very precise and targeted emphasis on the following:

❧ Internet connectivity

❧ The integration of technology and curricula

- Enhanced parental engagement

- The professional development of teachers in technology

- Technology in curriculum integration

The *Community of 21st Century Learners* project furnishes extensive professional development for the classroom teacher. The curriculum enables inservice teachers to strengthen and further develop their lesson plans through progression of instruction. The coursework is done in a computer lab that houses state-of-the-art computer equipment. In addition, a major importance in this program is that the teachers chosen to enlist in the program agree to serve as mentors to their fellow teachers by sharing and distributing new information and techniques.

A third major professional development program was initiated in 1994 when the Socorro ISD School Board commissioned a task force of classroom teachers to examine procedures for rewarding exemplary teachers in the district. The task force suggested tuition credits for teachers working toward a master's degree and the establishment of a special institute for the best teachers. This institute was approved by the Board and called the Socorro Teacher Academy. The basic premise behind the Academy is to gather a group of remarkable teachers to provide opportunities to improve professionally and personally. The Academy's curriculum aligned its mission with the district's vision to become a learning establishment that holds the conviction that all children *will* learn.

Evidence of Success
While it is true that faculty and students can both feel and see a difference in the adoption of professional development programs, it is nice to see concrete evidence of success. During the 1996-97 school year, the College of Education evaluation team conducted an examination to determine the results of a program entitled Challenge Grant in Technology. The findings revealed a positive impact on students, with teachers using the words "confidence," "enthusiasm, " and

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"eagerness" to describe the attitudes of their students. The findings, conducted by using surveys and interviews, suggested that respondents had increased levels of confidence in integrating technology into their daily teaching activities. Plus, evaluation respondents reported that coursework had extended their own outlooks on the possible uses of technology into their curriculums.

Success was also acknowledged in December of 1997 when H.D. Hilley Elementary was awarded the Texas Successful School Award for demonstrating sustained success and improvement in achieving academic goals. In addition, the school received the Recognized Status Award for the last two years, as well as the Socorro ISD Award for academic gains and schoolwide technology applications.

Teachers love the implementation of professional development programs because the programs ultimately challenge the students. When teachers learn things in professional development activities and bring what they've learned back to the classroom, the students interact more, learn more, and try harder. Plus, professional development fosters confidence in teachers as they learn more and exude confidence. Ultimately, that confidence rubs off on their students, and suddenly, teachers find themselves with a classroom full of students who love nothing more than a good challenge and a chance to flaunt their abilities.

Looking Ahead
Commitment to professional development is like anything else you want to do well in life. If you want to stay healthy, you exercise regularly. If you work out on a sporadic basis or only when your body reminds you that it is not well, benefits are few. Staying healthy means staying proactive by taking preventative measures such as eating well and exercising regularly to keep from getting sick. The same mindset is true of maintaining a healthy school or school district. All parties involved (faculty, parents, and community) must remain dedicated to professional development for it is what ensures student success.

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H.D. Hilley plans on maintaining its health by continuing its investment in resources such as workshops, special institutes, seminars, masters degree programs, and specialization certificates. Staff members report an ongoing sense of renewal, and they see this as proof that their professional development endeavors are incredibly valuable and beneficial.

Hungerford School
Staten Island, New York
At Hungerford School, instruction, professional development, learning, and assessment are unified.

Hungerford School is becoming more and more a "community of learners," a school that has found through the development of their professional development programs that student success hinges on the learning and problem-solving abilities of all staff members. Hungerford School is very proud of its mission to actively support and prepare students for community and workforce integration by placing instructional emphasis on academic, social, pre-vocational, and vocational areas. The goals of instruction at the school include increasing students' levels of academic achievement, social ability, and independent functioning.

Hungerford School's population consists of 250 special-needs students ranging in age from 12 to 21. One hundred percent of these students receive special education services since they are classified as medically fragile and severely to profoundly retarded. Staff at Hungerford does not perceive these special needs as roadblocks to success, however. Instead, thanks to professional development programs, school staff have witnessed improved job performance, changes in school organization, and improved student learning.

Components of the Program
The staff at Hungerford School has a philosophy: improved learning for all school children ultimately relies on teacher learning and training. This is why the school has worked so hard at initiating and continuing to develop professional

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development programs. The school focuses on high expectation, literacy, assessment, team building, parent-involvement, conflict-resolution, positive behavior, and technology use.

Hungerford assembled a school-based management team that acts as a planning team for the school. It includes representatives from all constituencies in the school community–parents, teachers, and students. Since the team was built, channels of communication have flowed freely producing an atmosphere of support for new ideas and problem-solving that takes a non-blaming approach. The following table lists some of the actions the team took, as well as an explanation of the purpose behind the action:

Action the Management Team Took	Purpose of the Action
Developed partnerships with the community	To develop vocational programs to prepare students for the transition from school to work
Involved students in community service projects	To create a therapeutic atmosphere; to produce opportunities for learning
Supported thematic curriculum planning	To give teachers more authority in their professional lives
Supported cooperative learning	To keep teachers from feeling isolated; to foster collegiality
Increased opportunities for employment options and successful job placement for each student	To give students increased chances to learn, grow, and succeed in the outside world
Initiated the use of curriculum-based measurement and portfolios as assessment methods	To augment methods of student assessment

In Hungerford's effort toward becoming a community of learners, all staff and parents have become "students" in the course of the daily activities at the school. In keeping with this mindset, it is easy to see why professional development

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is not regarded at Hungerford as being separate from student instruction. Rather, Hungerford sees success as dependent upon the learning of individual school employees and the improvement of the potential of the school to solve problems and renew itself. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Hungerford finds collegiality and collaboration among teachers to be of utmost significance to the success of the professional development programs. Collegiality fosters a cohesive atmosphere that makes collective, shared decision making feasible. This, in turn, generates schoolwide improvement.

At Hungerford, staff development is seen as the major vehicle for school improvement. The broad goals of professional development are meant to help navigate students to their highest potential by supporting their development of fundamental social, emotional, and academic skills.

The school conducted various Needs Assessments to determine not only the most crucial needs of the students but needs of staff and parents, as well. Some assessments include a Professional Development Needs Assessment, a School Comprehensive Education Plan, and a Staff Self-assessment. Each school year, the Hungerford School chooses a specific goal that they want to make a priority. During the 1996-97 school year, the priority was literacy improvement. And the primary focus for the 1997-98 school year was comprehensive and sustained professional development for instructional and support staff.

Hungerford has been designated by the district as a Professional Development Laboratory (PDL) site. This means that the school hosts teachers and staff from other schools for on-site training. The PDL model affords the chance for successful teachers to share ideas with colleagues from other schools during the day.

Evidence of Success
Hungerford School's dedication to its professional development program has made quite a difference for both staff and students. There has been a marked change in both teacher

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effectiveness and student learning. Thanks to participation in professional development, the following has come to fruition:

- Teachers have more chances to learn particular skills by developing teams, peer coaching, and study groups.

- Teachers attend high-quality workshops followed by guidance and coaching from their seasoned peers.

- Teachers play a critical role in the school's reform process.

Unfortunately it is all too common to see schools zeroing in on specific student populations (i.e., exceptional, "honors" students) while ignoring all other types of students. At Hungerford, there is no such thing as focusing energies on certain students while neglecting others: the staff at Hungerford supports and encourages all students. Due to professional development, teachers are armed with strategies for meeting the needs of *all* students. In addition, viewing all educational community members as active learners is a vital component of this plan.

Another reason the school's professional development plan has been so successful is because the staff actively forms committees, meets, shares ideas, and acts on those ideas. In other words, they are not afraid of change. Administering Needs Assessments has brought about several committees. Some of these include technology, literacy, math/science, arts, behavior management, and school-to-work. Many of these committees administered additional Needs Assessments to determine supplementary needs. For instance, the Technology Committee conducted a Needs Assessment Inventory of software and hardware presently in the school and found that technology training for staff was sorely needed. The principal then arranged schedules so staff members could participate in technology training and review methods of integrating technology into the curriculum.

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Since 98 percent of the students at Hungerford are exempt from district and state standardized tests due to their disabilities, the staff must adopt other measures to estimate students' progress. Some notable changes have resulted in the last few years due to the emergence of professional development. Some of these include

❦ The number of students who utilized technology to communicate or utilized adaptations to access computer technology increased by 45 percent and 85 percent, respectively.

❦ Ninety-eight percent of students' portfolios reflected technology integrated into the curriculum.

❦ The number of students taking part in general education inclusion grew by 18 percent.

❦ The number of students placed at community-based work sites increased by 30 percent.

❦ One-hundred percent of graduating, transitioning students are linked to adult service agencies, supported employment, sheltered workshops, competitive employment, or day habilitation programs.

❦ Eighty percent of the students achieved their individual educational plan goals.

On-the-job behaviors have been positively affected thanks to professional development. Hungerford staff has reported improved job performance, changes in school organization and routines, and improved student learning.

Looking Ahead

The staff at Hungerford is excited about continuing their professional development efforts. They feel confident that future achievements will come to pass because they have already laid much of the groundwork for success. Through practice and perseverance, they have learned several lessons about what it is to develop and provide quality professional

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development in a school. They offer the following advice to others:

- ❦ Schools and School Districts: Clarify your educational purpose to get a results-driven education.

- ❦ Schools and School Districts: Construct a clear mission statement with measurable objectives.

- ❦ Schools: Have staff members develop an annual school improvement plan related to a set of agreed-upon objectives.

- ❦ School Communities: Ask yourselves, "What should a graduate know and be able to do as a result of his/her education?"

International High School at LaGuardia Community College

Long Island City, New York

Our mission is to enable each of our students to develop the linguistic, cognitive, and cultural skills necessary for success in high school, college, and beyond.

International High School (IHS), established in 1985 and housed on the LaGuardia Community College campus, boasts incredibly diverse demographics. This alternative high school, which admits students not on the basis of achievement but rather on need, has a large concentration of students from low-income and immigrant families who speak 37 different languages. Seventy-three percent of the 450 students are Limited English Proficient (LEP). Forty-five percent are Hispanic; 30 percent are Asian; 22 percent are white; and two percent are African American. The school is proud to say that it has successfully narrowed the achievement gap between students with limited English proficiency and those who are native-born. The school's mission is to continually narrow this gap.

International High School is another model school that believes in the importance of engaging *everybody* in learn-

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ing—not just the students. Students' needs at IHS are what drive the structure of professional development.

Components of the Program
Since the student population at IHS is extremely varied in terms of economic, educational, and linguistic backgrounds, it is a challenge to find ways to meet the needs of all students. However, that is exactly the charge the faculty at IHS has taken on.

The faculty and student body at IHS are divided into six interdisciplinary instructional teams. Each team has notable decision-making authority over the curriculum, budget, and scheduling; plus three hours of meeting time are built into each faculty team's weekly schedule. This time is used for setting professional development team goals, revising curriculum, designing activities to reach the goals, monitoring and assessing practices, and sharing successful practices. In addition, members team teach and participate in peer review. Student learning is tracked by observing and evaluating daily classroom activities, projects, and portfolios.

International High School's approach to professional development is multi-dimensional. The school firmly believes in cross-team professional development. Several committees and councils have been created to establish policy, discuss school management, set agendas, and determine faculty hiring and evaluation procedures. Some of these committees include the Coordinating Council, the Steering Committee, the Curriculum and Assessment Committee, and the Personnel Committee. These committees involve every member of the school system by including administrators, teachers, and representatives from student government, PTA, and a member from each of the six interdisciplinary teams.

International High School also takes part in cross-school professional development. Each year, IHS holds several joint professional development days with two more recent New York schools that share IHS' philosophical and educational model. These valuable days grant faculty the opportunity to share successful practices across schools. In addition, they

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give faculty the chance to serve on the graduation portfolio panels at their sister schools, thereby serving as an effective way to jointly form performance standards and share curriculum. International High School also benefits from sharing their campus with LaGuardia Community College because several of the college faculty teach within the interdisciplinary team structure that serves to narrow the gap between high school graduation requirements and college entry requirements. Plus, instructional teams work with community-based organizations and businesses to furnish student internships.

Staff members at IHS believe that certain components of a professional development program are crucial if the program is to be an ongoing success. Some of these components include:

- Allowing teachers to be included in the decision-making process at the school

- Giving teachers the time to share in such venues as meetings, peer review, and teacher portfolios

- Granting teachers regular opportunities for collegial collaboration (both within the school and with other schools serving similar students)

- Encouraging a constant flow of visitors (both American and international) to the school

- Allowing faculty to have interaction with colleges, businesses, and community organizations to help faculty continually reassess ways to prepare IHS students for higher education and the global, working world

- Creating a climate of inquiry and continuous improvement

International High School's predominant professional development goal is to guarantee that each faculty member is fully equipped to support students in meeting increasingly

rigorous graduation requirements. In terms of student achievement, the school's goal is to continue to improve studc it attendance, retention, and graduation rates while raising standards in order to prepare students for success in college and beyond.

Teaching strategies are constantly fine-tuned to help augment student achievement. Doing so has led to outstanding student outcomes. Therefore, faculty members at IHS are encouraged to adhere to the following basic strategies:

♥ Facilitate cooperative learning within small groups of students working on projects where the student constructs his/her own learning with careful coaching by the teacher.

♥ Adjust curriculum so it is accessible yet challenging for all students.

♥ Integrate both first- and second-language development with content areas in classrooms where students speak several languages and have diverse levels of English proficiency.

♥ Build an interdisciplinary course of study that allows students to make connections and solve meaningful problems.

The staff at International High School holds a set of beliefs that has helped them design and implement professional development plans. One belief maintains that language skills are best learned in context and emerge most naturally in purposeful, interdisciplinary study. A second belief states that everyone (both students and teachers) learn best from each other in heterogeneous, collaborative settings. Collaboration not only promotes self-confidence; it provides recognition for everyone. A third conviction asserts that the most successful educational programs are those that stress high expectations coupled with qualified support systems. A final belief contends that the most effective instruction takes place when teachers are actively involved in the decision-making process.

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International High School is proactive in attempting new strategies—one reason that the school has become so effective and highly regarded. Some of these changes include lengthening class periods to give students a more coherent, less disjointed learning experience and creating a more consistent, interrelated approach to teaching by creating interdisciplinary block programs that generate a higher level of sophistication in student work. The school was also involved in designing a guide to assessment standards ("Beyond High School Graduation Requirements: What Do Students Need to Learn at the IHS?") outlining specific expectations for students who surpass the state's basic competency tests, enabling them to graduate with a portfolio demonstrating mastery of all subjects.

Evidence of Success

The school's professional development efforts have resulted in measurable student success. Student graduation rates have increased (on average 72 percent graduate in four years), the percentage of IHS students passing courses has increased (94.8 percent up from 93.2 percent three years ago), the daily attendance rate has increased (93.9 percent), and dropout rates are below the city average. In addition, the college acceptance rate for LEP students now exceeds 90 percent.

Looking Ahead

Professional development has been instrumental in higher student achievement, better methods of student assessment, and heightened support for teacher development. Contrived assessment is a thing of the past–authentic assessment (via portfolios, peer assessment, collaborative tasks) is clearly preferable.

In New York City, where there are few educational alternatives for LEP students, IHS is determined to continue enabling other schools in the area to address the needs of their immigrant students. Through their newly created task force, they plan to spread best practices among all schools for immigrant students, as well as collaborate with colleagues to provide a richer, deeper education for all LEP students.

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Lewisville Independent School District

Lewisville, Texas

All employees in the district are included in the district's professional development program.

There are three high schools, ten middle schools, 27 elementary schools, one career center, and one alternative/at-risk center in the Lewisville Independent School District (LISD). The district, serving 32,500 students and located in a highly populated portion of suburban north Texas, is the fastest growing district in the state. During the last ten years, enrollment has increased an average of 1,100 students per year, but this colossal growth has not precluded LISD from emerging as a leader in managing growth while maintaining high academic standards. Recognizing that the number of students was expanding and estimating that enrollment would continue to grow indefinitely, LISD established a long-term professional development plan that would be responsive to student needs. The comprehensive, needs-based staff development model is a dynamic, multidimensional continuum, which allows teachers to enter at varying levels, correspondent with need. It was important to design such a model since 400-500 new teachers could conceivably be incorporated into the system each year. (Incidentally, approximately 1,300 teachers were added in a consecutive three-year period several years ago.)

The district's ongoing goal is to enhance education through partnerships with parents, communities, and universities and thus produce a learning environment that allows all students to meet challenging academic standards. Other goals include increasing awareness and sensitivity to differences among staff and students.

Components of the Program

Lewisville Independent School District recognized that it was imperative to provide an instructional setting that encourages and allows *all* students to reach their full educational potential. When developing the plan, however, LISD kept its feet firmly planted in reality. The district knew that nothing could be improved by a quick fix–especially in

schoolwide improvement. They recognized that effective change within a school system normally takes three-to-five years of committed teamwork by staff, administrators, parents, and the community. Therefore, LISD implemented a long-range professional development program rooted in research and based on student needs.

Because the goal of LISD was to produce a complete infra-structure for professional development, the comprehensive staff development model had to be incorporated in two related five-year phases. Phase I, called *Project LIST (Lewisville Institute for Student Thinking)*, was the foundation and pivot point for revision and expansion into Phase II, a *Planned Community of Learners. Project LEARN (Lewisville Elementary Advocate Resource Network)* was the interim mini-phase that bridged the tandem model. The focal point of each phase remained constant: student achievement. The action-oriented plan promoted teachers as leaders, a community of learners, and site-based management.

The district developed a model based on seven influencing conditions found in schools that demonstrate significant achievement gains within all student subgroups. These conditions include:

❦ Clear and focused school mission

❦ Safe and orderly environment

❦ Effective instructional leadership

❦ High expectations

❦ Opportunity to learn with student time-on-task

❦ Periodic monitoring of student progress

❦ Home/school partnership

In addition, the district felt that preservice and induction-year opportunities needed improvement, so settings for

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reciprocal learning between seasoned, mentor teachers and pre-professionals and new teachers was created.

Three objectives emerged from the model. The first objective was to formulate a comprehensive staff development continuum addressing these six educational strands:

1. Needs assessment and application strategies
2. Theory of learning
3. Curriculum and instruction
4. Planning and leadership
5. Technology
6. Evaluation and monitoring systems

The second objective included creating a supportive Induction Year Program Model and a university Professional Development Center for mentoring training and observation/feedback interaction among teachers. This is important because educators who share research and ideas strengt en their own professionalism. In addition, collaboration among schools, colleges, and businesses increases educator effectiveness and builds professional knowledge. The third objective called for increasing parental and community involvement in education to nurture a planned community of learners. This is because LISD recognizes parents and community as essential members of the learning community.

Evidence of Success

The LISD plan views professional development as a career-long process rather than small transferable tidbits of knowledge handed out periodically. Faculty members at Lewisville believe in ongoing learning for teachers, which is why they have happily embraced LISD's dynamic, constantly evolving plan that promotes collaboration and focuses on intentional improvement of professional skills.

Both qualitative and quantitative data and both formal and informal means of assessment have been collected to determine results of Lewisville's investment in staff development. Process evaluation ensures that problems are detected and promptly fixed, and the product evaluation tool is a manual

to document progression of phases. Overall outcomes are measured by the impact on target audiences such as teachers, parents, community, and students. Evaluation focuses on evidence that the newly learned strategies are being used and that student achievement is increasing.

The following is a list of formal assessment evidence:

❧ Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is a criterion-referenced test that assesses student achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics. Between 1995 and 1997, student scores have been steadily increasing at all grade levels.

❧ Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) is a state-mandated accountability system based on composite and disaggregated data from TAAS scores, attendance and dropout rates, AP performance, and college admission performance. Between 1996 and 1997, 12 campuses increased their rating level (with six moving to the "recognized" category and six moving to the "exemplary" category).

❧ The district has consistently scored well on college entrance exams (SATs).

❧ The gaps between Hispanic, African American, and white students has narrowed in recent years.

The following is a list of informal assessment evidence:

❧ Progress reports

❧ Teacher/student/parent conferences

❧ Student portfolios

❧ Teacher and peer observation

❧ Debates and role-playing

❧ Project-based authentic assessment

- ❦ Academic competition

- ❦ Awards LISD has won:

  - Five campuses chosen as National Blue Ribbon Schools

  - Three campuses distinguished for Texas Mentor School Network; one for Texas Inclusion Project

  - Awarded Teachers of the Year

Looking Ahead

Lewisville Independent School District acts as a model for other school districts. It plans to continue in such a capacity, as they feel that self-perpetuation is built into their model. In devising and instituting the model, careful attention was given to accentuating potential transferability and project replication. A key project is an Implementation Notebook, which was intended to promote customization of the model to local need. The manual records progress, depicts obstacles, provides needs assessment and evaluation forms, and lists resources. Systematic, long-range planning that warrants gradual expansion of the project will be of particular appeal to large school districts.

Montview Elementary School

Aurora, Colorado

The goal at Montview Elementary is to provide all children with access to effective instructional strategies and challenging academic content to ensure success for all children.

Montview Elementary, serving approximately 860 K-5 grade students with a high concentration of low-income families, is committed to lifelong learning. Faculty members at the school share both an individual and collective responsibility to improve academic achievement for all students. The school's goal is to ensure student success by increasing teachers' understanding of how children learn.

Montview was aware of some of the essential components of a quality professional development plan. Faculty knew that, in order to see substantial school improvement, they needed to have the following:

- A shared purpose

- Norms of collegiality

- Norms of continuous improvement

- Structures that represent the organizational conditions necessary for significant improvement

The staff adopted a consistent belief system about teaching and learning in order to meet the constantly evolving and always diverse needs of the community. The staff felt that the skillful teacher is one who considers herself a learner, ensures the conditions for learning are in place, keenly evaluates to identify learning needs, and has a well-defined theory about teaching and learning, which is translated into classroom practice.

Components of the Program

Five years ago, Montview's reading achievement scores were below average for the district. The school, realizing that the true potential of the culturally and economically diverse population was not being met, began the restructuring process, beginning with finding a balanced literacy model that would both address student needs *and* provide instructional development for the staff. They found such a model in the New Zealand literacy model. Montview has established a range of practices that blend professional learning into teachers' daily work lives. Teachers engage in weekly coaching sessions with a teacher leader, and through analysis of student data, they reflect on their practice and create future goals.

To reflect the faculty's commitment to a job-embedded staff development approach, the following belief statements were

collaboratively developed among staff during the first year of schoolwide implementation:

- ❦ All students can learn.

- ❦ Formative assessment data is more important (while just as valid and reliable) than summative assessment data.

- ❦ Reading and writing are acts of constructing meaning.

- ❦ Individualized instruction is possible and manageable.

- ❦ Each of us is responsible for professionalizing teaching and accelerating student learning.

From a one-year pilot came a renewed enthusiasm for education. As a result, Montview became a school where a collective vision and commitment energized the whole community. Another notable change was that staff started focusing on the positive and concentrating on everyone's strengths rather than overemphasizing the negative. Plus, staff began taking a more proactive stance in that they applied funds to schoolwide literacy missions rather than waiting for students to fail and then using the funds for remedial instruction.

A great deal is asked of all teachers, but the end result from all the effort and hard work is phenomenal. Montview teachers are assigned a teacher leader who helps build their literacy and math practices. The instructional approach requires daily assessments, weekly observation and feedback sessions, and weekly conferences with their leader (or coach) to polish their diagnostic skills. Then, four times a year, each teacher discusses the progress of his/her students with a leadership team comprised of an administrator, the teacher's peer leader, and a team of specialists. These quarterly reviews serve several purposes: they grant the teacher opportunities for improved teaching strategies; they provide the coaches and administrators with data for planning professional development programs; and they allow the administration to oversee the progress of students on a classroom-by-classroom basis. All of this collaboration and

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feedback produces frequent occasions for observation, coaching, reflection, and dialogue.

In addition to weekly coaching, teachers spend about six hours a week on planning. This is possible because assistants are hired to relieve staff so that teachers' planning time is not sacrificed. Staff members are encouraged to attend professional development conferences and are reimbursed. Montview supplements its staff-development allocation from the district by setting aside one day a month and charging schools $60 to visit.

In July 1998, Montview initiated a partnership with the University of Colorado at Denver to become a Professional Development School. This was to afford opportunities to all staff to engage in action research and professional writing.

Evidence of Success

Montview uses multiple assessments to monitor student achievement. Some of these include student literacy and math monitoring notebooks, looking at standardized test scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and evaluating data on the Riverside Integrated Language Arts Performance Assessment. Data on both standardized tests illustrated increased achievement when it found that Montview's students exceeded scores of students from higher socio-economic, more stable schools. In fact, the 1996 and 1997 scores on the Riverside were the highest in the district. The Riverside displayed a virtual elimination of gaps in performance between white and non-white students.

Internally and externally run studies determined that since the implementation of Montview's professional development efforts, teachers' effectiveness has improved. And by improving teachers' understandings and practices, student achievement has subsequently increased. Faculty members have reported an increase in their abilities to estimate student improvement in reading and writing, to plan, and to more effectively support students' learning needs. Faculty members have also noticed a change within the culture of the school. The increased tangible support among staff, the higher involvement in the decision-making process, the

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appreciation and recognition, and the honest, open communication have all made Montview a stronger and more effective school. In addition, partnerships among the school, parents, and community have a great deal to do with Montview's success.

Looking Ahead

Montview has been so impressed with the impact parents have had on student learning that they have planned a parent resource center for the 1998-99 school year. Montview also strongly believes in the philosophy of giving back to the education profession so that other schools can learn and grow. This is why, once a month, Montview allows up to 15 visitors to tour the school, observe classes, and interact with faculty. Another way Montview shares its knowledge and valuable experience is by offering on-site leadership seminars bi-annually where the principal trains administrators from across the country. These seminars share the staff development model, along with instructional constructs and assessment data. Lessons learned and mistakes to avoid are also addressed so that other schools can know what to realistically expect where change and implementation of programs are concerned.

Shallowford Falls Elementary School
Marietta, Georgia
Our mission is one not to sustain, but to continuously improve.

Shallowford Falls Elementary serves approximately 660 K-5 students in Cobb County, a suburb of Atlanta. The school, which opened in 1990, has always held high professional development goals, but within the past several years, the staff has fully committed itself to continuous improvements and has made great gains in overall school and student improvement. To accomplish such rigorous performance standards, the school established total quality management (TQM) and site-based decision-making and consensus-building processes.

Teachers felt that their individual students' success depended on the success of students in the entire school.

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Hence, the entire faculty, along with parents and community members, came together to create school goals. The result of the faculty being such an integral part of the professional development activities and decision-making processes has been phenomenal. Teachers now take ownership of and responsibility for school improvement efforts, and this, in turn, affects students' learning. Teacher satisfaction is evidenced by the low turnover rate. Plus, new staff members are hired through an interview process that involves teachers—once again, calling on other teachers to be part of critical decision-making processes.

Components of the Program

When Shallowford Falls Elementary opened its doors eight years ago, the principal knew great things would come to pass. This was due to the fact that she interviewed and hired staff who embraced involvement in a cooperative decision-making school. The staff and principal then developed a philosophy, a mission statement, performance goals, and student and teacher handbooks.

The organizational structure of the school consists of multiple teams made up of teachers, school specialists, paraprofessionals, secretaries, custodians, and food service workers. Parents and students serve on many of the committees, as well. Some of the committees include Building Leadership Team (BLT), Budget Committee, Student Support Team, and Enrichment/School Spirit. These committees are responsible for everything from identifying crucial curriculum and discipline issues to developing educational plans for needy students.

Goal setting is a vital part of the school reform process. At Shallowford Falls, the staff communicates goals to the parents and students through newsletters, flyers, and memorandums. Goal development at the school has shown definite improvement over time. In the inaugural year of goal development, the school's goals were weak because they were not stated in quantifiable terms. However, in the past few years, positive working relationships and self-esteem among teachers and students were augmented due to enhanced goal setting. In addition, over time, as the school has

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expanded, professional development has matured from content-specific improvements to enhancements of the whole instructional program.

In 1993, the Georgia Department of Education offered each of the 1,800 schools in the state a chance to apply for a group merit pay/incentive grant, entitled Pay-for-Performance (PfP). Applicants were asked to address four sections: academic achievement, client involvement, educational programming, and resource development. Over 100 schools applied, and Shallowford Falls was one of ten schools that received grant monies.

During the 1993-94 school year, the school targeted math and science; in 1994-95, the emphasis was on social studies; and from 1995-1998, the school has focused on reading and language. A great deal of time has been given to reading and language, and teachers have attended numerous professional development inservices and conferences on reading and language because studies have shown that all curricular areas are affected by a student's reading capacity and development. During the 1997-98 school year, the faculty decided to be trained in "Frameworks," a balanced literacy reading model. The model was used to design a consistent philosophy/approach for the teaching of reading comprehension, language arts/vocabulary development, writing composition, and spelling.

In addition, many activities for marketing the school's literacy and communication goals include student participation in:

❦ Reading Awards

❦ The Writing Fair

❦ Daily Oral Language

❦ The Fourth- and Fifth-Grade Writing and Drama Clubs

❦ A student newsletter

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- Spelling bees

- Book publications

- The Visiting Author/Illustrator's Program

- Various writing-process software programs

Other related professional development training that staff participated in includes in-depth training in multiple intelligences, improving students' critical and creative thinking skills, and reading/technology study groups.

Student progress is encouraged and announced during the school year at assemblies, over the public address system, and in the newspaper. In addition, there is an awards ceremony at the end of the year where individual and school accomplishments are celebrated.

Evidence of Success
Shallowford Falls defines academic success as the actual attainment of performance goals stated in quantifiable terms. Success has most assuredly graced this elementary school.

The academic program at Shallowford Falls strengthens with each passing year. Students enter each grade stronger and better prepared than the previous year, and teachers attribute this to the school's professional development efforts. Third- and fifth-grade students' scores on the ITBS have been consistently improving. In the past three years, rising scores in reading, language, and math have indicated a correlation between student success and the school's implementation of professional development. In addition, student performance on the state-mandated writing assessment has also improved since 1996.

This focus on school improvement has resulted in Shallowford Falls being ranked sixth in the state by the Georgia Public Policy Foundation.

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Looking Ahead

Coordinating a school improvement plan of this magnitude is an enormous endeavor, and its success depends on many people—faculty members, parents, and students. Everyone at Shallowford Falls Elementary is pleased with the final result.

Shallowford Falls is excited about embracing the future because professional development activities are numerous, ever evolving, and flourishing. The past several years have been a learning experience for the Shallowford Falls staff, but through their experience, they have established certain ideas. They feel confident about the following things:

- No longer can staff and faculty be satisfied with the "sit-and-get" philosophy of professional development. We must be active, not passive learners and seek out wisdom rather than waiting for it to come to us.

- No longer can we shift accountability—no good can come of that practice. It is incumbent upon us to act responsibly for our students and take an active role in goal-directed school improvement.

- No longer can teachers identify goals with no ties to student learning.

- Never must we let up. We must continue our professional development efforts because this will most certainly drive our schools into the future with no chance to fall behind.

Ever since the 1993-94 school year when Shallowford Falls was named a successful Georgia PfP school, staff has continued the spirit of writing high student performance goals. In the future, the faculty plans to continue analyzing and assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses. Shallowford Falls is also excited at the prospect of continually restructuring the school's professional development program in order to better the entire system. This would be accomplished by adding new programs, redesigning old

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ones, and doing away with obsolete ones or ones that do not generate desired results.

A Commitment for All Schools

It is clear that all eight of these schools and school districts have made great strides in the professional development arena. The hard work and continued dedication by these schools' staff, faculty, and community is not only impressive but encouraging as well. No doubt these award-winning schools and districts can provide ideas and hope for other schools who wish to establish similar programs and practices in their communities. The keys to erecting and maintaining a successful professional development program in schools and school districts are interactive teamwork, a great sense of enthusiasm, and a shared and renewed commitment to the program. Only good things can come from such positive attitudes and unwavering dedication.

The Winners of the 1997 National Awards

- Lawrence Public Schools
  Lawrence, Kansas

- Samuel L. Mason Elementary School
  Roxbury, Massachusetts

- San Francisco Unified School District
  San Francisco, California

- Wilton Public Schools
  Wilton, Connecticut

- Woodrow Wilson Elementary School
  Manhattan, Kansas

Additional information on the 1997 Award Winners is available upon request from SERVE's Publishing and Quality Assurance Office.

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Evaluating Current Professional Development Opportunities

Directions: Use the scale provided below to identify those areas of the professional development activities currently available to you that should be studied for possible improvement.

1 = Low priority for study. Current practices are strong in this area.
3 = Medium priority for study. Current practices could be improved.
5 = High priority for study. Current practices need improvement.

The areas receiving the highest average rating should be considered as priority areas that should be studied before other areas.

Rating	Key Ideas for Effective Professional Development
☐	Adult learning is enhanced when adults are allowed to work with colleagues to solve a work-related problem which they identified and which represents a collective concern. Adult learners are able to achieve extremely high levels of implementation when support is provided after initial training.
☐	Change is a long-term process, not a one-time event. Change produces concerns in everyone. With appropriate support, individuals progress through the different stages of concern in a predictable sequence. Effective professional development addresses an individual's concerns through support that is appropriate for each person and his or her immediate concerns.
☐	Selecting the program or practices that will be studied and implemented is an extremely important decision. The major investments of time, energy, and other resources that go along with professional development activities require that this decision be a thoughtful one. The selection of content should be based on 1) a strong research-base that proves the effectiveness of the program in producing student learning, 2) a review of the program to ensure it makes sense to teachers, 3) its match with student and teacher needs, and 4) its compatibility with current practices, programs, and policies.

☐ Numerous models exist for structuring professional development activities. Each has strengths and weaknesses relative to specific outcomes. No matter which model is used, the activities should (1) focus on reducing the gap between actual and desired levels of student achievement, (2) involve participants in identifying the content and objectives, (3) help participants develop a theoretical as well as practical understanding of the new practices, (4) include follow-up and support, and (5) be linked to a comprehensive change process that focuses on student learning.

☐ Meaningful, effective collaboration is more likely to occur when you and your colleagues share responsibility for major tasks of teaching and for student learning, when you are committed to collective inquiry into student learning and collective action in improving it, and when you support one another in ways that involve elements of coaching. Individuals differ in how they seek out or avoid learning experiences. These differences have implications for group functioning. Groups require time to develop into more effective teams. Groups that view their work as meaningful and challenging will develop higher functioning and higher levels of collegiality.

☐ Data-driven decisions are made throughout the process of identifying a problem, selecting a solution, implementing it, and assessing its results. Collective examination of data will be a new experience for most teachers and is likely to produce some conflict. However, the value of data-driven decisions far outweighs the difficulties in learning to use them. Data-driven decisions force you to face the realities of problems and your efforts to solve them. Your implementation of valid strategies is the key to improving student learning. Data concerning degrees of implementation are vital if you are to be confident of what you are evaluating. Comparisons of baseline data and "post-test" data should be used to draw conclusions about the effects of any innovation.

☐ Professional development that truly enhances your learning will provide opportunities for you to be involved in leadership activities that focus on direct interaction with your fellow teachers, peer-coaching study teams, and action research. These roles expand your responsibility for your own learning and your sharing of the responsibility for student learning. They contribute to the construction of a learning community where you and your colleagues model the types of learning in which you want students to become engaged. Performing well in these roles will enable you to make significant contributions to school improvement.

☐ Professional development that truly enhances teacher learning will provide opportunities for teachers to be involved in leadership activities that focus on direct interaction with their fellow teachers, peer-coaching study teams, and action research. These roles expand teachers' responsibility for their own learning and their shared responsibility for student learning. They contribute to the construction of a learning community in which teachers model the types of learning in which they want students to become engaged. Teachers who perform well in these roles will make significant contributions to school improvement.

☐ You and your fellow teachers need more time to participate in high-quality professional development activities. Additional time can be provided by adding time to your regular schedule, reorganizing how your time is currently allocated, and/or using school staff in new ways. Professional development activities should be held when teachers are fresh and when blocks of uninterrupted time are available. They should be scheduled during the school year so you can work on problems in "real-time" (job-embedded inquiry should not have to wait until vacation time). Teachers are capable of creative ideas and suggestions for finding additional time, especially when they feel it will be used in productive joint work.

☐ Professional development is a shared responsibility for teachers, schools, and districts. Setting priorities is necessary to produce an effective response to competing needs. Looking at the needs of other levels helps everyone to have the broad perspective necessary for wise decisions. Connecting plans for professional development across levels makes them more effective and more likely to receive the support needed to be successful.

Steps in Using Self-Directed Change Model

I. Identify practices to be studied

Identifying specific practices for study may be done by surveying teachers, reviewing lists of effective practices, analyzing student achievement data or reviewing school-wide or district improvement goals and objectives. A brief list is provided here as an example of practices that might deserve closer examination.

- **Subject matter knowledge** (Am I as knowledgeable as I should be in the subject areas I teach?)

- **Teachers as learners** (Am I continuing to learn? Is the climate of the school supportive of me as a learner?)

- **Instructional strategies** (Are the instructional strategies I use based on sound research? Are they effective? How do students respond to these strategies?)

- **Classroom assessment** (Am I using assessment to inform instruction or merely to record grades? Do I use a variety of assessment strategies?)

- **Time management** (Am I using class time and planning time efficiently? Are faculty and department meetings operating efficiently?)

- **Beliefs about teaching** (Is there a mission statement that reflects the beliefs of teachers? Are teachers' stated beliefs about teaching consistent with actual practice? Are school policies supportive of the stated beliefs of the faculty?)

- **Relationships with students** (How do students feel about themselves and about learning? How do I impact these feelings?)

- **Planning for instruction** (Am I using available resources to plan? Am I including information about learning styles, multiple intelligences, and other relevant student attributes as I plan?)

2. Identify standards or criteria for judging targeted practices
There are many lists and summaries of best practices that can serve as a starting point for assembling criteria for judging your current practices. Use a wide range of sources in developing these criteria so the evaluation of current practices can be as comprehensive as possible. Since these criteria will also become the standards you are aiming for, it is a good idea to put a significant amount of time into their identification.

3. Identify methods for collecting information about targeted practices

and

4. Collect information
As is true about any effort to describe something complex and multi-dimensional, efforts to describe your current practices should involve multiple measures so the picture that is created will be complete and accurate. A number of suggested methods for collecting this information are described here.

- **Comparisons with expert teachers' performance** (You may benefit from observing other teachers perform the practices you are seeking to study, so you are able to compare your own performance to that demonstrated by highly effective teachers. Some training and advice on observing specific practices may be helpful. Firsthand observation may be supplemented by viewing videotaped examples. Videotape offers the added benefit of being able to replay relevant segments for closer analysis.)

- **Peer observation** (Having another teacher observe your use of specific practices is an extremely useful way to collect information on your teaching performance. It is important to view this activity in a way that distinguishes it from traditional supervisory observations. Here, the observer's purpose is to collect information you will use to make judgments about your teaching.)

- **Portfolios** (A collection of sample lesson plans, teacher-made materials and tests, and associated student work can shed light on important patterns of behavior that might not be identified by other means. The items placed in the portfolio should be related to the specific practices being studied. Having a clearly stated purpose will allow you to decide what will be helpful to include. Self-reflection should be a primary method of using portfolios, but asking others to review the contents and give you their feedback can significantly enhance the quality of the insights into your current practices.)

- **Surveys or questionnaires** (Students can provide a great deal of relevant information about how your teaching practices impact them. It is best to allow them to respond anonymously in order to get the most candid feedback.)

* Student achievement data (Data describing student achievement are plentiful. Grades, work samples, and standardized test results are just a few of the readily available sources of information about student achievement.)

There is a difference between information expressed as numbers and information that is qualitative. An observer in your classroom will be able to record the number of higher-order questions you use or the time students spend on-task, but you may also benefit from asking that person to share his or her perceptions concerning your questioning techniques or the things you do to increase student engagement.

5. Compare real practices with standards or criteria for ideal practices

and

6. Identify priority areas for more in-depth study and professional growth
In comparing your current practices against what you have learned about ideal practices you are looking for two things: 1) Where are my practices different from the ideal? and 2) How far from the ideal are my practices?

Just as the collection of information about your teaching practices involved other people, your assessment of the data that was collected will be richer if you discuss that data with your fellow teachers, administrators, or other resource people, particularly those who have special knowledge of the practices you are studying. Earlier, the point was made that self-awareness was critical to any effort to change. Asking others to discuss the data that has been collected about your teaching will contribute to raising your self-awareness and help you make the changes that will bring the greatest benefit to you and your students.

Those specific areas where your current practices differ the most from the ideal are good places to start in planning for self-directed change. However, areas where small adjust-ments may bring your practice in line with the ideal should not be ignored. Making those changes right away can give you momentum toward making more difficult changes.

7. Identify the desired outcomes of the professional development activities
Daniel Duke, et al., (1994) developed a way to think about professional development goals that categorizes them into four groups. A description of each category is presented here along with an example that may help you in setting your own professional development goals.

Prerequisite goals = preliminary goals that must be accomplished prior to working on professional development goals:

* Develop an awareness of a range of instructional strategies for use in teaching at-risk students to read. (This goal describes what the teacher plans to do to get ready for a more in-depth study of reading strategies.)

Acquisition goals = goals that involve learning new skills or new knowledge:

❧ Learn to use advance organizers (a new skill).

❧ Learn to use rubrics to score student essays.

Developmental goals = goals which improve or refine existing skills, knowledge, attitudes, or attributes:

❧ Improve the use of corrective feedback.

❧ Develop a greater knowledge of United States history.

❧ Increase sensitivity to the needs of limited-English proficient students.

Application goals = goals which apply new or existing skills or knowledge to a familiar or new situation:

❧ Use knowledge of American government to enhance content of United States history course.

❧ Use recently acquired computer skills to enhance activities within creative writing unit.

❧ Use knowledge of consumer math skills to create an interdisciplinary unit for home economics students.

❧ Use recently acquired strategies for encouraging higher-order thinking to develop a new unit for students in the new advanced placement physics course.

In his report of an extensive case study of teachers who implemented a professional growth plan in lieu of their traditional evaluation process, Duke cites these pieces of advice from teachers who were successful in setting challenging, meaningful goals:

❧ Do not rush into goal selection. Take time to examine possibilities that are not obvious.

❧ Do not get "locked into" any particular goal if it means losing the flexibility to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities.

❧ Be prepared to seek help rather than waiting for it to come to you.

❧ Find out what you really want to do to improve your teaching. Be honest with yourself, and don't worry about what somebody else thinks would be great.

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8. Plan the professional development activities, including follow-up activities, that will address the targeted practices.

See the sections of Chapter 3 dealing with five models of professional development. Figure 3.3 provides estimates of the effectiveness of each model in producing specific outcomes. Take special note of the information in Chapter 5 on the forms of continuing assistance you will need to be successful in implementing the content of the professional development activities you are planning.

9. Implement the plan; assess and monitor its progress periodically.

Your plan should include anticipated completion dates for each individual activity. Checking your progress in implementing the planned activities will help keep you on track.

10. Use feedback to determine the extent to which the professional development activities achieved the desired outcomes; continue or modify the activities as necessary, or identify new practices for study.

Establishing baseline data describing the need or condition prior to the professional development activities, as described in step 4, is an important part of assessing the impact of those activities. At this point in the process, you should "re-measure" using the same procedures and tools used in collecting the baseline data. A comparison of the "pre- and post-activity" data will provide you with the best measurement of impact of the professional development activities.

Evaluating Professional Development: A Tool for Staying on Track

Directions: Think about what has been completed in this professional development activity or program. Circle 1 if you do not agree with the statement, 2 if you agree somewhat, or 3 if you agree strongly. Use the lines provided to make suggestions or write comments.

1   2   3   The way our sessions are organized helps us get the most from the time provided for each session.

_____

_____

1   2   3   The content is understandable and relevant to what we hoped to learn from this activity/program.

_____

_____

1   2   3   The content fits our philosophy and expands our skills and knowledge.

_____

_____

1   2   3   The pace of the activities keeps me interested without moving too fast.

_____

_____

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1   2   3   The presentations are clear, and we are actively involved in what is
being done.

_____

_____

1   2   3   The objectives are clearly stated and help us stay focused.

_____

_____

1   2   3   We get opportunities to practice what we are learning and to get feed-
back on that practice.

_____

_____

1   2   3   We will be able to use what we are learning in our classrooms.

_____

_____

1   2   3   What we are learning will help our students improve their academic
achievement.

_____

_____

ACTIVITY: Planning and Evaluating Professional Development Activities

1. Form small groups of four or five participants, and distribute Writing Form #1.

2. Explain to the groups that the following exercise asks them to relate a professional development activity that was particularly satisfying and helpful. They have approximately ten minutes to think and respond, but they will not be asked to read their notes aloud, nor will their forms be collected. The purpose of this activity is to stimulate thinking and provide notes for later discussion.

3. After distributing Writing Form #2, ask the participants to write about a professional development experience that was particularly frustrating, allowing another ten minutes for thinking and writing.

4. Ask each group to choose a recorder, and then have the group compile two lists on blank paper: one of satisfying professional development experiences, the other of frustrating experiences.

5. Now, ask group members to tell their group details of their satisfying experience. Then, the group works together to describe the aspects that made the experience satisfying, recording these features on chart paper. Allow approximately 20 minutes.

6. Repeat step five for frustrating experiences, again allowing 20 minutes.

7. While groups are working, collect the lists from step four, make a large list of all satisfying vs. frustrating experiences recorded, and tape it to the wall.

8. Distribute the handout "Features of Effective Learning Experiences," and give participants a few minutes to read through it. As a large group, ask them to consider satisfying experiences, identifying features on the handout that correspond to their comments on the chart paper. Have a volunteer letter the items as discussed, and when all items have been considered, circle any items that have no correspondents.

9. Repeat step eight for frustrating experiences.

10. Hold a general group discussion, considering whether certain features (or their absence) seem to be key in creating satisfaction or frustration. Do "one-shot" experiences show up more often on one list than the other? Do traditional educational experiences (lectures with passive listeners) appear more often on one list than the other? How has this activity and discussion changed what you understood about effective learning or

professional development? Are there ways in which your current professional development plans could be adapted to create more satisfying and effective learning? Has this learning experience been satisfactory for you in modeling the features of effective learning as described on the handout?

Writing form #1

Think of a professional development experience you have had that was satisfying and helpful. Briefly, what did you learn?

Now, reflect for a moment on the experience, and then write about what made that experience satisfying for you.

Writing form #2

Think of a professional development experience you have had that was frustrating. Briefly, what did you learn—or what were you supposed to be learning?

Now, reflect for a moment on the experience, and then write about what made that experience frustrating for you.

Features of Effective Learning Experiences

1. Learners help plan the learning experience to fit their needs.

2. New information is received through more than one of the five senses. For example, learners may read text, hear an explanation, view a demonstration, or use materials.

3. Learners process information in more than one context and in more than one way. They may write in journals, analyze case studies, role play, hold small-group discussions, conduct interviews, present lessons, solve problems, use art or music to express ideas, construct objects, etc.

4. Questions are thoughtfully and thoroughly discussed.

5. Learners are encouraged to reflect, wonder, suppose, and predict.

6. New concepts and information are related to current knowledge and experience. Learners may connect the new with the old by drawing on previous experience to illustrate new ideas; by comparing and contrasting new knowledge with previous knowledge; by applying new strategies or skills to familiar situations; by constructing metaphors for new concepts. Or new information may trigger a process of deconstructing previous knowledge.

7. The learning environment is collegial. Learners learn from one another. Ideas and perspectives reflect the ethnic and gender diversity of the learners. Learners value and welcome diverse viewpoints.

8. Learners use new information over time, testing, comparing notes with other users, revising and refining understanding and practice.

9. Learners have access, when needed, to support and feedback from those with expertise.

10. Learners experience success.

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Shifting the Paradigm of Professional Development

From Too Much	To More
Focus on teacher needs	Focus on student-learning outcomes
Focus on individual development	Focus on individual and system development
Transmission of knowledge, skills, and strategies	Inquiry into teaching and learning
"Pull-out" training	Job-embedded learning
Generic teaching skills	Combination of content and content-specific teaching skills
Fragmented, piece-meal, or e-shot	Driven by clear, coherent, long-term strategic plan
District direction and decision making	School direction and decision making
Professional developers as trainers	Professional developers as facilitators, consultants, and planners
Professional development as some people's jobs	Professional development as everyone's job
Professional development for teachers	Professional development for everyone
Professional development as a "frill"	Professional development as essential

Source: Adapted from "Shifting the Paradigm of Professional Development" by Susan Loucks-Horsley and Dennis Sparks. Developed for the Goals 2000 Conference, Washington, DC, May 1994.

National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development

Adapted by the Professional Development Institute at SERVE, Inc.
P.O. Box 5406, Greensboro, NC 27435-5406 (336) 334-4667

The Standards

CONTEXT
Effective staff development...

- Requires and fosters the norm of continual improvement

- Requires strong leadership in order to obtain continuing support and to motivate all staff, school board members, parents, and the community to be advocates for continual improvement

- Is aligned with the school's and the district's strategic plan and is funded by a line item in the budget

- Provides adequate time during the work day for staff members to learn and work together to accomplish the school's mission and goals

- Is an innovation in itself that requires study of the change process

PROCESS
Effective staff development...

- Provides knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding organization development and systems thinking

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❧ Is based on knowledge about human learning and development

❧ Provides for the three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization

❧ Bases priorities on a careful analysis of disaggregated student data regarding goals for student learning

❧ Uses content that has proven value in increasing student learning and development

❧ Provides a framework for integrating innovations and relating those innovations to the mission of the organization

❧ Requires an evaluation process that is ongoing, includes multiple sources of information, and focuses on all levels of the organization

❧ Uses a variety of staff development approaches to accomplish the goals of improving instruction and student success

❧ Provides the follow-up necessary to ensure improvement

❧ Requires staff members to learn and apply collaborative skills to conduct meetings, make shared decisions, solve problems, and work collegially

❧ Requires knowledge and use of the stages of group development to build effective, productive, collegial teams

CONTENT

Effective staff development...

❧ Increases administrators' and teachers' understanding of how to provide school environments and instruction that are responsive to the developmental needs of children, young adolescents, and adolescents

❧ Facilitates the development and implementation of school and classroom-based management which maximize student learning

❧ Addresses diversity by providing awareness and training related to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to ensure that an equitable and quality education is provided to all students

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- ❦ Enables educators to provide challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum that engages students in integrative ways of thinking and learning

- ❦ Prepares teachers to use research-based teaching srrategies appropriate to their instructional objectives and their students

- ❦ Prepares educators to demonstrate high expectations for student learning

- ❦ Facilitates staff collaboration with and support of families for improving student performance

- ❦ Prepares teachers to use various types of performance assessment in their classrooms.

- ❦ Prepares educators to combine academic student-learning goals with service to the community

- ❦ Increases administrators' and teachers' ability to provide guidance and advice to students

- ❦ Increases staff knowledge and practice of interdisciplinary team organization and instruction

About SERVE

SERVE is an education organization with the mission to promote and support the continuous improvement of educational opportunities for all learners in the Southeast. To further this mission, SERVE engages in research and development that address education issues of critical importance to educators in the region and provides technical assistance to SEAs and LEAs that are striving for comprehensive school improvement. This critical research-to-practice linkage is supported by an experienced staff strategically located throughout the region. This staff is highly skilled in providing needs assessment services, conducting applied research in schools, and developing processes, products, and programs that inform educators and increase student achievement.

As the new millennium approaches, SERVE is preparing to address emerging 21st-century issues, such as persistent achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students, massive teacher training needs, and rising numbers of limited English proficient students. Committed to a shared vision of the future of education in the region, the SERVE organization is governed by a board of directors that includes the governors, chief state school officers, and key legislators from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and representative teachers and private sector leaders. SERVE's core component is the Regional Educational Laboratory program. SERVE is one of ten organizations, funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, that provide the services of the Regional Educational Laboratory program to all 50 states and territories. These Laboratories form a knowledge network, building a bank of information and resources shared nationally and disseminated regionally to improve student achievement locally. SERVE has additional funding from the Department in the areas of Migrant Education and School Leadership and is the lead agency in the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Consortium for the Southeast and the Southeast and Islands Regional Technology in Education Consortium.

Based on these funded efforts, SERVE has developed a portfolio of programs and initiatives that provides a spectrum of resources, services, and products for responding to local, regional, and national needs. Program areas include

- Assessment, Accountability, and Standards

- Children, Families, and Communities

- Education Policy

- Improvement of Science and Mathematics Education

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- The Initiative on Teachers and Teaching

- School Development and Reform

- Technology in Learning

SERVE's National Speciality Area is Early Childhood Education, and the staff of SERVE's Program for Children, Families, and Communities has developed the expertise and the ability to provide leadership and support to the early childhood community nationwide for children from birth to age eight.

In addition to the program areas, the SERVE Evaluation Department supports the evaluation activities of the major grants and contracts and provides evaluation services to SEAs and LEAs in the region. Through its Publishing and Quality Assurance Department, SERVE publishes a variety of studies, training materials, policy briefs, and program products. These informative and low-cost publications include guides to available resources, summaries of current issues in education policy, and examples of exemplary educational programs. Through its programmatic, evaluation, and publishing activities, SERVE also provides contracted staff development and technical assistance in many areas of expertise to assist education agencies in achieving their school improvement goals.

SERVE's main office is at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, with major staff groups located in Tallahassee, Florida, and Atlanta, Georgia. Policy advisors are assigned to each state department of education in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Current and detailed information on any of the program and service areas noted here may be found on SERVE's site on the World Wide Web at www.serve.org.

SERVE Main Office

P.O. Box 5367
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For two decades, **David Collins** has been a practicing educator in the state of Florida, serving in a variety of capacities. In 1994, he assumed his present position as the Director of Strategic Planning and Continuous Quality Improvement for Orange County Schools. Dr. Collins has been a member of the Florida Teacher Education Program Approval Board since 1992 and has written or co-written numerous publications, including *Understanding School Operations: A Guide for Parents, Citizens, and Business Partners; Building a Teacher's Guild; School Improvement and Site-Based Decision-Making;* and *Teaching Concepts* for the Teacher Learning Module series for the Florida Department of Education.

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