Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary, Utica

In Utica City schools, the Professional Development Plan is created by a multi-constituent team, clearly specifies the goal of serving all students, commits to providing learning opportunities for teachers, and lists a wide variety of ways for teachers to fulfill their individual development responsibilities.

Utica City School District

Professional Development Plan

2010 – 2011 School Year
Professional Development Plan
Utica City School District
Team Members

, UTA President
, Administrator
, Administrator
Administrator
, Teacher
Teacher Assistant
Administrator
, Teacher
Parent Representative
, Administrator
Administrator
, Teacher
, Teacher
, Teacher
, Teacher
, Teacher
, Teacher
Administrator
Goals

All professional/staff development opportunities are designed to improve instruction and meet the needs of all students in the Utica City School District. The Professional Development Plan (PDP) committee recognizes the diversity of students in Utica including students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency and has a strong commitment to integrating all students into the total school program. We are addressing the needs necessitated by the state standards, school district report card, new state and local assessments and new program initiatives within the district.

Objectives

The district will provide a variety of opportunities for professional development. Our intent is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers participate in substantial professional development in order that they remain current with their profession and meet the learning needs of their students.

Strategies

- All pedagogical staff members will be provided with numerous appropriate opportunities to enable them to further develop professional skills.
- As per New York State regulations, teachers certified after February 2, 2004 are required to be provided a Mentoring experience to ensure their success.
- Commissioner’s Regulation 80-3.6 (b)(1) requires that Professional certificate holders and Teaching Assistant III certificate holders complete professional development every five years (175 hours for teachers and school leaders and 75 hours for TA IIIs) in order to maintain their certification. Pursuant to this regulation, the District has developed a plan to ensure this mandate is met. (See page 5 for a list of activities.)
- Commissioner’s Regulation 100.2(o) Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) focuses on the process of teacher evaluation and improving professional practice in the context of local needs and resources. Pursuant to this regulation, the District has developed a plan to ensure that that those with unsatisfactory performance receive a teacher improvement plan with appropriate professional development.
- The District will measure the impact of the professional development on student achievement and teacher practice by providing time for faculty and staff to conduct analysis of the district report card and other data. (The PDP committee will assess the impact of these initiatives on student achievement and best practices of its professional staff.)
Activities

Designated hours are those activities specifically required by the District. Professional/Staff Development activities applicable to all staff members as menu items which may be used for nondesignated professional development or in the case of absence from designated professional development (due to absence from school or with prior approval), as agreed to by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (Article IV, Section O). Non-designated professional development are those hours that have not been designated as required by the district.

The planning team has surveyed teachers, administrators, and parents in order to prepare a plan that meets the needs of the professional staff. In addition, school district data has been reviewed and disaggregated to determine achievement for English Language Learner (ELL) students and Student with Disabilities populations. The data which has been reviewed includes: attendance rates, suspension rates, drop-out rates, state assessment data, graduation rate, and other standardized test data. Time has been set aside for teachers and administrators to review building-level data and determine goals for the current year, in the CDEP (Comprehensive District Education Plan) format. Building, department, grade level, and individual goals will be forwarded to the Professional Development Planning Team, the Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Director of Staff Development and Planning. Specific agendas for established staff development days will be based on this data. In addition, the individual, building and district-level goals will be used to determine its course offerings for the current year. The following core principles, together with this data, determine the goals and objectives for this plan.

Page 5 includes the list of these activities that can be counted toward the 175 professional development hours needed either in school (before, during, or after school) or off site. (The Professional Development Committee recognizes that other activities not listed here might be considered for approval but those activities would require prior approval from the District.)
Acceptable Professional Hours

- Advanced certification, certificates in additional areas, or National Board certification.
- Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) - Special Education Training Resource Centers (SETRC) - Bilingual/ESL Technical Assistance Centers (BETAC).
- Collaborating with other teachers and teaching assistants to examine case studies of student work and development. (Pre-approved by the District).
- Collegial Circle Workshops
- Curriculum planning and development.
- Committee Meetings – Academic Intervention Services (AIS), Response to Intervention (RTI), Child Study Team, CSE, Health and Safety Committee, Discipline Committee, Individualized Education Program (IEP), APPR/PDP, Strategic Planning Committee, any other District-sanctioned committee
- Coursework linked to improvement of instructional technique or content knowledge
- Delivering professional development (i.e. conducting workshops).
- Faculty/Department/Grade-Level Meetings (when educationally relevant)
- Graduate Credits & In-Service
- Grant Writing
- Independent Study/Research (with prior approval)
- Inter-Classroom Visitations
- Mentor/Mentee sessions
- New Teacher Meetings
- Peer coaching
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC's)
- Portfolio
- Pre & Post Observation Conferences
- Programs Developing or collaborating on the development of new programs and instructional methods.
- Publishing in Educational Journals
- Regional Scorer Training and/or Trainee/Turnkey
- Research - Engaging in research projects (Pre-approved by the District.)
- Service on the State Professional Standards and Practices Board.
- In-District Workshops
- Conferences (Pre-approved by the District.)
The Plan to Provide Professional Development Opportunities

The Utica City School District will provide “substantial Professional Development” Opportunities for all teachers directly related to student learning needs as identified in the school district report card and/or other sources. The articulation of professional development across grade levels will be provided through:

- Discretionary Days
- Early Release Day Sessions
- Embedded Staff Development
- In School (Before, During, After School, Summer) *
- Superintendent/In-service Sessions
- Web Based Training Offered

CORE PRINCIPLES

- All staff is an essential part of building and district long-range planning.
- All staff is responsible for all standards.
- Articulation is needed between and among grade level and subject area teachers to provide continuity of curriculum and teaching practices.
- Professional development is most effective when there is collaborative leadership and shared responsibility for improving teaching and learning. Collaborative leadership for professional development recognizes that the pursuit of excellence is never-ending and embraces the individual and collective goals and talents of teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, school administrators, school boards, district and state staff, institutions of higher education, unions, and other stakeholders.
- We must work collaboratively to understand the need for change, the change process, and the mechanisms that must be employed in order to meet established goals.
- Professional development is most effective when it takes place in professional learning communities. These learning communities might take various forms, but they are all characterized by ongoing learning. They encourage individual and collaborative exploration, practice, and reflection. They foster collegiality and problem solving, and they emphasize continuous improvement in classrooms and schools.
- Staff development will be based on student achievement and other pertinent forms of data including the Utica City School District Action Plan.
- Effective professional development fosters a culture of continuous improvement for all engaged in the learning endeavor. Practices address the needs of professionals throughout their careers and embrace other stakeholders as participants in learning.
- Activities are evaluated both for effectiveness and impact on student learning.
• Effective professional development is that which improves the learning of all students, including those with different educational needs, learning styles, and incremental abilities, and those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

• Professional development is most effective when it is job embedded, directly relevant to classroom practice, provided over time, and when it provides opportunity for practice of new strategies, time to reflect on changes, and time to integrate new learning into the teaching practice.

• All professionals must seek to learn and grow in an environment that supports self-reflection and provides the opportunity to select goals meaningful to the individual as a life-long learner.

• The State Education Department and the United States Department of Education are mandating policies and procedures that require a considerable amount of professional development.

• Professional development is most effective when there are clear Research-Based expectations for what teachers should know and be able to do to support student learning. These expectations are reflected in the New York State Code of Ethics for Educators, district Professional Development Plans, Annual Professional Performance Reviews, and Commissioner’s Regulations related to teacher preparation and certification. They are also enumerated and reflected in collective bargaining agreements, job descriptions and assignments, performance appraisal systems, systems of rewards and incentives for teachers, and in the design and content of teacher professional development.

• Professional development is most effective when adequate resources are provided. Resources include money, people, and time. Resources necessarily come from a variety of sources, and should be sufficiently sustained over time to insure the full impact of professional development. Resources are adequate when they ensure that all educators can study, practice, reflect, receive feedback on practice, and implement knowledge and skills necessary to be effective with their students and others.

• Additional time is needed at regular intervals during the school calendar year to provide continuity and opportunity for staff to work together in a concentrated manner.

• Time is needed for staff to meet with colleagues.

New York State Professional Development Standards

Please see pages 8 through 25 to review the New York State Professional Development Standards. When applicable, under each indicator is the District’s activity that is planned to specifically fulfill the standard. (Note: Not all standards warrant a specific activity.)