



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo: Professional Learning Update

TO: School Board
Superintendent Kocanda

FROM: Daniel Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Professional Learning and Human Resources

November 27, 2018

Overview & Background

At the start of last year(2017-18), the District initiated a new manner in which to have Professional Learning unfold for faculty during our Institute Days. Based upon a review of current research we determined that Professional Learning should meet several requirements, as listed below. Professional Learning should be:

- Cohesive and long-term
- Relevant to student and faculty needs
- Job-embedded and research-based

As a result we put out a call to faculty at the start of the 2017-18 school year for workshop proposals that aligned with our District vision and goals. The response was a robust selection of workshops that were offered during our three Institute Days last year. The faculty survey results at the end of the 2017-18 school year demonstrated a clear approval of this approach by faculty as meaningful and impactful on their teaching and learning.

As a result, we are continuing to use this Professional Learning model for the 2018-19 school year. Once again, we put out a call for workshop proposals in September. We received 23 proposals from faculty to teach workshops that aligned with our District vision and goals.

November 9, 2018 Institute Day

In addition to having two August Institute Days, ahead of the first day of student attendance, we have two Institute Days scheduled during the 2018-19 school year. The first was on November 9, 2018 and the second will be on February 18, 2019. Each Institute Day serves as opportunities both for faculty-led workshops and District Committee meetings. In collaboration with the WEA we agreed to utilize half of each institute Day for committee meeting time. This helped to reduce the number of after school committee meetings during the school year.

On November 9, 2018 we held committee meetings in the morning between 8:30 and 11:15. We then hosted a lunch for everyone in the Washburne gymnasium, taking time to honor Veterans Day during the lunch gathering. The afternoon consisted of two 90-minute workshop sessions. The first from 12:15 - 1:45 was followed by a 15 minute break. The second session was from 2:00 - 3:30. Faculty signed up ahead of time both for the November and February sessions.

Faculty Feedback

To assess the effectiveness of our Institute Days we collect faculty feedback via a Google Survey. Below are the results of the survey regarding our November 9, 2018 Institute Day:

- "How relevant were the session(s) to your day-to-day work with children?"
 - 86.2%

- "How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the Institute Day afternoon sessions/workshops in meeting your professional learning needs?"
 - 85.1 %

These responses are in keeping with feedback received last year. The average for question one last year was 89.3%, putting us 3.1% below last year's average. The average for question two was 84.3%, putting us 0.8% above last year's average.

In the most recent survey of November 9th faculty shared such thoughts as, "The sessions were more meaningful than in the past. Great conversations." "Inquiry - I left with some new insights into inquiry and great resources. I'd love to have time next session to plan inquiry lessons for my class." Some of the feedback asked for a wider variety of options and we will try to add a few more session topics to the February Institute Day.

Overall, we are pleased with the level of engagement our faculty and staff have demonstrated during our Institute Days. Faculty attendance was excellent and our associates joined many of the sessions as well. In addition we held a training for all Classroom/Special Education Associates in morning on “Fostering Student Independence”. This was provided by staff members from our NSSED Cooperative. The Resource Center/Technology Associates also attended a morning training session entitled, “Common Technology Tips”. This was provided by members of our District Technology Team. Both of these sessions were offered as a result of continued requests by associates not only to participate in our Institute Day offerings, but to have workshops tailored to their specific needs.

Attachment:

Course Offerings