



Information Memo: January 22, 2018, Institute Day

TO: School Board
Trisha Kocanda, *Superintendent*

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

January 30, 2018

On Monday, January 22, 2018, we held our second Faculty/Staff Institute Day. The first was held on Friday, November 10th and the next Institute Day will be held on Monday, April 2nd.

History

Over the past two years we have reviewed current research on effective professional learning practices via *Learning Forward* and other organizations and have found that the most effective professional learning is classroom-based, teacher initiated and/or led and is directly connected to the District's vision and goals.

As a result, last year we conducted faculty surveys, held focus groups, and met with WEA leadership to reframe our professional learning to current research and best practices. One goal was to create a yearlong Institute Day schedule that would allow faculty predictability of focus and include faculty as part of the planning process.

In May of 2017 we provided faculty with a vision of the 2017-18 Institute Day schedule, which incorporated their input and research affirming faculty voice as a key-component of successful professional development.

We created a model in which we would offer "Inquiry Studies" or courses led by faculty, guest speakers and/or administrators. Some of these classes would be offered only once during the three Institute Days. Other courses would involve three sessions over the course of the school year.

In August/September of this year we invited faculty to submit course topics they would like to teach. After careful review we accepted 20 courses, to be taught either individually or in teams by 25 Faculty and/or staff. Invited guests such as Dr. Kurt Schneider, NSSED Superintendent, teach the remaining course offerings. These courses were selected to align with specific District goals and initiatives such as *Executive Functioning and Classroom Performance*.

January 22, 2018

On this second Institute Day of the year we had 270 faculty and staff attend. There were 12 course offerings from 8:30 am – 10:00 am and 11 courses offered between 10:15 and 11:45. The topics included, *Differentiated Math Instruction*, *Google Apps for Education*, *Exploring Social Emotional Universal Screeners*, *iMovie for iPad* and more. In the afternoon faculty are given time (12:45 – 3:30 p.m.) for various Committee Meetings.

Feedback

Faculty completed a survey after the November 10th Institute Day. Of the 129 responses, 92% felt the sessions were relevant to their day-to-day work. 85.3% felt the courses would impact their classroom practices and teaching. When asked about the overall effectiveness of the morning sessions to meet their professional needs, 90% said yes.

We will be sending a survey out to get faculty feedback on the January 22nd Institute Day as well. Thus far, anecdotal evidence suggests it was equally successful. An update will be provided in May assessing the overall effectiveness and impact of this new model of professional development being implemented this year.