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Module Three: Strong Districts and Their Leadership

Job-embedded Professional Learning for all Members of the Organization

Contents

Agenda

Self-assessment

Samples of Relevant Research

Appendix A: Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Appendix B: Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District
School Board

Job-embedded Professional Learning for all Members of the Organization

Agenda

1. Objectives

As a result of participating in this module, district leaders will be more likely to:

- Restructure the use of meeting time with teachers and principals so that very little is devoted to routine administrative matters. Meeting time formerly used for such matters is devoted almost entirely to professional development.
- Design most professional development opportunities so that it is carefully aligned with board and school improvement initiatives and reflects the best available evidence about how people learn.
- Ensure that almost all schools provide time for collaborative work on instructional improvement initiatives. Schools are provided with the resources they need to provide this time and leaders are provided with professional development in how best to facilitate such work.

2. Review of relevant theory and research ([PowerPoint presentation](#))

3. Appendix A: Waterloo Catholic District School Board

What can be learned from this case study about how to provide effective job-embedded professional development for all members of the organization?

- Discussion of written case study (in teams of four or five people)
- Debriefing of what was learned from the written case study by each team
- Synthesis of key findings from written case study and interviews

4. Appendix C: Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

What can be learned from this case study about how to provide effective job-embedded professional development for all members of the organization?

- Discussion of written case study (in teams of four or five people)
- Debriefing of what was learned from the written case study by each team

5. Compare and contrast learnings from the two case studies and the summary of research -- Full group discussion

- Consider relationship to relevant research and to the approach currently being taken by one's own district
- Highlight key lessons (what to do for sure, what not to do at any cost) making as many links as possible to the case studies and research

Self-assessment

*In order to assist you with your learning, use a rating scale in response to the following:
(1 = not at all, 2 = a modest amount, 3 = significantly, 4 = a great deal)*

Please indicate the extent to which you feel that participation in this module has extended your ability, or increased your awareness of the need, to address the following challenges associated with providing job-embedded professional learning for all members of the organization:

1. Significantly reduce the time devoted to routine administrative matters in meetings of teachers and principals. Ensure that meeting time formerly used for such matters will be devoted, almost entirely, to professional development.
2. Carefully align most professional development opportunities with board and school improvement initiatives.
3. Differentiate professional development opportunities in response to the needs of individual schools, administrators and teachers.
4. Provide extensive opportunities for both teachers and administrators to further develop their expertise.
5. Provide time for schools to engage in collaborative work on instructional improvement initiatives and offer professional development opportunities for leaders to learn how best to facilitate such work.
6. Closely align system-sponsored professional development with the best evidence about how people learn.

Samples of Relevant Research

Bransford, J., Brown, A., Cocking, R. (Eds.) (2000). *Brain, mind, experience and school*. Washington: National Research Council.

Mangin, M., Dunsmore, K. (2015). How the framing of instructional coaching as a lever for systematic or individual reform influences the enactment of coaching, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 51, 2, 179-213

Perkins, D., Salomon, G. (1992). Transfer of learning – Metacognitive strategies. In N. Postelthwaite & T. Husen (Eds.). *International Encyclopedia of Education* (2nd Edition)

Sun, M. et al (2013). Shaping professional development to promote diffusion of instructional expertise among teachers, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 35, 3, 344-369.

Appendix A: Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Guiding Questions

Waterloo Catholic District School Board offered professional development opportunities to a team during the 2011 to 2013 school years on instructional rounds in order to develop district support models to improve instructional practice. In May of 2014, they brought a team from Harvard to Waterloo Catholic District School Board to provide a two-day workshop for all administrators, consultants, and literacy/numeracy coaches on facilitating school-based instructional rounds. This is now used in the board in that the focus is on a problem of practice at individual schools. Principal learning teams are connected and aligned to the instructional rounds process in an explicit way to support their own capacity building. The principal learning teams meet regularly and follow a consistent protocol as they collaborate on each other's presented problem of practice.

Once you have read the relevant section of the case study, please focus the conversation in your group on the following three questions:

1. *What is your overall reaction to this job-embedded practice used by Waterloo Catholic District School Board and other boards in the province?*
2. *How would you measure the impact of this approach to job-embedded professional development on the capacities of staff?*
3. *What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of supporting this approach to job-embedded professional development with "principal learning teams"?*

CASE STUDY

Appendix B: Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

Guiding Questions

During the fall of 2012, administrators in Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board were led through an exercise to develop growth plans with a focus on the domains of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF). The majority of leaders indicated that they wished to focus on OLF's Personal Leadership Resources as part of their growth plan. After reading the relevant section of the case study, please address the following three questions with your colleagues:

- 1. How do the approaches used by Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board compare with approaches you have used in your district to support your leaders and other support staff in developing their Personal Leadership Resources?*

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board chose to incorporate the principles and practices of Cognitive Coaching and conducted extensive professional development sessions for all on Cognitive Coaching.

- 2. How does this Cognitive Coaching approach compare with the approach you use to support the ongoing learning of your aspiring and incumbent leaders?*

To further the professional development for all staff, Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board offers a leadership-training series, S.A.L.T. (Student Achievement Leadership Training) to support aspiring formal leaders, instructional leaders and to offer general leadership development opportunities to teachers in the system. These sessions were offered in the evenings.

- 3. How does the approach used in your district for such leadership development compare to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approach. What challenges have you encountered and how have you addressed those challenges?*

CASE STUDY

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1. If your participation in this module has caused you to consider doing something different in your own system, please describe what that is.
 2. Please identify any changes or refinements that could be made to this module that would improve participants' learning.
 3. How can this work best be used with others in the future?

The Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) invites you to share your responses to the above questions with the coordinator of the IEL at communication@education-leadership-ontario.ca.