

Staff Development Initiative

What does staff development mean?

Staff development means high quality ongoing training programs with follow up and support such as study groups, action research, peer coaching, and other growth promoting processes.

Parts of a staff development program

Staff development programs must take into consideration three areas. Those areas are as follows:

- 1) Context – refers to the organization or system in which the new learnings will be implemented. Some contexts are more supportive than other contexts.
- 2) Process – refers to the “how” of staff development; it describes the means for acquiring new knowledge and skills. Examples of process are group development, follow up and support, and formative/summative evaluation.
- 3) Content – refers to the actual skills and/or knowledge educators need to possess or acquire through staff development. Examples of content are research-based instructional strategies, how to assess students and use the assessment results to plan instruction, and specific technology skills.

The Standards

Context

- √ Effective staff development requires and fosters continuous improvement
- √ Effective staff development 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 continuous improvement.
- √ Effective staff development is aligned with individual school improvement plans and the district’s strategic plan and is funded appropriately by a line item in the budget.
- √ Effective staff development will generally be provided outside instructional time, however, follow-up and support may occur during the school day for staff members to apply new learnings.

Process

- √ Effective staff development is based on knowledge about how people learn.
- √ Effective staff development provides for four phases:
 - 1) Initial training
 - 2) Follow-up and support
 - 3) Implementation
 - 4) Evaluation

- √ Effective staff development bases priorities on a careful analysis of student and staff data regarding goals for improved student achievement.
- √ Effective staff development uses content that will increase student learning and development.
- √ Effective staff development requires an evaluation process that is ongoing, includes multiple sources of information, and focuses on all levels in the school district.
- √ Effective staff development uses a variety of approaches to accomplish the goals of improving instruction and student success.
- √ Effective staff development provides the follow up and support necessary to ensure improvement.
- √ Effective staff development requires staff members to learn and apply new skills to make shared decisions, solve problems, and work together.

Content

- √ Effective staff development increases administrators' and teachers' understanding of how to provide instruction that is responsive to the developmental needs of students.
- √ Effective staff development 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.
- √ Effective staff development enables educators to provide challenging, developmentally appropriate curricula that engage students and increase thinking and learning.
- √ Effective staff development prepares teachers to use research-based teaching strategies appropriate to their instructional objectives and their students.
- √ Effective staff development prepares educators to demonstrate high expectations for student learning.
- √ Effective staff development facilitates cooperation among staff and encourages family support for improving student performance.
- √ Effective staff development prepares teachers to use various types of performance assessment in their classrooms.