



Washakie County School District #1

Professional Growth and Development Plan

2010-2011

Professional Growth and Development Plan

Washakie County School District #1 supports the development and implementation of professional development for all stakeholders in an academic learning community who have a direct impact on the lives of students. The Washakie County School District #1 Professional Growth and Development Plan is specifically designed to improve and enhance the quality of instruction and instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students and is based on district/school goals, student achievement data, parent/community in-put, and district-wide professional development needs.

...DISTRICT VISION AND MISSION

VISION STATEMENT

1. Washakie County School District #1 is a learning community established on the rigor of academics, relevance of achievement, and nurturing relationships that foster student engagement and challenge students to stretch student learning to develop lifelong learning skills.
2. Each graduate will leave Washakie County School District #1 prepared with abilities and skills to enter the adult world.

MISSION STATEMENT

Educate every student to his/her maximum potential.

...DISTRICT GOAL STATEMENTS AND OUTCOMES

The members of the Washakie County School District #1 community are committed to developing life-long learners who value themselves, contribute to their community, and succeed in a changing world. To achieve this, Washakie County School District #1 Schools will provide each learner with instruction and guidance necessary for acquiring essential knowledge and skills of:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| › Language Arts | › Social Studies | › Physical Education |
| › Mathematics | › Fine and Performing Arts | › Health Education |
| › Science | › Foreign Language | › Career/Vocational |

This is accomplished by believing that (1) all students can learn; (2) students must take responsibility for their learning; and (3) learning must take place in a nurturing, safe environment that recognizes the diversity of individuals, encourages creativity, and assures equity for all.

WASHAKIE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT GOAL STATEMENTS

- Goal #1: By 2013-2014, all students will reach high standards, at minimum attaining proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Goal #2: All limited English proficient students will become proficient in the English language and reach high standards, attaining proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Goal #3: All students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.
- Goal #4: All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning.
- Goal #5: All students will graduate from high school.
- Goal #6: Educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities will continuously improve.
- Goal #7: Academic, vocational, and technical skills of secondary students, who elect to enroll in career and technical education programs, will be developed more fully.

To meet these goals it is the intent of the district to...

- a. To have students become adept at deep understanding, applying knowledge, solving problems, and analyzing.
- b. To provide a curriculum that relates to student interest, and to student needs, and to real-world situations and is linked to a global economy and democratic life
- c. To ensure that each student feels connected and succeeds in a caring student-focused environment.
- d. To initiate district pedagogy on the premise of supporting high expectations, collaborative leadership, effective professional development, a student-focused school environment, and parent involvement and business engagement.

TO MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE DISTRICT:

- All schools will be tightly connected regarding student achievement.
- District and school leaders ensure that specific interventions are enacted in every classroom, in every school.
- Critical commitments:
 - a) **Sustain a System of Individual Student Feedback at the District, School, and Classroom Levels** – securing effective feedback, one of the most powerful influences on student achievement, to prevent students from moving through the system from grade level to grade level with information and skill deficiencies that cumulatively impedes learning.
 - b) **Ensure Effective Teaching in Every Classroom** - supporting a system that ensures a district-wide emphasis on monitoring and enhancing the effectiveness of teaching in every classroom.
 - c) **Build Background Knowledge for All Students** - enhancing student academic background knowledge through direct instruction in specific academic terms.

ALL SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT ARE COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING, IMPROVING, AND ENHANCING:

- Skills in problem-solving;
- Skills in interpersonal communications;
- Skills in keyboarding and computer applications;
- Skills in critical thinking; and
- Intrapersonal and life skills.

...DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Washakie County School District #1 stresses the importance and function of professional development in the district to:

- Focus teachers on student learning in all content areas through standards-based instruction;
- Use student assessment data to drive instructional decisions and training;
- Establish a comfortable learning environment conducive to learning;
- Differentiate instruction, targeting student needs with appropriate interventions;
- Develop further expertise in content, instructional strategies, and uses of technologies;
- Foster the leadership capacity of teachers, paraeducators, and administrators;
- Enhance and expand content knowledge and understanding skills;
- Promote teaching to high standards and expectations;
- Provide equitable opportunities for all students to graduate; and
- Encourage creativity and innovation.

DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The District Professional Development Committee encompasses representatives from administrators, teachers, paraeducators, home/private schools, substitutes, parents, and community members to develop, implement, and monitor a comprehensive professional development plan that provides opportunities (1) for individual professional growth, (2) to sustain effective instructional strategies and (3) to secure feedback from the district throughout the implementation of the plan during the school year, driven by student information data and needs assessments.

RATIONALE FOR THE FOCUS OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Professional development is an integral part of school improvement. The collaborative development of the district plan includes input from all school/area representatives who work with students, the district needs assessment, student performance data, and school improvement action plans (goals, interventions/strategies, and activities). Professional development programming is based upon proven scientific research that supports appropriate instructional strategies and collaboration. Continuous feedback is provided in a supportive climate with ample opportunity for evaluation. Professional development efforts focus on (1) improving instructional skills and strategies and (2) integrating technology to improve student learning.

Consideration in the development of the plan is based on the following:

- ✦ Instructional strategies and practices to meet the needs of all students to improve academic performance;
- ✦ Specific school improvement goals within the district;
- ✦ The district's mission and vision;
- ✦ Research-based professional opportunities, which are student-focused, data-driven, and results-based;
- ✦ Continuous training, rather than a one-shot process;
- ✦ Integrated technology for staff and classroom use;
- ✦ Improvement in instructional strategies and services for all staff;
- ✦ Feasibility of feedback and follow-up;
- ✦ Meeting the needs of the district as well as all individual schools;
- ✦ Providing allowances for individual professional growth;
- ✦ Compliance with all federal and state guidelines; and
- ✦ Evaluation procedures for programs and activities for improved instruction.

Professional development is based on documented student results through a thorough examination, analysis, and developed implications of standards-based student reports, PAWS data, MAP data, ACT scores, and DIBELS Student Reports. District activities include alignment and implementation of standards and standards-based assessments according to grade level collaboration (horizontal alignment); content level collaboration (subject level vertical alignment); grade level transitions, and the K-12 assessment matrix (Body of Evidence - BOE).

Careful consideration is given to the process for ensuring that the school community understands how the professional development components fit/connect to all school improvement plans by involving representatives from all schools/areas who review school improvement plans, the district needs assessment, and dissemination of information. School improvement goals through examination of the effectiveness of the schools' action plans/interventions, needs for title supplemental opportunities, and student performance data generates essential professional development activities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- a. Using a variety of approaches, professional development activities address both student and staff needs and interests to improve student performance.
- b. Professional development activities concentrate on meeting school improvement interventions within each goal identified at each school.
- c. Funding for professional development are appropriated and distributed to staff members on a priority basis to improve student performance in all areas of instruction.
- d. Professional development information is disseminated district-wide to all staff members to improve student performance.

The Professional Development Plan objectives are based on district goals, school improvement plans, student achievement data, parent/community in-put/involvement, district-wide professional development needs assessment, individual school profiles, and the community profile in collaboration with businesses and community agencies.

The Professional Development Plan targets interventions that focus on increasing student academic achievement through the use of scientifically based research to guide action steps toward the goals in each School Improvement Plan at the district and school levels. The Plan is designed to enable staff members to develop further expertise in content, instructional strategies, and other essential elements for effective teaching. Professional development activities are sustained through feedback, administration monitoring, and peer collaboration. Completing the district conference/workshop/in-service summary form, sharing with school staffs, collaboration with peers, and teacher initiatives are evaluated to obtain feedback from professional activities.

- Professional development includes scientifically researched-based...
 - Interventions developed in action plans
 - Effective leadership
 - District-wide programs
- Parent/community activities support student learning through...
 - Schoolwide/Targeted Parent Involvement Policy
 - BOE active participation and involvement
 - School Improvement Plan input
 - Infinite Campus (Student Information System)
 - ELL Parent training/involvement
- Technology is integrated into instructional strategies through...
 - District-Level training
 - Implemented, scientifically research-based programs, such as My Access, NetTrekker, Renaissance
 - District Technology Committee recommendations
 - Content focused software
 - District Formative and Summative Assessments
 - Federal (Title, IDEA) Programs
 - Virtual learning
- Professional development addresses at-risk students through...
 - Understanding Poverty, Sheltered Instruction, and Differentiated Instruction
 - Response to Interventions through Individualized Learning, Reading, and/or ELL Plans
 - School Improvement Interventions
- Expected results for (1) instructional personnel and (2) improved academic achievement of students through...
 - Positive feedback from staff, students, and parents
 - Program evaluations
 - Teacher initiatives
 - District Assessment Data

ACTIVITIES PLANNED WITHIN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The district focus is in the following areas of need, which is supported and reinforced by individual school goals and interventions targeting all students as well as identified subgroups. Although the need to target specific subgroups is of vital importance to the district, it is the intent of the district to maintain continued, academic improvement for all students at all levels. The plan involves in-depth training in instructional strategies to include a variety of technology use in the classroom. The focus of the plan is instructional strategies and assessment development in the cognitive arena of reading comprehension, writing skills, and math problem solving, supported with appropriate formative and summative assessments to assess student learning and integrated in classrooms according to school-driven goals and interventions. The high school level includes an affective goal to target student responsibility and behavior. Professional and curriculum development activities for the 2010-2011 school year are developed through in-service opportunities as well as specialized training, contributing to the district's school improvement efforts at appropriate grade levels as described in the following narratives, which are available to teachers, paraeducators, administrators, and substitute teachers:

1. Subject Content

Teachers are encouraged to increase their capacity for understanding content in each of the nine content areas by exercising the opportunity to expand the knowledge base of their content endorsement and be involved in active research.

2. School Improvement

School improvement drives the curriculum, interventions, and instructional practices in all content areas and involves activities that enhance the opportunity for staff to be involved in the skills and techniques (1) to examine and analyze student data, (2) to research and develop effective interventions and strategies, and (3) to increase student academic performance in a professional learning community. Effective training opportunities for staff to expand and enhance their skills include the WDE-NCA School Improvement Conference, Building Leadership and District Leadership Teams, AdvancED Quality Assurance District Accreditation, RTI training, and collaborative book studies. School improvement goals, specific for each school, includes professional development that targets action steps for identified interventions to achieve school improvement goals.

3. Technology

Technology training is a continuous, on-going program as hardware and software up-grades and initiatives continue to be added at the district/school level. Additional staff training is provided for the use of on-line student assessments and evaluations. The use of technology in the classroom provides extended opportunities to reach a variety of student learning modalities and differentiated instruction at all levels.

As the demands increase for technology use, appropriate professional development training is necessary to integrate and sustain various technology software and hardware into classroom activities. Training involves a variety of software application that enhances student achievement and provides a variety of strategies for teachers to instruct/motivate students. Technology hardware usage targets equipment such as GPS, Polyvision, In Focus, Document Cameras, Air Liners, Neo and Dana Alpha Smarts, graphing TI instruments, and computers. The expanded use of software and equipment requires extended training of staff members to effectively integrate technology into the classroom, as well as continuously updating new initiatives in technology. The requirements of the Infinite Campus student information system require additional training for all personnel to manage student information, communicate with parents, and records individual student performance data.

4. Student Assessment

Student performance data drives school improvement plans at the school and district levels. Staff members continue to be cognizant of effective strategies to implement aligned and fair K-12 district assessments. Staff members need to be cognizant of new, complex procedures for student data analysis of district PAWS, DIBELS Next, STAR Reading, STAR Math, My Access, WIDA, ACT, Explore, and MAP assessments. Teacher collaboration opportunities afford staff to initiate school improvement goal-driven activities in core academic subjects (reading, math, and writing) that focus on alignment of assessments to improve classroom instructional strategies and address all students, targeting individual students of special needs and with different learning styles. Each school will receive training on district summative assessments that are coordinated with training in the continued development, implementation, and expansion in the District Balanced Assessment Plan for the K-12 Body of Evidence.

5. Content and Performance Standards

Teachers focus on vertical and horizontal alignment of standards to improve classroom instructional strategies. Alignment is critical for transitioning from grade to grade and school level to school level. State content and performance standards are being revisited, especially with the initiation of national standards, necessitating teachers to re-examine the standards and benchmarks and adjust benchmark alignment.

6. Classroom Management

The district supports training on the "The Effective Teacher" and The First Days of School by Harry Wong as well as Project Achieve, a school-based/whole-school professional development program that targets academically and socially underachieving students, as well as teaching and reinforcing critical skills that address immediate and long-term academic and behavioral needs. Staff members, paraeducators, and substitute teachers are provided opportunities for training through an instructional facilitator or administrator. Staff members work in groups or facilitators/administrators work with individual teachers, providing book studies and training in specific skills for appropriate classroom management. Additional training involves on-site modeling and shadowing with follow-up in specific areas of classroom management. Training in the design, integration, and implementation of literacy/activity

centers in the balanced literacy program at the elementary level affords staff members opportunities to sustain appropriate student behaviors during guided reading. Paraeducators are provided training in management skills upon request and/or recommendation.

7. Instructional Strategies and Practices

The district provides opportunities for content specific staff members to participate in effective instructional training that targets student proficiency in the nine content areas - science, math, career/vocational, language arts, fine and performing arts, foreign language, physical education, and health. Content teachers are provided opportunities to collaborate with community colleges and the University of Wyoming and to develop partnerships in effective instructional practices to reach all levels of student performance. Instructional facilitators are trained to model and train staff members in all grade levels to integrate (1) a variety of software and hardware technology in the classroom and (2) model effective instructional strategies.

At the elementary grade level teachers and paraeducators are trained in a balanced literacy curriculum which includes guided reading, reading comprehension, and writing strategies at Tier I and Tier II levels – whole group and small group instruction, respectively. At the middle level, content staff members are trained to integrate reading and writing (My Access and Step Up to Writing) in the content area; high school content staff members are trained to integrate writing (My Access) in the content area. Marzano’s “What Works in Schools” training is available on a one-on-one basis. Math workshops with Pia Hanson focus on a K-5 continuum for staff to sustain teaching concepts with problem-solving strategies and math fluency. *Bridges in Mathematics* training and peer collaboration is reinforced under the leadership of the math instructional facilitator. Understanding lexile (reading) scores and quantile (math) scores are valuable tools to understand in content/subject placement and monitoring. At the high school level, average math proficiency scores prompted math teachers to integrate Texas Instrument tools for math application and assimilation.

Reading, writing, and intervention training for RTI and school improvement are available at all school levels in the climate of a professional learning community. Professional leadership training opportunities through extended study groups on leadership, responsibility, reform, and change are available to enhance on-going and newly established programs/activities within RTI interventions and school improvement plans. Book studies enhance effective practices at each of the RTI tiered instruction levels. The staff continues to be encouraged to understand and participate in brain-based learning to target all levels of learning.

8. Diverse Populations

Data indicates the need for the district to target student achievement in the areas of reading, writing, and math in order to increase the percent proficient for students with special needs (IEP, ELL, at risk, migrant, SES, and 504). MAP, PAWS, DIBELS, and WIDA data indicate that students are making progress but not within the timeframe as expected by WDE AYP requirements. Concerns were expressed at the consolidated grant meetings from staff and parents, as well as among the District Professional Development Committee. Additional concerns involved training staff members new to the district regarding ELD standards and monitoring student progress. Understanding the needs of a student with extended concerns (academic, emotional, developmental, and physical) generates the requisite for book studies, poverty training, and specific identification training, such as signing, Asperger’s Syndrome, and autism. Individual and group counseling contribute to training staff members involved with direct counseling of students of diverse learning and ethnicity.

9. Mentoring and Evaluations

Staff development opportunities are available through the district mentoring program and Chapter 29 – Certified Personnel Evaluation Systems, ETS – GreenLight for Learning.

SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

