Ohio University Leadership Project has as its purpose the identification, development, and implementation of needed professional development programs for current and aspiring school administrators.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Improving the Effectiveness of the Treasurer’s/School Business Official’s Office

Treasurers met last spring for a special 2-day session to develop strategies for improving the organization of their office, for managing job related stress and conflict, and for working effectively with their school board and superintendent. Charles Dygert of Motivational Enterprises International, Inc. addressed the topics of working as a team, addressing barriers to change, and achieving quality. Mary Beth Kemmer, treasurer, Lebanon CSD, shared with the group on the topic of “Mess with your Stress.” Gary Pack, Pack Consulting, built upon her presentation and included additional strategies for dealing with stress and conflict. Small group and roundtable discussions gave participants a chance to share what they had gleaned from the speakers and sessions and to offer ways these ideas could be implemented in their workplace.

Secondary Principals discuss the Tenth Grade Proficiency Test

The first meeting of the school year focused on the upcoming tenth grade proficiency test. Henry Cooke, principal, South Point HS, Lisa Cooke, science teacher, South Point HS, and Brian Hedden, social studies teacher, Jackson HS were the presenters for the session. Each of the presenters brought first-hand knowledge of the tenth grade test as each has played a role in its development.

Instruction and curriculum strategies were presented that will be necessary for implementation within schools in order for students to be prepared to take the test. An emphasis was placed on higher order thinking skills and constructed response. The presenters stressed that the changes will be an ongoing process and will take time to implement.
Joining Together for Summer Sessions

This summer the administrators from Northwest Local School District, Washington-Nile Local School District, and Wheelersburg Local School District joined together for a week of professional development. Their purpose for the week was for the improvement of teaching and learning through evaluation. Various speakers came in and presented strategies for effective practices of evaluations, legal ramifications of evaluations, and applications of Danielson’s framework of the evaluation process. At the end of the week the participants met together to focus on the components of their evaluation process that should be continued and the components that should be revised. All or part of this group will continue to meet periodically throughout the school year to further investigate and develop evaluation criteria.

Leadership Styles and Changes: Superintendents’ Professional Development Program

The Superintendent’s first meeting this year was a session on identification of leadership styles and temperament led by Gary Pack. The focus of this session was to build an understanding of how one’s leadership style and temperament relate to change. The discussion allowed participants to see how their own style and the style of others impacts change and how each style handles changes. The identification of style and temperament gave participants an opportunity to see how change impacts them and their leadership.
2000/2001 School Year OULP

Below is the current schedule of professional development cohort programs for the upcoming school year: September 14, October 12, December 14, February 8, April 12 and June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups. Times vary.

OUC Elementary Principals

The Elementary Principals Professional Development group meets at the Ohio University Chillicothe Campus. The following dates are scheduled for the upcoming school year:

- September 14, October 12, December 14, February 8, April 12 and June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups.

OUSC Elementary Principals

The Elementary Principals Professional Development group will meet at the Ohio University Southern Campus at 2:00 p.m. on the following days:

- September 21, October 19, November 16, February 15, April 5, and June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups.

Secondary Principals

The Secondary Principals Professional Development group consists of middle school, junior high, and high school principals. Meetings are scheduled to begin with coffee at 8:30 a.m. with the seminar at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude at noon with lunch. The schedule for next year is as follows:

- September 13 (OUSC), October 11 (OUSC), November 8 (OUC), December 6 (OUC), and April 11 (OUC).
- June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups.

Superintendents

The Superintendent’s Professional Development Program will meet on the following dates:

- September 26 (OUSC), October 31 (OUC), November 28 (OUSC), March 27, and April 24.
- June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups.

The meetings will begin with refreshments at 8:30 a.m. and conclude mid-afternoon.
Professional Development Program Preview

The remainder of the school year. Please note times and dates are subject to change.

Treasurers
The Treasurer's Professional Development Program meets for coffee at 8:30 a.m. and concludes late afternoon. They meet at the Ohio University Chillicothe Campus. The dates for this year are:

- September 28, December 7, February 22, and May 10.
- April 26 & 27 – Annual 2-day Spring Workshop
- June 13 & 14 (OUC) joint session with all OULP Professional Development Groups

Five Year Forecasting
The Ohio University Leadership Project and School Business Solutions are teaming up to bring you the needed training for your Five Year Forecast preparations. If you have already attended the 2-day training, we are offering a 1-day Update session. There are still openings for the November 30 session. All update sessions will be held at Ohio University Chillicothe Campus. Five Year Forecasting You Can Live With, beginning sessions will be offered on October 12 & 13 at the Fairfield Career Center and on October 26 & 27 at the Cuyahoga JVS. A December session is in the planning stages.
Spring Advisory Council Meeting

Dennis Meade, Paul Lloyd, and Phyllis McQueen visit before the meeting begins.

The variation of meeting locations to reduce the travel time of participants. They encouraged the coordination with the Ohio Association of Secondary Administrators (OASSA) and roundtable discussion groups. The new initiatives they suggested were programs focused on the new 10th grade test, curriculum alignment, and special, topical sessions for their assistants.

The superintendent’s group values the constant revision of programming to meet the continuously changing environment in school leadership. They suggested revisiting previous topics as refreshers and to meet the needs of new participants. New initiatives suggested by this group focused on community and continuing educational programs such as evening classes, latch-key funding, and community involvement.

The treasurer’s group shared the importance of meeting current needs and the coordination of schedules. They would like to see some development opportunities for their staff and the use of an interactive web-site with a communication bulletin board. They also suggested the idea of an all-day session for all district administrators so they would be able to “cross-train” and develop a greater appreciation for other administrators within their district.

Following the presentation and discussion of the small group activities, participants were dismissed for lunch. The Ohio University Leadership Project appreciates the commitment of time each participant gave as well as their thoughtful participation. We look forward to the implementation of these ideas to better meet the needs of program participants.

Donalyn Smith and Kim Phillips work together to discuss the needs of treasurers.
OHIO UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP PROJECT

Professional Learning Communities at Work
June 14 & 15, 2000

Ohio University Leadership Project Professional Development Group participants had the distinct privilege to spend two days with speaker and author, Robert Eaker. Eaker is the former Dean of the College of Education at Middle Tennessee State University and a former Fellow with the National Center for Effective Schools Research and Development. He has written extensively on the issues of effective teaching, effective schools, helping teachers use research findings, and high expectations and student achievement. He regularly consults with school districts throughout the nation regarding school improvement issues.

On Thursday evening, Eaker introduced the concept of developing a community of learners. He used humor to illustrate how education operates and to create a receptive audience. Key points included: 1) School improvement efforts should be research-based and data driven; 2) Collaboration is a key to a learning organization; 3) School improvement efforts must directly impact the teaching/learning process; 4) Successful organizational improvement requires systematic collaboration; and 5) Learning communities are characterized by shared mission, vision, and values; collective inquiry; collaborative teams; action orientation/experimentation; commitment to continuous improvement; results orientation.

On Friday Eaker picked up on his introduction and continued with a more in-depth description of learning communities and how to build them. He stressed that the first building block of a learning community is clarity of purpose in the mission statement. Our “mission” gives focus to the question, “Why do we exist?” “Learning” is the primary purpose of a school that functions as a professional learning community. The second building block was to develop a mental model and describe the school you seek to become. Peter Senge states “A shared vision is not an idea. It is a force in people’s hearts, a force of impressive power. It may be inspired by an idea, but if it is compelling and supported by others, it is no longer an abstraction. Few, if any, forces in human affairs are as powerful as shared vision. Visions are exhilarating. They create the spark that lifts the organization out of mundane.”

Eaker shared that the third building block is shared values. The development of shared values asks people to clarify how they intend to make their shared vision a reality. Values are the ABC’s of organizational improvement because they challenge people within the organization to identify specific attitudes, behaviors, and commitments they must demonstrate in order to advance toward their vision. The core values of an organization are the primary means of communication about what the organization stands for and mastery for communication is inseparable from effective leadership. The most important ways to communicate values are through planning, modeling, celebrating, confronting, and monitoring.

The fourth building block is goals. The collaborative development of goals addresses the questions of what steps should be taken and when they should be taken. The development of short and long term goals is necessary. It is important to celebrate incremental improvements as they are achieved. Finally, the process of creating more effective schools must be cyclical and internalized and focused upon improving student learning. This process should be a part of how the school operates everyday but more than anything, the process of becoming a professional learning community ultimately means reculturing schools.

The two-day session was full of valuable information and the presentation by Eaker was outstanding. We appreciate the work of Debbie Queen and the South Region School Improvement Team who worked with the Leadership Project to co-sponsor this session. Their help ensured a successful and beneficial session.
Hi Friends of the Leadership Project!

I hope you have experienced a pleasant and a productive beginning to this school year. The all important student-count week is over, the leaves are changing colors and falling to the ground, and it already is the second half of the football season. My goodness, the time seems to fly.

This edition of the newsletter contains recognition of the friends of the leadership project who have assumed new responsibilities as school administrators. We commend these individuals for being willing to assume leadership roles in their school communities. We also wish these administrators well with their endeavors. And, we hope that they will continue or begin to participate in the professional development programs of the project.

The provision of leadership for a school or district represents an enormous and challenging enterprise. School administrators typically work very long hours, and they often work with inadequate praise and recognition of their efforts. The expectations for their jobs continue to grow and become even more difficult.

Most school administrators find themselves trying to address concurrently the expectations and needs of a board of education, the parents, the students, the teachers and other staff members, and legislative and negotiated mandates. It can be a “Catch 22” situation in which the administrators “cannot win for losing.” They are often the scapegoats for other problems.

But, fortunately there are conscientious, hardworking, and dedicated individuals who are willing to work in administrative “pressure cookers.” And, these administrators typically do spectacular jobs given the circumstances under which they work. They deserve our praise and support.

I hope you will have a great school year and be able to make a difference for the students. The leadership project is committed to providing the needed professional development to help you make these things happen. Please contact me at larsonwy@ohio.edu or (740) 533-4580 with your suggestions and concerns. They are needed and would be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Bill Larson

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