IMPLEMENTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE

The Issue: Even when professional development (PD) is appropriately designed to advance children's literacy (Memo 8), PD will not translate into improved instructional quality and increased literacy development if it is not implemented effectively.

What Are Some Common Pitfalls That Impede Impact?

Common Pitfalls	What We're Learning
1. Educators engage in data-driven PD (Memo 8), but struggle to implement the new ideas learned.	1. Educators need support as they take new ideas from PD and put them into use. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that structures are in place to facilitate the link between professional learning and actual practice (Memo 3).
2. Educators initially implement new ideas learned during PD, but lose momentum over time, and in the end, practice doesn't change.	2. PD will only be effective if leaders organize learning communities so that educators have opportunities to encourage each other and discuss implementation issues on an on-going basis.
3. PD sessions are organized such that educators are passive participants and their learning is compromised.	3. PD sessions need to be interactive, with time for collaboration and reflection, and with actionable take-aways for educators.

For More on This…

Teacher Learning: What matters? by L. Darling-Hammond and N. Richardson

Policies that Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform by L. Darling-Hammond and M. McLaughlin

Key Strategies for Impact:

To implement professional development that truly results in literacy improvement, start the process using this checklist as a guide.

A checklist for the leadership team

☐ Educator participation is at the core of all PD sessions. At each session…

☐ educators openly share thoughts, discuss perspectives, and raise questions (even when the question may reflect a lack of understanding).

☐ the environment is active, engaging to all.

☐ participants acquire new knowledge, reflect on the ideas with colleagues, and give feedback.

☐ Structures are in place that support educators as they apply new ideas to everyday practice. This means...

☐ materials necessary for implementing new knowledge are available and accessible.

☐ formal collaboration time (e.g., designated opportunities for educators to share newly-acquired knowledge with other educators at the site) encourages mutual support and communal advancement.

☐ non-evaluative observations and feedback are part of the on-going routine.

☐ schedules and classroom locations are organized to best encourage informal

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