Tupelo Public School District

Comprehensive

Staff Development Manual

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I. Introduction

This document presents the Tupelo Public School District Comprehensive Staff Development Manual. Section I presents the definition of Staff Development; Rational; Three Level Approach; Commitment to All Employees; Need for a Systemic Integrated Approach; and Tupelo Public School District's Commitment to Being a Learning Environment. In subsequent sections, descriptions are provided for the Tupelo Public School District Staff Development Mission, Beliefs and Goals, the Organizational Structure for Staff Development, and the process for building the Three-year Staff Development Plans.

A. Definition

Staff Development in our district is defined as a process that fosters personal and professional growth for individuals within a respectful, supportive, positive organizational climate. The ultimate goal of our staff development process is increased student learning and continuous, responsible self-renewal for all constituents working together in partnerships to create a quality environment for learning.

It is important to think of staff development activities as encompassing a wide range of professional growth experiences. Staff development refers to a systematically planned, comprehensive set of ongoing professional growth activities carried out over time to achieve specific district-wide, school, and department improvement objectives.

Our comprehensive plan is built around three major focus areas; curriculum, instruction and organizational change. This can be depicted as follows:

The "Written" Curriculum: Standards of achievement for all students determined by the System

Curriculum   Instruction

Organizational Change
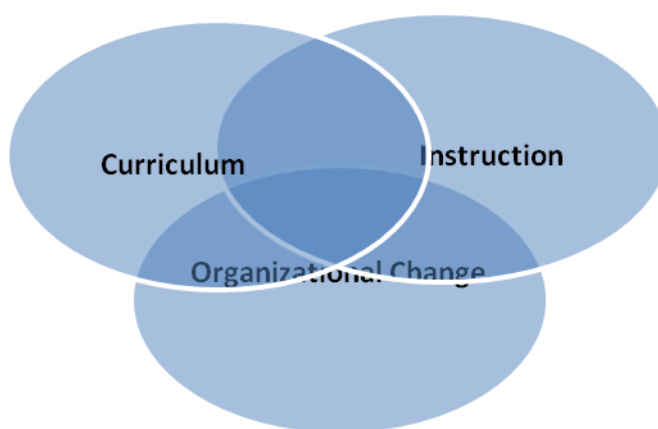
The "how to" Instructional delivery systems designed and implemented by sites

B. Rationale/Need for Staff Development

Education has entered a most challenging and critical era. There is an urgent need for increased quality and improved accountability. Our constituents need to keep current and adapt to rapid rates of technological, informational and societal change. To meet these challenges, our employees must continuously be retrained and renewed in order to remain effective. To remain a vital force in a democratic and international society, employees and those who serve our students must serve as models of lifelong learning.

A comprehensive staff development program is the foundation for strengthening TPSD by offering opportunities for personal, occupational, and organizational growth to all our employees. There is no question regarding the need for continuous updating of knowledge and skills. New developments in the content, strategies, and technology of education must be made available. Staff development programs should provide a wide range of opportunities, from induction training for the new employee to renewal and enhancement for the more experienced employee. The organization benefits from staff development programs because an organizations's capacity for continuous improvement is dependent upon the effectiveness of its members. Learning opportunities are critical in developing within the organization a sense of competence and commitment.

Successful staff development programs share several common characteristics. A comprehensive program:
- Has participant involvement in goal setting, implementing, evaluating, and decision-making
- Includes both professional and organizatinal components
- Provides for integration of individual goals with school and district goals, allowing for personal growth
- Provides for a formal placement of the program within the philosophy and organizational structure of the school and district
- Has a design built on principles of adult learning and the change process
- Allows for collegiality and collaboration
- Encourages experimentation and risk taking
- Provides leadership and sustained administrative rewards
- Allows time to work on staff development and assimilate new learning, with incremental goals for three to five years
- Moves constituents to intensive motivation for learning

Successful staff development programs require support from both the district administration and the school board. The Tupelo Public School District is committed to addressing each of these elements in this comprehensive plan.

II. Mission, Standards and Goals

**The focus of Tupelo Public School District's
staff development program is improving student learning.
Student learning includes student achievement,
academic performance, and positive behavior.**

TPSD VISION
The Tupelo Public School District will be the leading school district in Mississippi and one of the best in the nation, earning broad recognition for the excellent education it offers its students.

TPSD MISSION
TPSD serves the community by engaging each student in an excellent education that develops skills and citizenship needed for success in a global society.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES
All that we do in the Tupelo Public School District is closely connected to and measured against a set of guiding principles. The Tupelo Public School District strives to be:
- Student-centered in the decisions that we make or actions that we take; we will focus on building the spirit of students to embrace education.

- Open, honest and transparent about our reasons for our actions, our approaches, our successes and our shortcomings.

- Respectful and appreciative of ideas, feelings, aspirations and of differences in background, points of view and desires.

- Customer-oriented in all our interactions.

- Focused on quality in all aspects of our operations.

- Innovative and entrepreneurial in seeking, experimenting with and adapting promising educational ideas and practices that will lead to excellent teaching and learning at the highest level.

- Accountable to our students, their families, our community and to each other.

- Relentless in our pursuit of excellence.

- Team-oriented and committed to shared beliefs.

TPSD GOALS

Goal 1:   ***Implement and sustain comprehensive programs that address the needs of all students.***

Objective 1:   Provide an effective instructional program

Objective 2:   All students will acquire the essential skills and knowledge to meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by the end of Grade 2.

Objective 3:   All schools will increase enrollment and performance of all students in gifted, Honors, Advanced Placement and other advanced programs, while decreasing the disproportionate enrollment and performance of minority students.

Objective 4:   TPSD will eliminate the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education.

Objective 5:   All schools will provide students with disabilities access to the general education environment, to the maximum extent appropriate.

Objective 6:   All schools will achieve or exceed local and state standards for attendance.

Goal 2:   ***Ensure success for every child.***

Objective 1:   All students will achieve or exceed proficiency standards in mathematics, reading, writing, science, and government on local and state assessments.

Objective 2:   All students will successfully complete algebra by the end of Grade 9 and geometry by the end of Grade 10.

Objective 3:   All schools will increase participation and performance of all students taking the SAT/ACT.

Objective 4:   All schools will meet or exceed the state's graduation requirements.

Objective 5:   All graduates will be prepared for postsecondary education and employment.

Objective 6:   All students will have access to a safe and healthy educational environment. All students will be supported both socially and emotionally through a Positive Behavior Support System

Objective 7:   Implement Positive Behavior Supports.

Objective 8:   All schools will eliminate the disproportionate suspension rate of African American and Hispanic students.

Goal 3:	*Support quality teaching that inspires students to achieve at their highest potential.*
Objective 1:	All employees will be provided with high-quality professional development opportunities to promote individual and organizational effectiveness.
Objective 2:	Systems will be designed and implemented to recruit, support, and retain highly qualified and diverse professional and support personnel.
Objective 3:	All offices and departments will have strategic plans that are aligned with TPSD pursuit of excellence.
Objective 4:	All schools develop improvement plans that address the needs of all No Child Left Behind subgroups using the Baldrige-guided School Improvement Planning Process.
Objective 5:	The work environment promotes employee well-being, satisfaction, and positive morale.
Objective 6:	TPSD recognizes staff efforts and achievement in pursuit of system goals and related priorities.
Goal 4:	*Promote community knowledge of, involvement in, and support for the TPSD pursuit of excellence.*
Objective 1:	The district and schools will seek out and strengthen productive partnerships for education.
Objective 2:	The district and local schools will communicate with parents regularly about TPSD's educational and students' academic progress.
Objective 3:	The district will assure that processes are in place for stakeholder input in system-wide policy development, strategic planning, budget development, and implementation of district initiatives.
Objective 4:	All schools will be welcoming to our diverse student and parent communities and provide varied opportunities for engaging parents as partners.
Objective 5:	The district and local schools will collaborate with county agencies and parent, student, civic, business, and community organizations to support student success.
Goal 5:	*Provide high-quality business and support services that are essential to the educational success of students.*
Objective 1:	All business services will meet or exceed customers' needs, requirements, and reasonable expectations.
Objective 2:	All business functions plan, develop, secure and effectively manage fiscal resources, in compliance with internal and external accountability requirements to support the education of students.
Objective 3:	All business functions effectively and efficiently delivers the highest quality products, resources, and business serviced essential to the educational success of students.
Objective 4:	The district and schools will systemically eliminate inequities that result in achievements gaps.

III Staff Development Organization and Structure

The purpose of the Tupelo Public School District's professional learning system is to improve student learning. Professional learning is designed to facilitate individual, school-wide, and district-wide improvements for the purpose of increasing student achievement. Professional learning is the means by which employees acquire or enhance the knowledge, skills, and expectations necessary to increase student learning. Because professional learning must support increased student learning, the following criteria must be met.   All approved professional learning shall be aligned to the following standards developed by the National Staff Development Council:

National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development

Context Standards
Staff development that improves the learning of all students:
Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district. (Learning Communities)

- • Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement. (Leadership)
- • Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration. (Resources)

Process Standards
Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- • Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement. (Data-Driven)
- • Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact. (Evaluation)
- • Prepares educators to apply research to decision making. (Research-Based)
- • Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal. (Design)
- • Applies knowledge about human learning and change. (Learning)
- • Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate. (Collaboration)

Content Standards
Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- • Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement. (Equity)
- • Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately. (Quality Teaching)
- • Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately. (Family Involvement)

III. Organizational Structure of Staff Development

The role of TPSD's School Improvement Department:

1. Provides training and assistance, as needed, to groups or individuals as they plan for staff development
2. Coordinates resources within the organization by collaborating with other units.
3. Assists individuals seeking support for their own identified professional or growth activities.
4. Identifies and facilitate areas of potential collaboration and conflict.
5. Assists in implementing all district-sponsored staff development activities.
6. Assists in identification of appropriate resources for planned staff development opportunities.
7. Provides technical assistance, as needed for groups or individual implementing staff development activities.
8. Ensures that staff development opportunities are consistent with district goals.
9. Acts as a clearinghouse of educational information and resources.
10. Publishes a calendar of scheduled staff development activities.

Role of Administrators:
The administrator of each school or department and his/her staff are responsible for facilitation of the Comprehensive Staff Development Plan. In addition, each site will identify and examine further staff development needs, propose strategies, and design learning opportunities.

The administrator of each site is responsible for overseeing the planning and review process for designated staff and constituent members. The planning process is to be completed by an ad hoc group formed of staff and constituent members representing the identified target group. The administrator then assumes responsibility for development, implementation, and evaluation of specific plans. He or she also is responsible for submitting plans to the Department of School Improvement. On an annual basis, the lead administrator will review the long-range plans and the evaluation data of implemented plans.

The administrator of each site or department and their staff are responsible for facilitation of the TPSD Comprehensive Staff Development Plan.

IV. Staff Development Action Plans

Staff development involves both the individuals and the organization in the change process. It is important to note that staff development is a process and not an isolated event. Formal staff development endeavors involve the following steps:

- Identification of Learning Needs
- Development of Staff Development Endeavors
- Development of the Action Plan
- Implementation of Learning Opportunities
- Evaluation of Programs

- Design and Delivery

This section presents the expectation that staff development efforts in the district be included in the development of action plans. It is recommended that each plan be for three to five years in length. These plans need to be embedded in (department and school) improvement plans. When the plan is a district wide effort, then an overall action plan will precede the department and school plans.

A. Identification of Learners and Their Needs

Staff development opportunities should be based on needs of the learners as identified through an assessment process. A need may be defined as some condition, skill, knowledge, desire, or value currently lacking that, once acquired, will enhance employee job performance, personal satisfaction or productivity and, ultimately, the goals and mission. The identification of needs is an essential element for identifying gaps between the existing condition and the optimal condition. Data is to be collected in a systematic manner to determine priorities for learning and improving attitudes, knowledge and skills of employees and other groups impacted. The primary purpose of needs assessment is to determine areas for improvement, to identify potential participants, and to plan effective learning experiences.

Those responsible for staff development should involve the personnel for whom the learning is intended in the needs assessment process. Needs assessment can be conducted using a variety of techniques. The needs assessment needs to be aligned with district and department/school goal priorities.

Sources to be considered in conducting a needs assessment include:

- Observed behavior on the job
- Trends in the literature
- Research study recommendations
- Interviews with constituents
- Surveys of receivers of staff development efforts
- Federal, state, local mandates
- Evaluation data from student and program assessments, state assessment results
- Evaluation and comments from previous staff development programs
- Information from professional organizations
- Professional trends within program areas

Within each employee group the following is taken into consideration when identifying needs:

1. Individual level development
2. School/department level development
3. Organizational level development

B. Selecting Staff Development

Of all the staff development decisions made, none is more important than the linkage of efforts to district change and to goals and cascading goals of the schools and departments. To justify the time, energy, and money invested, staff development should be research-based and/or proven in practice, be relevant to the planning group, make sense to the intended user, be compatible with other practices that are currently or will be in use.

There are several management considerations in designing staff development. These are listed below:

1. **Participant Involvement**
    - Effective staff development engages participants in as many decision points as possible while acknowledging that everyone cannot and should not be involved in all decisions. Planning and evaluation responsibilities have to be spread out among staff, involving those who really want to be involved. Places where participants should be involved include:
        - Needs assessment
        - Setting goals
        - Planning activities and strategies
        - Implementing activities/strategies
        - Evaluating
2. **Time to Participate and Practice**
    There are three issues related to time
    - Participants need time to participate in staff development activities
    - Participants need time to perfect new skills and strategies with expert feedback
    - Participants need to be protected from over-innovation (good staff development balances the infusion of new ideas with time to effectively implement and institutionalize the approaches which have already been introduced).
3. **Leadership and Sustained Support**
    There are three issues with respect to support:
    - Leadership and visible sustained support from key school leaders is critical to the success of staff development efforts
    - Administrators need to play a number of leadership functions in the support of staff development programs:
        - Focusing the work

- o Participating in meetings
- o Providing encouragement and recognition for efforts
- o Providing time and resources
- o Incorporating the results of staff development in evaluation

Necessary resources include:
- o Human and financial
- o Materials and supplies
- o Released time
- o Personnel for planning, evaluating, training, coaching

4. **Appropriate Incentives and Rewards**
   - Effective staff development programs pay attention to and build in a variety of incentives and rewards.
     - o <u>Extrinsic rewards</u> such as training in a nice facility, recognition for growth
     - o <u>Intrinsic rewards</u> such as opportunities to meet new people, share ideas and work together
     - o Increased knowledge and competence, time to think/talk/figure out alternative strategies, mastery of a new skill - a sense of efficacy-, a belief that what one does makes a difference

In planning for staff development learning opportunities, the following needs to be considered when selecting content objectives:

- Use available knowledge bases
  - o Knowledge promotes curiosity and also disciplined inquiry
  - o Good staff development presents both the theoretical and research rationale, in addition to the nuts and bolts of what is to be learned
- Build on principles of adult learning and change
  - o Conditions necessary for adult growth include: opportunities to try out new practices; careful and continuous reflection and discussion about the proposed changes; continuity of programs and time for significant change; personal support as well as challenge during the change process
- Include training designs that support adult growth
  - o Study of theory/rationale for strategy or change
  - o Observe demonstrations of strategy or change
  - o Discuss application of strategy or change
  - o Practice and feedback
  - o Coach the application in a work setting

- Integrate individual, school, department, district goals
  - Common organizational goals are central to effective staff development. However, the diversity and uniqueness of concerns and cultures between school sites, departments must be acknowledged
- Integrate with organizational mission and structure
  - Effective staff development serves the school and district mission while helping the school/department realize its mission
  - Staff development is most effective when it is built into the structure of a department/school, and it mirrors curriculum, instruction, and improvement efforts. When these efforts function separately from staff development programs, resources can be wasted, overlap can occur, and participants can be frustrated by competing demands
- Consider a variety of learning opportunities, including:
  - SEMINARS: events with a central theme, utilizing expert consultants and group participation
  - WORKSHOPS: introductory sessions to build awareness, provide basic information, and allow participants to determine future areas of concentration
  - INDEPENDENT STUDY: a designated course of study completed independently, including checkpoint evaluation of progress and an end assessment of accomplishment
  - VIDEO STUDY: independent or group study through the use of commercial or locally produced videotapes and the completion of a viewer's guide
  - BOOK TALKS: the reading of agreed upon book(s) that may offer insight into the improvement of education (or an aspect of); provide an opportunity to compare those practices that have improved organizations, businesses, and projects; provide an opportunity to keep abreast of the latest innovations that would improve schools and our educational system; and the discussion of the content of the book(s) in regularly scheduled sessions (6-12 hours). This may also transfer to the listening and discussion of audio cassettes.
  - SUMMER INSTITUTES: events scheduled over (one or more days), offering a menu of sessions revolving around integrated themes, with expert presentations and opportunities for collegial discussion and planning
  - RETREATS: district-site or site-specific, for work group expansion of knowledge and for implementation planning for a particular theme.
  - CONFERENCES: local, state or national experiences selected to broaden knowledge and to assess adaptability of outside programs

- SUPPORT GROUPS: networking to share information and to develop strategies, problem-solve, seek additional information, celebrate successes in using a particular innovation
- TRAINING OF TRAINERS: a stand of concentrated study with a commitment to provide professional development training for the District in the area of concentration; includes training in preparation and delivery of in-service sessions
- PILOT PARTICIPATION: establishment of core teams of teachers and administrators at given sites to implement specific programs or strategies
- RESOURCE INSTITUTES: visitation to recognized resources generic to a particular study area, with the purpose of replicating the resource in the District.
- PEER COACHING: a strand of concentrated study plus a collegial support component
- CADRE TEAM DEVELOPMENT: the training of a group of individuals in a core concept with the responsibility to assist implementation of the concept at the local site level
- STRANDS: of concentrated study in selected area(s) particularly curricular
- COURSES/CLASSES: a designated course of study for which district or university credit is offered
- STAFF MEETINGS: held for the purpose of formal study groups or teacher as a researcher of curriculum, instruction, technology and assessment design groups, or interdisciplinary planning or sharing or artifacts or analysis of student work
- DINNER MEETINGS: usually an evening work time period during which dinner is included, and held for the convenience or participants.
- SATURDAY MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS: held during the school year, usually offering a stipend
- RESCHEDULED TIME: the district or school-site calendar is changed to provide more teacher planning days

C. Development of the Action Plan

New staff development efforts must be introduced showing how they relate to current and future efforts. How these various innovations contribute to the mission of the organization or to a professional knowledge base is essential.

Effective professional development efforts include precise descriptions of how different innovations can be integrated. Each new innovation is presented as part of a coherent framework for improvement.

Staff development improvement plans need to include a carefully and thoughtfully designed framework for integrating the innovations to be implemented. All implementation efforts need to provide descriptions of how each new innovation relates to other ongoing programs and to the mission of the organization. There needs to be a clear sense of how the selected innovations collectively address priorities and goals of the organization.

D. Plan Component Checklist

Planning teams, consisting of administrators, staff, and stakeholders, should consider the following elements for long range staff development planning.

- **Needs Assessment:** Utilize collected data in a systematic manner to determine needs of school/department as they relate to staff development for the purpose of enhancing employee job performance, personal satisfaction or productivity and, ultimately, the accomplishment of the organization's mission.
- **Goals/Purposes**
- **Target Audience**
- **Content/Delivery Mode**
- **Evaluation**
- **Instructors/Trainers/Facilitators**
- **Participation**
- **Time Frame/Schedule**
- **Compensation**
- **Funding**

E. Evaluation of Staff Development Opportunities

Evaluations of staff development endeavors need to be an ongoing process that is initiated in the earliest stages of program planning and continued beyond program completion. Evaluation is to be used to determine whether a planned program has met stated goals and objectives. Staff development activities and learning opportunities are to be evaluated to provide a basis for judgments about a program, a presenter, a series of activities, or a model. Systematic evaluation is to be used to determine whether a program should be continued, modified, expanded or discontinued. The evaluation design should be arranged so that it is continued, modified, expanded or discontinued. The evaluation design should be arranged so that it is consistent with the goals and objectives of the program/planning group. For example, if the activity is focused on process, the evaluation techniques should focus on processes rather than knowledge or attitudes. Reasons for making evaluation a part of staff development planning are:

- To document the effectiveness of the design and activities used;
- To assist in making appropriate decisions for further training;
- To detect gaps in the plan and procedures;
- To provide accountability for support of future programs; and
- To inform the staff about the staff development process

All levels of an organization affect staff development programs; therefore, all levels should be included in the evaluation of any staff development effort. Although evaluations should be considerate of the time and energy required from participants, evaluation information should include data on participant objectives, organizational objectives. Evaluation information also should be presented in forms easily understood by all interested parties. The most important form of evaluation is to observe actual changes in behavior of participants.