

The Strategic Blueprint goal of building human capital focuses on engaging our teachers in relevant, timely, pertinent, and personalized professional development. This school year the district has worked to achieve that goal by thoughtfully transforming our professional development offerings to have the greatest impact on our Pleasantdale staff and students.

According to a study from the Center for Public Education (2013) on professional development, the following principles are crucial to effective professional development:

- The duration of professional development must be significant and ongoing to allow time for teachers to learn a new strategy and grapple with the implementation problem.
- There must be support for a teacher during the implementation stage that addresses the specific challenges of changing classroom practice.
- Teachers' initial exposure to a concept should not be passive, but rather should engage teachers through varied approaches so they can participate actively in making sense of a new practice.
- Modeling/coaching has been found to be a highly effective way to introduce a new concept and help teachers understand a new practice.
- The content presented to teachers shouldn't be generic, but instead grounded in the teacher's discipline (for middle school and high school teachers) or grade-level (for elementary school teachers).

As the administrative team planned professional development this year, we used the findings from this study as our guiding principles. We will continue to use these principles to inform future PD offerings in District 107. The administration believes that teachers must be given the time and support to learn new curricula and instructional practices, while at the same time teachers must be provided coaching and opportunities for active engagement during the implementation of the practices and curricula. Examples of how we applied this approach to professional development are outlined below.

When getting started with writing workshop, we took a varied approach to planning the professional development to support teachers. 5th-8th grade ELA teachers were active participants throughout the process of learning about writing workshop. We worked with a trainer, Nawal Qarooni, who first gave an overview of balanced literacy and the workshop model. Then teachers observed her teaching a mini-lesson and conferring with students (modeling) in one of our 5th grade ELA classrooms. They also got to experience conferring for themselves in a 6th grade ELA classroom while being coached by Ms. Qarooni. These "lab site" experiences were then followed by a debriefing session where teachers could ask questions. Ms. Qarooni has coached each 5th-8th grade teacher through unit planning for a pilot unit, and she will continue to work with these teachers over the summer to plan for full implementation of writing workshop next fall. K-4 ELA teachers will be introduced to writing workshop in a three-day training this summer, and Ms. Qarooni will be working with all ELA teachers in grades K-8 using the same approaches described above next school year and beyond to support writing workshop.

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This year we've implemented the Bridges math resource in grades K-5. Our support of teachers during this full-year implementation stage has been ongoing and focused to allow them the time to learn the new resource and adjust their classroom practices. Our 2017 summer trainer through The Math Learning Center, Carol Wallace, returned to work with our teachers during the October institute day and provided grade level coaching to address each grade level team's specific challenges and needs during implementation. Since then, she has been available to our teachers and has answered questions and provided feedback throughout the school year. Ms. Wallace will be providing a Bridges refresher session in August that will once again be tailored to each grade level team's specific needs. In addition, our teachers went on site visits to Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and Bannockburn schools to observe and debrief with their teachers on their use of Bridges. They were able to see modeling of teaching Bridges and get ideas for their own classrooms. Finally, K-5 math teachers have been meeting monthly for Bridges "Cafe": a collaborative time where they can share ideas, challenges, and dig deeper into the resources Bridges provides.

While the writing workshop and Bridges professional development focuses on providing all teachers with focused, timely, and personalized professional development on the same topic, instructional coaching allows individual teachers to receive one-on-one support to enhance their own classroom practice. Five of our teachers have been attending monthly sessions with Jim Knight, an authority in the field, through Northwestern University's instructional coaching program to learn how to coach teachers. Mr. Knight's books, *Better Conversations* and *The Impact Cycle*, are the foundations of the instructional coaching support that we will be implementing in Pleasantdale. Next year, these coaches will begin working with individual teachers to provide another layer of personalized professional development

Following our Strategic Blueprint goal and the principles of effective professional development has changed the way we look at professional development as a whole, and that includes summer work. The summer work being planned for 2018 serves as a continuation of the professional development and curriculum work completed during the school year. Writing workshop, Bridges, technology integration, and co-teaching are the professional development workshops being offered this summer, and subject-area curriculum projects in each discipline will be led by the subject-area coordinators and the Assistant Superintendent. Any additional projects or opportunities will go through approval by the Assistant Superintendent. The budget for summer work is shown below:

	Professional Development Workshops	Subject-Area Curriculum Projects
Budgeted for Summer 2018	\$29,000	\$22,000

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Presentation Takeaways:

- Professional development in Pleasantdale District 107 is aligned with our Strategic Blueprint and the principles for effective professional development (Center for Public Education, 2013).
- Teachers are engaging in professional development that is ongoing and relevant to their subject areas and/or grade levels through varied approaches that include modeling and coaching.
- Summer work for 2018 will be a continuation of the professional development and curriculum work that happens during the school year.