

**Professional Development Design**

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### **Context**

To address the Eltown Area School District's digital literacy initiative at the high school, the current format of monthly unconnected face-to-face professional development will be modified so that it is ongoing and specific to each content area. Using the English Department as a model, the district's staff developer will work with the technology integration specialist and English chairperson to create and facilitate a blended professional learning community. While the educational technology PD plan will begin with the English department, the district is aiming to use it as the model for all departmental PD. The PLC format of face-to-face meetings in conjunction with online asynchronous discussion will scaffold a move toward conducting district PD sessions online within the scope of three years.

The information shared by the three team facilitators, an environmental scan, and results of a teacher-taken LoTi needs assessment have supplied the following departmental demographics to guide the PLC design:

- **Facilitators:** The *Staff Developer* will work to develop and maintain collaboration and organization while the ETPD is administered. The *Technology Integration Specialist* will provide future-focused assistance with pedagogy and tools. The *Department Chairperson* will establish program relevancy by connecting practices to the curriculum. Teachers will facilitate their own discussions within the constructs provided.
- **Learners:** English teachers (15) teaching to different grades and academic tracks
- **Teacher Stages of Concerns:** Upon execution, the plan will attempt to meet teachers where they are, which will be based on teacher observation and survey feedback. An evident concern, which is management, will be addressed by easing into the blended learning environment format and by clustering the sessions to focus on one topic at a time so that teachers can better acquire the skills.
- **Students:** Grades 10-12 who are adept with handheld technologies and online programs, but have limited analytical and research skills

- **Supports:** Help from the technology integration specialist is provided by appointment. Tools, such as Promethean Boards, internet access, Windows laptops and student laptop carts are available to every teacher in the department.
- **Barriers:** Common meeting time to learn the tools has always been a struggle and it is taken into consideration for the new ETPD PLC model. Other barriers varying levels of teacher acceptance and knowledge of technology integration.
- **Format:** A blended PLC model alternating online wiki discussion with bi-weekly face-to-face meetings will evolve to so that the use of the wiki replaces most in-person meetings.
- **English Curriculum Focus:** A collaboration of input from English Department feedback with insight from the technology integration specialist concluded a need for improvement in the area of digital literacy. Aligning with national ELA and Technology standards, ETPD will focus on two increasing important language arts concerns: creating content that demonstrates critical thinking and researching effectively to obtain accurate information
- **ETPD Component:** Wikispaces will serve as the main discussion and resource portal, linking to other tools that teachers are encouraged to use.

### **Design**

The first year of on-going ETPD will scaffold the use of asynchronous discussion by integrating it with the in-person model with which Eltown Area teachers are accustomed. Eight segments, each approximately 4 weeks long, will focus on a set of ELA/Tech goals with aligning standards and tools. Due to holidays, standardized testing, and cumulative research projects, the PD will be further divide into two semesters; the first will emphasize content-creation, the second, research.

During the 45-minute week 1 meeting for each segment, pedagogy supporting the goal will be presented and best practice examples will be provided. Into week 2, teachers will discuss the concept(s) in their online PLC. On an as-needed basis, the ETPD team will step in to organize the threads and mentor teachers. Week 3 will build off of the concept discussion in a face-to-face workshop-structured meeting. Here, the ETPD team

will introduce specific technologies that compliment the goals while coaching teachers with step-by-step instructions on tool use. The 4<sup>th</sup> week will take place online as teachers share ideas about how to implement this into the curriculum they teach.

English curriculums for grades 10-12 contain production and research components, but not every tool can be effectively applied in the same way or at the same time for each level. There are five teachers per grade level. To increase the ready-to-use element of PD, each group of five will generate grade level-specific ideas to add to a folder on the ETPD wiki space. Although similar to the discussion thread, the folder is meant to be a quick resource for teachers to turn to when the opportunity for technology integration presents itself in the curriculum. This aspect of resource generation and collection parallels the self-directed approach that the teachers desire to instill in students.

Research supporting the following ETPD design is based on the fundamental concept that “you learn by doing” especially in application to a technical training program in which participants do not develop an understanding for technology until using it (Picciano 245). For this reason, Eltown Area’s new PD model is learner-centered with supports for guided active learning. Likewise, the learners were also considered in the content and assignment selection. According to Learning Technologies Professor Rob Koper, authentic learning tasks enable successful and deep learning if they are complex, realistic, and completed in a minimal amount of time (284). Therefore, each project in this design is presented in a manner applicable to the classroom and conducive to reinforcement.

<b>The two-month scope and sequence below serves as a vision for the ETPD plan.</b>			
<b>Time</b>	<b>Learning Aims</b>	<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Standards</b>
Sept. 4 weeks 2 face to face meetings 2+ wiki contributions during alternate weeks	Understand types of active and student-centered lessons that should be designed Collaboratively determine how wikis can be used to create content and encourage critical thinking skills in students.	Face-to-Face <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pedagogy Presentation</li> <li>▪ Provide examples of best practices through experiences, videos, lessons, etc.</li> <li>▪ Tutorial of Wikispaces</li> <li>▪ Modify based on teacher input</li> </ul> Online PLC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss tool (2 original posts, 2 responses)</li> <li>▪ Explore support links</li> <li>▪ Add ideas for implementation to grade-level folder</li> <li>▪ Answer survey</li> </ul>	NETS-C: 1b, 2a,d,f 3a,b,c,d,f 4a,b,c 6c  NETS-T: 1c 2a,c 3c,d 4a,b 5a,b,c,d  ELA Common Core (Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening): CC.1.4.11-12.C CC.1.4.11-12.O CC.1.4.11-12.S CC.1.4.11-12.T CC.1.4.11-12.U CC.1.4.11-12.W CC.1.5.11-12.C CC.1.5.11-12.D CC.1.5.11-12E
	<b>Technology Tool:</b> Using Wikispaces will provide a foundation for teachers to grasp the idea and reasons for asynchronous discussion.		
Oct. 4 weeks 2 face to face meetings 2+ wiki contributions during alternate weeks	Understand how alternative media can affect student understanding. Collaboratively determine how podcasting can be used to create content and encourage critical thinking skills in students. Experiment with podcasting tools.	Face-to-Face <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pedagogy Presentation</li> <li>▪ Provide examples of best practices through experiences, videos, lessons, etc.</li> <li>▪ Tutorial of Podcasting</li> <li>▪ Modify based on teacher input</li> </ul> Online PLC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss tool (2 original posts, 2 responses)</li> <li>▪ Optional: Post a link to a podcast on this wiki in lieu of a written post.</li> <li>▪ Explore support links</li> <li>▪ Answer survey</li> </ul>	
	<b>Technology Tools:</b> While conversing on Wikispaces, teachers will explore podcasting software to realize how it can help auditory learners improve content acquisition through synthesis.		

<b>Future segments will follow the aforementioned pattern unless teachers and the ETPD team collectively decide to tweak format, procedures, and/or topics.</b>	
Nov- Dec 5 weeks	Teachers will be introduced to various presentation tools (VoiceThread, Prezi, Animoto, Adobe Connect) and taught how to use two to improve the delivery of their own instruction. For student use, the rationale is that these tools will provide learners with a template for content-creation while linking to national ELA and technology standards for public speaking and presentation.
Jan 3 weeks Review and share practices	Before delving into topics relating to research skills, teachers will use this period to review asynchronous discussion, podcasting, and visual presentation tools. The first meeting will be a recap presentation via Adobe Connect in lieu of the face to face meeting. This will occur directly after the holiday vacation and the rest of the month

	will be conducted in Wikispace PLCs. The rationale is that some teachers may need more time to review and practice tools, and their peer groups may ease or advance this transition.
Feb 4 weeks	Teachers will be familiarized with pedagogy surrounding website analysis and information validity since online research is the primary way most of their students collect information for research papers.
March 4 weeks	Teachers will continue the conversation of reliable and efficient online research. Topics will include search Booleans and district-provided research databases like EbscoHost and Eric.
April 4 weeks	Teachers will be introduced to ways of organizing research data online, specifically with the tool Refworks. The idea stems from observation that students keep poor records of hand-written data. In addition, teachers will set up accounts with an easy-to-use and understand online plagiarism detector called Turnitin.com
May- June 6weeks	Since the research component for all English classes occurs at some point between May and June, teachers will put into practice the tools that they learned this semester. Since this is a busy time for teachers because of grading, coaching, and chaperoning events, face-to-face meetings will transition into voluntary workshops at teachers' requests. An end of the year face-to-face meeting coupled with surveys and PLC discussion will inform the collaborative decision of how to conduct summer ETPD.

### **Assessment**

Eltown Area School District's educational technology professional development program will be assessed through participant comprehension and participant implementation.

The first part of assessment will evaluate teachers' understanding of pedagogy as the ETPD team facilitators will formatively examine how teachers are shifting their thinking about their teaching approach.

- **Level 1: Participant Reaction**

A bi-weekly survey about PD face-to-face and progress will be administered online using the tool Zoomerang. This information will assess teacher satisfaction and provide a base for program improvement.

- **Level 2: Participant Learning**

Teachers will facilitate ETPD discussions with team leaders monitoring and redirecting as needed. Additional tools and tutorials will be linked to the Wikispace PLC for added support. Wiki use and responses will help leaders determine areas in need of content improvement.

- Level 3: Organization Support and Change

Self-reflection is encouraged on part of ETPD team facilitators through the use of other levels of assessment as feedback to their support. During weekly Adobe Connect meetings, the three leaders will compare observations and ideas related to present and future needs and progress. Their communication serves to document improvement and support for the overall goal of promoting student learning.

The second aspect of the PD program that will be assessed is teachers' implementation of new content creation and research tools. The ETPD team will conduct summative observations of technology integration to analyze how teachers are practicing what they learn.

- Level 4: Participant Use of New Knowledge and Skills

The technology integration specialist can assess implementation by helping to plan, co-teach, and/or record lessons. Recorded lessons will be viewed by the ETPD team and the teacher in order to promote reflection and improvement. If a teacher declines assistance with their implementation, they must submit a comprehensive plan detailing the procedures, standards, and outcomes as well as a post-reflection of how it went. All teachers will conference with at least 2 ETPD team leaders post observation. Contributions to the technology best practices showcase on the ETPD wiki are encouraged and can be assessed for program improvement.

- Level 5: Student Learning Outcomes

ETPD leaders and teachers will observe student learning for level of interest, participation, and understanding. In applicable cases, student artifacts and records will be analyzed and discussed by the department chairperson and individual teacher to demonstrate the influence of the ETPD program on student understanding. Some situations may warrant use of a database comparison of student scores. In addition, surveys on learning will be administered to the student via a teacher-chosen tool.

## Resources

International Society for Technology in Education. (2011). *The Standards for Learning, Leading, and Teaching in the Digital Age*. Retrieved August 25, 2012, from <http://www.iste.org/standards.aspx>

Koper (Ed.), R.(2009). *Learning Network Services for Professional Development*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

PA Department of Education. (2012, April 20). Academic Standards for English Language Arts. *Standards Aligned System*. Retrieved August 25, 2012, from [http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/6-12\\_ELA\\_Standards\\_8-2-12\\_DRAFT.pdf](http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/6-12_ELA_Standards_8-2-12_DRAFT.pdf)

Picciano, A. G. .(2006). *Educational Leadership and Planning for Technology* (4th ed.). Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education. (Original work published 1994)