

NCCTQ Issue Forum

From Planning to Action:
Effectively Using your Professional
Development Resources

NYS Teacher Centers

- The Greater Capital Region Teacher Center

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Teacher Centers

- Teacher Centers were originally founded in the United Kingdom
- Funded in U.S. as a national program in the 1970's
- Lost national funding in 1982
- Established in NYS in 1984 with the advocacy of union groups especially NYSUT

Teacher Centers

- Teacher driven: professional development for teachers by teachers
- Must have a majority of teachers on the governing Policy Board appointed by the union
- Funding comes from the NYS Legislature and is now at \$40,000,000
- There are 133 Teacher Centers in NYS of varying sizes

Greater Capital Region Teacher Center

- Serves 22,000 educators in 93 school districts, 4 BOCES and 80 private schools
- Offers approximately 400 professional development programs a year to P-12 teachers in all subjects
- Programs range from expressed teacher needs such as forensic biology to national and state initiatives like National Board support groups and mentoring

Characteristics of teacher centers

- We are governed by teachers
- We work on the premise that the classroom teacher is the expert
- We are more flexible than most SED networks
- We partner with many, many other educational networks including but not limited to higher education, cultural institutes and businesses

Supporting Federal and State Initiatives

- NYS requires that each district have a Professional Development Plan that includes:
 - A mentor plan
 - Annual Professional Performance Reviews
 - Provision for every teacher to receive 175 hours of professional development every 5 years

And addresses NCLB requirements

NYS Professional Development Plans

- PDP teams must have a majority of teachers
- Must be based on local needs as identified by student data and local expertise
- The plan must be approved by the school board

Supporting Federal and State Initiatives

- The PDP must be based on student assessment data (we begin with a close examination of 3-8 ELA and math assessments)
- It must include specific programs tied to what students need to know and be able to do
- Must evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and the plan in improving what students know and can do

Professional Development Institute

- In addition to periodic dinner briefings on PDP the Center heavily subsidizes three day-long professional development institutes
- These are overnight experiences at beautiful and remote sites suitable for supporting sustained team building and intensive analysis and planning

The PDP Institute

- Each district has a teacher Liaison, appointed by the union president, who serves as a contact between the Teacher Center and the district
- Teams arrive with the following members
 - Teacher leaders
 - Administrators
 - Parent member
 - Higher ed. member (if there is one)

The PDP Institute Agenda

- Update on Federal and State Educational mandates
- Review of State regulations related to PDP (sometimes will have expertise from SED)
- Examine district specific student assessment data especially 3-8 ELA and math assessments (with expertise from BOCES data analysts)
- Develop a team work response to emerging gaps and strengths
- Develop an evaluation plan

How does this work continue?

- District PDP teams may return for further time working as a team on district identified focus
- Districts may seek professional development from a number of providers including all of the educational networks in NYS

What are the results

- Teams leave with
 - A binder of material on PDP including all relevant regulations and Federal allocations of funding
 - The skill to use student assessment data to inform instruction (and the PDP)
 - An awareness of some of the PD resources available
 - A sense of team work fostered between administrators and teacher union leaders