

Green Scenario

This scenario describes a series of circumstances and events that might occur in any school or district. As you read, consider how do the actions, outcomes, and intentions of those involved reflect the NSDC standards:

- **Context Standards for Professional Development:** Learning Communities, Leadership, and Resources?
- **Process Standards for Professional Development:** Data-Driven, Evaluation, Research-Based, Design, Learning, and Collaboration?
- **Content Standards for Professional Development:** Equity, Quality Teaching, and Family Involvement?

To ensure that the content of her upcoming effective teaching presentation had relevance for staff, Arnette Sanchez, central office professional development director, met with high school principals. She shared materials from a recent state department of education training: PowerPoints and policy and research briefs.

At the end of this meeting, all agreed this information was vital for all staff and would align to the new evaluation instrument to be covered by the second speaker. She and the principals were confident the two presentations would lay the groundwork for improved instructional practice.

During her actual presentation, Sanchez noted attendance was low (some teachers chose to take personal leave rather than attend) and her audience wasn't fully engaged. She decided she would spend the next morning reviewing the presentation evaluations to determine why

1. twenty percent of the high school teaching staff had elected to take a personal day rather than attend the required in-service, especially since this topic was directly related to their performance evaluations,
2. approximately 10 percent of those present exhibited lack of interest by reading newspapers and grading student papers, and
3. the remaining teachers were attentive, as demonstrated by note taking and relevant questions throughout the session.

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For the first time in five years, Martin Zeva, Title I Director for Chance School District, notices that teachers are leaving a district-wide in-service meeting with smiles on their faces. Thanks to a great deal of effort, not to mention a substantial speaker's fee, Zeva had been able to secure Joe Starr as the day's speaker. Joe Starr was an All-American football star in college and the coach with the greatest numbers of wins in the state's collegiate history. Now retired from coaching, he has become a popular motivational speaker.

Starr's forte is humor laced with a message for leaders to maintain a positive attitude. His definition for leadership had also been well received: every "man" on the team needs to be leader not just the quarterback. The teachers and administrators in the audience laughed so hard they could barely stay in their seats. Yet, at two different points in his speech, Joe Starr's stories of individuals who had overcome adversity brought many to tears. At the conclusion of his speech, Starr was given a five-minute standing ovation.

Zeva expects staff evaluations will be high; however, he is surprised at the lack of enthusiasm expressed by the district's professional development coordinator. Zeva had seen her laugh repeatedly, but she mentioned her dissatisfaction as she left the auditorium. Zeva wonders why she did not like the presentation.

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Promise HS teachers presented a new idea to Principal Jean Allyn for next year: on the October and March PD days, allow staff the opportunity to share good teaching strategies among themselves in small group discussions rather than a typical professional development session. For example, Glenn Schlecter and Maria Simón could discuss strategies they had implemented after attending a national conference last year on brain-based learning. Two teachers wanted an opportunity for extended conversations about new ESL strategies they were trying. Soya Lazure wanted to lead a discussion on the latest adolescent reading research.

Allyn agreed to the idea, with the stipulation that each group of teachers submit a description of what they planned to do and how it related to student needs. In addition, each would follow up with a short written description of how teachers planned to use new ideas.

On the first professional development date, teachers engaged in a variety of activities: a large group met to talk about brain-based research strategies; another went to the district's media center to preview and borrow instructional materials; another met to talk about adolescent reading and math strategies for ESL students; some spent the day either at their homes or in their classrooms, grading papers, writing lesson plans, organizing materials, or creating bulletin boards; and coaches met together to plan.

Staff agreed the day had been worthwhile.

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After reading a new report on community demographics and, specifically, his school in June, Henry Nyguen, Hope Elementary School principal, realized his school would have a large influx of English language learners for the new school year. He wondered whether his staff was prepared to meet the needs of these students.

During the first week in August, in anticipation of this change in population, he reviewed the qualifications and experiences of his teaching staff. When he finished, he realized his staff had little or no training in language acquisition or sheltered instruction. He quickly called the Title III director for guidance and suggestions for staff development.

By the end of October, he and his leadership team (two district-level staff members, an ELL specialists, an assistant principal, and the school counselor) had designed a three-year systemic approach to address staff development needs. The plan included the following:

1. A model for continuous improvement of teaching and learning
2. Processes for disaggregating student data and providing relevant research on sheltered instruction models
3. Staff workshop events with follow-up and support provided through their existing professional learning community groups
4. A built-in mechanism for evaluation and needed modifications for staff development

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