DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Corey J. Miklus

An executive position paper submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Spring 2014

UMI Number: 3631198

UMI 3631198

DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Corey J. Miklus

Approved: _____
Ralph P. Ferretti, Ph.D.
Director of the School of Education

Approved: _____
Lynn Okagaki, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Education and Human Development

Approved: _____
James G. Richards, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education

I certify that I have read this executive position paper and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an executive position paper for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed: _____

Sharon Walpole, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of executive position paper

I certify that I have read this executive position paper and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an executive position paper for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed: _____

Doug Archbald, Ph.D.
Member of executive position paper committee

I certify that I have read this executive position paper and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an executive position paper for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed: _____

William Lewis, Ph.D.
Member of executive position paper committee

I certify that I have read this executive position paper and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an executive position paper for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed: _____

David Santore, Ed.D.
Member of executive position paper committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

Appendix

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Designing professional development (PD) for teachers is at the heart of instructional improvement. Based on the PD literature, I grounded my strategies in: working with experts, working with colleagues, aligned curriculum, practice in classrooms, observations and feedback, and school wide walkthroughs. This portfolio begins with my efforts as building principal to design, implement, and monitor the effects of PD in an elementary school, revealing the challenges inherent in such efforts. I took what I learned and moved to larger-scale district work. In 2010, the Delaware State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2010) for all schools in the state of Delaware. Artifacts illustrate the efforts I made to ensure a coherent and systematic PD process was in place for teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District for teachers and administrators. Efforts began with introduction to the standards and ended with teachers changing some of their instruction. Administrators learned to monitor implementation efforts. During this initiative I learned that teachers and administrators are at different levels of willingness and expertise to implement the CCSS. The majority of teachers reported that their knowledge of the standards has increased but they still are in need of more carefully aligned curriculum materials. A small portion of teachers reported that they are fully implementing the standards at their grade level. The administrators were receptive to the walkthrough documents that I created and are currently using them on a weekly basis. Based on the feedback I received from teachers

and administrators, I will continue to design more training. Recommendations for future teacher training include learning progressions based on the standards and specific strategy instruction. This training must move teacher and administrator understanding of the standards to a much deeper level of implementation. Other recommendations include analyzing all curriculum materials used for instruction for their alignment to the CCSS and refining monitoring documents so that both teachers and administrators are clear on the teaching and learning expectations required by the CCSS.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

My professional development (PD) plan began when I was the principal of Nellie

Hughes Stokes Elementary in the Caesar Rodney School District. Stokes Elementary is a

school where 55% of the students come from low-income homes. Teachers at Stokes

Elementary frequently stated that their students struggled with comprehension activities

because of their lack of background knowledge. Because of this I began to implement

PD that focused on increasing both the background knowledge of the students and their

comprehension skills. I also noticed a discrepancy in second grade performance on

fluency measures as compared to their performance on the state assessment. Because of

this I also designed a PD plan that focused on educating the staff on fluency and decoding

strategies which they could use with their students to increase reading achievement. The

PD plans were grounded in the work I had done with outside experts and the readings I

had done on the subjects.

The State of Delaware adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2010)

in August of 2010 without having an implementation plan in place for the local school

districts. During the initial adoption of the standards by the state the message the local

school districts received from the state department was that Delaware's standards and

assessments were already aligned to the CCSS. State officials performed a crosswalk of

the old state standards and the new CCSS and published a document showing high levels

of alignment. Because of this, the Caesar Rodney School District did not design a PD

plan to address the standards. In 2012 the Delaware Department of Education announced

they were "rebooting" the state's plan for the implementation of the CCSS. Based on a national meeting the state department attended on the issue, officials realized that Delaware was in fact behind in its implementation of the initiative and that current standards were not aligned with the new expectations. Once the district was briefed on this I began to design a plan for education about and implementation of the CCSS in the district.

To address this problem I designed a PD plan that would target both teachers and administrators. In order to launch this plan I needed to educate myself on the standards -- specifically the math and literacy standards that pertained to science and the technical subjects. I spent time researching literature that pertained to PD strategies and to the design and implementation of the CCSS. I also attended conferences and PD sessions that were run by experts in PD strategies and by CCSS content experts. For instance, I was able to attend conferences that were run by Dr. Thomas Guskey and also Dr. Bill McCallum. Dr. Guskey is a leader in the field of PD and Dr. McCallum is one of the writers of the Math CCSS. Through the literature I reviewed on both subjects and from what I learned at conferences on the subject I was able to design my PD plan for the district. My PD cycle included the following efforts: work with experts, work with colleagues, aligned curriculum, practice in classrooms, observation and feedback, and school wide walkthroughs. It is represented below in Figure 1.

Work with
experts

Schoolwide
walkthroughs

Work with
colleagues

Observation
and feedback

Aligned
curricular
materials

Practice in
classrooms
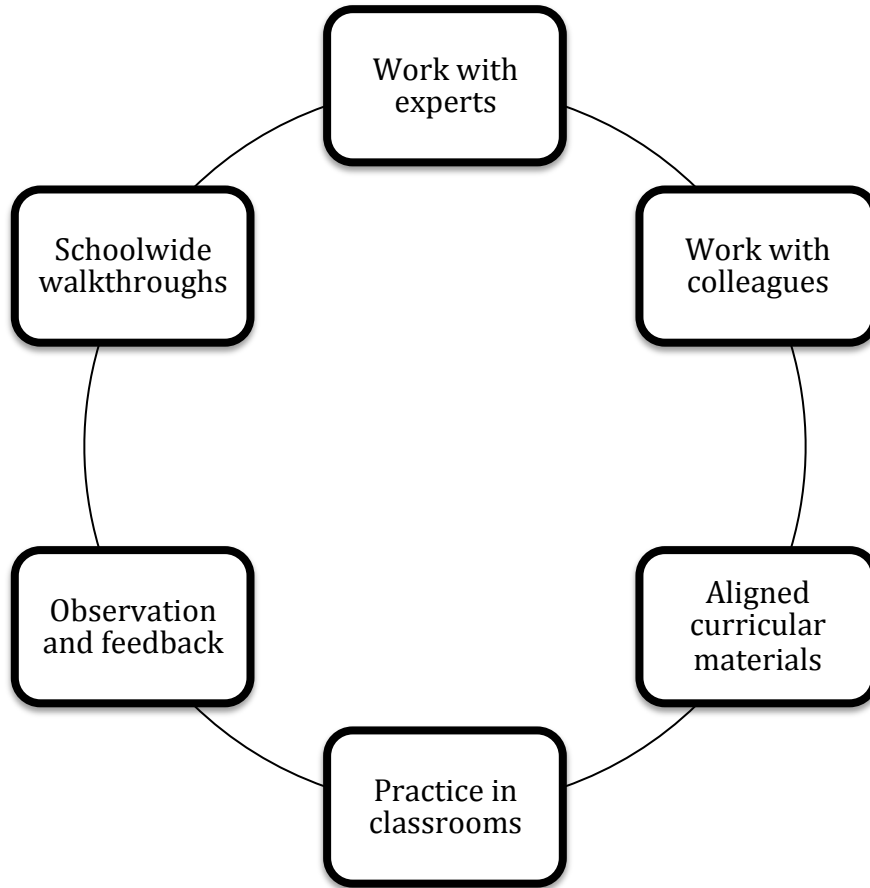
Figure 1   Model for Design of PD Efforts

Included in this portfolio are ten artifacts that describe the process I engaged to

implement PD. The artifacts also provide evidence of the PD content I used to ensure all

district stakeholders were trained on the standards and that implementation and

monitoring of the standards were occurring. The artifacts presented in the EPP were

created while I was a building principal and then when I was promoted to Supervisor of

Instruction in the district. My work as a principal set the tone for the PD work I did district wide. A description of each artifact is below.

1. EPP Proposal Document: This document defines the plan I put in place to address the problem in the Caesar Rodney School District. This EPP describes the structure of the Caesar Rodney School District as well as the roles I have played in the district. This paper describes my new role in the district and how this plan was initially designed. This paper describes the initial PD work I did around the CCSS as well as strategies related to their proper implementation.

2. Read Aloud Literature Review (White Paper): This literature review laid the groundwork for the PD plan I implemented at Stokes Elementary. Researching 100 articles helped me gain an in-depth understanding of what research says about how and why to implement Read Alouds at the elementary level. Once I had read the articles I designed my Read Aloud PD based on the research. The Read Aloud program that I implemented at Stokes Elementary focused on both fiction and non-fiction texts (see APPENDIX A).

3. Implementing a Structured Read Aloud Program at Stokes Elementary- This artifact documents my initial work in school wide PD. PD was conducted to train teachers on the design and implementation of a structured read aloud. The PD plan included work with an expert (through a book study), collaborative time to design lessons, and observation and feedback. Teachers were exposed to research on why read alouds are important for developing student comprehension and vocabulary skills. Teachers were given time during PLC sessions to create read aloud Lessons. The teachers used

the book *Creating Robust Vocabulary*: *Frequently Asked Questions & Extended Examples* by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2008) to help them understand vocabulary instruction in more depth (See APPENDIX B).

4. Fluency and Decoding PD Plan- This artifact describes my second instructional initiative. It focused on a reading PD plan that targeted the small group reading instruction across the second grade. Looking at school wide data, only 66% of the second graders were at benchmark with their fluency scores at the end of the 2010-2011 school year. My observations of the building were that teachers focused their energy on the teaching of comprehension and ignored the fluency needs of the students. Based on this observation I designed a focused PD plan for the second grade teachers that incorporated the teaching of decoding and fluency as well as how to assess student needs in these two areas. The Title I reading teacher was also trained on screening and diagnostic measures which would help develop lessons to target student needs. Both the classroom teachers and the Title I reading teacher read and used information from *Differentiated reading instruction: Strategies for the primary grades* (Walpole & McKenna, 2007) as well as *How to plan differentiated reading instruction: Resources for grades K-3*(Walpole & McKenna,2009). Teachers and the Title I reading teacher worked together on the implementation of a more focused decoding and fluency plan for those students who needed it. At the end of the 2011-2012 school year 73% of the students were at benchmark with their fluency skills (See APPENDIX C).

5. Transitioning to the Math Common Core With Extension Lessons- Teachers were hesitant to jump right into teaching the Math CCSS during the 2012-2013 because the state assessment was still based on the Delaware State Standards rather than the CCSS. In order to move teachers and schools towards full implementation of the Common Core I formed a committee of elementary teachers to develop expertise in the math content standards. I worked with this committee to unpack the Common Core Standards at their grade level so they had a thorough understanding of the content. Once this initial knowledge building was completed, teachers were asked to look for content in their current curriculum that aligned with the CCSS. When they found this aligned content the committee was asked to design a mini lesson, which would take their current curriculum to the depth the Common Core required. This PD session helped with the beginning phases of the implementation of the CCSS. (See Appendix D)

6. Walkthrough Form Monitoring the 8 Mathematical Practices- This artifact `was designed to ensure that the math practice standards were implemented during math instruction across the district. Teachers across the entire school district were trained on the new standards as well as how to implement them in their classrooms. This artifact describes why the practice standards are just as important as the Common Core content standards. This walkthrough form will help the administrator's monitor that the math practices are being implemented in their schools. (See Appendix E).

7. Common Core Training For Administrators and Lead Teachers- In May of 2012 I was promoted to the position of Supervisor of Instruction for the Caesar Rodney

School District. One of my first responsibilities of the job centered around training

district administrators and Lead Teachers on the CCSS in the areas of Mathematics

and Literacy in the Content Areas. During the summer months and during the first

few days of the 2012-2013 school year I conducted training for the Common Core

Math Standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment, and the ELA standards. The

initial trainings provided an overview of the Core, how the standards were

established, content shifts, and the plans for future PD around the Common Core for

administrators and teachers. During these training efforts I realized how important it

is to make sure all key stakeholder groups are a part of the PD process. Because I

forgot to include the teacher's union in the development of the plan I received push

back from the group on how I was using teachers in the implementation stages of the

project. (See APPENDIX F).

8. Elementary Common Core PD Survey- I conducted this survey to assess how the PD

conducted with the elementary teachers effected their professional practice. Teachers

were given this survey on the second to the last teacher day of the 2012-2013 school

year. All elementary teachers were grouped together at one elementary school so that

they could receive training on the new CCSS-aligned math lessons they would

implement next school year. At the conclusion of this training teachers completed the

survey. Analyses revealed teachers are still in need of high quality PD around the

CCSS so they are confidently implementing the standards in their classrooms. Data

also suggest that the teachers feel very confident implementing the practice standards

but are still in need of PD around the content. Qualitative data from the surveys

suggest that access to aligned common core material is an issue. Survey data helped

me judge the effectiveness of the sessions I ran during the 2012-2013 year and helped

me design the PD plan for the 2013-2014 school year (See Appendix G).

9. Implementing The Common Core Literacy and Writing Standards Into the Career and

Technical Subjects-This artifact focuses on the work that was done with an outside

expert in helping the CTE teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District to

understand and implement the CCSS into their daily instruction. This type of training

with the CTE teachers was very different from what they have been used to in the

past. At no time were these teachers ever required to implement reading and writing

activities into their lessons. In the past CTE teachers were solely required to deliver

their content standards to their students. With the shift to the CCSS, the CTE

teachers are now responsible for implementing literacy and writing instruction daily

which is a dramatic shift for many of the teachers. The training that was designed

and delivered with the help of an outside expert from the University of Delaware

focused on understanding what the standards and expectations are for CTE teachers.

Training was also designed to educate the teachers on explicit reading and writing

strategies they can implement in their classrooms which will help them implement the

standards (See Appendix H).

10. Walkthrough Form for Science and the Technical Subjects-This artifact was created

so that the building administrators and I could monitor the implementation of the

literacy and writing standards required by the CCSS. Both the teachers and

administrators received training by an outside expert on the literacy and writing

strategies they could use in their classroom, which would be aligned to the expectations of the CCSS. This walkthrough form helped both administrators and teachers understand what the expectations for their classroom have become due to the adoption of the standards statewide (See Appendix I)

Alignment Of the Core Plus Math Program to the CCSS at 9th And 10th Grade- This artifact describes the process of leading a team of math teachers from Caesar Rodney High School to analyze and align their current math program, Core Plus Mathematics, to the CCSS. The artifact describes how this process was much different from the work done at the elementary and middle schools. Because the standards at the high school level are not grade-level specific, we needed to consult with a representative from the Delaware Department of Education to help guide us through this process. Once we received guidance from the state we were able to begin our process of analyzing and aligning the curriculum to the standards. I worked through this process with the lead team across several PD sessions. During Professional Learning Community (PLC) time this lead team was able to share their findings with their colleagues (See Appendix J).

My goal in these chapters is to reflect on what I learned about instructional leadership across this entire initiative. This paper is organized into 6 chapters that describe my journey through this project. In chapter one I have described the artifacts that I completed during this project. All artifacts are included in the Appendix section of the paper. In chapter two I present the problem that I decided to work on. In chapter 3   I discuss in detail the improvement strategies I used as well as all work done with outside

experts throughout this initiative. In chapters four and five I describe the results I

received from implementing this professional development plan as well as my reflection

on those results. I conclude this paper in chapter 6 with my reflections on the initiative as

well as my own learning about the topic of professional development and about

leadership.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

During my twelve years as a building and district administrator it is very apparent to me that student achievement can be increased when you have well trained high quality teachers working with the students. If teachers do not have formal explicit training on instructional strategies they will resort back to strategies that they were exposed to when they were in school. Teachers spend only 6 hours a day instructing students. If the teachers are not using best practices during that time, we cannot predict that student achievement will increase.

The problem that I have chosen to focus on for my ELP is developing, implementing, and monitoring PD with a special emphasis on elementary reading, K-12 mathematics, and literacy in the technical subjects. Taken together, these PD initiatives strengthen the knowledge base for CCSS implementation for teachers and administrators. I hoped to move teachers from building basic understanding of best practices and of the standards' requirements to curriculum planning to changed instruction. PD sessions were designed around the critical needs of my building and then for an entire district. At the building level I was able to design PD that focused on the student's weaknesses. The PD I designed for the district was focused on the CCSS. I learned quickly that there was a big difference in designing PD at the building level compared with the district level.

Organizational Context

Description of Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary:

Nellie Hughes Elementary School in the Caesar Rodney School District is a first through fifth grade educational setting. The current enrollment at Stokes Elementary is 434 students with 44 of those students receiving special education services. The classifications of the special education student's range from developmentally delayed (DD) to learning disabled (LD). Students who are receiving speech services are not included in the 44.

Table 1 and Table 2 show demographic data for the students at Stokes Elementary.

Table 1   Breakdown of Race at Stokes Elementary (DOE, 2011)

Race	Percent
African American	29.4
White	62.7
Asian	3.2
Hispanic	3.5

Table 2   Other Student Characteristics (DOE, 2011)

Characteristic	Percent
African American	29.4
White	62.7
Asian	3.2
Hispanic	3.5

Table 1 breaks down the student population by race while Table 2 shows a breakdown of the student population by additional characteristics disaggregated cells. As you can see from the tables above Stokes Elementary is primarily made up of Caucasian students coming from low-income environments.

Stokes Elementary currently has 29 teachers employed as well as one librarian and 2 support personnel. 90.6% of the staff is Caucasian. 9.4% of the staff is African American. 100% of the teaching staff is considered highly qualified per federal guidelines. Sixty percent of the teaching staff at Stokes Elementary holds a Master's Degree or above. At this time no teachers are Nationally Board Certified. Table 3 shows the breakdown of the staff's years of teaching experience.

Table 3   Years Experience (DOE, 2011)

Years Experience	Percent
4 or Less	7
5 to 9	28
10-14	41
15-19	14
20-24	10

The information in Table 3 shows the wide range of teaching experience the staff at Stokes Elementary possesses.

The Caesar Rodney School District, which is located in Wyoming, DE, serves over 7600 students from kindergarten through 12 grade. Caesar Rodney consists of 1 high school, three middle schools, 6 elementary schools, and an early childhood center. The district's student population spans the areas of Dover, Camden, Wyoming, Felton, and Magnolia Delaware. The following tables present demographic information for the student population of the district:

Table 4   Enrollment by Race (DOE, 2011)

Race	Percent
American Indian	.5
African American	29.7
Asian American	3.7
Hispanic	5.1
White	61.1

Table 5   Other Student Characteristics (DOE, 2011)

Characteristics	Percent
ELL	1.8
Low Income	41.1
Special Education	15.1

The tables above show the diverse student population the Caesar Rodney School District serves. The high percentage of special education students has proven to be a challenge for the district. Two middle schools and the high school have had trouble reaching the AYP target in this category.

District Employees

The Caesar Rodney School District has 917 employees. The chart below describes the staffing across the district.

Table 6   District Staffing (DOE, 2011)

Staff Member	Number
Teachers	435
Librarians	11
Instructional Support	192
Pupil Support	58
Administrators	34
Secretaries	53
Food Service	66
Maintenance	66

Other	2

All teachers throughout the district are considered highly qualified by the state of Delaware. Most (54.6%) of the professional staff has a bachelor's degree while 44.8% have a Master's. Twelve professional staff members have their Doctoral degree.

Student Achievement

The Caesar Rodney School District has met AYP for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. The State of Delaware has also rated the district Commendable. Nine schools in the district have an "Above Target Rating" while two have a "Meets Target Rating". One school in the district, Fifer Middle School, was rated "Below Target" in 2011. The table below presents student proficient across the district as measured by the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS).

Table 7   District and state DCAS DATA (2011-2012) % proficient

Grade	Reading CR	Reading State	Math CR	Math State	Sci CR	Sci State	SS CR	SS State
3rd	88	75	87	76	NA	NA	NA	NA
4th	84	74	87	77	NA	NA	76	68
5th	86	78	83	74	51	52	NA	NA
6th	79	74	74	67	NA	NA	NA	NA
7th	80	71	78	70	NA	NA	69	57
8th	82	73	85	74	60	50	NA	NA
9th	62	66	69	71	NA	NA	NA	NA
10th	69	71	70	71	51	41	NA	NA

The Caesar Rodney School District has outperformed the state in 16/21 content areas. The district has taken steps to address the loss in achievement from 8th grade to 9th grade by implementing a Freshman Academy at the high school, starting in fall of 2011.

The district has also hired additional interventionists that focus on the instructional needs of the 9th and 10th graders.

Below Table 8 shows the disaggregated graduation rate for the last two school years based on the ESEA formula.

Table 8   District Graduation Rates (Disaggregated) (DOE, 2011)

Student Characteristics	2009-2010 % Graduated	2010-2011 % Graduated
All Students	76.0	76.5
American Indian	75.0	50.0
African American	72.5	66.7
Asian American	80.0	91.7
Hispanic	72.2	73.1
White	77.8	81.3
ELL	76.9	80.0
Special Education	43.8	49.5

Low Income	60.3	62.2

The table shows a distinct gap between the percentages of White students graduating as compared to the students receiving Special Education and students qualifying as Low Income. The district hopes the implementation of the Freshman Academy will help address this gap. District dropout rates have declined slightly since 2008. The percent of students who have dropped out at the high school has declined from 4.6% to 4.2% in three years.

Compared with Stokes Elementary the Caesar Rodney School District has a higher percent of students receiving services through special education. This may be due to the fact that we have a school in the district that serves only students with special needs. Stokes Elementary has a higher percentage of low income students than the rest of the district. In other ways, the two settings are fairly similar..

Organizational Role

My current role in the Caesar Rodney School District is Supervisor of Instruction. I officially started this position in June of 2012. Before accepting this position I was the Principal of Stokes Elementary, also in the Caesar Rodney School District. As an elementary school principal my focus was on PD. Before I was the principal of Stokes Elementary I had been the principal of Woodbridge Elementary in the Woodbridge School District. Woodbridge Elementary was a Reading First school, which meant they

received federal funds to implement scientifically-based reading instruction. While implementing the strategies learned through Reading First, Woodbridge Elementary was named a Superior School by the State of Delaware as well as being named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2010. Part of my time as principal of a Reading First school was spent attending PD sessions about researched-based reading programs and instructional strategies. Then I had to ensure that these practices were actually enacted in all classrooms; together with a literacy coach, I had to enact building-level PD.

The information I learned during these sessions was used to develop my own theory of PD and a plan for an elementary school. As principal I felt my role was to be the instructional leader of the building. With this in mind, I created PD plans to make sure my staff was trained on the best instructional practices that had been associated with increased student achievement. After I provided my PD sessions with the staff, I worked with them to improve their daily instruction through the use of school wide data. My monitoring of the progress the teachers were making was based on instructional walkthroughs and student achievement data. This monitoring piece was a critical component of all of the PD plans I implemented. Without this piece the status quo would be sufficient for the teachers. The old thought process was "I implemented what he told me to do so I am good." Monitoring of both classroom instruction and changes in student achievement data helped me and the teachers refine instruction based on the students' needs. This process of improvement was never a one-shot deal. The initial PD sessions were just the beginning of the overall plan. Within one year of implementing this PD structure standardized assessment scores rose on average 15% in both reading and

mathematics. The Reading First project exposed me to many researched-based reading strategies that could be implemented in a school to improve teaching and learning. What I learned through this initiative was actually how to implement, monitor, and modify these strategies with a staff of 45 teachers.

As principal of Stokes Elementary my priority was creating and delivering high quality PD that would be systematic and sustained throughout the years to come. Using the information I learned from working with outside experts through the Reading First experience I was able to design and implement quality PD for the teachers that was implemented directly in better teaching practices in the classrooms. I was also able to read and research the work from Walpole & McKenna (2009) as well as attend doctoral classes and PD sessions taught by both authors which helped me design and implement my PD sessions. After designing and delivering the PD my staff I had worked together on the initiative and practiced the new strategies in their classrooms in a non-threatening environment. Teachers found value in observing and working together as they worked to master the implementation of the PD plan. I was able to monitor the effectiveness of the PD plan through my use of school wide walkthroughs. A key component to this PD plan was ensuring that materials were readily available to the staff for their instruction. Having materials ready that were aligned to the instructional strategy they were trying to use helped with the implementation of this plan.

My first duty as Supervisor of Instruction was to begin developing a plan for the rollout of the Common Core Standards across the district. As a building principal I had

read about the standards but was never trained on their content. As a Supervisor of Instruction I had to develop a plan for the implementation of the Common Core throughout the district. I worked with another Supervisor of Instruction on the design and implementation of the plan. My implementation plan focused on the areas of mathematics and the technical areas while my colleagues focused on ELA. We worked together but our subject areas were clearly divided. In order for me to move the district forward with its Common Core implementation it was extremely important that I become well versed in the standards. My summer was spent reading and attending conferences about the CCSS. The information that I have learned about the Common Core helped me design PD activities for administrators and teachers. As I continued through the project I focused on developing PD activities to enhance teaching strategies in the classroom and encourage implementation of the CCSS

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

When I was hired for the principal position at Stokes Elementary I was asked to implement strategies that would raise achievement for all students in the building. Based on my prior experiences working with outside experts during the Reading First Initiative I decided to implement a PD plan that would strengthen the instructional strategies the teachers were using in the classroom. I focused my efforts on improving the reading and comprehension strategies the teachers were using during their language arts block. During this two hour period of time teachers used a model of both whole and small group instruction to meet the needs of their students. As the principal I analyzed data across all grade levels and noticed that fluency scores on the DIBELS assessment were low in second grade while comprehension scores of several subgroups were low as measured by the DSTP and DCAS state assessment in grades 3-5. Therefore I decided to launch two PD initiatives which focused on improving the teaching strategies being implemented in the classrooms.

The PD initiative I created for the second grade teachers focused on improving the fluency and decoding strategies they were using with their students. There was a discrepancy between how students performed on the end of the year DIBELS assessment compared to their results on the end of the year state assessment. At the end of the 2009-2010 school year 66% of the students were at benchmark as measured by the DIBELS assessment while over 90% of the second graders were proficient on the state assessment.

Because of the performance on the second grade state assessment, teachers were not concerned with their DIBELS results which lead to students entering the third grade reading below grade level.

In order to reverse this trend at Stokes I implemented a PD session focused on work done by Sharon Walpole and Mike McKenna. I purchased the books *Differentiated reading instruction: Strategies for the primary grades* and *How to plan differentiated reading instruction. Resources for Grades K-3.* The books served as the backbone for the development of my PD plan. My second grade teachers as well as my Title I reading teacher read and implemented the strategies presented in the two texts. During the PLC sessions the teachers were able to work together to discuss the instructional strategies they were using as well as discuss what was working and what was not. Teachers and administrators worked together to observe the instruction and give constructive feedback to each other during debriefing sessions. This PD initiative became the main topic of discussion for all PLC sessions throughout the course of the first semester of school.

The second major PD plan I implemented at Stokes Elementary focused on improving the comprehension strategies being implemented in the classroom through the use of a school wide read aloud program. This PD plan was grounded in the 100 peer reviewed journal articles I located on this topic. During my review of the literature I looked for design models which I could incorporate into my building. I also looked for journal articles which indicated a positive response to implementing a PD plan such as this. I also worked with an outside expert, Dr. Sharon Walpole, on this topic. Through

my research on this topic I identified work from Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan to help design my PD sessions. Their book titled *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction* was used as a school wide book study which helped my staff understand how to teach Tier II and Tier III vocabulary words during their read alouds.

This PD plan was shared with the staff at the opening of the 2011 school year. During this PD session I set the stage for the book club we would focus on as well as what the PD schedule would be for this initiative. The teachers were given the PD schedule for the school year which was all based on this read aloud initiative. This initiative focused on improving instructional strategies for comprehension, vocabulary, and summary. These components would all be addressed during the book study as well as the PD sessions which took place during district in-service days and PLC meetings. In order to ensure that teachers were implementing the instruction, I designed a walk through form which was used by me and my assistant principal to ensure the initiative was being implemented in the classroom. This walkthrough form was also used to identify classrooms where more PD was needed in order to implement the initiative correctly.

At the end of the 2012 school year I was asked to be a Supervisor of Instruction for the Caesar Rodney School District. The first directive I received was to organize and implement a district plan for the transition to the Math CCSS. In 2015 the State of Delaware will begin assessing students in grades 3-8 and 11 on the CCSS in the subject

areas of Math and Reading. Currently teachers are using curriculum materials and teaching lessons that are aligned with the Delaware State Standards. Because the DCAS Assessment for grades 3-10 will be based on the Delaware State Standards for 2014, teachers and administrators do not want to fully embrace the CCSS. This thinking may serve the district well for the current school year but will leave teachers and students ill prepared for 2015 and the Smarter Balanced Assessment. For example, if first grade teachers do not teach the Common Core Standards to the current first grade students, tremendous gaps in knowledge will exist in two years when these students will be tested on the Common Core Standards for third grade.

Because the state's expectation was for all schools to be fully teaching the CCSS this school year, a lot of training needed to be done for both the teachers and administrators. A tremendous amount of time and energy was spent educating teachers and administrators on the CCSS and what it means for the content area they teach. This is not something that can be accomplished overnight.

One of the long-range goals of the district is to achieve and maintain a Commendable or Superior rating for all schools and the District in the Delaware School Accountability System. This goal will not be reached if we are not addressing the critical standards the students need to have mastered for the 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment. This project began the long process of educating teachers and administrators on the CCSS in the areas of mathematics and the technical subjects.

Based on the training the Caesar Rodney School District administrators received this summer from Dr. Max Thompson, textbook companies do not have materials that are aligned to the demands of the new CCSS. With this in mind, the plan in the district is to not adopt any commercial curricular programs for approximately three years. This should give the textbook companies ample time to design curriculum aligned to the Core as well as the new PARC and Smarter Balanced assessments. During this transition period I trained staff and administrators on the Common Core and began the process of creating curriculum aligned to the CCSS. Below are the steps I took to accomplish the task.

1. Conduct introductory training for administrators and a teacher leader from each building on the CCSS. Training focused on the major shifts in Math, ELA, and the Technical Subjects. The building administrator and lead teacher took the training back to their buildings to be used on an in-service day.

2. Conduct training on the 8 mathematical practices that are a part of the Common Core. This training was done for the administrators and a building lead teacher. The administrator and lead teacher then delivered this training in each building at an in-service day.

3. Contact building administrators and ask for their assistance in selecting one teacher per grade level from their building to be a part of the lead Common Core Team for the district (K-6). This team met 5 times throughout the school year and was responsible for bringing all information learned at the sessions back to their

PLC at the building. The sessions focused on diving deeper into the content of the Common Core in the area of mathematics.

4. Work with the middle and high school science teachers in understanding what the Common Core means for their content area. Time was spent during in-service days and PLC meetings looking at the Literacy demands in the area of science and the technical subjects.

5. Plan and design PD sessions about incorporating writing and reading strategies into the technical content areas. The trainings were shared with the science and CTE teachers at the middle and high schools. This training was delivered by me as well as outside presenters whose expertise is writing and reading strategies.

6. Design a walkthrough forms which will be used by administrators to monitor whether the eight mathematical practices and the reading and writing strategies learned at the PD sessions are being implemented in the classroom. I trained both the administrators and teachers on the forms so that all parties are aware of the expectations.

7. Develop a process that will allow teachers to apply to be a part of a Common Core Writing Development Team. Participants were selected based on their experience in education, experience writing curriculum, and knowledge of the Common Core. These individuals were asked to work with me and district resource teachers to design Common Core extension activities that focus on the Literacy Component of the Common Core.

It is the district's expectation that both the teachers and administrators have been trained on the standards in enough detail that full implementation of the standards can occur during the 2013-2014 school year.

Professionals in the Caesar Rodney School District have always taken pride in staying current with best practices in education. The district has a history of working with outside experts to help improve instruction in the classrooms so that all students can be successful. Based on the work of Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), I was able to create a cycle of PD that I could use throughout my process. The cycle consists of working with outside experts, working with colleagues, practice in classrooms, observation and feedback, aligned curricular materials, and school walkthroughs. Not all portions of this PD plan were used in all artifacts but all artifacts are grounded in this plan.

While working as a principal in the Woodbridge School District I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Sharon Walpole through the Reading First program. It was during this time that I realized how a systematic process for providing PD to teachers greatly benefits a school. During Reading First, the staff at Woodbridge and I learned decoding and comprehension strategies that raised achievement in my elementary school for all students. In 2009, when I became the principal of Nellie Hughes Elementary School in the Caesar Rodney School District I incorporated many of the strategies proven to be successful with students at Woodbridge Elementary. Woodbridge Elementary and Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary share similar demographics with both schools serving

populations with a free and reduced-price lunch rate of over 55%. This demographic similarity helped me convince the staff at Stokes Elementary to buy into the PD plan I was implementing.

The Caesar Rodney School District has used Professional Learning Communities since 2009. A critical component of this philosophy is the work done with colleagues to analyze data, problem solve, and study instructional practices. Because of this I have made working with colleagues a critical component of my PD cycle. But that is not enough. I am a firm believer that what gets monitored gets done. For instance, if teachers know the expectation is that they incorporate read aloud lessons into their curriculum and they know that the administrator will monitor this, teachers will implement the read alouds. Because I felt monitoring of the practices was important, I designed walkthrough forms that the administrators could use to specifically observe the strategies taught to the teachers were being implemented.

Many of the PD initiatives that I designed while working through this problem involved setting up committees of administrators and teachers from the district. From my experience working in the district, a PD plan will not get off the ground unless a team of stakeholders who are invested in the topic are part of the PD process. In order to develop the committees I had to work with the building administrators to select teachers who were eager to learn and had a sound base of knowledge. The teachers selected for the committees were often asked to take back the knowledge learned during the PD sessions

to their entire school team, so it was important that the individuals selected were able to communicate effectively with their peers during the PLC sessions.

In order to work through this process money had to be allocated by the district to support my own training. Through the use of Race to the Top funds I was able to attend workshops on both Professional Learning Communities and the CCSS for Mathematics. I was also able to use Race to the Top Funds to support my work with Dr. Bill Lewis from the University of Delaware to train my teachers and me on how to incorporate the standards into the science and technical subjects. I was also able to direct funds from the district's Title I budget to support substitute teacher funding for the elementary teachers who were part of one of my committees. Race to the Top funds were also used to secure substitute teachers for any PD training done with the secondary teachers.

In order to ensure that my PD trainings were done in a systematic manner I was able to use all the district's PD days to work with teachers and administrators. I was also able to work with Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, the superintendent of the Caesar Rodney School District, to present to the district's administration during the summer retreat. Having all of this time allocated to my initiative on a district level ensured that the plan was a part of the district's culture during the 2012-2013 school year.

Chapter 4

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS

Stokes Elementary PD

Results from this project were gathered through the use of surveys, walkthrough forms, discussions with teachers and administrators, and through the collection of curriculum artifacts. Through this data collection phase of the project it was clear to me that this initiative was one that the critical stakeholders of the district felt was important and valuable. I learned that the stakeholders felt the initiative was important to the district but they had concerns about the timing and implementation of the plan. Teachers and administrators knew that we needed to begin our Common Core implementation but they also didn't want it to come at the expense of their performance on state assessments that were designed to test the Delaware State Standards. This insight helped me as I designed my PD sessions throughout the school year.

My first three artifacts were designed when I was the principal of Stokes Elementary in the Caesar Rodney School District. The artifacts focused on the need for an explicit and systematic PD plan that would increase the fluency, comprehension and vocabulary skills of the students. For these artifacts I was able to ground my work in the professional journal articles I read on the subject as well as the work I had done with Dr. Walpole. I was able to work through my cycle of PD so that a thorough PD plan was instituted in the building.

After analyzing DIBELS performance in my second grade classrooms at Stokes Elementary I noticed that there was a discrepancy between how the students performed on the DCAS assessment and how they performed on the end of year DIBELS Assessment (see Appendix B). I wanted my teachers to attend training on teaching decoding and fluency so that they had the skills necessary to be able to teach students explicitly how to read. I also had supports in place to help the teachers identify those students who needed the extra support.

The read aloud PD plan was designed because Stokes Elementary serves children from low-income backgrounds. During my time at Stokes Elementary I was working with Dr. Max Thompson and through this work realized the significant language deficit that children from low income homes may have at the start of school (see Appendix C). For me positive results from the first three artifacts were focused on the teacher's implementation of the new strategies they were learning. The results from both artifacts show that teachers were implementing the strategies taught to them but there were still some barriers in place for all strategies to be implemented with fidelity each day. The number one issue that I faced with the implementation of the strategies was the time teachers had to teach language arts. A two hour block of time was mandated by the district for daily language arts instruction. This two hour block was structured between whole group and small group instruction. Teachers struggled finding the time to incorporate the read aloud structure into an already packed instructional block. It was clear to me through construction of my artifacts that the language arts block needed be

designed around the individual needs of the students in the class rather than a fixed format that was mandated from the district.

Common Core PD

Four of my artifacts focused on the development and delivery of PD for the CCSS. I was able to ground the work I did in artifacts four, five, eight, and ten back to my cycle of PD specifically in the areas of working with experts and working with colleagues. The improvement result I was looking for in the above artifacts was a deeper understanding of the CCSS by both the administrators and teachers. By working with outside experts to help train my teachers I was able my to ensure the Caesar Rodney School District teachers were learning from experts in the areas of mathematics and literacy. Through my PD sessions with the administrators I understood that at the conclusion of the sessions the administrators had a solid working knowledge of the math and literacy standards for science and the technical subjects. It was also clear at the conclusion of the PD sessions which involved an outside expert who was conducting the training that my teachers would be able to begin the actual implementation of the standards. Those sessions were designed to give the teachers a toolkit of strategies to use in their classrooms that would address the literacy and writing standards for their subject area. Through the delivery of these PD opportunities I was able to achieve my intended results of this portion of the project.

Artifacts six, seven, and nine focused on observing and monitoring the strategies and practices learned during the PD sessions are being implemented in the classrooms. It

was important to include the observation and feedback component and the school-wide walkthrough component in my PD cycle because from research and practice I have come to understand that if you do not monitor the strategies you expect to see in the classroom on a daily basis some teachers will not implement them with fidelity. Artifacts five and six which can be found in Appendix F and G, were walkthrough forms that will continue to help me and my colleagues monitor strategies and practices.

I was able to accomplish my desired results from the creation of these documents. The creation of the walkthrough forms helped me address the observation and feedback as well as the school-wide walkthrough segment of my PD cycle. These documents helped me with my effort in educating the administrators on the CCSS. Through this project I was able to conduct school-wide walkthroughs with administrators which allowed me to explicitly point out the positive behaviors we needed to see from their teachers as we progressed to the implementation of the new standards. Administrators now had the knowledge and the tools to conduct school-wide walkthroughs and are now able to identify the explicit strategies that must be seen in a true Common Core classroom. This document has also allowed the administrators to specifically give their teachers feedback on what was seen in their classrooms. Results from the Elementary Teacher Common Core Survey (Appendix I), allowed me to gauge the impact this PD plan had on the elementary math teachers. Results show that the majority of teachers have a good amount of knowledge about the math content standards at their grade level. Even with this content knowledge the majority of teachers felt they only had a fair amount of knowledge to actually implement the strategies in their classroom.

Based on this survey information I was able to understand the effects this PD plan had on the teachers. Overall I did achieve my desired outcome of raising the knowledge level of both the teachers and administrators on the CCSS, at least according to their self reports. Even with that said I wish all teachers in the district were able to implement the math standards to the depth required by the CCSS. Not all teachers in the district felt comfortable addressing the standards based on the train the trainer model that I used. Because of this, gaps in math knowledge exist for students who moved from the old Delaware Standards to the CCSS this school year. Survey results will also help me as I begin to prepare future PD sessions for my teachers

Chapter 5

REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS

Reflecting on this project I am comfortable stating that this project was a solid first step in increasing knowledge for teachers and administrators. This initiative was focused on both Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary and then on the entire Caesar Rodney School District. I learned that a smaller, more controlled setting is easier to manage. As a building administrator of Stokes Elementary I could ensure my professional development sessions were conducted either by me or outside experts directly to my staff. All questions they may have had about the initiative could be directly answered by people who had a thorough understanding on the initiative. District trainings, however, were designed with a Train-the-Trainer model. This model was effective at training a large amount of teachers in a limited time period. Unfortunately when training is done in this manner the key details of the initiative can be lost in the delivery so people do not get the explicit training they need to be successful. Training teachers across the district proved to be more challenging than training within one school.

With my new role as a district PD designer, I have the financial capacity to bring in outside experts to work directly with me and my teachers on PD initiatives. This aspect of my PD cycle worked extremely well. Teachers really bought into the information shared with them by the outside experts. Having outside experts helping with the delivery of the PD helped get the buyin needed for this plan to be successful. The cycle of PD that was created during this project helped me stay focused on what is

important when delivering PD. I was able to share this cycle with both the administrators and teachers so they could understand the "Why" behind the PD design. I also learned that the creation of the walkthrough forms served much more than just a way to monitor whether teachers were implementing the strategies with fidelity. These forms became a tool for understanding the expectations for changed in the classroom with the implementation of the new standards. Administrators and teachers are alike in their wanting to know exactly what the teaching expectations are. The walkthrough forms were used as a tool for discussions in the PLC meetings which linked teachers with administrators.

One of my main goals was to have all teachers implementing the standards 100% of the time with fidelity. Unfortunately, this did not occur at the level I wanted it to. When reflecting on the goal I do understand why this did not take place. Teachers were very stressed with having to learn and implement new standards when their students are still being assessed on the old Delaware State Standards. This was a detriment to my accomplishing all of the goals of my project. Another major issue was the lack of curricular material available for teachers to use that were aligned with the Common Core. Teachers not only had to learn new standards and strategies but they also had to find and/or create materials that would help them deliver the standards in their classroom. This is a monumental task for teachers, especially with all the other demands that have been placed on them the last few years. Knowing that the lack of curriculum materials severely limited the implementation of the CCSS I thought I would address this as one of my artifacts.

If I were to be asked what recommendations I had for others who were trying to solve a PD problem I would first tell them to clearly define what their problem is and what their intended outcome would be. This is critical in designing a thorough PD plan. In my case my plan started with building a knowledge base for literacy and then for the Common Core but quickly moved to full implementation of the standards so that we were aligning instruction to state expectations. Outside factors such as pressure from the state and superintendent did not allow me to just focus on the knowledge building aspect of my plan.

As seen from my artifacts a solid base has been built for the understanding of the standards by both the administrators and the teachers. It is also evident that the teachers have been trained on strategies which they can integrate in their lessons which may help their students reach the proficiency levels required. The next step for my organization is to either purchase or create materials and lesson plans that are aligned to the expectations of the standards. Teachers will also need to engage in continuous, high-quality PD to learn more strategies for their classroom instruction. We will continue to improve the teacher and administrator knowledge of the standards through the discussions of the materials that are aligned to the core. Teachers are at the stage that they want to begin putting the content into practices and just need the materials to do so.

Chapter 6

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

As I reflect on my time in the ADPO program I realize how much I have learned about educational practice. This program has exposed me to not only other educators across the state but to professors who are experts in their particular field. I had the opportunity of actually working in class directly with the authors of the books I was using in school wide book studies. This program has opened my eyes to the research base that is needed when making sound educational decisions. Before enrolling in the ADPO program I never spent a lot of time focusing on peer-reviewed research articles. Standard practice was to use the strategies that were described in the district-purchased materials. I thought that if the district purchased the materials they must be appropriate for the students. The ADPO program also helped me develop understanding of the cycle of PD which has guided PD for Stokes Elementary as well as across and entire district. I feel this program really helped me in my transition from school leader to district leader.

As the building level administrator at Stokes Elementary I had the luxury of being able to design and implement PD in my building. Through my coursework at the University of Delaware I learned how to design and effectively implement a thorough professional development plan. Using information learned in my Instructional Leadership course I was able to design a PD plan that would directly impact the struggling students of Stokes Elementary. This course gave me the knowledge base for

how to design this plan both as an instructional leader as well as from an instructional specialist point of view. The course work for this class focused both on becoming a better instructional leader as well as improving my knowledge base for how to teach literacy at an elementary school.

As I stated earlier, during my doctoral journey I accepted a new position as Supervisor of Instruction for the Caesar Rodney School District. My main duties in this position were to oversee the math, science, and CTE curriculum and instruction in the district. In my new position I had to begin to look at situations through a different lens and I the professors in this program helped me do this. The professors' expertise was always grounded in research and not necessarily with the inner cultural working of a school system. This actually really helped me break away from the "this is how it has always been done" mentality and I have begun to implement PD in different ways than has been done in the past. Because of the makeup of my cohort I was able to hear the many different perspectives the group had on situations which helped me open my eyes to multiple ways of looking at a problem. The professors fostered a culture within the group where everyone felt comfortable sharing their beliefs with the group. I think this culture really helped me grow as an educator.

Through my past experiences as an elementary school principal I was comfortable working with elementary school teachers. Elementary school was actually where I spent my entire school career before becoming the Supervisor of Instruction for the district. Instead of leading 35 teachers and 500 students I was responsible for over 400

teachers and 7500 students. Past educational experiences did not alone prepare me for the magnitude of this new position. When I first took the position I was charged with the roll out of the CCSS across math and the technical subjects. This roll out consisted of designing and implementing our PD as well as analyzing and adopting curriculum materials for the district. Through my coursework I was able to accomplish both tasks without feeling completely lost. While I was overwhelmed with both tasks, I took courses such as *Public Relations Within School Systems, Problem Analysis/Planning in Education,* and *Program Evaluation in Education*, which helped with designing and implementing complex plans. For example, I had to involve all key stakeholders in my design of the professional development across the district. This was a critical aspect we talked about at great lengths in class. With this background knowledge I was able to bring the critical stakeholders together to help design a plan that would be effective for all parties in the district. Even with the best intentions I did forget to involve the teachers' union as a member of this stakeholder group. This slip in judgment caused me delays in launching my professional development plan. I learned to ensure that they were involved moving forward to enable my initiatives to get off the ground.

With the adoption of the new standards the first move the district wanted to make was to adopt new curriculum which was aligned to the CCSS. Through my course work in the program I learned about the *What Works Clearing House.* I learned how to navigate this website which helped me analyze curricular programs that the district was thinking about purchasing. Instead of reading random information from the Internet or listening to a sales pitch about a curricular program, I was able to utilize a website that

provided evidence of what actually works in schools. This website helped me analyze curriculum materials so that I could spend the district's money wisely.

While reflecting on my position as a Principal as well as on my current position of Supervisor of Instruction I have come to realize that a major part of these positions is being a true problem solver. As an instructional leader I have to tackle tough challenges that a building or district faces on a yearly basis. This program has taught me how to tackle these challenges in a manner that is always grounded in research and is done in a systematic fashion. Through the use of logic models I have been able to clearly describe problems for my Director of Instruction using a visual model that acknowledges the inputs, activities, and outcomes I expect to achieve through the implementation of PD plans. I have found that my colleagues seem to understand a visual representation of my action plans better than when just a verbal explanation. This visual representation allows my boss to thoroughly see the process I plan to use to achieve my desired outcomes. My Director of Instruction and my Superintendent are critical stakeholders who need to have a thorough understanding of any initiative before it is used with the entire district; I have learned tools and strategies for making this case soundly.

Throughout this project I always had to think about the structure that was currently in place for how professional development was developed and conducted at both the building and district levels. As a building administrator I had to keep my Director of Instruction abreast of what sessions I would facilitate in my building. As a building administrator in the Caesar Rodney School District I had the power to design my

professional development around what I felt was best for the building. When I transitioned into the role of Supervisor of Instruction my power was reduced but my responsibilities increased. For example, I had to ensure that all schools were supplied with the professional development sessions needed for them to increase their learning around the CCSS. Unfortunately, administrators then had the option to use the material or go off in their own direction. I basically became a polite suggestion for what professional development should occur in their building. This structure that was in place made it hard to monitor that the learning was consistent across the school district.

Another aspect of this program that has proven to be invaluable are the connections I made with content experts from the university and surrounding school districts who helped me design and deliver PD to many of the teachers of the district. My network of professional relationships grew dramatically since I began the ADPO program. For example, I was able to communicate with my classmates about similar problems they were facing in curriculum and instruction and we were able to talk through some ideas together. Having these relationships opened up a network of resources that helped me grow as an educator. I also had the luxury of working with my professors to design sound professional development plans that would benefit my school and district. Working with professionals who are experts in their fields on a professional development plan helped me feel more comfortable with the contents of the plan. Being able to actually talk through situations with the authors of the books you are using for a book study was much more valuable to me than just using the information I was reading in the book. Having these relationships also helped me sell my plan to my district

administrators as well as to teachers. Being able to work with content experts to design and deliver my professional development plan was a great experience. Without joining this ADPO program I would have not developed the relationships that I have. This program opened up doors not only for me but also for my entire school district. I am a much better teacher leader today than I was three years ago.

Overall the major benefit of being a part of this ADPO program is the depth of knowledge of the faculty. Instead of learning from adjunct professors who are immersed in the day-to-day grind of being in a school district I had the opportunity to learn from full-time professors who are true leaders in their fields. I feel that this is the main reason for my growth as a teacher leader while in the ADPO program. Instead of hearing the war stories of active school personnel I was able to learn about program evaluation and reading development and PD design. These strategies helped me actually improve instruction for the students of my school and district. They will stay with me as I continue to work to enhance learning for children by enhancing the knowledge and skills of teachers.

REFERENCES

Beck, I., McKeown, M., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, INC.

Guskey, T. R., & Peterson, K. D. (1996). The road to classroom change. Educational Leadership, 53(4), 10-14.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC: Authors.

Sparks, D., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1989). *Five models of staff development for teachers*. Journal of Staff Development, 10(4), 40-57.

State of Delaware Department of Education. (2011). Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary School Profile. Retrieved from http://profiles.doe.k12.de.us/SchoolProfiles/School/Default.aspx?checkSchool=616&districtCode=10

Thompson, M. (2010). *Leadership for learning focused schools. Implementing with support and accountability.* Boone, NC: Learning Focused Solutions.

Walpole, S., McKenna, M. C. (2007). *Differentiated reading instruction: Strategies for the primary grades*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Walpole, S., McKenna, M. C. (2009). *How to plan differentiated reading instruction:*

    Resources for grades K-3. New York, NY: Guilford Press

    http://www.achieve.org/files/CCSS-CTE-BridgingtheDivide.pdf

Appendix A

READ ALOUD WHITE PAPER

There is no question that reading aloud to children is good practice. Parents and teachers have been utilizing this technique with children for years. A great deal of research has been conducted recently which has focused on the effects a structured read aloud has on the development of children's reading skills. When teacher read alouds are done effectively and on a consistent basis they serve as the catalyst needed to ensure students will develop a love of reading at an early age. Read alouds are exactly what they sound like. The classroom teacher selects a high interest book that he/she will read to the class. The book is usually a grade level above the class's ability level. While the teacher is reading aloud, he/she is highlighting key vocabulary words that may be new and challenging for the students. The teacher is also modeling and discussing comprehension strategies he/she is using to understand the text while reading. Read alouds are a great time for teachers to model good reading strategies. Current research suggests that structured read alouds provide students a model of what fluent independent reading sounds like. Read alouds also expose students to a variety of texts, key comprehension strategies, vocabulary, and higher order thinking that they may not be able to achieve on an independent level.

Teacher read alouds help model the "active engagement" skills needed for students to monitor their own comprehension of the text while they are reading. Through the read aloud structure, teachers have the opportunity to model for students how they are

actively thinking of the story while they are reading. Teachers can model how they made

connections to the text from similar experiences they have had while reading a different

book or through their own life experiences. This skill of monitoring one's own

comprehension is essential for students to become well-rounded readers.

Many students come to school lacking the background knowledge needed to be

successful on many of the assessments they are administered. The student's background

knowledge is a very important aspect of understanding text. Young students tend to have

reading levels which restrict them from reading informational texts which would help

build important background knowledge. Teacher read alouds help teachers build

background knowledge for the entire class no matter what the varying reading levels may

be in the classroom. The structure of the read aloud will allow all students in the class to

grasp the vocabulary and depth of knowledge needed for them to be successful in school

despite their limited ability to access informational texts on their own.

Read alouds help level the playing field for all students in a classroom no matter

what their reading level may be. When done thoughtfully, read alouds expose all

students to vocabulary and comprehension skills they would not be able to access and

accomplish on their own.

It is extremely important to select texts that are both meaningful and challenging

to the class. According to Beck and McKeown (2001, p. 1), "Texts that are effective for

developing language and comprehension ability need to be conceptually challenging

enough to require grappling with ideas and taking an active stance toward constructing

meaning." The text teachers choose to read to their students should be authentic in nature so that the topic will engage the students. The readability of the text should be above the class's grade level. This can be achieved using both narrative and informational texts. The majority of the research on read alouds focuses on the use of narrative stories, but this is not the only text needed. As stated by Smolkin and Donovan (2003, pg. 27), "Although we love storybooks as much as anyone, we understand that offering early access to the ideas, vocabulary, syntax, and text structures of informational texts helps prepare children for the time in school when the emphasis in reading instruction shifts from learning to read to reading to learn."

The authentic texts chosen to be read aloud should focus on building background for the students on the topics that are being addressed in the daily curriculum. This can be achieved through both narratives and informational texts.

Read alouds are most effective when conducted on a daily basis. Read aloud sessions can last anywhere from 30-45 minutes at least 3 times a week. In order to make read alouds an integral part of the curriculum they should be incorporated into the regular English Language Arts block. Trying to find the extra time for educators to conduct read alouds is always a concern. Effective vocabulary and comprehension skills can be taught through the read aloud as long as time is spent selecting the appropriate materials to use. Using authentic literature to teach vocabulary and comprehension skills to the students will keep the instruction fresh as well as help develop the background knowledge of the students in your classroom.

Book Selection- Teachers should select authentic literature that will gain the attention of the students. The text selected should also help build background knowledge for a theme or topic of study. Book selection can include narrative or informational texts. The book selected should also highlight a particular text structure which the teacher will be able to discuss with the students.

Vocabulary Instruction- Two to four words per day can be selected for instruction. Vocabulary instruction should focus on the way the word was used in the text and describe its meaning. Explicit instruction should be spent using strategies to try to understand the word in the text while reading it. Modeling how to do this for students is very important. Students should also be given the opportunity to use the word in a sentence and say the word correctly out loud.

Build Background- Teachers need to think about what the students already know about the text that is going to be read aloud. Based on this information the teacher can decide how much time should be spent discussing the contents of the book before actually reading it to the class.

Teach - Teachers can decide what comprehension strategies to model during the read aloud. Based on the text structure of the literature being used, the teacher can decide what skill to teach the class. Teachers should incorporate and model the comprehension skills below when applicable in their Read Alouds.

Comprehension Strategies

Strategy	Description
Inferring	Readers think about the text as well as use their personal knowledge to construct meaning beyond what is literally stated.
Visualizing	Readers create images in their minds that reflect or represent the ideas in the text.
Retelling	Readers tell the story again in their own words.
Summarizing	Readers identify key elements and condense important information into their own words during and after reading.

The chart above identifies key comprehension strategies that should be modeled while conducting the Read Aloud. It is not the expectation that all strategies will be modeled in each read aloud. The teacher must pre-read the book and determine which strategy or strategies best suit the text they will be reading.

Teachers must also plan for how they will engage the students in the text. As stated by Beck and McKeown (2001, p. 1), "Researchers suggest that the most valuable

aspect of the read aloud activity is that it gives children experience with decontextualized language, requiring them to make sense of ideas that are about something beyond the here and now." The teacher's role is to guide the students through text that they may not be able to comprehend on their own.

Talking during the reading is very important. Teale and Martinez (1996) concluded that the most effective talk involved encouraging children to focus on important story ideas and giving them opportunities to reflect rather than expecting a quickly retrieved answer. It is the teacher's role to connect with the students by actively engaging them in discussing the major ideas of a story. It is extremely important that the students are continually involved throughout the course of the read aloud.

<u>After Reading-</u> Once the read aloud is complete it is important that summarizing activities take place. Students should be given time to actively discuss what the story was about either with the teacher, in small groups, or in an individual writing assignment. This is also a great time to review the key vocabulary that was discussed throughout the story as well as review the text structure that was taught. The chart below defines common text structures.

Text Structure

Skill	Description
Sequence	Order of events in a story. Tells the steps to do something.
Compare & Contrast	Shows how two or more things are alike or different.
Cause & Effect	Cause is why something happened. Effect is what happened.
Story	Shows the title, setting, characters, problem, and solution.

While reading about read alouds, I came across eight cognitive acts that teachers, through modeling, scaffolding, and direct instruction, were to encourage students to perform. Students were to activate their prior knowledge and monitor their comprehension using fix up strategies when reading went awry. Teachers should also generate questions, answer questions, and draw inferences. They were to create pictorial mental imagery (generally during informational or content reading) as well as activate their knowledge of text structure, considering story grammar as they read fiction and weighing the relative importance of ideas by attending to structure as they read non-fiction.

Results of a 12 week Read Aloud program that was initiated for struggling fifth grade students proved to be beneficial. In this study 72 struggling fifth-grade readers were placed in either the control or experimental group. The control group continued

with their regular course of classroom instruction while the experimental group took part in a 12 week read-aloud program. The researcher met with the students one time a week for 12 weeks. The results on a standardized comprehension measure showed borderline significant gains in the achievement outcomes of the experimental group as compared to the control group (Ouellette, Dagostino, & Carifio, 1999).

The majority of the staff at Stokes Elementary attended the district-sponsored read aloud training this summer. The start of the school year will focus on this background knowledge of read alouds to generate the course of action for the school year. This year we have an in-service day on September 2, 2011. Time will be allotted to discuss how the Professional Learning Communities will be conducted at Stokes Elementary this school year. Much of this conversation will be focused on the implementation of a structured Read Aloud program at Stokes Elementary. The goal will be to provide all professional development for the implementation of the Read Alouds during the PLC time. Please be prepared to discuss this initiative on September 2, 2011.

References

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. (2001). Text Talk: Capturing the benefits of Read

    Aloud experiences for young children. The Reading Teacher, 55, 10-20.

Beverly, B. L., Giles, R. M., Buck, K.L. (2009). First grade reading gains

    following enrichment: Phonics plus decodable texts compared to authentic

    literature Read Aloud. Reading Improvement, 46, 191-205.

Ouellette, G., Dagostino, L., Carifio, J. (1999). The effects to exposure to

    children's literature through Read Aloud and an inferencing strategy on

    low reading ability fifth graders' sense of story structure and reading

    comprehension. Reading Improvement, 36, 73-89.

Smolkin, L. B., Donovan, C. A. (2001). The contexts of comprehension: The

    information book Read Aloud, comprehension acquisition, and

    comprehension instruction in a first grade classroom. The Elementary

    School Journal, 102, 96-122.

Smolkin, L. B., Donovan, C. A. (2003). Supporting comprehension acquisition

    for emerging and struggling readers; the interactive information book

    Read Aloud. Exceptionality, 11, 25-38.

Appendix B

IMPLEMENTING A STRUCTURED READ ALOUD PROGRAM

A program evaluation was conducted to determine if the professional development provided to teachers on a structured read aloud program would change their weekly instruction. The read aloud program was expected to be implemented by the teacher 3 times a week for 20 minutes. The read aloud focuses on the teaching of text structure, comprehension strategies, and vocabulary words. The teacher has the option of choosing from a fiction or a non-fiction trade book. The program evaluation focused on the following two questions:

1. Process Question: Were professional development sessions productive for staff so they could create effective read aloud lessons?

2. Outcome Question: Did this professional development yield instruction as intended?

The process question was analyzed through the use of a survey. Survey results suggest that the staff understands how to correctly conduct a read aloud in their classroom. The outcome question was answered by analyzing the data collected from the walkthrough form. Data suggests that the read aloud professional development led to changes in the teacher's instruction. Findings of this evaluation are discussed and recommendations for the program are given.

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine if implementing a structured read aloud program will lead to changes in a teacher's instruction. A survey will be administered to all teachers in grades 3-5 to determine if the professional development provided to them was effective in increasing their knowledge on the subject. I will also conduct walkthroughs in the teacher's classes to monitor whether this initiative is being implemented in the classrooms with fidelity.

This evaluation begins with a description of Stokes Elementary as well as the Read Aloud program that was implemented this school year. From there I will share with you the evaluation questions I addressed throughout the report. I will then explain how I gathered my data for this report and will then present my findings as well as my recommendations for the program.

Stokes Elementary is a Title I elementary school in the Caesar Rodney School Demographics for Stokes Elementary are the following:

Breakdown of Race at Stokes Elementary

Race	Percent
African American	29.4
White	62.7
Asian	3.2
Hispanic	3.5

Other Student Characteristics

Characteristic	2009-2010	2010-2011
English Language Learner	2.7%	0.5%
Low Income	46.3%	50.3%
Special Ed.	16.3%	9.7%
Enrolled full Year	92.3%	91%

Because of the large low-income population that Stokes Elementary serves, many of the students may come to school with insufficient background knowledge. Research states that students from low-income homes come to school knowing considerably fewer words then their middle class peers. For example as stated by Thompson (2010, p. 5) ,"A child from a family at or below the poverty line hears 600-700 words an hour at 12-18 months. A child from an upper income or professional family hears 2900-3100 words per hour at 12-18 months old. By kindergarten the gap between income levels can be 10,000 words".

One of the major initiatives we have undertaken at Stokes Elementary is to decrease this knowledge and vocabulary deficit each year. A structured read aloud program provides students a glimpse into a world that they would not be able to access on

their own. For instance, many of the Stokes Elementary students struggle with their

reading and have a hard time reading books on their grade level. A structured read aloud

program takes this reading problem out of the equation because a teacher reads the text to

the students. In this manner students are exposed to specific vocabulary and text

structures they don't have the skills to access yet. A structured read aloud program

explicitly teaches students vocabulary, text structure, and comprehension strategies that

engage them with the text they are reading.

The read aloud program that was implemented at Stokes Elementary is based on

the work of Sharon Walpole and the research of Isabel Beck. My assistant principal and I

used an in-service day in September to train the staff on the program. The training took

place during a morning in-service day. The staff was briefed on the research that

supported the implementation of a read aloud program as well as the components of a

read aloud. The staff was also given a copy of *Creating robust vocabulary* (2008) by

Beck, McKeown, and Kucan which discusses vocabulary strategies which can be used by

the teacher when teaching vocabulary. This book study is a component of each grade

level's PLC time. The in-depth training discussed each phase of the read aloud as well as

discussing the length a read aloud should be. The expectation was that three times a

week for 20-30 minutes the teacher would use a structured read aloud in their daily

instruction. Upon the completion of the initial training the staff used their PLC time to

collaboratively design read aloud lessons.

Once the read aloud lessons were designed the teachers moved into the

implementation phase. The next step in the school model was for the teachers to begin

implementing the read alouds. In order to track effectiveness of the lessons teachers used

data obtained from weekly and monthly comprehension measures. The intended outcome

of this program was for teachers to successfully implement the Read Aloud program in

their classrooms with fidelity.

The process and outcome that I have chosen for this design are the following:

1. Process Question-Were professional development sessions productive for staff so

   they could create effective read aloud lessons?

2. Outcome Question- Did this professional development yield instruction as

   intended?

The process question focuses on the backbone of this project which is the professional

development the staff received in order to be able to effectively implement the program.

The effectiveness of the training was measured through a likert-type survey. While

analyzing the results of my survey, I was able to determine if the entire staff or a select

few individuals need some follow up training. I was also able to monitor the

effectiveness of the training through the district's weekly walkthrough form. During my

walkthroughs I was able to determine if the read aloud lesson was taking place as well as

if it was being done effectively. The outcome question focused on real time data obtained

from the walkthrough form. If the staff was able to understand the professional

development session on how to conduct read alouds and were implementing the program

effectively in the classrooms the walkthrough forms will indicate this.

The sample I am using for this evaluation design will be all third through fifth

grade teachers. I selected this population because this is the population that factors into

the school's accountability rating. The teacher population includes 14 adults. This sample has 5 males and 9 females. Three of the teachers are special education teachers. Out of the group of 14 teachers one is African American. Two staff members fall into the range of 0-2 years of experience, two in the range of 4-8 years of experience, seven in the range of 7-15 years of experience, two in the range of 15-20 years of experience, and one staff member has over 20 years of experience.

The instrument that was used to answer the process question was a survey inquiring about the effectiveness of the read aloud professional development that was delivered to the staff. This eight question Likert survey focused on how the training prepared them for implementation of the read aloud program back in their classrooms. For instance, questions focused on the staff's understanding of the read aloud process as well as their comfort teaching each component of the read aloud. An example of the survey is listed below.

Directions

Please complete this survey based on the professional development session you just received on the implementation of read alouds. Circle the response that best matches your understanding with each aspect of a read aloud. The results of this survey will be used to plan future professional development sessions so your honestly is appreciated. Please turn your completed form into your grade level's lead PLC teacher. Survey is due by 11/14. Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions

1. **I know how to select a read aloud book for my class.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

2. **I know how to design a read aloud lesson for my class.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

3. **I know where to find the graphic organizer's to use during the lesson.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

4. **I understand how to select and teach Tier II Vocabulary Words.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

5. **I understand how to select the text structure I will teach during the lesson.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

6. **I understand how to select the comprehension skill I will teach during my lesson.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

7. **I understand how to teach all of the comprehension strategies taught to me during the read aloud professional development session.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

8. **I understand how to summarize a read aloud lesson.**

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

This survey focused on the staff's understanding of how to create a read aloud lesson plan and also where to gather the materials for the lesson.

The outcome question was addressed through weekly walkthroughs that were being conducted using a district-approved form. The walkthrough form focused on the lesson's essential question, type of text used, vocabulary words taught, text structure, the comprehension strategy being taught, summary, and culminating activity. The walkthrough form was completed using an IPad. An example of the walkthrough form is below.

Stokes Elementary Walkthrough Form:

1. **Grade**

   Third   Fourth   Fifth

2. **Was there an essential question posted?**

   Observed   Not Observed

3. **Type of Text?**

   Fiction   Non-Fiction

4. **Were Tier II vocabulary words being instructed?**

   Observed   Not Observed

5. **Was text structure being discussed?**

   Observed   Not Observed

6. **Was a comprehension strategy being taught?**

   Observed   Not Observed

7. **Did the read aloud include a summary?**

Observed   Not Observed

8. Did the read aloud include a culminating activity?

Observed   Not Observed

The survey I used was piloted by the second grade team to ensure the survey would serve its intended purpose. Feedback from the second grade team suggested that no changes needed to be made to the survey instrument. I met with each PLC team and discussed the contents of the survey and explained how it should be completed. I met with each team the week of 11/7-11/11. Each lead PLC member was asked to collect all the surveys and place them in my mailbox by 11/14. A reminder e-mail was sent to the group on 11/14 to remind them of the due date. This was an anonymous survey.

I also performed weekly walkthroughs using the district approved form and downloaded all results into an Excel spreadsheet. Walkthroughs were conducted during the teachers scheduled Read Aloud times. I used the district-issued IPAD to complete the walkthrough.

I analyzed the results of the professional development survey through the use of an Excel Spreadsheet. I determined the mean and frequency for each question. Since the survey is based on a four-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) I used a mean score of 2.5 to determine a positive response.

Walkthrough data which is based on the criteria observed/not observed was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and summarized for frequency.

The results from the Professional Development Questionnaire show that all means are equal to or greater than 3 for all the questions as well for each individual respondent. The frequency data shows that the majority of responses fall into the 3 and 4 score range which shows a positive response. 12 out of 14 surveys were completed. A graph detailing the results is below.

Read Aloud Survey Results
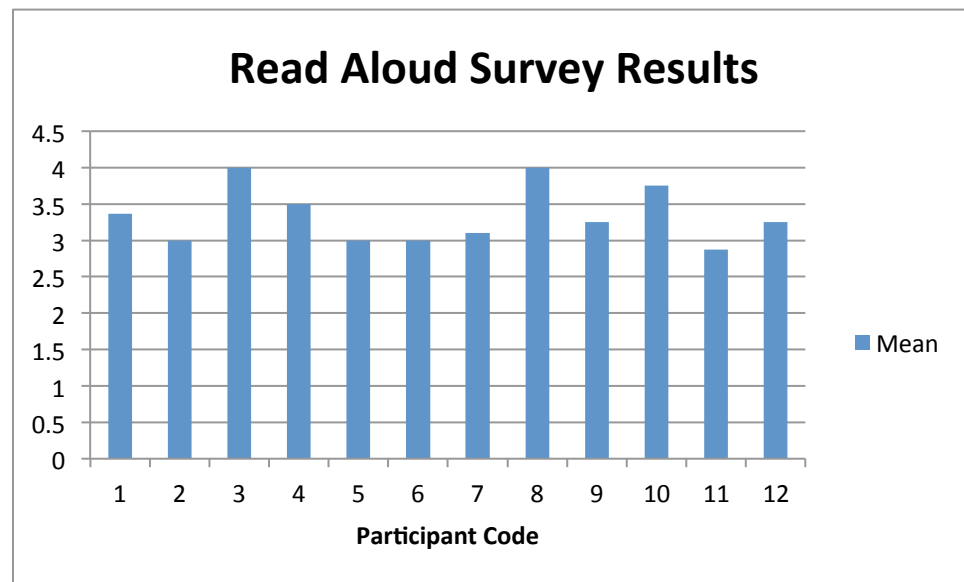
The Read Aloud walkthrough data shows that teachers posted essential questions for their lesson, used Tier II words in their instruction, and included a summary to their Read Aloud lesson consistently. Data also shows that teachers discussed text structure and explicitly taught a comprehension strategy on half of the occasions. Culminating activities were observed occurring in fewer than half of the Read Aloud walkthroughs. Results also show that non-fiction (NF) books were chosen for the Read Alouds more often than fiction books.

Data from the Read Aloud Professional Development Survey showed the following. Teachers indicated that they disagreed with the statement "I understand how to teach all of the comprehension strategies taught to me during the read aloud professional development session." This question received the lowest scores on the survey. In regards to the process question "Were professional development sessions productive for staff so they could create effective read alouds?" the data shows that the sessions were productive.

Data from the walkthroughs suggest that the staff is actively implementing the Read Aloud structure in their classrooms. Walkthrough data shows that teachers consistently had an essential question posted, were using Tier II vocabulary in their instruction, were explicitly teaching a comprehension strategy, and were including summaries. Text structure discussions ware observed occurring about half of the time in the classroom and a culminating activity was observed occurring during less than half of the walkthroughs. The data suggests that the third grade was not implementing text structure (question 5) into their read aloud lessons as often as the other two grade levels. Text structure was not observed in 8 out of the 11 walkthroughs done in third grade as compared to not being observed in 4 out of the 12 occurred in the fifth grade. Question #8, which dealt with implementing a culminating activity, was not seen occurring in 5 out of 11 walkthroughs in third grade, 7 out of 12 walkthroughs in the fourth grade, and 5 out of 12 in the fifth grade. Data suggests that involving text structure and a culminating activity into the Read Aloud lesson were the two areas that were observed less frequently. The below table describes the data that was collected during the walkthroughs.

Read Aloud Walkthrough Data

Grade	Q2 O	Q2 NO	Q3 F	Q3 NF	Q4 O	Q4 NO	Q5 O	Q5 NO	Q6 O	Q6 NO	Q7 O	Q7 NO	Q8 O	Q8 NO
Third	10	1	4	7	10	1	3	8	8	3	11	0	6	5
Fourth	11	1	3	9	8	4	8	4	10	2	10	2	5	7
Fifth	10	2	4	8	11	1	8	4	11	1	12	0	5	7

Key: **G**=Grade; **Q**=Question #, F=Fiction, NF=Non-Fiction, **O**=Observed, **NO**=Not Observed

There was clear evidence from the survey data collected that the staff felt the Read Aloud professional development sessions were beneficial. Based on the survey data it was evident that some staff members may need another professional development session on the teaching of comprehension skills during a read aloud. Walkthrough data supports the information provided in the survey data. Walkthrough data shows that read alouds are occurring in the building. The staff is implementing all but two of the stages of a read aloud on a consistent basis. The two areas that were not observed as frequently as the rest were the teaching of text structure and the culminating activity. The deficit in the teaching of comprehension strategies and text structure could be related.

Recommendation for Action

1. Provide more professional development sessions in the areas of teaching text structure and comprehension strategies to the staff during regular scheduled PLC meetings.

2. Continue the use of the read aloud walkthrough form to continue to monitor if the read alouds are being implemented correctly in the classrooms.

3. Survey students in grades 3-5 on their feelings of the Read Aloud initiative especially focusing on whether they feel the program is helping them learn vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

This project really helped me understand the sequence of events needed for effective professional development to occur. The logic model helped me to establish all the critical aspects that were needed to make this plan successful. Once I was able to establish all of my "inputs" it was much easier for me to develop my activities. I always knew what my intended outcome was but it is getting there in a logical manner that was the hard part.

Professional development does not work when it is a one shot deal. My logic model breaks down how I performed the initial training with the staff at the beginning of the school year. I then gave them time during their PLC's to create their Read Aloud lessons. After the lessons were created it was time for them to implement them in their classroom. This is where an integral part of this plan comes into play. While the teachers were implementing the lessons I spent time monitoring their teaching. The data I obtained from my walkthroughs plus the student data we obtained from comprehension

assessments helped me gauge whether the Read Alouds were effective in the classroom. Constant monitoring of the plan and retraining on the structure of read alouds as well as explicit vocabulary strategies helped make this plan successful.

Based on the walkthrough data it was evident that professional development sessions will be needed to address text structure and culminating activities during read alouds. The sessions will include specific activities teachers can use during the read aloud which address text structure. Teachers will walk away from all sessions with materials that will help them teach such structures as cause and effect and compare and contrast. Teachers will also be exposed to ideas for how to include a culminating activity into their read aloud lesson. Training will address how to implement this critical component in the time frame allotted for read alouds.

References

Beck, I., & McKeown, M. K. (2001). Text Talk: Capturing the benefits of read aloud

    experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher, 55* (1), 10-20.

Beck, I., McKeown, M., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary*

    instruction. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Thompson, M. (2010). *Leadership for learning focused schools. Implementing with*

    support and accountability. Boone, NC: Learning Focused Solutions.

Appendix C

PHONICS AND FLUENCY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

At the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year, only 66% of the second graders at Stokes Elementary were at benchmark for Oral Reading Fluency as measured by the DIBELS assessment. At the end of the 2010-2011 school year 72% of the second graders scored proficient on the Reading Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System Exam. At the conclusion of the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 100% of the second graders have been promoted to the third grade. Clearly the data shows a discrepancy between student performance and promotion rates.

Reading fluency, which is measured on the DIBELS assessment is a key component to the second-grade reading curriculum. As students' progress into the third grade, reading comprehension starts to take more of a focus than does fluency practice. The teachers were beginning to not focus on the fluency portion of the curriculum so that they could "test prep" for success on the DCAS assessment. The DCAS assessment does not measure a student's fluency rate as the DIBELS assessment does therefore teachers didn't feel that they should focus instructional time on the skill. Before I became the principal of Stokes Elementary teachers were held accountable for their DCAS scores rather than their DIBELS scores.   My specific concern is that if students are not receiving the explicit reading instruction required to make them fluent readers by the end of second grade, their development in comprehending text will be hindered.

Nellie Hughes Elementary School in the Caesar Rodney School District is a first through fifth grade educational setting. The current enrollment at Stokes Elementary is 434 students with 44 of those students receiving special education services. The classifications of the special education students range from developmentally delayed (DD) to learning disabled (LD). Students who are receiving speech services are not included in the 44.

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Characteristics	2009-10	2010-1
African American	30.9%	29.4%
American Indian	0.7%	0.9%
Asian	3.6%	3.2%
Hispanic/Latino	3.8%	3.5%
White	60.7%	62.7%
Multi Racial	0.2%	0.2%

Other Student Characteristics

Characteristics	2009-10	2010-11
English Language Learner	2.7%	0.5%
Low Income	46.3%	50.5%
Special Education	16.3%	9.7%
Enrolled for Full Year	92.3%	N/A

As you can see from the data above, Stokes Elementary serves primarily Caucasian students coming from low-income environments.

Stokes Elementary currently has 29 teachers employed as well as one librarian and 2 support personnel. 90.6% of the staff is Caucasian. 9.4% of the staff is African American. 100% of the teaching staff is considered highly qualified per federal guidelines. 60% of the teaching staff at Stokes Elementary holds a Master's Degree or above. At this time no teachers are Nationally Board Certified. Table 3 shows the breakdown of the staff's years of teaching experience.

Staff Experience

Years Experience	% of Teachers
4 or Less	7
5 to 9	28
10 to 14	41
15 to 19	14
20 to 24	10

The information above shows the wide range of teaching experience the staff at Stokes Elementary possesses.

Class size at Stokes Elementary is no higher than 22 students in a classroom at grades 1-3. Fourth grade classes average 25 students in a classroom and the fifth grade classrooms average 24 students in a room. Each grade level has one inclusion classroom. Stokes Elementary also has a special education resource teacher who educates the most academically challenged students in the building. This year she is servicing students in grades 4 and 5 whose reading levels are at a primer and kindergarten level. Nine students make up this classroom. IQ scores for these students tend to be no higher than 70, so conventional reading may not be possible for them.

Reading instruction at Stokes Elementary is a priority. Two hours of the school day is dedicated to reading and writing instruction. Reading instruction takes place every day at Stokes even if there is a half day or a delay due to the weather. Whole group reading instruction is scheduled for 30-40 minutes each day. An hour and a half of small group reading instruction is also a part of this language block. Each teacher teaches a small reading group lesson based on the instructional need of the group. The teachers usually have a low, middle, and high reading group. Some teachers may also have a fourth group which could be a mid/high reading group. The teachers meet with each reading group daily for approximately 15-30 minutes. Students are placed in their respective groups based on achievement data from DIBELS, Reading DCAS, and/or other classroom based assessments. The instructional groups in the classroom are all teacher designed.

All elementary schools in the Caesar Rodney School District use the Harcourt Trophies anthology series. All students receive a hardback book with all of the reading selections in them. Students are also given a workbook which has activity sheets that go along with each story and theme. These workbooks contain the end of selection and theme assessments that the teachers use for grades as well as RTI purposes.

The Harcourt series also provides multiple copy books that go along with the theme the class is currently working on. These books are leveled by below, on, and above grade level. The books use the same vocabulary as the anthology story but the

majority of the text used in the book is geared towards the students' reading levels. Some staff use these books with their groups if they feel the text is appropriate.

Two reading intervention programs are also used by classrooms teachers to help remediate student reading issues. In grades 1-2 Reading Success from the Start is used. In grades 3-5 Soar to Success is used. Both of these programs are usually used with the below level reading groups in the respective grade level. One second grade classroom is currently piloting a Leveled Literacy Intervention Kit. This program is being piloted because staff felt that the RSS program does not offer explicit phonics and comprehension instruction.

Stokes Elementary also has a Title I Reading Teacher, who is a certified reading specialist. The students who are selected to work directly with the Title I teacher are those whose DIBELS and DCAS scores are the lowest in the building. All students who received a rating of at-risk on the DIBELS assessment at the end of the 2009-2010 school year received reading intervention instruction 5 days a week from the Title I teacher this school year. Any student who received a score of a PL 1 on the 2009-2010 DSTP assessment automatically received Title I reading intervention. This year the Title I Teacher is using the state approved RTI lessons as well as the intervention kit, which is a supplement to the Harcourt series, as the curriculum.

Teachers have many reading materials at their disposal to use during their small group reading sessions. Some teachers use multiple copies of popular trade books to help guide their instruction. Some other materials that are available for the staff to use are

Write Time for Kids Series, Bookroom Series, Comprehension Toolkit, and small group

RTI lessons which were sent out by the Delaware Department of Education.

At the building level in-service days and faculty meetings are designed around

providing the staff professional development opportunities. The administration also

organizes "extended planning" sessions about once a month which give the staff a two-

hour block of time for professional development. This time is additional to their

regularly-scheduled planning time. During the last two school years the staff has

received building-level professional development in the areas of small-group reading

instruction, math interventions, and whole-group comprehension instruction. Some of

the training has been at the direction of the instruction department but I have also been

able to design professional development sessions based on what I feel are the needs of the

building. These sessions have been run by the building administration and also the

school's Title I reading teacher.

At the district level subject-specific resource teachers are used to provide the

building's instructional support. These resource teachers are available to model lessons

for teachers as well as help teachers design meaningful lessons. The resource teachers

are viewed as a support tool rather than an evaluator of performance.

At the end of the 2009-2010 school year the DIBELS was administered to all

students in grades 1-2. At the end of the school year Oral Reading Fluency is the

standard measured. In first grade 89% of the students were at benchmark while 10% of

the students showed some risk. 1 student's scores put him in the at risk category last

school year. In second grade 66% of the students were at benchmark and 21% of the students showed some risk. 14% of the second graders last year were considered at risk based on their Oral Reading Fluency scores. The above data shows a need for improved fluency and decoding instruction at the second grade level. A 23% decline in students reaching benchmark on the DIBELS on end of year fluency measures between first and second grade is not acceptable.

At the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year 62.7% of the second grade students were at benchmark and 23.4% of the students showed some risk. 13.8% of the students were considered at-risk based on their oral reading scores. The oral reading fluency benchmark for students at the beginning of the school year is 52 words read correctly per minute. The instructional needs of these students vary widely from phonemic awareness to decoding of multisyllabic words. Some of these students are also struggling with mastery of their sight words. Others may have mastered the above skills but are still struggling with reading prosody. These students need more time to practice reading books aloud with support.

Five teachers compose the second grade teaching staff. Teaching experience varies among this group. Two teachers have more than 20 years of experience teaching students in grades 2-3. Two of the teachers have experience teaching students in grades 2-3 for less than 10 years. One teacher has 15 years of teaching experience teaching students in grades 2-4 with the majority of her experience being in the second grade. As you can see this is an experienced group of educators.

Currently the second grade team at Stokes Elementary uses the Harcourt Trophies series to teach both the whole group and small group reading lessons. During the small group reading lessons the teachers use the materials from the Harcourt series such as the below, on, and above leveled readers. Currently the teachers use a before, during, and after reading model which helps structure the small group reading time with the students. Unfortunately no explicit instruction takes place for phonics, vocabulary, or fluency instruction. The majority of the instruction focuses on students reading out loud to the teacher one at a time, often stopping to answer questions that are posed to the group from the teacher. This practice is called round robin reading and is never recommended. Some teachers may begin to bring in some chapter books for the highest functioning students. The current plans reflect teaching of the vocabulary words that are present in the leveled readers. However, the vocabulary words are the same in the leveled readers as they are in the anthology. Plans also reflect round robin reading strategies which require each student in the group to read out loud. The teachers use this time to monitor the fluency rates of the students. During and after the reading of the text the teacher asks comprehension questions about the material they have been reading. The lesson usually ends with the students summarizing what was read during the lesson. This same format is used with all three reading groups in the classroom.

Students are assessed weekly on a curriculum-based measure but these results do not influence instruction for the students. Students who have been identified as at-risk on the DIBELS get assessed on a weekly basis but scores from these measures do not impact the instructional design of their reading group.

Instruction for these struggling readers needs to be geared around the student's individual reading needs and should occur daily for at least 15 minutes. Groups of 4-5 students would be optimal to ensure learning. To develop the instruction, individual reading needs would need to be determined through the use of screening tests and diagnostic reading assessments. Once the reading need is identified instructional planning should gear the lesson for teaching the specific reading skills the group needs. Planning should reflect direct instruction activities around the concept the students need support with. The instruction should be fast paced and should provide ways for all students to be engaged in the lesson. The ultimate goal of reading is for all students to comprehend what they read. Clearly the DIBELS data shows a deficit in both fluency and decoding skills.

Research supports specific areas of instructional focus. As stated by Bourassa, Levy, Dowin, and Casey (1998), reading fluency is considered critical to skilled reading, given its correlational if not casual connection to comprehension. Phonics and decoding are critical aspects of a balanced reading curriculum in the kindergarten through second grade years. It is clearly important that teachers are trained on how to explicitly teach phonics and decoding skills to struggling readers. A student's reading fluency can only improve if he or she understands the phonics and decoding skills necessary to sound out words (Torgeson, Houston, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007).

The strategies my second grade teachers will implement are based on the work of Walpole and McKenna (2009). The strategies in this book will help fill a gap in the knowledge, resources, and strategies my second grade team of teachers need in order to

help improve the fluency rates of their students. The fluency and decoding strategies in the book are consistent with the evidence that repeated readings and explicit decoding instruction build fluency in second grade and that fluency is associated with later success on comprehension measures.

Large numbers of children in the U.S. are below minimum competency in reading (Martens, Eckert, Begeny, Lewandowski, Digennaro, Montarello, Arbolino, Reed, & Fiese, 2006). In their evaluation of students' reading achievement, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2004) reported that 37% of fourth graders read below the basic level. At Stokes Elementary only 66% of the second graders were at benchmark according to the DIBELS assessment at the end of the 2010 school year as compared to over 90% of the students reaching benchmark on the Delaware State Assessment (DSTP). The emphasis that is placed on the DSTP scores has devalued the low DIBELS scores the students have received. Little to no instruction occurs that focuses on student's deficits in oral reading fluency.

The instructional design that is presented in the Walpole & McKenna book will help give the staff a structure to use which should improve the fluency and decoding skills of the second graders at Stokes Elementary. The staff will also be exposed to the work by McGlinchey and Hixson (2004) which reported correlations of .63 to .81 between oral reading fluency (administered 2 weeks before the state test) and the state-developed Michigan test, for eight successive cohorts of fourth grade students. Seventy-four percent of students with a fluency score of 100 words correct per minute or more

were correctly classified as passing the state test. This type of research indicates that there is a positive correlation between fluency rates and success on standardized assessments.

There is impressive evidence that fluency and comprehension are related. Wanzek, Roberts, Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Woodruff, and Murray (2009) focused on the correlation of success on oral reading measures compared to success on high stakes assessments that are state designed and also nationally normed.   This study not only looked at correlations at one grade level but across several grade levels. The studies indicate that students who have oral reading scores above 95 at second and third grade have at least a .71 confidence interval for passing their state assessment. The study also suggests that students who are reading 40 words per minute at the end of first grade had a .69 confidence interval for passing the third grade state assessment.

This study makes a solid argument for why explicit teaching of fluency and decoding is important. The study also points out that the rate of growth needed through second and third grades to achieve proficiency on the SAT-10 is more than double what is needed to pass the state designed assessment. In this study all the students who passed the state assessment were proficient on the SAT-10. This article clearly shows the correlation between results on fluency measures and results on standardized assessments.

Teachers also need the skills to analyze assessment data and then design explicit reading instruction based on what the data is telling us. The grouping of students should be based on diagnostic assessments which clearly indicate the explicit needs of the

students. It is quite possible that the instructional needs of one at-risk student are much different from another at-risk student's needs. Students could be grouped by decoding need. For example some students may need a group that focuses on blends and digraphs while others may need a group that focuses on R-controlled vowels. Being able to differentiate in this manner will allow the fluency rates of these struggling readers to increase.

Once a school wide reading model has been adopted a plan must be established to monitor its effectiveness. At the beginning of each school year all students in grades 1-5 are screened using the beginning of the year DIBELS assessment. All students are administered this screening assessment within the first thirty days of school. The focus group, second grade students, will be assessed on Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). Students will be given three different passages to read out loud to a teacher. The student will have one minute to read each passage. The median score of all three passages will be used as the student's oral reading fluency score for the beginning of the school year.

Each individual classroom teacher is responsible for assessing each student on the DIBELS assessment at least three times a year. At a minimum, students are assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The classroom teacher is given a spreadsheet in which they will indicate each student's oral reading score for the beginning of the school year. Once the entire class has completed the assessment, the classroom teacher will submit the spreadsheet to a paraprofessional who will enter all data in the I-Tracker system. The I-Tracker system then takes the data and creates charts

which allow the data to be summarized and easily understood by the teacher and administrators.

Once the initial DIBELS screening information has been collected for the second grade the focus shifts to those students whose scores are not at the benchmark level. Those students who are not at benchmark on the initial assessment will need further diagnostic testing in order to fully determine the appropriate instruction for them. With this age group I would begin with a phonics inventory to help identify the exact areas of difficulty. This inventory will yield information such as the student's strengths and weaknesses in letter names, letter sounds, short and long vowels, and multisyllabic words.

Unlike the DIBELS assessment where the classroom teacher administers the assessment, I would have the Title I reading teacher and her paraprofessional administer the diagnostic measures. These two individuals would be assigned the responsibility of assessing the students whose scores fell in the strategic and intensive range. Once the students were assessed, the data would be reviewed and an intervention plan would be established for the classroom teacher as well as for the Title 1 reading teacher.

Once the classroom teacher and Title I teacher analyze the data, instructional reading groups will be formed based on the needs of the students. Since these students will be served by both the classroom teacher and Title I reading teacher, a cohesive plan must be developed to ensure the instruction the students are receiving will be appropriately structured. The data obtained from the diagnostic measures will allow the

teachers to plan lessons that are directly aligned with the skills the students have deficits in. For example, instead of just having one reading group of 6 students, you may now have a group of three students that focuses on phoneme segmentation and another group of three that focuses on multisyllabic words. Instruction is much more individualized once the diagnostic measure is used.

Based on the diagnostic information obtained from the phonics inventory, these students will have individualized, twice daily instruction targeting their specific reading deficits. Due to this intervention schedule results should be seen in two week blocks of time. With this said, I plan on having the classroom teacher progress monitor their at-risk group of students on their oral reading fluency using the DIBELS once every two weeks. Since each teacher will assess only 2-3 students, the progress monitoring should not interrupt the daily instruction. This progress monitoring data will again be turned into the reading paraprofessional so she can enter the information into the I-Tracker system.

After the progress monitoring tool has been given to the students, the classroom teacher and the Title I teacher will analyze the results looking for growth from previous scores. Teachers should expect to see at least a two word improvement from the last progress monitoring score. If after the two week cycle the student has made no growth the teacher and Title 1 teacher will meet to generate a new plan of instruction for the student.

To determine if the instruction that was used during the school year was effective the end of year DIBELS assessment (ORF) and the students reading DCAS scores will be

analyzed. Even though the DCAS assessment is new, I would imagine that those students who are fluent readers will be highly successful on the test. Just like the beginning of the school year all students will be administered the DIBELS assessment in May. Second grade students will need to be able to read 96 words per minute in order to be considered benchmark with their oral reading fluency.

Classroom teachers will administer the assessment to their students. The same format used for the fall administration will again be used for the spring administration. Teachers will once again collect student data and place it on their data sheet which will then be turned into the reading paraprofessional. The reading paraprofessional will then enter all information into the I-Tracker website.

Once the data is on the I-Tracker website teachers will be able to see how their class scores compare to other classes in their grade level. Teachers and administrators will also be able to see the amount of growth a student has made from the beginning of the year to the end. Another nice feature of this system is the fact that those students who were considered at-risk at the beginning of the year will have their specific reading intervention plan on line for the grade level to analyze. Teachers and administrators will be able to identify those students who made great gains in the oral reading fluency and be able to trace it back to the exact interventions used for that student.

The goal of this initiative is to have 100% of all second graders scoring at benchmark with their oral reading fluency scores. I would also like to see 84% of the second grade be at benchmark on this year's Reading DCAS assessment.

The beginning theory building for this initiative will take place as a whole school at the opening in-service of the school year. As a school we will be focusing on our differentiated reading lessons during the small group portion of the ELA block. Throughout the school year the staff will work with books from Walpole and McKenna as well as from Isabel Beck to help guide their professional learning. The books from Walpole and McKenna are titled *Differentiated reading instruction: Strategies for the primary grades* and *How to plan differentiated reading instruction. Resources for Grades K-3*. The book that we will focus on from Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan is titled *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. The in-service day will help set the tone for what the professional development sessions will look like throughout the school year.

At the beginning of each school year all schools in the Caesar Rodney School District have one day reserved for the building principal to introduce the professional development for the school year. I will be delivering this session to the staff highlighting school data that supports the roll out of this initiative. The staff will be shown data that shows a discrepancy between DIBELS scores, DCAS scores, and our promotion rate. As a school we are promoting anywhere between 97%-100% of the students but only 66% of the second grade students are at benchmark on the DIBELS assessment. The topics for the first two months of PLC sessions will also be shared with the staff. These sessions will focus on the background knowledge needed to make this initiative effective. The remaining PLC sessions will be spent actually focusing on the lessons that are presented in the Walpole and McKenna books.

Weekly PLC meetings will be where the majority of the professional learning will take place. These weekly meetings will be 50 minutes in length. This PLC time will be used for the staff to read and discuss their professional books that we assigned to their respective grade level, watch model lessons, examine and interpret student data, and design exemplar lessons. These sessions will be led by either the school administration or the Title I Reading Teacher.

The Title I Reading Teacher at Stokes Elementary has been trained in the initiatives that will be rolled out school wide next year. Other reading specialists around the district have been trained in the Walpole and McKenna strategies so they can also be used as a resource. The reading specialist at Stokes Elementary will be videotaped as the starting point for modeling strategies in action. Once the initial theory building has been done the second grade team would be shown a video of the strategies they have learned about in action. Time would be given to the teachers to practice in their classrooms before the Title I reading teacher would do an informal walkthrough giving feedback at the conclusion of the lesson. Schedules will also be created so that the second grade team could visit and observe a live lesson being performed by the Title I teacher. Eventually the teachers would be able to observe each other while the Title I teacher accompanied them. The Title I teacher and the teacher performing the observation would then debrief the lesson.

The expectation will be that the second grade teachers take the strategies they learn during the PLC sessions and implement them directly into their small group lessons.

The lessons are set up to last 14 days which includes an assessment piece. During that three week period the Title I Reading Teacher will be able to informally observe the delivery of the lessons and offer the teachers constructive feedback so improvements can be made. The Title I teacher's role in this process is to act as an instructional coach. Because the Title I teacher is also a reading specialist she will be able to provide the teachers with the constructive feedback necessary. As stated by Mangin & Stoelinga (2008) teacher leaders must have content expertise.

Besides working with the Title I teacher a schedule will be developed where each second grade teacher will be afforded the opportunity to informally observe his or her peers delivering the small group differentiated lessons. The Title I Reading Teacher will accompany the teachers during the observations and at the conclusions of the lessons the two will meet to debrief. The debriefing sessions will help reinforce the positives that were seen during the observation rather than focusing on the negatives.

The second grade team will receive feedback on the delivery of their lessons mostly on an informal basis. The administration, Title I Reading Teacher, and their peers will observe lessons and give constructive criticism on what was observed. The administration will do a formal "write up" of what was observed during the small group reading time.

Scheduled weekly visits by the Title I teacher will take place for the first two weeks of the cycle. After the initial two weeks a schedule will be created so that the second grade team can observe each other within a two week period. Within the first

month of implementation an administrator will visit a session and give informal feedback to each teacher based on what was observed. The following months the Title I teacher will visit the classrooms once every two weeks. Another peer visit schedule will also be created. By the end of the second month of implementation an administrator will conduct a formal observation focusing on the delivery of small group differentiated instruction.

Small Group Reading Walkthrough Checklist:

	Observed	Not Observed	NA	Comments
Sounding/ Blending *Teacher models strategies 1st. Students repeat.				
High Frequency Words *Explicit teaching of the sounds and spelling of words selected.				

Whisper Reading *Teacher introduces book and vocabulary words they will learn. Teacher explains whisper read process.				
Partner Read *Teacher explains process to group for partner read.				
Choral Read *Teacher leads choral reading exercise.				

The lack of a systematic lesson design focusing on decoding and fluency instruction may have led to the low fluency scores of the second grade population. This model for reading instruction is based on empirical studies that demonstrate the positive effects that explicit phonics and fluency instruction has on the overall reading success of young readers. Using the theory, strategies, and lesson plans found in the Walpole and McKenna text will guarantee that a research based instructional plan is being implemented in the classrooms.

End of the year DIBELS data indicated that 72.3% of the second graders were on grade level and 21.2% were Strategic. 74% of the second graders reached benchmark

proficiency on the DCAS Assessment. Overall I felt this professional development plan was successful. From working with the teachers and observing them on a daily basis it was clear to me that their knowledge of teaching reading has grown. The staff went from teaching what their reading series told them to teach to actually trying to diagnosis the students' reading deficiency before they delivered the instruction. I also saw a positive change in the instruction the teachers were delivering to their students. Lessons were more intense and had a clear purpose. All students were actively engaged in their learning. No instructional time was wasted during these small group lessons.

Clearly more work needs to be done. The teachers need to refine their skills so they can zero in on the exact reading issue the student is experiencing. The teachers also need more tools for their reading tool kit. More professional development will be needed to keep improving the fluency rates of the students of Stokes Elementary.

References

Chard, D. J., Vaughn, S., & Tyler, B. J. (2002). A synthesis of research on effective

interventions for building reading fluency with elementary students with learning

disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 35, 386-406.

Mangin, M. M., Stoelinga, S. R. (2008). *Effective teacher leadership: Using research to*

inform and reform. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Martens, B. K., Eckert, T. L., Begeny, J. C., Lewandowski, L. J., DiGennaro, F. D.,

Montarello, S. A., Arbolino, L. A., Reed, D. D., Fiese, B. H. (2006). Effects of a

fluency building program on the reading performance of low achieving second

and third grade students. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 16, 39-54.

Torgesen, J., Houston, D., Rissman, L., & Kosanovich, M. (2007). *Teaching all students*

to read in elementary school: A guide for principals. Portsmouth, NH: RMC

Research Corporation, Center of Instruction.

Walpole, S., McKenna, M. C. (2007). *Differentiated reading instruction: Strategies for*

the primary grades. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Walpole, S., McKenna, M. C. (2009). *How to plan differentiated reading instruction:*

Resources for grades K-3. New York, NY: Guilford Press

Wanzek, J., Roberts, G., Linan-Thompson, S., Vaughn, S., Woodruff, A. L., Murray, C.

(2009). Differences in the relationship of oral reading fluency and high stakes

measures of reading comprehension. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 35,

67-77.

Appendix D

TRANSITIONING TO THE MATH COMMON CORE THROUGH THE USE OF

DISTRICT CREATED COMMON CORE EXTENSION LESSONS

The Delaware Department of Education had the expectation that all schools would fully implement the CCSS (2010) by the 2012-2013 school year. However, the DDOE implementation timeline did not include any training for the local districts on CCSS. The Department of Education provided no assistance for local districts in their quest to determine if the current curricular materials they were using aligned with the new standards. At the start of the 2012-2013 school year I knew that work had to be done to align our math curriculum with the CCSS (2010). The main issue I faced with this initiative was the fact that the students and teachers would still be evaluated based on the old state standards on the DCAS test. The State of Delaware altered the evaluation process for teachers creating further roadblocks in proceeding with full implementation of the CCSS (2010) last school year. The new component of the evaluation process holds teachers accountable for the performance of their students on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS). This DCAS test is aligned to the old Delaware State Standards and not the new CCSS (2010). To ensure our students and teachers would be prepared for both the DCAS assessment and the implementation of the CCSS (2010) I designed a professional development initiative that focused on teaching lead groups of teachers from each school about the CCSS (2010).

Delaware Department of Education Common Core Roll Out Plan
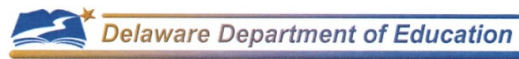
Delaware Department of Education

Phase-by-Phase Roll Out of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Teaching and Learning

DELAWARE'S TRANSITION FROM ADOPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

Phase I 2010-11	Phase II 2011-12	Phase III 2012-13	Phase IV 2013-14
DCAS *DCAS will assess existing DE Prioritized Standards in Math and ELA.* *Field testing Items/Aligned to Prioritized Curriculum*	**DCAS** *DCAS will assess existing DE Prioritized Standards in ELA and Math and the CCSS that are content and grade-level matched, and continue field testing items that will be coded to Common Core. Field testing for ALL GRADES (3-10) items aligned with the Common Core will begin.*	**DCAS** *DCAS field testing of Common Core blueprint-aligned test items in ELA and mathematics will continue for grades 3-10 (items for use in 2013-14 DCAS)* *A new DCAS test segment containing Common Core aligned test items in ELA and Mathematics in grades 3-10 will be introduced during the spring 2013 test window. This test segment will be administered only in spring 2013 and spring 2014. Score reporting will provide index of readiness to perform well on Common Core/based test items. Scores from this test segment will not be used in accountability calculations.*	**DCAS** *DCAS original test blueprint and item pool will be maintained for grades 3-10 in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.* *DCAS Common Core test segment will be administered to students in grades 3-10 in both ELA and Mathematics during the spring 2013 assessment window, with score reporting to provide an index of readiness to perform well on Common Core/based test items. Scores from this test segment will not be used in accountability calculations.*

Teaching and Learning Branch
Revised 9/11/12

Delaware Department of Education

Phase-by-Phase Roll Out of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Teaching and Learning

DELAWARE'S TRANSITION FROM ADOPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

Common Core	Common Core	Common Core	Common Core
	Initial Instructional Implementation for Grade-levels K-5 and 9-12	Full Instructional Implementation for Grade levels K-12	Full Instructional Implementation for Grade K-12

• Understand the foundation of and implications for the CCSS (Component 1)
• Begin the local district systems shift toward the CCSS through professional development
• Investigate and interpret the knowledge, skills and understandings in grade level CCSS (Component 2)
• Plan for curriculum alignment work through state-level PD
  o Begin to develop Math Learning Progressions
  o Begin to develop Literacy Concept Organizers
  o Begin to develop Model Instructional Lessons and Units (Math and ELA)
	• Align and select instructional resources based on the CCSS
	• Begin to pilot and implement units of study and lesson plans based on CCSS
	• Research and align scientifically-based instructional strategies to CCSS
	• Review and align formative and benchmark assessments to CCSS
	• Continue to develop high-quality PD aligned to the CCSS
	  o Continue to develop Math Learning Progressions
	  o Continue to develop Literacy Concept Organizers
	  o Continue to develop Model Instructional Lessons and Units (Math and ELA)
		• Continue to align and select instructional resources based on the CCSS
		• Implement units of study and lesson plans based on CCSS
		• Select and use high quality instructional strategies to support the CCSS in ALL classrooms
		• Use high quality, research-based teaching practices to support student learning aligned to the CCSS
		• Review and align formative and benchmark assessments to CCSS
		• Implement high-quality PD aligned to the CCSS
		  o Refine Math Learning Progressions
		  o Refine Literacy Concept Organizers
		  o Refine Model Instructional Lessons and Units (Math and ELA)
			• Select instructional resources based on the CCSS
			• Implement units of study and lesson plans based on CCSS
			• Select and use high quality instructional strategies to support the CCSS in ALL classrooms
			• Use high quality, research-based teaching practices to support student learning aligned to the CCSS
			• Review and align formative and benchmark assessments to CCSS
			• Implement high-quality PD aligned to the CCSS
			  o Refine Math Learning Progressions
			  o Refine Literacy Concept Organizers
			  o Refine Model Instructional Lessons and Units (Math and ELA)

Teaching and Learning Branch
Revised 9/11/12

During the 2012-2013 school year I worked with building administrators to select a representative from each grade level to work with me to unpack the standards of the CCSS (2010) at their respective grade level. At each professional development session training was done to ensure all teacher representatives were comfortable with a particular Domain from the CCSS (2010). The role of these teachers was to then take information learned from the sessions and share this with their grade level team during their PLC sessions. In an effort to help guide teachers through the unpacking of the CCSS (2010), I provided them documents created by the North Carolinas Department of Education. These documents gave examples of how the North Carolina Department of Education

interpreted the standards. This information can be obtained from

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/common-core-tools/. I explained to the

teachers that the documents demonstrated how North Carolina interpreted the standards.

The teachers' task was to talk in their groups to determine if they agreed with the NC

interpretation and to clarify any questions or concerns. During this professional

development session teachers were able to work with experts as well as with their

colleagues on the CCSS (2010).

Six professional development sessions were conducted with this lead math group

throughout the 2012-2013 school year. All sessions were designed using the same

format. The morning session focused on the teachers understanding of the CCSS (2010)

at their grade level. I guided the teachers through the unpacking documents from North

Carolina as well as how to use the chart found below in their discussions. This chart

shows the process for how teachers were to use the North Carolina document to begin

unpacking and interpreting the new standards.

Caesar Rodney School Districts Common Core Mathematics Unpacking Document

Standard	What does this standard mean to you?	What prerequisite skills do your students need for this standard?	Where in your current curriculum is this standard present?	What examples can I show my team for how to teach this Common Core State
CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.A.1 Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 5 × 7 as the total number of objects in 5 groups of 7 objects each. *For example, describe a context in which a total number of objects can be expressed as 5 × 7.*				

Completion of the charts helped guide us as we progressed in designing Common Core extension activities.

Although teachers and students will be judged based on performance on the DCAS assessment which is still designed around the old Delaware Standards, in order for

the Caesar Rodney School District to be prepared for the Smarter Balanced Assessment in the Spring of 2015 it is important that our students are exposed to the CCSS now. Creating Common Core extension lessons is an initiative that will allow our teachers to prepare their students for the DCAS assessment and still incorporate Common Core activities within their classroom.

Column four of the chart above asks for teachers to determine where, if at all, this standard is present in their existing curriculum. Once these overlapping standards have been identified, teachers will spend time determining how much deeper their current curriculum will need to go in order to reach the proficiency asked for by the CCSS. The standards will help teachers have more time to cover subjects in greater detail (Engageny, 2012).

My professional development plans seeks to show teachers how the standards are different not just by content but also in the extent in which the standards need to be mastered by the student. The task that teachers performed each afternoon in the professional development session was for them to create one Common Core extension lesson for a skill that they will be teaching in an upcoming lesson from their current curriculum. For example, looking at the sample standard listed in our chart above, a third grade teacher found the place where they teach multiplication in the current curriculum and analyzed the depth to which it was presently being taught. The lead teachers then designed an extension lesson that other grade level teachers could use while they are teaching the multiplication lesson from the curriculum series. This extension lesson

added the necessary depth for the lesson to be Common Core aligned and was used as a supplement to the current curriculum. Once this extension lesson was created by a lead team member, it was expected that all teachers in the district would utilize the extension lessons in their instruction. All extension lessons were housed on a district share drive so that all teachers could access them. Principals were notified when the lessons were posted so that they could inform their staff. It was the responsibility of each lead team member to share the lessons with their peers at the weekly building PLC.

Below find a third-grade example of an extension lesson that teachers from the Caesar Rodney School District created for the implementation of the (CCSS, 2010) during the 2012-2013 school year. The reason they created this particular extension lesson was so students were exposed to the CCSS. The current curriculum that was in place addressed the topic of Area but did not get to the depth that the standard Measurement and Data 3.MD.7d asked for.\

TO BE INSERTED AFTER TRAILBLAZERS UNIT 5

Common Core State Standard:

Measurement and Data 3.MD.7d

Recognize area as additive. Find areas of rectilinear figures by decomposing them into non-overlapping rectangles and adding the areas of the non-overlapping rectangles and adding the areas of the non-overlapping parts, applying this technique to solve real world problems.

Activation Strategy:

Smart Board- create a rug for under your desk. Count the square tiles. Be sure to include the chair and desk!

Lesson Objective:

Students will be able to measure area of one shape. They will then use that measurement to add together with other shapes to find the area of one large object.

Procedure:

- Pass out one sheet of white copier paper to each student. Divide students into equal groups, if possible. Tell students they are making a quilt. Each group should decide on a theme and create a piece for their quilt following that theme. Then, the students will tape their "patches" together to create a *group quilt.* Discuss the areas of each group and what strategy they used to measure their area.

- Now you will make a *class quilt.* Let's add all the group quilts together and see if we can find the area of our class quilt. Tape the group quilts together (use the rug or cleared floor).

Monitor and Check for Understanding:

-What strategies can we use to measure the area?

-What patterns did you notice?

-Can you think of any other real life situations where you could use these

strategies?

Teacher content knowledge of the standards will continue to be the major focus of the upcoming professional development sessions for this leadership team of math teachers. This group of teachers will also begin to create Common Core lessons that the district will use to support our alignment concerns. Because there is no formal curriculum currently available to purchase that is 100% aligned with the (CCSS, 2010) these teachers will be used to design curriculum materials for all teachers in the district.

References

EngageNY. (2012). New York State Mathematics Curriculum Modules for Grades P-12.

Retrieved October, 2012, from http://www.engageny.org/mathematics

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC:

Authors.

North Carolina public schools (2012). North Carolina Common Core instructional

support tools. Retrieved September, 2012, from
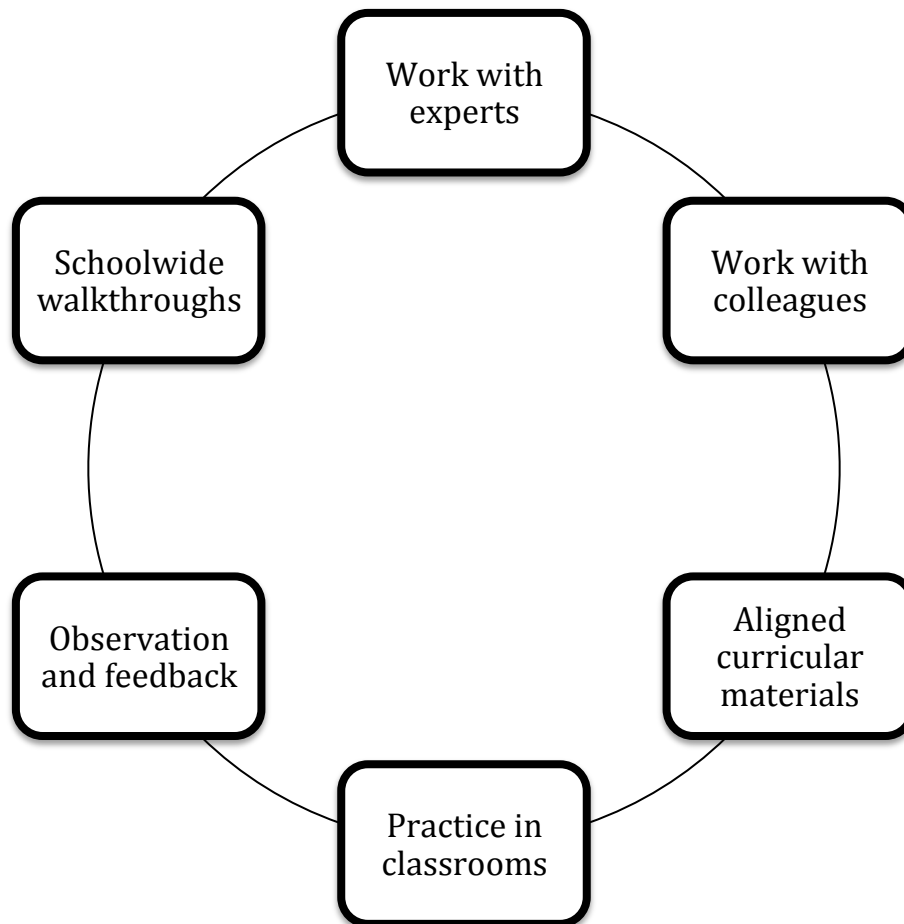
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/common-core-tools/.

Appendix E

WALKTHROUGH FORM TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 8

MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES OF THE COMMON CORE STATE

STANDARDS

As discussed in Artifact 6, the adoption of the CCSS (2010) has led to changes in the way teachers need to deliver instruction. In the area of mathematics, the CCSS address not only content standards at each grade level but they also address practice standards called the 8 Mathematical Practices. The practice standards are a critical component of the standards. The mathematical practices ensure the math standards are delivered in the manner intended by the authors of the CCSS. These practices rest on important "processes and proficiencies" with longstanding importance in mathematics education (CCSS, 2010).

During the 2012-2013 school year I designed professional development sessions which focused on all teachers understanding the 8 Mathematical Practices and their importance in teaching the Math CCSS. Teachers were engaged in activities that helped them understand what the practices were as well as in examples of what the practices should look like in action. Teachers began implementing the practices in their daily instruction last school year. The expectation for the 2013-2014 school year is that teachers are effectively implementing the practices within their daily instruction. This professional development plan is based on Dennis Sparks and Susan Loucks-Horsley five models of staff development for teachers (Sparks, Loucks-Horsley, 1989). Their model

consists of staff development, observation, involvement in the improvement process,

training, and inquiry. I have adapted this theory to frame a cycle of professional

development pictured below.

```
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │  Work with  │
                    │   experts   │
                    └─────────────┘
     ┌─────────────┐                ┌─────────────┐
     │ Schoolwide  │                │  Work with  │
     │ walkthroughs│                │  colleagues │
     └─────────────┘                └─────────────┘

     ┌─────────────┐                ┌─────────────┐
     │ Observation │                │   Aligned   │
     │ and feedback│                │  curricular │
     └─────────────┘                │  materials  │
                                    └─────────────┘
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Practice in │
                    │ classrooms  │
                    └─────────────┘
```

As indicated above, a major component of the professional development model is

monitoring both through observation and feedback and through school wide

walkthroughs. In order to effectively monitor the implementation of the 8 Mathematical

Practices I felt it was important to create a walkthrough form which would help facilitate

the process. I created this walkthrough form using information learned from the CCSS

as well as from documents obtained from the Delaware Department of Education. I also

explored a website from the Arizona Department of Education

([http://www.azed.gov/azcommoncore/files/2012/11/high-school-ccss-flip-book-usd-259-](http://www.azed.gov/azcommoncore/files/2012/11/high-school-ccss-flip-book-usd-259-2012.pdf)

[2012.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/azcommoncore/files/2012/11/high-school-ccss-flip-book-usd-259-2012.pdf)) which has helped me understand the practices on a deeper level. Information

on this website helped me differentiate characteristics of the practices for teachers and

students. I was then able to synthesize this information to create a document that would

be used to monitor the implementation of the practices. During the Caesar Rodney

Administrator Retreat this summer, administrators of the district were trained to use the

Mathematical Practices Walkthrough Form I created. An example of the math

walkthrough form can be found below.

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP1 Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Provide problem-solving experiences daily ☐ Promote student involvement in explaining and solving ☐ Class environment encourages student interaction & conversation ☐ Allow students to "struggle" with the mathematical tasks	Student discussion/work ☐ Understand the meaning of the problem ☐ Analyze information/data provided ☐ Make conjectures and plan a solution pathway ☐ Monitor progress of strategy and change as necessary ☐ Check answers to problems and ask, "Does this make sense?"

☐ Provides opportunity for multiple representations of a given problem/solution	
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP2 Reason abstractly and quantitatively.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Teach concepts in context—symbols have meaning ☐ Promotes reasoning of solutions and strategies in place of procedural steps. ☐ Provides multiple representations to encourage varied solutions.	Student discussion/work ☐ Make sense of quantities and relationships in problems ☐ Represent abstract situations symbolically and understand the meaning of quantities ☐ Create a coherent representation of the problem at hand ☐ Consider the units involved ☐ Flexibly use properties of operations
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of

others.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Promote student interaction and conversation on a daily basis ☐ Students engaged in problem based/open ended tasks ☐ Models appropriate "argument" techniques and supports clarification of points ☐ Encourages taking risks and defending answers	Student discussion/work ☐ Use definitions and previously established results in constructing arguments. ☐ Develop logical progression of statements to explore and support ideas ☐ Communicate and defend mathematical reasoning using objects, drawings, diagrams, actions ☐ Listen to and read the arguments of others ☐ Decide if arguments of others make sense and ask probing questions to clarify or improve arguments
Comments	

Teacher lesson plan/instruction	Student discussion/work
CCSS.Math.Practice.MP4 Model with mathematics.	
☐ Promotes opportunity for students to represent solutions in multiple ways	☐ Apply prior knowledge to solve real world problems
☐ Guide students to see similarities in different ways to represent the same solutions	☐ Make assumptions and approximations to make a problem simpler
☐ Use objects and drawings to represent math solutions	☐ Check to see if an answer makes sense within the context of a situation and change a model when necessary.
☐ Provides a variety of contexts for students to apply mathematical knowledge and strategies	☐ Experiment with representing problem situations in multiple ways, including numbers, words, drawing pictures, or creating equations
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP5 Use appropriate tools strategically.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Mathematical tools are readily available in the classroom ☐ Solutions and strategies support instruction on tools provided ☐ Students are able to defend "Why" they are using a particular tool to solve a problem	Student discussion/work ☐ Make reasonable decisions about the use of specific tools. ☐ Use technological tools to visualize the results of assumptions, explore consequences and compare predictions with data ☐ Identify relevant external math resources (digital content on a website) and use them to pose or solve problems ☐ Use technological tools to explore and deepen understanding of concepts
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP6 Attend to precision.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Uses appropriate math language throughout instruction ☐ Display and provide instruction on mathematical vocabulary ☐ Encourages students to use mathematical vocabulary in discussion and written explanations ☐ Instruction includes error analysis and feedback to develop accuracy and proficiency with computation	Student discussion/work ☐ Communicate precisely using clear definitions ☐ State the meaning of symbols, carefully specifying units of measure, and providing accurate labels ☐ Calculate accurately and efficiently, expressing numerical answers with a degree of precision ☐ Provide carefully formulated explanations
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP7 Look for and make use of structure.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Encourages students to always look for patterns to help develop conceptual understanding ☐ Promotes mental math to practice patterns in our number system ☐ Focuses on student reasoning rather than direct instruction ☐ Provide opportunities for students to generalize mathematical procedures ☐ Provides opportunity to apply and discuss properties of mathematical content	Student discussion/work ☐ Look for patterns or structure, recognizing that quantities can be represented in different ways ☐ Recognize the significance in concepts and models and use the patterns or structure for solving related problems ☐ View complicated quantities both as single objects or compositions of several objects and use operations to make sense of problems
Comments	

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP8 Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.	
Teacher lesson plan/instruction ☐ Models how to look for patterns or opportunities to generalize computational skills ☐ Guides the use mental math to develop more efficient computation methods ☐ Encourages students to look for and discuss regularity in mathematical content.	Student discussion/work ☐ Notice repeated calculations and look for general methods and shortcuts ☐ Continually evaluate the reasonableness of intermediate results (comparing estimates) while attending to details and make generalizations based on findings
Comments	

Because administrators were trained on the 8 mathematical practices during the 2012-2013 school year, a brief review was provided to refresh their memory of the practices. This walkthrough form is being used by district office staff such as Dr. Scott Lykens, Director of Instruction, and me, as well as by the building administrators. Math teachers in the district have been introduced to the form during the district's first PLC

session. During this PLC session I designed professional development for all math teachers in the district that will focus specifically on the Mathematical Practice 1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. During the session teachers had a copy of the walkthrough form and were guided through the purpose of the form. For example, the walkthrough form breaks down exactly what the observer should see both the students and teacher doing during the lesson when this particular mathematical practice is being used. However, it is important to note that not all of the practices will be seen in every mathematics lesson (Inside Mathematics,2012). It was stressed in the PD sessions that due to the implementation of the math practices instruction should look and feel different to the observer. For example, high school administrators should not see an entire class session dedicated to a lecture by the instructor. Rather, students should be engaged in meaningful discussions around the math they are learning. In order to help the administrators be able to recognize the shifts they should be seeing in math instruction I spent time with them breaking down each practice so they knew what to look for in the instruction. Here is an example of what was provided to the administrators as a means of helping them understand what this should look like in practice.

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP1 Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.	
Traditional Math Classroom ☐ Teacher tells the students how to solve a problem ☐ Students are given low level problems to complete on their own ☐ Teacher led discussions on how to solve a problem ☐ Only one correct answer	CCSS classroom ☐ Students are working to understand the problem before giving up. Teachers encourage students to make sense of what the problem is asking ☐ Students are engaged with other students about the problem ☐ Teacher encourages discussion about the problem and asks for multiple ways to solve the problem
Comments: The key to this mathematical practice is to make sure students are engaged in the mathematics. Students need to be given time to try to understand what the problem means before being asked to solve the problem. The teacher needs to demand the class engage in mathematical discussions about the problem. The teacher should not allow a student to give up on a problem and should provide the student multiple strategies for how to begin to understand and solve the problem.	

During the PLC session teachers reviewed the walkthrough form and were given time to read through and ask any clarifying questions they had about the form. The PLC team had an opportunity to explore their understanding of Mathematical Practice 1. This form was designed to show the characteristics which should be demonstrated by both the teacher and the student when incorporating this practice in the lesson. Because of this, the team was asked to share examples of how they have incorporated this practice into their lessons or to share ways they feel they could incorporate the practice. The administrator present in the PLC was asked to share with the teachers specific examples of what he or she would expect to see in a mathematics lesson that would reflect understanding and implementation of this practice. Next, the PLC team visited the site http://www.insidemathematics.org/index.php/mathematical-practice-standards to view lessons that show this particular practice in a real math lesson. At the conclusion of the video, the PLC would then discuss what they saw and continue their discussion regarding how they could incorporate this practice in their upcoming lessons.

An in-service day in September and October as well as PLC sessions during these months will provide the professional development time needed to engage all mathematics teachers in discussions around the 8 mathematical practices. All professional development sessions will be structured in the same manner as mentioned above. I will continue to incorporate videos of the practices in action when I am able to video Caesar Rodney teachers using them effectively as demonstrated by the walkthrough form.

Given the importance of the Mathematical Practices in understanding and implementing the Common Core Mathematics Standards, it is essential that teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators have a firm knowledge of these practices (ASCD, 2012). Understanding the mathematical practices will be the cornerstone of our monthly PLC math discussions in each building across the district.

References

Kansas Association of Teachers of Mathematics. (2013). *High School Flip Book.*

    Common Core State Standards. Retrieved August 5, 2013, from

    http://katm.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/flipbooks/High-School-CCSS-Flip-Book-

    USD-259-2012.pdf.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

    School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC:

    Authors.

Novak, J., & Parker, F. (2012). *Implementing the common core mathematical practices.*

    ASCD Express. Retrieved August 20, 2012, from http://www.ascd.org/ascd-

    express/vol8/805-parker.aspx

Noyce Foundation. (2013). *Common Core mathematical practices*. Retrieved August

    15, 2013, from http://insidemathematics.org/index.php/mathematical-practice-

    standards.

Sparks, D., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1989). *Five models of staff development for teachers*.

    Journal of Staff Development, 10(4), 40-57

Appendix F

SURVEY ON COMMON CORE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As stated in previous artifacts a focused professional development training plan was executed for all elementary math teachers during the 2012-2013 school year. This professional development included training for all teachers on the 8 Standards of Mathematical Practice as well as the content standards of the CCSS. Training was conducted for teachers during in-service days, district leadership team meetings, lead math teacher meetings, and during PLC meetings. PLC time was also used as an opportunity for teachers to work together to design Common Core based lessons applying the content knowledge they gathered from the trainings. In order to continue to design a professional development plan that will foster growth in the skill set of the district teachers I have created a survey to solicit their feedback on their professional knowledge around the CCSS.

Improving math instruction and increasing the knowledge level of the Common Core amongst the teachers were the district's main priorities for the 2012-2013 school year. In order to be able to meet this priority I was given two district in-service days. I was also given the budget to create a district lead math team of elementary math teachers. This structure of professional development opportunities allowed me to design a cohesive plan to train, monitor, and support teachers and administrators throughout the school year.

The district in-service day in September focused solely on teachers and administrators becoming familiar with the 8 Standards for Mathematical Practice. Given the importance of the Mathematical Practices in understanding and implementing the Common Core mathematics standards, it is essential that teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators have a firm knowledge of these practices (ASCD, 2012). To do this the professional development plan focused on the above stakeholders becoming familiar with practice standards. This session had teachers and administrators engaged in activities around understanding the standards as well as why the practice standards are a critical piece of implementing the CCSS. The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students. These practices rest on important "processes and proficiencies" with longstanding importance in mathematics education. The goal of this session was to familiarize all administrators and teachers with the practices as well as an understanding of their importance.

The October in-service day again focused on the 8 Standards for Mathematical Practice. This session focused on an understanding of the practice standards to a deeper level. For example, teachers began to actually look at grade level curriculum to determine when exactly they could incorporate one or more mathematical practices within their lessons. This session began with a review of the 8 Mathematical Practice Standards. Teachers looked at the definitions of each mathematical practice and were to highlight the key words that were found in each practice. Upon completion, grade level groups discussed what they felt the purpose of each practice was as well as what they felt

it would look like in a classroom. Teachers then worked in grade level groups to discuss how they could implement one or more of the practice standards into their upcoming curriculum.

As discussed in earlier artifacts, a leadership team of elementary math teachers was developed as part of the mathematics professional development plan for the 2012-2013 school year. This team of teachers worked through professional development sessions which increased their knowledge level of the (CCSS, 2010). This team's responsibility was to conduct the same professional development sessions with their grade level teams back in their buildings. In order to learn to do this correctly I sent a district team of math teachers to Baltimore, Maryland to attend a conference titled "Common Core Mathematics in a PLC at Work." This training was run by Tim Kanold who was past president of the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics. Attending this professional development session allowed our district leaders an opportunity to learn about the CCSS from an outside perspective as well as having an opportunity to see how to lead CCSS trainings through the channels of a PLC. The train the trainer sessions were designed so that all elementary teachers in the district were familiar with the CCSS content standards at their particular grade level. At the end of each PLC session, minutes were submitted to the district so that we could review the sessions. The minutes helped me design future professional development sessions around the content standards.

At the end of the 2012-2013 school year all elementary math teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District were trained on the 8 Mathematical Practices as well as the content of the CCSS,. In order to understand all teachers' knowledge and comfort level with the CCSS, I designed a survey. This survey focused on the content of the trainings which were held during the 2012-2013 school year. The purpose of the survey was to see if the teachers felt the professional development sessions increased their knowledge of the CCSS. Survey results helped me design future professional development around the Core for the elementary math teachers. The survey can be found below.

1. Please rank your knowledge level of the Math Common Core Content Standards at your grade level.			
1	2	3	4
I have no knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a fair amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a good amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I understand sufficiently to design and implement instruction
Comments:			

2. How much implementation of the Math Common Core State Standards has taken place in your classroom?			
1	*2*	*3*	*4*
I have not implemented any of the standards this year	I have begun to implement some standards but have a long way to go	I have implemented a good amount of the standards this school year	Full Implementation
Comments:			

3. The professional development I attended this year increased my knowledge of the Math Content Standards.			
1	*2*	*3*	*4*
Professional development has not helped me implement the standards	Professional development did a moderate job to begin implementing the standards	Professional development did a good job helping me to implement the standards	Professional development sufficiently helped me implement the standards effectively in my classroom
Comments:			

4. *The professional development I attended this year increased my knowledge of the 8 Mathematical practices.*			
1	*2*	*3*	*4*
I have no knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a fair amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a good amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I understand sufficiently to design and implement instruction
Comments			

5. *I have the knowledge to effectively implement the Math Common Core State Standards in my math classroom.*			
1	*2*	*3*	*4*
I have no knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a fair amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I have a good amount of knowledge to design or implement instruction	I understand sufficiently to design and implement instruction
Comments:			

This survey was administered to all elementary math teachers on the last professional development day of the 2012-2013 school year which was also the second to the last day of the school year. I used this day to conduct a half day math training on the new Common Core math units the teachers would be implementing at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. This training was focused on exposing the teachers to the first

math unit at their grade level for the following school year with the purpose that the teachers would have the entire summer to read and digest all information included in the binder. Teachers were excited about receiving the materials but were also focused on wrapping up this school year. At the conclusion of the professional development session I passed out the survey to all teachers. I explained to the teachers that the survey results will help me judge the effectiveness of this year's professional development and also prepare for next year's sessions. I walked the group through the survey and indicated to the teachers to please add any comments they felt would be helpful for my planning. The teachers were allowed to leave the session once the survey was completed. Teachers spent between one and ten minutes on the survey. Results of the survey can be found below.

Question 1

Response	1	2	3	4
Frequency	0	55	60	5

Survey results indicate that for question 1, 55 teachers have a fair amount of knowledge of the Common Core Standards while 60 responded that they have a good amount of knowledge about the Common Core Standards. A small number of teachers felt they sufficiently understand the standards to be able to design and implement lessons into their classrooms.

Some teachers responded with comments for this question. Three teachers felt strongly that they knew the content standards in depth at their grade level but had concerns about their peers. Ten teachers indicated that they felt they were getting stronger with the CCSS at their grade level but wanted to continue learning about the standards this coming school year. Forty teachers responded that they were getting fairly comfortable with the standards but wanted to continue this process in PLCs this school year.

Question 2

Response	1	2	3	4
Frequency	0	82	30	8

Results show teachers the majority of teachers have begun to implement some of the standards but feel they have a long way to go for full implementation. Thirty teachers indicated that they have implemented a good amount of the standards this school year. Only eight teachers in the teachers feel that they have full implementation of the standards taking place in their classroom.

Of the 82 teachers who indicated that they are at a level two with their implementation of the CCSS, 45 provided comments. I was able to divide the comments into four common themes. The four themes are implementation of the standards in the current series, implementation of the practices, designing lessons to address the standards

129

not found in the current series, and just beginning to implement either the content or practice standards. Twenty two of the respondents stated they have begun to implement the CCSS into lessons they were already teaching by providing more rigorous math problems to the students or by using higher level questioning in their lessons. Eighteen of the respondents stated they are only at the early stages of designing lessons to teach the CCSS that are not found in the curriculum series. Seven respondents from this group stressed that they were in the very beginning stages of doing this. The remaining 5 respondents stated that they were doing their best to begin to implement the practice standards.

When looking at the thirty respondents who indicated they were at a level 3 with the implementation of the (CCSS, 2010) 12 people provided comments. I divided their comments into two categories. Eight teachers responded that they are teaching the CCSS as well as possible based on their current materials and four teachers responded that they are already teaching in this manner.

Of the eight people who responded as a level 4 on the implementation of the CCSS, only two responded with comments. One of the individuals responded by saying that they were fully implementing the CCSS but had concerns that others are saying they are but really are not. The other respondent stated that the standards are really no different than what has been taught in the past. This teacher stated that they have been teaching in this manner for years.

Question 3

Response	1	2	3	4
Frequency	0	45	61	14

Results from this question show that the majority of teachers felt the professional development they received this school year increased their knowledge level of the standards. Forty five teachers indicated that the professional development did a moderate job of increasing their knowledge level of the standards. Fourteen of the teachers felt the PD sufficiently helped them understand and implement the standards into their classrooms.

Of the 120 teachers who completed this survey 55 of them provided feedback with their responses. I was able to sort the responses into three categories. Twenty three of the respondents stated that the training was a great start. Twenty eight of the respondents indicated that they would like to see concrete models of what this looks like in action in the classroom and four of the respondents stated that they would like to continue to discuss the standards with their peers during professional development sessions.

Question 4

Response	1	2	3	4
Frequency	0	3	35	82

The majority of teachers indicated that they sufficiently understand the 8 Mathematical practices. Eighty two teachers indicated that they sufficiently have the knowledge to design and implement instruction around the practices while 35 indicated they have a good amount of knowledge to design and implement instruction. Three teachers indicated that they have a fair amount of knowledge about the practices.

Of the 120 respondents to this survey question only 33 responded with comments. I was able to categorize the comments into 4 categories. Eighteen of the respondents stated that they are very comfortable with the mathematical practices and that they have been doing them for quite some time. Of the 18 who responded with that statement, 4 of them also added that they do the practices naturally and don't necessarily have them memorized. Four of the respondents stated that this is the easy part of the CCSS. Nine of the respondents stated that they hope that all future professional development will focus on only the content standards and not the practice standards and two of the respondents stated that the training was very good.

Question 5

Response	1	2	3	4
Frequency	0	73	43	4

The majority of teachers indicated that they have a fair amount of knowledge to design and implement instruction around the Common Core Standards. Fewer than half of the teachers indicated that they had a good or sufficient amount of knowledge to implement the standards into their classrooms.

The results from question five suggest that the majority of teachers surveyed have a Fair amount of knowledge to implement the CCSS in their classrooms. Of the 120 teachers who completed this survey question 62 responded with comments. Forty two of the teachers who commented stated that they were thankful for the training but were hoping that more in depth training would take place in the future. Eighteen responses asked for more concrete examples of units, lessons, and assessments to be presented that were aligned to the CCSS. Two teacher comments focused on administration holding all teachers accountable for the implementation of the standards. Both teachers stated that they were already implementing the standards and wanted to ensure all teachers would be held to this standard as we moved forward with the initiative.

The results from this survey indicate to me that the professional development offered to the elementary teachers was a good first step in the knowledge building and

implementation of the CCSS (2010) at the elementary level. It is clear from the survey

results that teachers need and want more professional development. Designing

professional development for an entire district is much harder than I expected. Because

of issues such as the district calendar and the Teacher Negotiated Agreement, I am only

able to work with teachers on a limited basis. The majority of trainings that I conducted

used the Train the Trainer method. I feel my results suggest that the teachers who

attended my professional development sessions benefited but I do not think that their

delivery back to the building was as effective. I think this accounts for the small number

of teachers who indicated that they felt they had sufficient knowledge of the standards.

Overall, the elementary teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District feel that they are

more comfortable with Math Practice Standards then they are with the Math Content

Standards. This information will be used to design future professional development plans

in the district.

Another factor that I noticed through the administration of this survey was the fact

that teachers were hesitant to implement the standards with no aligned curriculum present

to support them. This is an area that I will have to address as I move forward with this

initiative. If the teachers feel that are always having to create and design their own

curriculum materials to implement the standards they will not be willing to spend extra

time learning what the standards are actually about.

Based on information obtained from the Math Common Core Survey additional

professional development will be designed for the summer of 2013 as well as during the

2013-2014 school year. I plan to focus trainings more on the Math Content Standards rather than on the Mathematical practices. Teachers are craving specific examples of what the CCSS looks like in action. I will search for concrete examples of exemplar models for curriculum and assessment around the CCSS to share with the district. To continue to design professional development sessions that meet the needs of my teachers I will explore such websites as inside.mathematics.org, corestandards.org, and www.achieve.org. These resources have been developed to help districts with the implementation of the Common Core. I will continue to utilize the resources when planning for future professional development sessions. As the school year progresses more training will be needed for teachers on particular content shifts that have occurred within certain grade levels. For example, the CCSS places a great priority on the understanding of fractions at grade levels three to five. This emphasis is new to all grade levels so specific fraction strategies will need to be taught to the teachers so they can effectively teach the CCSS to the depth that the Core requires.   Everyone wants to attend professional development sessions that will improve instruction. Teachers often attend sessions where they are not able to take anything away from it to implement into their classroom. This really frustrates them and it is why so many educators have a negative feeling of professional development sessions. Quality matters in professional development. I will continue to work with outside experts to either present to my teachers or will work with them to design high quality sessions that will benefit all teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District.

References

Kanold, T. D., & Larson, M. R. (2012). Common core mathematics in a plc at work.

Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC:

Authors.

Novak, J., & Parker, F. (2012). Implementing the common core mathematical practices.

ASCD Express. Retrieved August 20, 2012, from http://www.ascd.org/ascd-

express/vol8/805-parker.aspx

Sparks, D., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1989). Five models of staff development for

teachers. Journal of Staff Development, 10(4), 40-57.

Appendix G

COMMON CORE TRAINING

The biggest challenge that I will be facing in my new position as Supervisor of Instruction in the Caesar Rodney School District will be the roll out of the Math and Science Common Core State Standards Training for the district administrators and the teaching staff. In 2015, students will begin to be assessed on their knowledge of the Common Core Standards rather than the Delaware Recommended Curriculum. Due to the rigor of the Common Core Standards, curriculum shifts and teaching strategies will need to be altered across the district. Clearly this is a challenge that is creating a lot of anxiety among critical stakeholders in the district.

In an effort to prepare the district for the transition to the Common Core I plan on educating the building level administrators not only on the Common Core Standards but also on the training plan that I will roll out for them and their teaching staff for the upcoming school year. The focus this summer will be on training the elementary school principals on the Math and ELA Common Core as well as what next year's professional development plans will look like. Three professional development sessions will be held this summer with the district administrators to delve into the Common Core Standards and to look at the Common Core State Assessment (Smarter Balance). These three sessions will lead into the development of the Common Core Professional Plan for the 2012-2013 school year.

As you can see from the above plan the strategy is to strengthen the instructional core starting with the building level administrators. Building level principals need to have a working knowledge of the Common Core Standards so that as the professional development begins in their buildings they know what to be looking for in the classrooms. During these initial professional development activities the building administrators will see how the plan will be implemented next school year. Principals will leave the trainings knowing how the Train the Trainer sessions will help educate their staff on the Common Core.

This professional development plan focuses on the instruction division, building principals, and the teaching staff in the elementary schools. These are the critical stakeholders that are addressed in the plan. As a member of the instruction division I will be updating the school board on our roll out plan of the Common Core Standards for the 2012-2013 SY. This is how the instruction division will be keeping this important stakeholder group informed of the district's professional development plan. As I mentioned earlier, the stakeholders involved in this plan have a lot of anxiety around the Common Core. This plan will educate all stakeholders so that they are building their knowledge of the Core as well as on the long-range plans for the Common Core project.

The structure of this plan focuses initially on training the building level administrators during the summer months. After the three professional development sessions are conducted, building level leadership teams, which will include the building administrator, will take part in several professional development sessions throughout the

school year.   The system for the training sessions are based on the Train the Trainer model where I will give the leadership teams the professional development session they are to implement in their buildings. This way the teams do not feel like they have to reinvent the wheel.

The mission of the instruction division is to provide support, training, and materials to the buildings so that the instructional core is strengthened. It is important that we always take care of our most important resource, people. The purpose of this training is to not only educate but to also relieve some of the anxiety people are feeling around the Common Core.

Three professional development sessions were held during the summer to educate the district administrators on the Common Core and the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The administrators were given a schedule of professional development opportunities that were going to be offered throughout the summer. Principals and their assistants were encouraged to come to the meetings but due to vacations, trainings, and issues such as scheduling not all administrators were able to attend all sessions. The first professional development session focused on the Smarter Balanced Assessment. During this professional development session I created a PowerPoint that showcased the released sample test items for both Math and ELA. The administrators were exposed to elements of the assessment such as question type, response type, computer specifications, time of testing sessions, as well as some sample questions. The discussion also focused on the necessity for change in our instruction and what this will look like for the administrators.

The second professional development session focused on the Math Common Core, specifically the 8 mathematical practices that are addressed in the common core. This session actually served two purposes. The first purpose was to increase the knowledge base of the administrators in regard to the math Common Core. The second purpose was to share with the administrators a professional development plan that they could use to train their staff. This "train the trainer" session was expected to be carried out at the buildings on the September in-service day.

The third session focused on the Common Core professional development roll out plan for the areas of Math and ELA as well as the resources we will be using to develop the district's Common Core knowledge base. This session described in detail the three year implementation plan for both ELA and Math. The plans centered on the building administrators selecting teachers from their buildings who would begin the process of aligning the current curriculum to the Common Core State Standards. This process would begin this school year and will continue throughout the summer months. Substitutes will be brought in for five to seven days throughout the school year so that this alignment can take place. Administrators were asked to pick a representative from each grade level to be a part of this work. In-service days throughout the school year will all focus on the Common Core State Standards. The majority of days will focus on the training of the staff on the standards and the other days will focus on aligning the curriculum.

This internship project focused on developing both the teachers and the building administrator's knowledge base of the Common Core Standards. The district is well aware that we need to begin the transition to the Core standards. The anxiety level of the administrators and the teachers is high because they are unsure of how we will achieve this task. Looking at the PELP Framework, Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University, I feel that this plan addresses both the Instructional Core as well as the Theory of Change component.

Administrators and teachers in the Caesar Rodney School District expect the district to be "ahead of the curve" or "visionaries" when it comes to curriculum and instruction. That is the culture of the district. As a whole, the district has prided itself on training and implementing the instructional programs and strategies that are deemed as the most effective based on research. The challenge for the instruction division of the Caesar Rodney School District is to always be well informed about programs and strategies and find a way to deliver this information across the district. Because of this culture, the professional development plan laid out above needed to be delivered to the critical stakeholders in the district in a manageable manner. As the plan was being implemented, I spent time updating my Director of Instruction on the progress being made so that we could communicate this to the school board and superintendent. As the plan was being implemented I quickly realized a key stakeholder group I did not include in my discussions.

At the beginning of September it was brought to my attention that CREA (Caesar Rodney Education Association) brought up the Common Core Professional Development Plan at district liaison. Their concern was the amount of work I had teachers doing without any monetary compensation. My plan focused on the teachers completing tasks during the school day while a substitute was covering their classrooms. At no time was it ever stated that work not completed during the in-school sessions should be completed at home. At this time the district is supporting my professional development plan but I am not sure this issue has been resolved. The next time I create such a committee I will explain in writing the expectations of the group so that no confusion arises. Teachers can opt out of the committee if they are not in agreement with the expectations.

As I mentioned earlier in the paper a lead teacher from each grade level was selected from each school to be a member of the Math Leadership Team. This group's task is to become knowledgeable of the Core at their respective grade level, and to design curriculum materials that are aligned with the Core. After the professional development sessions are held, the expectation is that they go back to their PLC meetings and share the information. This is the "System" that was put in place to ensure that the professional development plan would be successful. Unfortunately for me, the "Structure" of the district got in the way with my plan being implemented the way I wanted. In the Caesar Rodney School District the principals of the buildings control PLCs. During my time working with my leadership team the participants have opened up about what is occurring in their buildings. Two of the seven elementary school principals are not supporting the leadership team in the sharing of the material that was discussed during

the professional development sessions. These two schools have two very different reasons. One of the buildings had their PLC plan for the year planned out since June. This plan was delivered during July and the principal would not alter his PLC plan. The other building has a staff that is very resistant to change. The teachers' argument in this building is they will start teaching the Core when the district adopts a new curriculum that they can use. Their stance is that the district should not have teachers trying to figure out the Core but should rather adopt a curriculum that all teachers can use. The administrator at this school does not like conflict so he allows his staff to keep the status quo. In essence this stance allows him less headaches. Based on the information I received from my leadership team I felt it was necessary to have a discussion with the principals to see if I could ensure the math discussions were taking place in the school. Both principals are still not supporting the project but the staff at the buildings are working with me on their own time to learn about the Math Common Core.

The goal of this project was for a district team of teachers to come together to learn and create materials that were aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The materials created during the professional development sessions would be shared with all teachers in the district through the Safari Montage technology system. Understanding that all teachers are stressed about both the Common Core and the teacher evaluation system this plan aimed to take a lot of work and stress away from the teachers. At this time I can report that several of the schools and grade levels across the district are doing a great job of creating and implementing Core curriculum. Unfortunately this is not the case for all schools and grade levels. Many are refusing to even begin implementing a

new curriculum. As the leader of this project it is clear to me where the issues are and I have been working to address as many as possible. My first task is working with the building administrators to brainstorm ways to decrease anxiety around the project. I have also created summaries of each professional development session that occurred so that the administrators and staff not attending the sessions are always kept in the loop.

Overall I see this project being very beneficial to the district. I knew from the start that this was not going to be an easy task. The new addition of student achievement as a part of teacher evaluation did not help lessen the teachers and administrators anxiety. I have also learned that the Structure that is in place regarding building-level decisions is not helping me implement this plan. Clearly this has been a learning year for me but hopefully we can continue to make positive changes in the teachers and administrators' knowledge base of the Common Core State Standards.

References

Childress, S., Elmore, R. F., Grossman, A. S., Moore-Johnson, S. (2007). *Cases in public education leadership: Managing school districts for high performance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education press.

Appendix H

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE

COMMON CORE LITERACY AND WRITING STANDARDS INTO THE

CAREER AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

The Common Core State Standards (2010) (CCSS) for English Language Arts specifically address standards for the Technical Subjects. These standards are much different than the content standards already in place for each of these areas. Table 1 provides an illustration for comparison of the previous Technology Education Standards to the new CCSS for the Technical Subjects.

Comparison of previous technology education standards to new CCSS

Previous Standards for Career and Technical Education	New CCSS for Career and technical Education
M5.01.02-Develop a successful model or prototype.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.
M1.01.02-Perform a market analysis to ascertain a product's potential impact or real impact on individuals and	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text

communities.	distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
M3.02.08-Understand that complex systems have layers of controls and feedback loops and learn to diagnose, troubleshoot, analyze, operate, and maintain these systems.	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.9 Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.

The new standards must be firmly in place to ensure that students have access to the curriculum that will be tested. The Next Generation of Tests (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2013) developed by Smarter Balanced and PARCC will be administered to students in the spring of 2015 and will focus heavily on informational texts. Students will need to be able to read and understand informational text from all content areas in order to be successful on these assessments. The CCSS ask students to be able to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts as well as to be able to read and understand science/technical texts in the 6-8 grade band independently and proficiently. In order for students to do such tasks, our science and technical education teachers must have explicit strategies to teach students to help them reach proficiency on these standards.

The inclusion of English Language Arts Standards within the sciences and other technical subjects requires a vast change in practice for both administration and teachers. Teachers of science and the technical subjects have traditionally focused on only teaching

the content standards for their particular grade level. They have not been required to focus on literacy and writing standards, as they will now have to with the CCSS. Their practice will have to change in order to ensure all students have the ability to read, understand, and communicate about the informational texts designed for these subject areas. The English and Language Arts standards cannot be implemented by the science and technical subject teachers without a clear professional development plan focusing on instructional strategies that address the expectations of the CCSS.
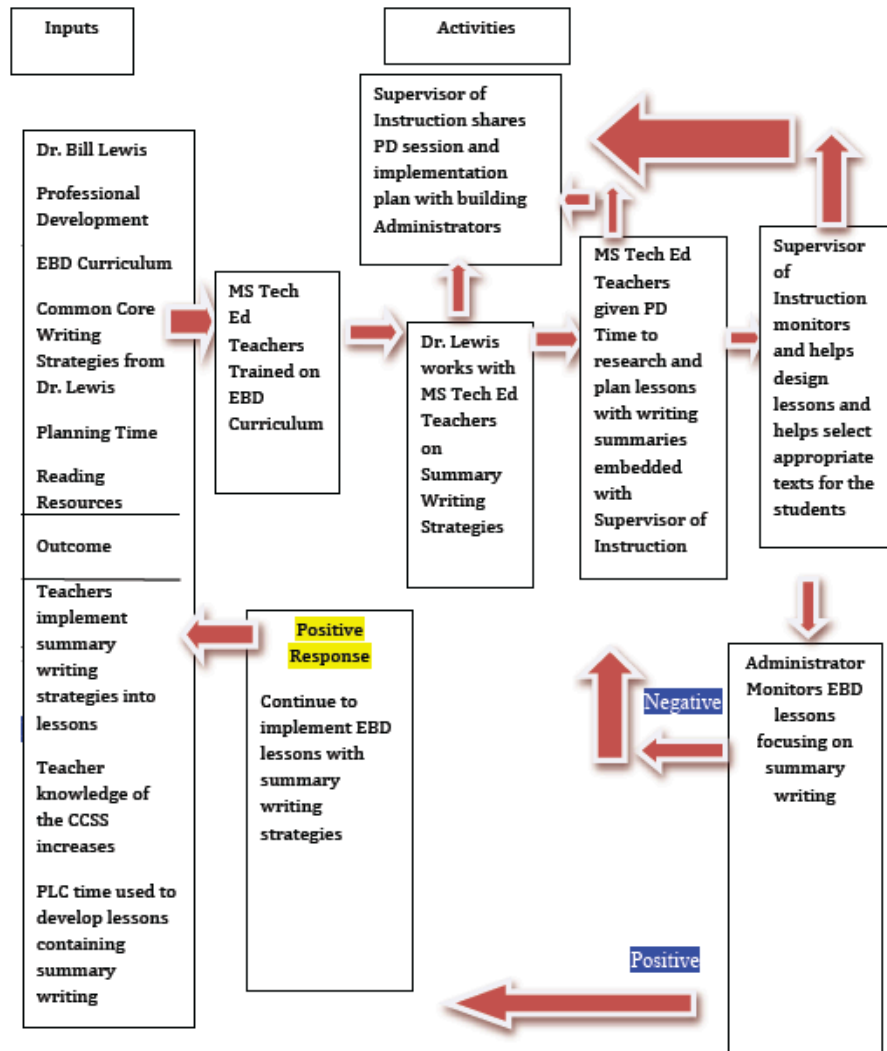
In order for this professional development plan to be effective it is imperative that all teachers and administrators feel supported throughout the process. It is important that teachers and administrators see that there is a grand vision that goes beyond the walls of individual classrooms or buildings and focuses clearly on learning and learners (Guskey & Peterson, 1996). It is important that district and school administration as well as teachers are clear on what the purpose of this professional development plan is. Clear, constant communication about the plan between the district office and the schools will ensure the plan's success.

This professional development plan will be designed for the Career and Technical Education Teachers at all three of the district's middle schools. Each middle school has the following programs: Technology Education, Business Education, and Family and Consumer Science.   Therefore, 9 teachers will need professional development on instructional practices that are aligned with the CCSS. Because the content of each course of study is vastly different I have decided to design three separate strands to focus

on the CCSS as well as the specific content of the courses. While we are implementing

professional development plans for all of the above stated areas, this particular plan will

solely focus on the training of Technology Education Teachers. In an effort to develop a

clear understanding of the professional development plan for this topic I have included a

logic model below. The plan and expectations were shared with both teachers and

administrators at initial implementation of the process. The logic model describes the

inputs, activities, and desired outcomes for the initiative.

Common Core Writing Strategies in the CTE Areas

Professional Development Plan

Inputs

Activities

Dr. Bill Lewis

Professional Development

EBD Curriculum

Common Core Writing Strategies from Dr. Lewis

Planning Time

Reading Resources

Outcome

Teachers implement summary writing strategies into lessons

Teacher knowledge of the CCSS increases

PLC time used to develop lessons containing summary writing

MS Tech Ed Teachers Trained on EBD Curriculum

Supervisor of Instruction shares PD session and implementation plan with building Administrators

Dr. Lewis works with MS Tech Ed Teachers on Summary Writing Strategies

MS Tech Ed Teachers given PD Time to research and plan lessons with writing summaries embedded with Supervisor of Instruction

Supervisor of Instruction monitors and helps design lessons and helps select appropriate texts for the students

Administrator Monitors EBD lessons focusing on summary writing

Positive Response

Continue to implement EBD lessons with summary writing strategies

Negative

Positive

The initial stage of this professional development plan began with the adoption of a new on-line curriculum entitled *Engineering by Design* (2011). This program was selected by the district based on the district's initiative to incorporate more Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematic (STEM) activities. Both the Delaware Department of Education and the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association endorsed the curriculum. A representative from *Engineering by Design* facilitated a three-day training for all technology teachers in the district. After the initial three days of training, the teachers implemented the curriculum in their programs. Two follow-up webinars were also offered by the company which the teachers accessed on their own during their planning periods.

I designed a series of progressively more specific professional development sessions to enhance this training. At the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, both the Career and Technical Education and Science teachers received training on the CCSS. These initial trainings were designed to simply scratch the surface of what the implications of these new standards would be for their content areas. The initial trainings were conducted by Dr. Bill Lewis and the Caesar Rodney Division of Instruction which included Christine Alois, Supervisor of Instruction, and me. The next phase was designed to develop a more meaningful understanding of the standards, enabling teachers to explicitly use instructional strategies for reading and writing. Prior to the next training, I worked with Dr. Lewis to design a session that demonstrated how the teachers could use reading and writing strategies, aligned to the CCSS, within their specific technical area. I also asked that part of the session focus on a review of the CCSS for the technical areas.

On February 27, 2013, Dr. Bill Lewis delivered a professional development session to the Technology Education Teachers on explicit instructional strategies aligned to the CCSS. Dr. Lewis spent the morning session educating the teachers on the background of the CCSS as well as specific instructional strategies for incorporating content area readings and writing strategies in their lessons. Dr. Lewis' focus was how teachers could incorporate appropriate grade-level informational texts into their daily instruction. Dr. Lewis explained to the teachers that incorporating informational texts into the technology classes is an expectation of the CCSS.

Dr. Lewis also instructed the teachers on how to incorporate summary writing strategies into their lessons. Robert Marzano and MCREL have identified over thirty strategies that most impact student achievement. Summarizing strategies was ranked as the number two strategy to use to maximize student learning (Marzano and ASCD, 2001; US Department of Education, 2002). Dr. Lewis demonstrated summary writing strategies teachers could implement in their classrooms. He explained to the teachers that the summaries could be used as formative assessments to help gauge student understanding on a daily basis. Summary writing strategies help students put into words the knowledge they have obtained from a lesson. Summarizing also provides teachers feedback for monitoring the learning of the students. This strategy is aligned to the CCSS. ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

The afternoon session was designed to give the teachers time to locate non-fiction articles that aligned with their curriculum. They also spent time designing lessons that integrated summary writing activities into their curriculum. After the session I met with the middle school principals to share the work we accomplished during the session and described what they should expect to see within these classrooms in the future. I encouraged administrators and teachers to contact me if they felt more professional development was necessary.

My goal was for teachers to use the information obtained from the professional development sessions to begin to locate informational texts and design writing activities that support the CCSS. Additional planning time was given to the teaching staff during the spring 2013 school year to collaborate and more effectively plan for instruction aligned to the Common Core expectations. During the 2013-2014 school year teachers will use their Professional Learning Community time to create lessons which incorporate the strategies they have learned. In addition, two Professional Learning Community meetings a month will be designed by the Division of Instruction, under my leadership, to ensure the teachers are given ample time to create lessons aligned to the CCSS.

Schools will not improve unless the administrators and teachers within them improve (Wise, 1991). With this in mind, Dr. Lewis will be contracted to work with district CTE teachers and administrators during the 2013-2014 school year to continue to deliver this professional development plan. Future trainings will focus on additional writing strategies these teachers can use in their classroom as well as how to help

students work through informational texts that maybe challenging for them. As stated in the CCSS (2010), by the end of grade 8, students will be able to read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. Administrators and teachers will also be trained to use a walkthrough form to monitor the effects of this professional development plan. It is crucial that teachers understand what is expected from them in the classroom.

References

Delaware Department of Education. (2007). Technology education curricula crosswalk.

Retrieved July 24, 2013, from

http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/tech/t.pdf

Guskey, T. R., & Peterson, K. D. (1996). The road to classroom change. Educational

Leadership, 53(4), 10-14.

International Technology and Engineering Educators Association. (2011). Engineering

by design. Retrieved from http://www.iteea.org

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC: Authors.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. (2012). Smarterbalanced.org. Retrieved July

15, 2013, from http://www.smarterbalanced.org/about/

Thompson, M. (2010). *Connecting exemplary practices in acquisition lessons: The

learning focused strategies model part 2*. Boone, NC: Learning Focused Solutions.

Wise, A. E. (1991). On teacher accountability. In voices from the field (pp. 23-24).

Washington, DC: William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and

Citizenship and Institute for Educational Leadership.

Appendix I

WALKTHROUGH FORM TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IN THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL

SUBJECTS

With the adoption of the CCSS (2010) a heavy emphasis has been placed on school districts to learn and understand new standards of practice. In the Caesar Rodney School District, a focused professional development plan has been developed to ensure teachers understand the new standards and are able to effectively implement them in the classroom. The next phase of this professional development plan is to monitor the implementation of the instructional strategies the teachers have been taught. One of the best ways to learn is by observing others, or by being observed and receiving feedback from that observation. Analyzing and reflecting on this information can be a valuable means of professional growth (Guskey, 2000). I will use this observation and feedback model of professional development to create an atmosphere where both teachers and administrators will know what the "look fors" are in the science and technical classrooms. This will be done through the use of a district-wide walkthrough form.

Administrators conducting classroom walkthroughs is nothing new to the district. This practice has been going on in the schools informally for the past ten years. About three years ago, the district attempted to formalize this process by creating a district walkthrough form. This from was directly aligned to the Learning Focused Strategies (LFS) program designed by Max Thompson. The initial feedback from the

administrators was not positive. Administrators felt that walkthroughs were a beneficial process but the LFS walkthrough form was too restrictive and often did not align to the school-based initiatives that were in place. Another major concern regarding the initial walk through form was that it focused on LFS compliance issues rather than focusing on the actual instruction of the teacher as well as the behaviors of the students. Using this information, I created a walkthrough form that focused specifically on the CCSS in science as well as the technical subjects.

The Caesar Rodney School District administrators have been receiving training on the CCSS since the summer of 2012. The initial trainings were designed to give the administrators basic knowledge of why the CCSS were adopted, who adopted these standards, and what the Next Generation of Tests (Smarter Balanced, 2012) will look like.   As the school year progressed, professional development days and Principal Cabinet meetings were designed to educate the administrators on the shifts in both Mathematics and English Language Arts. The Division of Instruction of the Caesar Rodney School District, Dr. Scott Lykens, Director of Instruction, Christine Alois, Supervisor of Instruction, and myself, in partnership with the Indian River School District, arranged for Judy Carr from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to work with the district administrators on the topic of the CCSS.

The sessions designed by Judy Carr reinforced the information administrators previously learned about the CCSS shifts in Mathematics and English Language Arts. This professional development session focused on the key areas of the CCSS that

administrators should look for while in a classroom. Within the sessions there was an activity titled *"Walkthrough Red Flags and Green Flags"* (ASCD, 2012). Mrs. Carr explained to the district administrators that Green Flags are the strategies that teachers and students should be utilizing in daily classroom instruction. An example of a Green Flag for literacy in the content areas is that students should be seen writing with evidence from the text (ASCD, 2012). Information gained from this session as well as from my reading about the CCSS has led me to create the following walkthrough plan.

Professional development is defined as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that student learning improves. In some cases, it also involves learning how to redesign educational structures and cultures (Guskey, 2000). This professional development plan began with the CTE teachers at the middle schools receiving professional development around the CCSS. The sessions focused on building a deeper understanding of the standards for their content (professional knowledge) as well as learning key instructional strategies (professional skills) aligned to the standards which they could incorporate directly into their classrooms. The middle school CTE teachers left all professional development sessions with strategies, materials, and lesson plans needed for them to directly infuse the strategies into their lessons.

The second half of this professional development focused on increasing the professional knowledge and skills of the administrators in the middle schools. After each professional development session was held with the teachers, I spent time with the

administrators educating them on CCSS as well as the strategies they would be seeing

their teachers implement in classrooms. Based on discussions with administrators, I

noted their previous observations in the CTE areas focused on student safety and whether

the teachers were implementing lessons that aligned to each content area's national

standards. Administrators were not concerned that the instruction did not include a focus

on reading and writing. The major purpose of these classes at the middle school level

was to give students an overview of what the course at the high school level would

include. However, the adoption of the CCSS has placed a greater emphasis on college

and career readiness for all students. Reading, written communications, listening,

speaking and mathematical reasoning (with problem solving) are embedded in careers —

especially in the middle- and high-skills careers that lead to family-supporting wages and

benefits (Achieve, 2013). That is why it is critical our CTE teachers have the skills

necessary to implement the CCSS in their classrooms.

Organizational variables can be key to the success of any professional

development effort. They also can hinder or prevent success, even when the individual

aspects of professional development are done right (Sparks, 1996). A critical component

of this plan is the ongoing monitoring completed by the administrators. Building

administrators play a critical role in the success of this plan. They need to constantly

monitor the classrooms to ensure the strategies are being implemented daily with high

quality. Communication between the teacher and the administrator about the strategies

will help reinforce the importance of the initiative. Furthermore administrators serve as

the first line of intervention when the professional development plan is not effective. For

example, they must be able to instill a culture of learning where the CTE teachers feel comfortable taking educational risks. This type of teaching is new to these teachers so it is critical that they feel supported in their efforts to teach in this new manner. Administrators must also allow time for staff to collaborate and discuss what is and what is not working in the classroom. This culture is crucial for the success of this professional development plan.

In order to make the monitoring of this professional development plan transparent to both the administrators and the teachers, I developed a walkthrough form grounded in the theory of instructional rounds. The idea behind instructional rounds is that everyone involved is working on their practice, everyone is obliged to be knowledgeable about the common task of instructional improvement, and everyone's practice should be subject to scrutiny, critique, and improvement (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2010). The following walkthrough form was shared with the administrators at the administrator retreat in August 2013.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.6 Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.8 Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.9 Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.10 By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.			
o Evident in lesson plan	o Evident in teacher-directed instruction	o Evident in student discussion	o Evident in student writing
Comments			

After the administrator retreat, I asked the administrators to share the walkthrough forms with their staff at the opening professional development day in August, 2013. During this time the administrators detailed their building's walkthrough plan so that all stakeholders are on the same page. Administrators will work with their teachers during their PLC time to discuss the information collected during the walkthroughs. Based on what we learn from these PLCs, more professional development may be necessary. As this initiative continues, The CTE teachers at the middle schools will also be asked to attend another CCSS-based training with Dr. Lewis and myself in the second half of the school year that will focus on how to implement argumentative writing into their classes.

This school year I will be conducting monthly walkthroughs with the building administrators. The purpose of these joint walkthroughs is to be able to discuss the use of the form as well as what is being seen in the classroom. After each walkthrough session we will discuss the information obtained from the walkthrough forms and decide what further steps to take in regards to this process. At the end of this school year the expectation is that all CTE teachers are embedding non-fiction articles related to their course of study into their lessons. Teachers will also be teaching writing techniques such

as summary and argumentative writing into their lessons. This plan ensures that teachers are implementing the CCSS with quality and fidelity.

References

Carr, J. (2012). *Leading the change to the common core state standards: Essential tools for school and district leaders*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

City, E. A., Elmore R. F., Fiarman S. E., Teitel L. (2010). *Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, INC.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC: Authors.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. (2012). Smarterbalanced.org. Retrieved July 15, 2013, from http://www.smarterbalanced.org/about/

Sparks, D. (1996). Viewing reform from a systems perspective. The Developer, 2-6.

http://www.achieve.org/files/CCSS-CTE-BridgingtheDivide.pdf

Appendix J

ALIGNMENT OF CORE PLUS MATH PROGRAM TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

The adoption of the CCSS brought challenges to all grade levels in the Caesar Rodney School District. At the high school level the standards are organized by 6 domain titles rather than by expectations per grade level. The domains that are covered in the 9-11 grade band are Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Modeling, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. This organization leaves it up to the state department or Local Education Agencies (LEA) to determine what standards to teach at a particular grade level. Another challenge to implementing the CCSS at the high school level is directly tied to the curriculum materials we are currently using. Caesar Rodney High School uses the Core Plus Problem Based Math Program from McGraw Hill. This curriculum is set up so that students would take Core I as a freshman, Core II as a sophomore, and Core III as a junior. Through this program, students are exposed to algebra and geometry as well as probability, statistics, and discrete math.   In order to ensure that our high school teachers are able to implement the CCSS with focus and coherence, we had to take a deeper look at our curriculum materials as well as the CCSS.

In order to initiate this professional development I needed to form a committee of high school math teachers who were willing to take on this task. I worked with the assistant principal at the high school to form a math leadership committee of teachers who represented all three Math Core Plus courses. When talking with the assistant

principal I asked for teachers who were strong with their mathematical content and also

would be willing to share the information we obtained from the analysis of the Core

program with their peers. When the committee was finally established I had two

representatives from each Core Plus Math section as well as the team leader of the Math

Department from Caesar Rodney High School.

Before meeting with my leadership team I arranged a meeting with the math

specialists from Delaware's Department of Education, James Dick and Renee Parsley.

My goal during this meeting was to obtain answers to questions I knew the leadership

team would ask me during our upcoming session. For example, my teachers are very

concerned with the aligning process especially since the CCSS at the high school level

are not written to be grade-level specific. I also wanted to review the curriculum

alignment tool from Achieve, which can be found at achievethecore.org (2013).

During this meeting the state department officials informed me, to the best of their

knowledge, that the Smarter Balanced assessment will be administered only to 11th

graders beginning in the spring of 2015. They also believe that the state will still

administer a ninth and tenth grade assessment similar to the DCAS test currently being

used. Their recommendation was to use the PARCC Model Content Frameworks

(parcconline.org, 2012). The frameworks list the standards that should be taught in an

Integrated Math I, Math II, and Math III classroom. The department representatives

stated that if we used the above documents we would be on the correct track for

curriculum alignment. However, I wasn't very comfortable with this answer. Therefore, I

asked the representatives to come to my first leadership meeting to communicate this information to my team. This would also give my leadership team an opportunity to ask the pressing questions they may have about how the alignment of the CCSS should occur at the high school level.

In May of 2013, I brought the leadership team together during a school day to discuss the vision for our work. I started this meeting by indicating the end goal of our project which was to align their current grade level curriculum materials to the expectations of the CCSS. This group has already taken part in district sponsored professional development sessions around the Math CCSS. The leadership team has worked through the North Carolina Unpacking Documents which were mentioned in a previous artifact, so they had the background knowledge needed to begin this initiative. In order to give this group structure to the project I had to address the lingering question of how can we align our curriculum to the CCSS when we are not sure what standards should be taught at which grade level. In order to do this in a manner in which the team would accept, I invited Renee Parsley and James Dick from the Department of Education to frame a structure for our work. Ms. Parsley introduced the group to the PARCC documents and stated to the group that they should compare the Mathematics I framework to their Core I program for alignment. She also shared a Draft copy of a Toolkit (achievethecore.org, 2013) for the group to use for the analysis work. Once the leadership team heard the recommendation for how to move forward from the Delaware Department of Education they were ready to analyze and align their current curriculum.

The next phase of this professional development day was to actually begin to analyze the tools listed above. As I stated earlier, the teachers have worked through understanding the standards using the unpacking documents from North Carolina. What they had not done previously was to look specifically at what standards should be taught at ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade. To facilitate this discussion I provided each teacher with the PARCC Integrated Math course breakdown of standards (parcconline.org, 2013). This document takes all of the high school standards and lists what standards should be addressed at each grade level. Teachers were given time to discuss and code the document by indicating which standards they currently address. For example, a ninth grade teacher looked through the PARCC model and indicated that they already teach the algebra standards to the depth described in the PARCC model as well as in the North Carolina unpacking document but do not cover geometry to the depth asked of the PARCC document. This activity set the tone for the group to use the curriculum Toolkit to analyze the PARCC document to their Core Plus curriculum.

The curriculum Toolkit from achievethecore.org was set to be released to the public when I had this initial meeting. The Delaware Department of Education was able to receive a draft copy of the Toolkit because of the work they have been doing with Achieve in regards to rolling out the CCSS throughout the state. Each team of teachers was given a section of the document to read and then discuss as a group. Once finished, each group was asked to share what they learned from the document. In order to ensure that this group of teachers was ready to begin analyzing the Core Plus Curriculum for alignment to the CCSS, a large portion of our time was spent thoroughly analyzing this

document. The remainder of the afternoon session was spent discussing the key

components of a curriculum program as identified by Achieve which were Focus,

Coherence, and Rigor. As a group, we decided what characteristics we would look for in

our curriculum series in order for us to call it aligned to the CCSS. For example, when

looking at Focus we decided that in order to call Core I aligned to the CCSS, the

curriculum had to focus 75% of the instructional time on the standards that were

indicated critical on the PARCC model.

Towards the end of May, 2013, this leadership team was brought back together to

continue analyzing our Core Plus Math Curriculum. This session was designed so

discussions could take place about what the teachers found out about their curricula in the

areas of Focus and Coherence. Through the discussions it was noted that the Algebra

Domain was weighted heavily in the CCSS and due to this we needed to ensure our

curricula matched this Focus. Teachers also began to notice overlap amongst the

standards in all three Core courses. When the teachers looked more deeply they noted

that each year several of the standards were retaught to the students in the same manner

as the previous year. When looking more deeply, the rigor of the standards did not

increase. Therefore the team decided to remove much of this overlap in the curriculum.

The teachers felt this "review time" could now be replaced with more instructional time

on the key standards at each grade level thus providing the rigor necessary in alignment.

The leadership team met once more over the summer to continue analyzing and

aligning this curriculum. By the start of the 2013-2014 school year, all three Core Math

courses had their 1st marking period planned out and aligned. The leadership team will continue to meet during the 2013-2014 school year to continue this process of alignment. We found through our process that the entire leadership team must be in attendance for this work to be successful. The discussions amongst the grade levels are the key to making this professional development initiative successful. The group must see the Coherence between the courses in order to fully understand what we are trying to get from this curricular program. Even though the adoption and implementation of the CCSS has been challenging, initiatives such as the one described above would have never been possible without the work of these key teachers. The teachers involved in this process are beginning to have a thorough understanding of the CCSS, as well as what the high school math program looks like from beginning to end. Instead of looking at the high school math courses as a series of books to teach, teachers are now seeing it as a process to ensure all students are proficient on the CCSS by the end of their 11th grade year. Through the PLC process, all teachers will have the opportunity to understand how the curriculum was aligned. This PLC session will be facilitated by a leadership team member and will focus not only on the alignment process but also on a discussion of the standards being addressed in the curriculum. At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, all teachers should have a thorough understanding of the CCSS at their grade level.

References

Achieve the Core. (2012). Toolkit for Evaluating the Alignment of Instructional and

    Assessment Materials to the Common Core State Standards. Retrieved April 12,

    2013, from

    http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Toolkit_for_Evaluating_the_

    Alignment_of_Instructional_and_Assessement_Materials_to_the_CCSS.pdf

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

    School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Washington, DC:

    Authors.

PARCC Online. (2013). PARCC Model Content Frameworks. Retrieved April 22, 2013,

    from

    http://www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCCMCFMathematicsMathI_No

    v2012V3_FINAL.pdf