

Issues in Professional Development: Designing & Implementing PD

December 13, 2010

9:30am-11:30am

Meeting Minutes

Introduction

Announcements

- Richard-UWSEPA Center for Youth Development winter trainings will be posted the week of 12/13. www.uwsepa.org/training. To receive emails about CYD's PD, email contact information to UW's Community Impact Training Initiative at citi@uwsepa.org.
- Allison Buehler- Mazzoni Center's Ally Safe Schools Program offers free PD opportunities for staff of schools and OST programs on creating safer, more inclusive environments for LGBTQ youth. abuehler@mazzonicenter.org, 215-563-0652 x 251
- Rhonda—JEVS Youth Services—providing college and career readiness programming to youth-serving organizations. Provide SAT/ACT tutoring, FAFSA and financial aid workshops and post-high-school planning.
- Natalia Smirnov—POPPYN (Presenting Our Perspective: Philly Youth News)—youth-led news show to positively represent youth. Looking for positive, powerful stories of how youth are engaged in their communities, schools and organizations. For more info go to whatspoppyn.blogspot.com or contact nsmirnov@temple.edu
- Greg Morgan—Healing PD for staff—life skills training on anger management, self-esteem, mediation, etc. 610-745-8906, eldor@godshouse-bamn.org
- Mike Sheridan—Eastern University School of Leadership and Development. Graduate Degrees offered in new format of 2 ½ week summer residency combined with online learning throughout the year. Contact 484-581-1275 or msherida@eastern.edu
- Operation Understanding—accepting new applicants now—current juniors—add link later
- Brandon Brown—Nu Sigma Youth Services: Sigma Beta Club. Mentoring Boys 13-17. 215-851-1755 or 267-712-9584
- Diana Owens—Safe Routes Philly, a youth education program of the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. Working with pedestrian and bicycle safety using teacher training and youth instruction. Dates listed at www.saferoutesphilly.org
- OSTRC—Dates for 2011 PNMs on website—link to Philly OSTPD calendar: www.PhillyOSTPD.org

Panelists

1. Naomi Leapheart—Best practices are often discussed, but what is NOT good PD? Scenarios: PD training with PPT overload (text-heavy, no images); PD that's poorly facilitated, don't get to have questions answered on-the-spot. What doesn't qualify as PD? You can't do a single workshop and let it be a "One Hit Wonder."

You must incorporate a longer term strategy—a series may be better. Training without regular post-training evaluation is not helpful because there is no structured way to follow up. The organizer has to continue to engage AFTER the workshop is over. This shows an organization's accountability and commitment to attendees.

Training must be put in a relevant context. PD training is often rooted in ideals without being connected to the realities or being related to the young people we're working with. Good workshops are focused on the realities rather than the ideals. Training without real-time models is not useful.

Sometimes it's good to stop in the middle of a training and say "let's practice this now, rather than waiting." (role play) One size does not fit all, so keep your audience in mind. Food, starting/ending on time, breaks of appropriate lengths are important to the attendees and can hurt the absorption of content if not done well. Give people opportunities to process information.

Don't underestimate strong communicators—you want expert who is dynamic and will engage participants.

2. Ieshia Nelson—Better to think about creative PD when standard methods don't work well. Some PD is all about practice, so *leadership* development has to happen on a continuum. Working in steps and moving up to the end result gradually is a useful method. Growing your own staff by training the youth with whom you work can be an effective strategy. Help people grow over time and eventually do their own PD. Self-analysis is significant to understanding how you are utilizing PD training and implementing it. Ask what your audience wants and have group reflection. Identifying your specific needs and goals can help you find the most appropriate program. Do not forget about the youth role in PD. Providing them with PD opportunities can help ensure outcomes. Youth have a lot to teach us, and partnerships help us understand what they need, thereby providing a quality program for them. Project-based collaboration is a useful strategy—example with Red Cross collaboration: we're teaching them about X, they're teaching us about Y and walking away having both groups learning something. Learning to incorporate these strategies into the long term can improve your outcomes, as does using good resources.

3. Nancy Peter—A lot of people present are responsible for conducting PD for staff and others, as well as selecting it for their own programs. "One shot deals" can be effective in a more realistic perspective. PD is broad, and can include one shot deals, long term programs, peer networking, apprenticeships, etc. PD is anything that helps an individual grow and learn in their field. Staff development and professional development is essentially the same, as the ultimate goal is student outcomes. Training is just part of a PD strategy or "menu"—

Facilitator should be dynamic, organized, focused, experienced, and good at soliciting participant feedback. Adults bring more experience to the PD table and therefore more insight into the programs that you are trying to grow. Remember your audience when doing a PD workshop.

Follow-up is beneficial for both the facilitators and attendees. Providing contact info, newsletter sign-ups helps maintain additional contact, even when one-on-one follow-ups are not possible. The point of PD is that you can share what you have

learned in the long term with others in a short amount of time. Trainings and workshops with peers are fundamental to PD.

Observing and evaluating elements of workshop makes it more helpful in the future when planning workshops or taking away information. Ask impact questions and see what/if people learned and if they plan to share and use the information covered in the workshop. What kinds of tools and systems will help them do that? What will make them take something away from the project/workshop/curriculum? Don't ask for more info if you're not going to use it. Save evaluation questions for what is important and what will impact people the most.

Group Discussion

In terms of training/developing youth, how do you differentiate between a youth who will “freeze in the headlights” vs. one who will absorb and excel? How can you help them learn when they could shut down and not respond to what you are teaching or working on?

Ieshia—When sharing something with students, are you valuing process or product? Getting up and allowing learning to happen by experience is most valuable to them. Look at the big picture of what they *learn in the process* rather than what you are hoping will be the product at the end.

Nancy—Training students in pieces helps them grow over time. Take a part of the implementation at a time and help youth work their way up to the overall goal.

Ieshia—As an adult, you create scenarios where they will succeed. You can create “pockets” of experience letting people develop skills over time at increasing intervals

The evaluations I get are almost always the same, and you have to identify yourself (they are rarely anonymous, even on the Internet). Often it is your organization or funder giving the workshop, and it will cause me to not be as honest with the evaluator. How can I give constructive criticism without complaining?

Deepa—As an organization, you are trying to show funders outcomes. One outlier (or a minority) does not reflect your whole audience—keep it in perspective. We get concerned about one person who complains rather than whole being good with the training, etc. If the whole is not what you hope for, then there needs to be an additional assessment of your strategies. The outcomes you show funders will probably be different than what matters to you as facilitator.

Naomi—Keep a check on your audience during the PD. If you check in with them during the meeting, an effective facilitator can make changes on the fly. Perhaps sit down with a few people about what they liked or didn't like. Legitimately writing responses is what is most helpful to people holding training and will help improve them in the future. Evaluation is a continuous process.

Nancy—Look at body posture, how comfortable people are at the meetings, and if they are following the point of the workshop (e.g., networking at a networking meeting). If PD is being forced on staff, they will likely rush through evaluations. You have to ask staff to be honest to see if we picked the right training.

Can you clarify/elaborate on the concept of how PD discussion should be ongoing? How many lessons and follow-ups should there be? We try to cram everything in at once, and then there is disengagement.

Nancy—Multi-session is ideal, but sometimes a single shot is all you can get in real life.

Naomi—One-shot can be effective if done well. You need to think about moving learners from “I learned something new” to *analyzing* what they learned and what they can do with it. It is important that they have the tools to implement it into something in their program.

Nancy—There are strategies to make it go longer. People are less likely to give helpful responses or learn from the PD training if they are feeling forced to use something.

Brandon B—When I am doing a workshop on something that takes multiple sessions in one, I put an overload. Practical applications are significant to getting outcomes from a single session training.

leshia—For a one-shot, people want to say everything they know and cram it into a few hours. If people want more resources, find out on follow-up evaluations and possibly create an additional PD training to go more in depth for them.