



The eMBEDDED LEARNING ACADEMY: A Professional Development System

For professional development in schools to be effective, it must be deliberate and systematic. Experience has shown that one-shot, one-size-fits-all professional development workshops with no follow-up are not effective. The eMBEDDED LEARNING ACADEMY offers an effective professional development system with the following important characteristics:

- It is differentiated, based on the needs of individual teachers on a continuum of knowledge and skills.
- It is accessible to all teachers, regardless of geographic location or proximity to training centers or universities. It can be accessed by teachers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- It provides a way for administrators to track individual teacher progress and monitor teacher coursework.
- It supports a career ladder, allowing teachers to move up on the salary schedule and/or acquire additional certifications (and possibly graduate degrees) as they complete coursework.
- It provides a high level of quality assurance. There is a consistent message delivered every time, so that you can be assured that your teachers are receiving the same message regardless of when they access the course. Within a given course, all teachers will receive the same core body of knowledge and skills. It does not depend on the whims of a particular instructor.
- It provides schools and districts the additional dimension of being able to track teacher improvement data, in addition to the student achievement data they are accustomed to collecting.
- It provides meaningful, consistent, and engaging professional development experiences.
- It is sustainable over time despite staffing fluctuations and changes.

- It is job embedded to ensure transfer from theory to practice and provide opportunities to earn credit through on-the-job teaching experiences.
- It provides opportunities for action research to allow teachers to add to their school's professional knowledge base.
- It supports professional dialogue with other teachers in the school, which magnifies the learning and develops into professional learning communities.
- It provides improved instruction resulting in improved student achievement.
- It provides techniques to make instructional experiences easier and more effective.

eMBEDDED LEARNING

ACADEMY

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An integrated and comprehensive professional development system that provides high quality professional learning for all teachers

Why a School District System of Professional Development?

According to a survey conducted by the National Staff Development Council (2005) of 2,123 individuals from urban, rural, and suburban systems, NCLB has increased the pressure on educators to raise levels of student performance but has failed to make good use of professional development. The eMBEDDED LEARNING ACADEMY can help districts address the fundamental barriers in professional learning in schools and can:

Leadership

- Support the vision and need for change, buy in and focus.
- Provide professional development for district and school leaders.
- Develop a core body of knowledge and shared language for teaching and learning that constitutes best practice.
- Support principals in maintaining a clear focus on teaching and learning through walkthroughs.
- Help all staff understand data analysis.
- Build capacity through a strong induction program.

Culture

- Develop a school culture which places a heavy premium on a rigorous professional development program that results in high student achievement throughout the school district.
- Facilitate the development of face-to-face and virtual professional learning communities focused on results.

Accountability

- Provide School Improvement districts with a comprehensive professional development program aligned with the PA state standards.
- Align professional development planning with the School Improvement Planning process.
- Provide a management system that will offer immediate registration, enrollment and reporting to schools and the district.

Evaluation

- Document the effect of long-term support-based professional development across the district using common evaluation tools.
- Fulfill federal mandates to align federal policies to expand and coordinate professional development using a variety of federal and state resources.

Differentiated Professional Development

- Move to systemic, ongoing, and sustained professional development.
- Develop and sustain effective professional learning communities with cohort study groups.
- Provide a means for teachers to document their career portfolio.
- Offer multiple professional development delivery methods: self study, graduate facilitated study groups, and blended study groups.
- Offer a differentiated program leading to Act 48 credits, Continuing Education Credit, and Graduate Credit.
- Increase access to professional learning that is convenient and flexible for all learners.

Observation, Supervision and Evaluation

- Match professional development goals and methods with student outcomes.
- Provide tools that map to PDE forms 426, 427, 428.
- Link content knowledge to application in the classroom through walkthroughs.

Time

- Assist in restructuring time (scheduling, release time, teacher coverage) that support a culture of professional development and learning.

Communication

- Provide sources of data to communicate to a range of audiences
 - School Board of Directors
 - Administrative Team
 - Teacher Associations
 - Faculty
 - Funding Sources
 - Community Partners

Technology

- Provide the technology infrastructure to support the eMBEDDED LEARNING ACADEMY district-wide.
- Provide all relevant staff appropriate scientifically research based professional development.

Funding

- Reduce the cost of professional development by providing a system that can satisfy multiple mandates for reporting and evaluation.
- Link to the district's tuition reimbursement structure and district salary schedule.



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