Research Briefs: A System-Wide, Collaborative, Purposeful, and Sustainable Distributed Leadership Plan Utilizing Teacher Leaders to Facilitate Professional Learning Communities

Georgia Southern University

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A System-Wide, Collaborative, Purposeful, and Sustainable Distributed Leadership Plan Utilizing Teacher Leaders to Facilitate Professional Learning Communities

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Research Briefs -- Video Introduction

"What was really unique about their particular professional development is that they use the distributive leadership model. They use their teacher leaders, and they train them and financially support them to go and be a part of the professional development. The teacher leaders are the ones who are implementing the professional learning communities," said Juliann Sergi McBrayer, Ed.D.

Watch the above video for an introduction to the article A System-Wide, Collaborative, Purposeful, and Sustainable Distributed Leadership Plan Utilizing Teacher Leaders to Facilitate Professional Learning Communities.

Abstract

Through collaboration between one rural southeastern university and a local rural school system of high-poverty in southeast Georgia (a pseudonym, Justice County School System [JCSS]), a mixed method case study analysis was conducted to examine a system-wide professional learning initiative. The goal of this initiative was to provide professional learning that was collaborative, purposeful, and sustainable. The professional learning initiative is a semi-structured plan developed based on distributed leadership to share the responsibilities of administration by utilizing teacher leaders to facilitate system-wide professional learning. In addition, school personnel perceptions
of their changes in professional practices as a result of this collaborative PLC work were explored to determine effectiveness of the professional learning communities. The outcome of this study resulted in the presentation of a replicable or modifiable plan that was formalized with evidence-based practices that could be disseminated to other districts and schools exploring similar professional learning opportunities. Georgia certification mandates require that districts and schools possess accountability measures that ensure the professional growth of all school personnel through PLCs. The mode in which JCSS approached professional learning could advance other professional learning initiatives or in many cases launch these initiatives. JCSS should serve as a model system with a proven record of using an innovative professional learning approach that distributed the responsibilities among both administrators and staff, specifically teacher leaders to effectively improve teachers' classroom practices. Institutions of higher education and local school systems need to implement collaborative, purposeful and sustainable professional learning with fidelity by distributing leadership efforts.

What practical tips will you gain from this article?

1. Presents a replicable or modifiable plan that other districts and schools could use as the framework when developing, implementing, and assessing their own professional learning initiatives
2. Provides a blueprint for professionalized learning plan of action as mandated by the state of Georgia
3. Details utilization of teacher leaders to enhance and sustain professional development in schools as well as the collaborative environment it creates with participants

Citation

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