

Introduction

We stand at a moment of great possibility for the professional learning of educators in the New York City Public Schools. This year, professional development will be implemented with the understanding that schools best serve their students when they collaboratively determine the goals, content and structures of professional learning. Bringing all parties on board to begin this process is critical to its success. Collaboration means all voices are heard from the beginning of the process.

The materials in “**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning: Finding Purpose in the Journey**” are intended to support your work in building a schoolwide consensus around the use of time for professional development.

This module contains two components. The first is a set of readings for the professional development committee. These are drawn from *Learning Forward*, which is an invaluable resource for professional learning. The second component includes a set of activities and materials for a professional learning session to be carried out in large or small groups. These activities clarify the value of collaborative professional learning and reaffirm the beliefs that led them to become educators.

As a PD committee, you will not only organize professional learning but also continuously strengthen the culture of learning in your school. Please keep in mind that schools that continually improve have the following strengths:

- **Clarity:** A shared and clear idea about what high-quality teaching and learning should look like.
- **Planning:** A strategic approach to schoolwide improvement, including time, structures, and spaces for adult learning.
- **Approach:** A collaborative approach to adult learning that is embedded in practice, and which relies on **engagement and inquiry rather than compliance** (Titel 2013).
- **Trust:** Trust at every level is a necessary ingredient if teachers and schools are to change (Learning Forward 2014). With trust we can better identify how we need to grow as a school and as individuals.
- **Appreciation:** As a way to respect past and present strengths and efforts, appreciation demonstrates mutual respect and has a powerful impact on collaboration and school culture (Whitney, D. & Trosten-Bloom, A. 2003).

Consider these qualities of collaboration as you work with your school community and become the change you wish to see! Good luck and have a great year!



I. Professional Reading for PD Committee: To be completed prior to PD.

We recommend two-hour sessions for reading, discussion, and review and production of materials.

- a. Committee reads and discusses these articles.
- b. Committee reviews the presentation, including the PowerPoint presentation and the Facilitators' Guide.
- c. Committee decides the format: grade-level groups, subject-area teams, diverse teams, etc.

II. Introduction to Professional Learning for School Staff: One 1.5–2-hour session (*See Facilitator's Guide for details*)

- a. "Talk Around" welcome activity
- b. Review norms
- c. Go over outcomes and agenda
- d. Reading: "Why Commit to Collaborative Professional Learning?"
 - Individual reading
 - Partner share
 - Whole group share
 - Facilitator shares: "What do we know about professional learning?"
 - Collaborative poster: "What worked for us in professional learning?"
 - Discussion: Compare our conclusions with those in the slide "What do we know about professional learning?"
 - Exit slips

