

Woburn Public Schools



Woburn, MA 01801

***District Professional
Development Plan***

Updated November, 2009

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Section 1: A Framework for Professional Development

PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Woburn Public Schools is to increase student achievement. One of the most significant ways to increase student achievement is to continue to increase the knowledge of our professional staff. In our major planning document, the “Blueprint for the Enhancement of Student Achievement”, professional development is identified as one of the six major goals of our school system.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

There are clearly a large number of ways to provide professional development to our staff. However, all successful professional development activities include some common elements. They include:

- improved student achievement
- increased skills and knowledge that improve teaching and learning
- opportunities for collaboration among staff members or with other professionals
- sharing of new knowledge, including “best practices”

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A Professional Development Committee will be formed to help guide professional development in our district. The committee will include representatives from the teaching and administrative staff. The role of the committee will be to solicit input regarding professional development, to develop district offerings, and to approve building-based initiatives.

DISTRICT-LEVEL GOALS

Our major planning document, the “Blueprint for the Enhancement of Student Achievement in the Woburn Public Schools”, identifies the following district goals:

1. To implement and assess curriculum and instruction
2. To establish a professional development model that provides in-service training
3. To support the effective integration of technology through our curriculum and management practices
4. To provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing learning environment for all students
5. To strengthen family and community participation in meeting our educational goals
6. To assess and plan for school facility improvement in order to support the implementation of our educational goals.

WHO LEADS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES?

When considering who should lead professional development activities, we are fortunate to have a variety of quality choices available. We have access to various professional organizations in the area. We can also make use of technology to access resources such as streaming video or online collaboration and research. Perhaps more importantly, we have an abundance of knowledge among our own staff. Whether through experience or training, our teachers and administrators have a great deal to share with each other. In addition to working with outside consultants, it is important that we provide multiple opportunities for our staff members to learn from each other.

SUMMARY

We encourage all of our staff members to think about professional development in broad terms. Courses and workshops can be effective professional development activities, but they are by no means the only way to build knowledge and skills among our staff. No matter what the format, the best professional development activities lead to changes in the classroom that result in increased student achievement.

Section 2: Massachusetts Criteria for “High Quality” PD Activities

(Source: Massachusetts Department of Education)

Note: When designing professional development activities, consider the following criteria. Proposals will be evaluated using these guidelines.

High quality professional development activities are activities that:

- I. Are intense and sustained activities that focus on increasing teacher’s content knowledge in the subjects which they teach and which address state academic standards.**

To what degree are professional development offerings of sufficient intensity and sustained length time to enable change in teaching practice? To what extent is the content of the professional development tied to student academic learning standards?

- II. Increase effective pedagogical strategies to enable teachers to address the full range of student abilities (e.g., English language learners, students with learning disabilities, academically gifted students, etc.) in the classroom.**

To what degree do the professional development offerings provide teachers with opportunities to understand how to address the range of student abilities in their classrooms? (Consider demographic data about the student population.)

- III. Are part of a deliberate plan to evaluate the impact on student learning (e.g., pre- and post- testing of students, examination of student work, classroom assessment data, etc.).**

To what degree is there a plan to measure the impact of professional development activities on student learning and performance in the classroom?

- IV. Are designed with extensive participation by teachers and administrators to address the needs identified by a variety of student performance data.**

To what degree are teachers and administrators engaged in assessing the need for, as well as designing, their own professional development?

- V. Are guided by scientifically based research to the extent possible.**

To what degree are teachers and administrators using the findings of research to shape the content and the design of professional development opportunities?

- VI. Provide training on the appropriate use of technology and applications for use in the classroom.**

To what degree are teachers taught the appropriate uses of technology and its applications in professional development activities?

Section 3: Guidelines for Earning Professional Development Points

(NOTE: Detailed information about recertification can be found on the [recertification page of the Massachusetts Department of Education web site.](#))

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POINTS (PDPs): Below is a listing of types of professional development activities and the rules associated with the awarding of Professional Development Points (PDPs). Please note that PDPs may be earned in activities other than those listed. (For example, PDPs are awarded for taking a graduate course.) The categories apply to activities that take place within our school system.

TYPES OF DISTRICT-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES (from Massachusetts Department of Education guidelines)

- 1. School or District Improvement Activity**—Participating in an activity that strengthens professional knowledge in skills in content areas. Must include an observable demonstration of learning have written product or other documentable product. A minimum 10 hours per category is required. 1 PDP/Clock hour
- 2. Mentoring (including Peer Coaching; Cooperating Teacher)**—Serving as a mentor to a new teacher, as a cooperating teacher for a student teacher, or as a peer coach (to be defined) for a colleague. 15 PDPs per year
- 3. Curriculum Development**—Participating in the authoring of a new curriculum that is shared in some way. Included in curriculum development is the sharing of professional resources. 15 PDPs per curriculum unit/maximum of 60 PDPs per five-year cycle
- 4. School-based Project**—Developing and implementing an activity for students, parents, or teachers that incorporates learning standards from the state Curriculum Frameworks. 1 PDP per clock hour/maximum of 30 PDPs per five-year cycle
- 5. Accreditation Activities**—Being a member of a visiting team or faculty member preparing for visit. Maximum of 30 PDPs per five-year cycle
- 6. Presenters**—Developing and presenting a workshop with a minimum of three separate sessions. Three times the amount of PDPs participants earn. (Minimum 10 PDPs/Maximum 24 PDPs)

Section 4: Categories of District and School-Based Activities

The following types of activities will be available to teachers on an annual basis:

Category 1. Professional Study Group—PDPs earned: maximum of 20

A Professional Study Group is a group of staff members who come together to address a particular educational topic. Group can be formed to learn more about subject-area content, pedagogy, or a host of other educational issues. The group can be building-based or involve people from several schools. A variety of resources is available to support Professional Study Groups, including a wide range of resources from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). A listing of available videos and a videotape request form can be found by visiting <http://www.woburnpss.com/pddocs/PDVideoListNCSD.pdf>.

Participants in the group are required to meet for at least 5 hours, which can be broken up in any way that's convenient to everyone. Members can also apply their findings in their settings (classroom, etc.), and earn an additional 5 PDPs. An additional 10 PDPs can be earned by doing research (books, journals, online resources), participating in an online discussion, observing others, or team teaching. The Massachusetts Department of Education requires that activities of this type include an "observable demonstration of learning" as an end product. Participants can accomplish this task by writing a short reflective piece, by creating lessons and units that can be shared, or by keeping a journal that reflects the progress of the group. A proposal form is available for people interested in starting a Professional Study Group. It can be found by visiting our professional development web site: www.woburnpss.com. Please submit the form to your principal or directly to Gary Reese, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum.

Category 2. District Workshops--PDPs earned: Varies

Specific offerings will be available during the course of the year, based on district priorities. Information about the number of PDPs will be contained in the description of each workshop. Generally, PDPs are earned at the rate of one per clock hour. At the end of the workshop or workshop series, participants need to produce some kind of evidence that shows what they have learned.

Category 3. Annenberg Workshops—PDPs earned: varies, up to 32 per workshop/course. *Important: Participants may take part in individual sessions without having to complete the entire workshop.*

The Annenberg Project includes high-quality professional development for K-12 teachers. During the year, we will offer various workshops. The offerings include a wide range of topics including subject-area content, pedagogy, and other educational topics. Generally, there will be eight group video sessions, each lasting approximately two hours. Participants may take part in individual sessions without having to complete the entire workshop. In general, each group video session will be worth two PDPs, and participants can earn two additional PDPs per session with appropriate follow-up activities.

Follow-up activities should be a collaborative effort involving least two people. Activities include planning to put the newfound knowledge into place into a classroom setting, implementing new strategies with students, observing one another or team teaching, and evaluating the results by meeting with others to discuss the lesson or activity.

Category 4. Off-site Workshops—PDPs earned: Varies. Awarded by presenting organization.

We are members of two professional development organizations: Salem State’s Collaborative Project for Math, Science, and Integrated Education (CPMSIE) and the Northeast Consortium for Staff Development. From time to time, we’ll offer free seats to some of the workshops they offer.

Category 5. District Curriculum Committees—PDPs earned: maximum of 15 per year

Up to 15 PDPs per year can be awarded to people who participate in our curriculum committees. (Massachusetts DOE Regulations)

Category 6. Other District Committees—PDPs earned: Approximately 15 (1 per clock hour.)

From time to time, committees will be formed to address various topics. For example, we would like to create an Early Childhood Committee and a Safe and Drug-Free Schools Committee. We can award 1 PDP per clock hour for time spent in meetings and related activities.

Category 7. Online Workshops and Courses

Many organizations are starting to deliver professional development activities through the use of online workshops and courses. In time, we may be able to use the expertise within our district to offer some online activities. Information about course content, registration procedures, and PDPs will be available through the provider. Online opportunities will be available through our Professional Development “Catalog”.

Section 5: Professional Development Forms for District Activities

In this section, you can find the forms you need when participating in professional development. Accounting forms are used at the completion of an activity as a way to claim PDPs. In some cases, there are individual forms. In other cases, group forms are more appropriate.

Category 1: Professional Study Groups

Category 2: District Workshops

Category 3: Annenberg Workshops

Category 4: Off Site Workshops:

(No form needed. Presenting agency will provide PDP certificate.)

Category 5: District Curriculum Committees

Category 6: District Committees (non-curriculum) form

Category 7: Online Workshops and Courses

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Category 1: PROFESSIONAL STUDY GROUP: Proposal Form

Name of Group	
Group Contact Person	
What question is your group investigating?	
Who is eligible to participate in your group?	
Approximate start and end date	

RESOURCES: Through our membership in the Northeast Consortium for Staff Development (NCSD), we have access to a large library of videotapes produced by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). You can access a listing of available videos and a videotape request form by visiting <http://www.woburnpss.com/pddocs/PDVideoListNCSD.pdf> . If you need would like to borrow any videotapes from this group, please fill out the appropriate form, which can be found on our professional development website, www.woburnpss.com and send it to Gary Reese.

We also can access professional journals and other sources online through the Woburn Public Library. A valid Minuteman Library Card is all that's required.

FINAL PRODUCT: Members of the group are expected to produce an “observable demonstration of learning” (Mass. DOE Regulations). The product can include any one of the following:

- Lessons or units of instruction to share with others
- A report (including PowerPoint presentations) to share with others.
- A group journal chronicling the activities of the group that includes what was learned and how the knowledge was used.
- Individual reflective writing piece (at least three paragraphs) that includes what was learned and how the knowledge was used.

Please submit this form to Gary Reese for approval.

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**Category 1: PROFESSIONAL STUDY GROUP:
Individual Accounting Form**

Individuals should complete the form below at the conclusion of the group's work.

Name of Study Group:		
Participant's Name:		
Your School and Position:		
Date Range of Meetings:		
Your Signature:		
ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF HOURS COMPLETED	NOTES
Meeting as a study group		5 to 10 hours required

Conducting Research (books, journals, online resources)		Maximum of 4 hours
Implementing a new strategy in your classroom.		Maximum of 4 hours
Observing others		Maximum of 4 hours
Participating in Team Teaching		Maximum of 4 hours
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS		Total not to exceed 20 hours

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**Category 3: ANNENBERG WORKSHOP:
Individual Accounting Form**

Individuals should complete the form below at the conclusion of the group's work.

Name of Annenberg Workshop:	
Participant's Name:	
Your School and Position:	
Date Range of Meetings:	
How many Group Video Sessions did you Attend? (Minimum of 4)	
Your Signature:	

ACTIVITY	HOURS SPENT	NOTES
Attending group video sessions		
Applying Strategies in the Classroom		Not to exceed 1 hour per group video session
Other activities: 1. Planning Classroom Application 2. Observing Others 3. Evaluating Success of Classroom Application.		Not to exceed 1 hour per group video session
TOTAL HOURS:		Not to exceed 32 hours

