



News Release

For Immediate Release: June 1, 2009

WRPS introduces a new model for high quality professional development.

The Board of Trustees sets aside seven days each school year for teachers to work together with other teachers to improve learning-teaching relationships. Research shows that professional development activities lasting 14 or fewer hours show little or no effect on student learning. The largest effect on student learning occurs when teachers have 30 -100 hours spread out over 6–10 months. In order for our teachers to have an appropriate amount of time to work on improving our understanding of what good assessment practices are as well as what and when to use appropriate instructional strategies, 4 types of professional learning activities have been scheduled for the 2009 – 2010 school year.

Type 1- Dates: September 1, 2009 and March 22, 2010.

These sessions are for the School Division instructional focus, which we call the “**Learning Cycle**”.

What is a Learning Cycle?

To educate students is to inspire students to become the best they can be. This can only happen when teachers and others who work with students obtain data and assessment evidence about how each student is progressing, what the student knows and can do, and what must be done to further develop and encourage the student to take ownership of his/her learning.

The Learning Cycle will help all who are engaged in and plan for student success in a process of making more informed long and short - cycle assessment decisions.

WRPS Learning Cycle has Four Key Elements:

Outcomes Planning

Question: What exactly do we expect students to learn?

Practice/Instruction

Question: How should we modify our instruction to actively involve students in the mastery of their learning?

Assessment

Question: What are we going to do when students do not learn?

Question: How will we know if students are learning?

Evaluation

Question: What value is the assessment evidence?

When the School Division plans learning activities for teachers we call this the Learning Cycle **Content** – our focus is on student learning.

- Our goal: To improve student engagement, learning, and performance.
 - By implementing assessment strategies to inform instruction and instill student self responsibility.
 - By applying the right instructional strategies to actively involve students in the mastery of their learning.



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Type 2 – Dates: September 2, 2009 and April 30, 2010.

These sessions are for each school to integrate divisional assessment and instructional strategies into their school improvement plans.

- When the School or site plans learning activities for teachers we call this the Learning Cycle **Context** – schools focus is on school improvement.
- Instructional Leaders need to be very knowledgeable about specific factors that contribute to student achievement, shortfalls, and successes such as instructional strategies, assessment practices, descriptive feedback techniques, checking for understanding, or delivery of learner outcomes and pacing, and connect these factors to student achievement.

Type 3 – Dates: **Half Day** - September 25, 2009 (afternoon), October 30, 2009 (afternoon), November 26, 2009 (afternoon), and February 26, 2010 (afternoon). See your school administrator for dismissal times.

These sessions are for each teacher to implement good assessment and instructional strategies into the classroom. These are half day sessions. In order for teacher to work together on individual improvement goals, over a 7 month period we need to spread out the teacher learning sessions. At the present time the Board has set aside 7 days, 5 are being used for type 1, 2, and 4 activities. That leaves 2 learning days for teacher to work on improving their classroom practices. Research tells us that this is not sufficient time for active learning by teachers to transform their teaching. To accommodate teachers we decided to spread these learning opportunities over 6 months, as indicated above.

- When teachers plan learning activities we call this the Learning Cycle **Design** – The Active, Sustained Learning by all Teachers. Teachers will be asked to commit to identify, document and implement an improvement goal by the end of September 2009.

Type 4 – Date: September 3, 2009

This session is set aside for a variety of in-services, training sessions, new staff orientation, ATA common collaborative sessions etc.

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For further information contact:
George Ollenberger
Director of Instruction
Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools
Phone: 780-352-6018