

Differentiated PD at K108

Constance Hahn: Differentiated professional development at PS 108 is all about moving student achievement through the teacher's professional development. A vision is that our children grow to be lifelong learners as we are all lifelong learners. We begin by looking at the teacher's background. Did they have an education background? Are they a fellow? Where are they coming from? Do they have previous experience in a different sector other than New York City Department of Education. That all makes a tremendous difference. And how we are going to differentiate that professional development?

So you're really studying the individual. What is it that they need to know to ensure the students have success this school year? So we're looking at the grade that they're going to move into, in the dynamics, looking in at what curriculum areas they're going to teach. Looking at, if they're going to have a partner teacher or if they're going to be responsible for everything.

Jennifer Amato Persaud: So we have faculty conferences using a continuum of teacher development.

Teachers actually look at the continuum and see where they are as a teacher and where they feel that they need to go as a teacher.

Gilda Galassi: So it's not only with the teacher feels he or she needs, it's what the data shown us they need. And then it's also what school leaders and staff developers know what the teacher might need because you might not yourself understand the things you yet don't know.

Melissa Vega: I had a formal observation recently and we noticed that I may have needed some assistance with shared reading. So I actually went on a walkthrough this week to an intervisitation to see a colleague of mine conduct a shared reading using the Smartboard.

John Rini: I first thought it was a meeting the administration or staff development team discussing what my strengths and weaknesses were, with the kind of accountable talk within the class and then it was visit to the intervisitation to see what all other teachers are able to incorporate in the day and then I am supposed to work and incorporate it myself into the day. And then I got the support from the people coming in to support me with what I was doing, give me suggestions with it, and work with it that way.

Rebecca Melzer: We have a great support team. We have our staff developers. We have our administrators that anyone at any time can come in and either support you with a co-teaching or modeling lesson or just sitting down and talking to someone informally.

Jennifer Amato Persaud: We are working on the teachers having our gradual release of support where we're doing modeling with maybe a couple of days. And then now we're going to move on to co-teaching with the teachers and then we become the observers where we are just basically just tweaking the pieces that the teachers still need to work on. And then at the end of that we set up the intervisitations for other teachers that we feel need that same lesson that we just modelled for, that usually takes about two to three weeks of that with one teacher. And then we have the intervisitation with other teachers now watch that teacher as that model teacher, rather than us being the model now and a teacher that we worked with becomes the model.

Narrator: The tapestry of professional development at K108 includes grade conferences, mentoring, new teacher meetings, videotaping lessons, observations and co-teaching, low-inference transcripts, demonstration lessons, inter-visitations and intra-visitations, outside conferences, after school and Saturday workshops, book studies, OSI consultant, inquiry teams, and staff developers.

Constance Hahn: In order to continuously provide such a tapestry of professional development, you have to have key players. You have to have a team. It's all about collaboration in the meeting of the minds to see what each person needs and to see what each person can offer. Every staff member in our building becomes a staff developer. Whether you are a classroom teacher, a specialty teacher or you have the official title of a staff developer. And everyone's told that from pretty much their interview here.

Kristy Ferrante: Last show setup as a model classroom for guided reading in the conferences where I got to do book studies and host inter-visitations and all that kind of led up to me being pulled out in class to becoming a staff developer. Now we work on closely one on one other teachers to share that knowledge with them.

Constance Hahn: It's an expectation that you're going to be a lifelong learner and that you are going to share your knowledge and you are going to receive knowledge and that's powerful.

Rebecca Melzer: Whenever we attend the outside workshop or any workshop, it's our responsibility to turnkey. If John went to a math meeting, it's his responsibility to go back to administration turnkey, see what we can do and then we take it to the next level.

Gilda Galassi: It doesn't matter what level of years you have in education, you always have something to offer and you always have something to learn. They challenge one another because when you know your colleagues can walk into your room at any time, you always self reflect because you want to be proud of what your colleagues see you doing.

Melissa Vega: The professional development that I feel has met most of my needs at this point has been the new teacher meetings along with the mentorship that I received as a first year teacher. We would meet every Friday 8:00 in the morning and that would be just an open forum where they would teach us things that we needed to know as being a new teacher in the public school system. And also being a safe haven in a sense to voice our concerns, our frustrations, our agonies, our cries, our smiles throughout a first year teaching and just having a support system where you know it's okay you're not by yourself, and if you need the help I'm here for you.

Lisa Donovan: As far as people will come to the school from other schools, I know one thing that they always say to me as a chapter person is "Wow! The professional development here is wonderful. We never got opportunities like that at the school where we were at."

John Rini: It gave me an opportunity to change my whole idea about teaching. And I don't think, I think we've got to a point of teaching where you say there's nothing that I can benefit from then maybe teaching isn't professional for you because I think it's changing as the students change as the years change, as the curriculums change. So you always have that opportunity to see as the newer teachers were just coming out of school or attacking their classrooms to maybe, someone who's been teaching for 30, 35 years and you have everything in between. So given the opportunity to see different strategies, different techniques and then have their meaning and support from the administration, I think I'm growing as a teacher. I'm getting better as a teacher and it's all because of the opportunities I have here at PS 108 to make that better for me.