Organizing Teacher Collaboration between Schools for Student Achievement
## Angela Gomez; March 14, 2011; EDLD 655
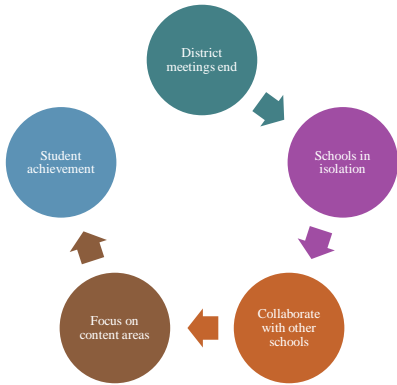## University of Oregon

Introduction

Problem

District schools are small, typically with one teacher per grade in a school. Neighboring district schools have larger student populations and thus more teachers per grade level.

Teachers in Each Grade Level

3rd Grade
2nd Grade
1st Grade
Kindergarten

0   2   4   6

■ Neighboring District School
■ Home District School
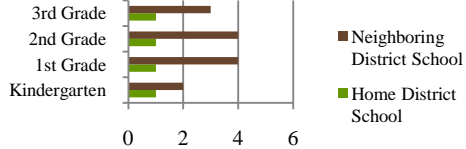
In the fall of 2010, the district held three meetings for teachers to learn about the process of curriculum mapping, which they began with other teachers at their grade levels.

- District meetings end
- Schools in isolation
- Collaborate with other schools
- Focus on content areas
- Student achievement

Teachers need adequate time to reflect on teaching in their content area with other professionals (Johnson & Fargo, 2010; Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010), to participate in curriculum and data analysis, and to share leadership for effective professional development (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

Goal: Regularly meet with other district schools to grow professionally and increase student achievement in specific content areas.

Alternatives to the Problem

- Collaborate on-line with other teachers via chat or other shared collaborative media such as Google Docs
- Utilize technology to expand collaboration to other schools across the country
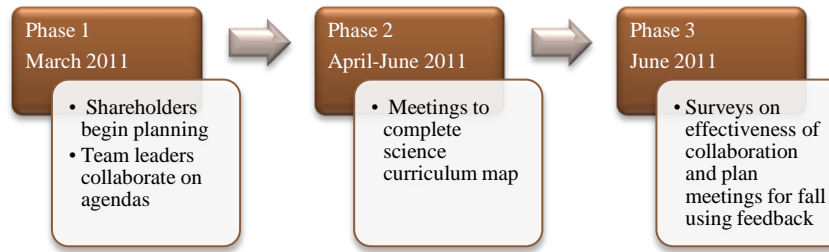
Details of the Plan

Shareholders

Teachers
Team Leaders
Administrators
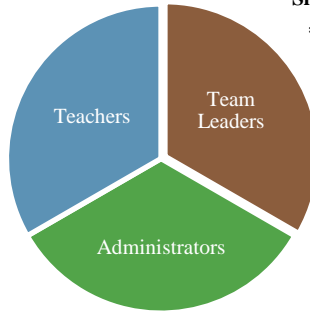
* *Administrators*- Determine appropriate meeting times for collaboration between schools, and provide resources for success.
* *Teachers*- Determine team leaders from the faculty to lead meetings, and work positively to ensure success of the collaboration.
* *Team Leaders*- Determine the agenda for meetings, coordinate travel, and set up for meetings.

Timeline

Phase 1 March 2011
- Shareholders begin planning
- Team leaders collaborate on agendas

Phase 2 April-June 2011
- Meetings to complete science curriculum map

Phase 3 June 2011
- Surveys on effectiveness of collaboration and plan meetings for fall using feedback

Resource Impacts

Component	Tangible Costs/Benefits	Intangible Costs/Benefits
Communication-Phone calls and email	Included in budget fixed costs/No extra monetary resources	Time from teachers' and administrators' schedules/Informed staff and clear communication
Meeting space and time	No costs-Early release days/No subs or extra paid time off	Strain on the commuting schools/Change of place and different perspective
Meeting agenda and set up	Costs for refreshments, possible costs through professional development funds for resources or speakers/Well-fed teachers and increased resources in learning	Time from team leaders' schedules/Happy teachers, well-organized meetings that become incentives to continue collaboration

Outcome Projections

Successful Teacher Collaboration

Short-term → Lightened work load → Support system

Long-term → Professional growth → Student achievement
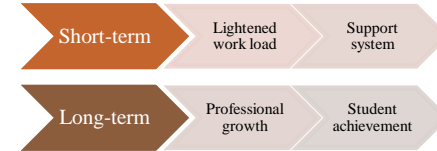
Success Criteria
- Aligned with school and district policy
- Collaborative conditions established
- Focused on improved student learning
- Data used to inform work
- Willingness to share about one's practice

(Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2007)

References

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2007). *Maximizing the impact of teacher collaboration*. Retrieved from http://www.centerforcsri.org/files/TheCenter_NL_Mar07.pdf

Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan,76*, 597–604. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20405410

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Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, F. (2010). *Professional Development in the United States: Trends and challenges.* (Executive Summary). Retrieved from the National Staff Development Council website http://www.nsdc.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf