



Fall 2006

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Featured Article

Title: "Is Your Staff Development Program Working?"

Education World

Author: Lorrie Jackson

To read the article: [click here](#)

Did you know...?

- **57%** of public school teachers with less than 5 years experience felt prepared or very well prepared to **handle a range of classroom management situations**
- **80%** of public school teachers with less than 5 years experience felt prepared or very well prepared to **teach the subject matter**

Reference: U.S. Department of Education, *Schools and Staffing Survey* ([click for table](#))

- The projected ratio of pupil/teacher for 2007 is 15.3, compared with 17.1 10 years ago

Reference: National Center for Education Statistics

- It was more likely that private school teachers who moved between schools, moved to a public school



Starting the School Year:

Connecting With Staff

Now that classes have begun, teachers are working on learning who their students are. They are asking themselves questions like: what strengths does my class have? What are the students' learning styles?

It is also likely that district administrators are probably asking themselves similar questions about their staff. The answers to these questions about staff fit into a larger picture for the district—which includes the overall goal of the district, the district's strategic plan, meeting accountability standards, etc.

So, what are the results of making this connection with district staff? In an article published in *Principal Leadership*, one district was able to connect with staff about their staff development programs. Areas of perceived need were explored in the needs assessment survey conducted with staff members. While reviewing results of the survey, they found two themes that—as stated in the article— "became the heart of the staff development program."

Because of the effort made to connect with staff and understand their needs as it related to their staff development program, the district felt that "the general consensus of the staff is that this was just the beginning of a continual program of research and application of findings..."

Not only can a staff survey provide direction for staff development, but it can provide some general understanding of staff perception, ideas and concerns for the new school year. For example, a staff survey could:

- **Examine** teacher's concerns about student issues for the new school year
- **Evaluate** training, curriculum development, and other staff development programs and services
- **Explore** perceptions and opinions about larger issues facing the district

Research can **guide a district's future** based on data received and information learned. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. provides information and services, which will allow you to plan and make informed decisions based on **benchmarking data** about staff opinions, concerns and perceptions within the district.

when they obtained a state certification in their main assignment. For example, in a study, 58.6% of teachers who moved, moved to public schools

Reference: National Center for Education Statistics, *click for Issue Brief* (September 2006)

Useful Links

National Staff Development Council

A site focused on "high quality professional learning" – Check out some of their great articles about Staff Development

LookSmart

A search engine for articles from a variety of educational journals—for free!

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Browse research studies related to Board Certification

PBS TeacherLine

Another great link to professional development resources for teachers and administrators; [click here](#) to view the courses they are offering for the 2006-2007 school year

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Article reference: "Teacher-Made Staff Development: Something for Everyone" by Ellen H. McCarthy: *Principal Leadership*, December 2005.

Opinions from Across the District

Students, Staff and the Community Speak

Many school districts conduct research with their students, or their staff, or their community, but very few districts make the effort to conduct research with students, staff and the community at the same time.



Many of the issues facing a school district impact more than one constituent group. For example, issues of school safety directly affect both students and staff, and the community becomes concerned based on what they may hear about school safety. When students, staff and the community are all asked for input on an issue like school safety, it provides more of a 360-degree assessment of the situation, the concerns, and the needs from everyone involved.

School districts that are progressive with their strategic planning recognize that measuring success for many of their goals will involve collecting information from students, staff and the community. To benchmark progress toward goals, districts have conducted annual surveys of students, staff and the community at the same time. Some school districts



have developed strategic plans that clearly recognize that students, staff and the community should all recognize progress in the district at the same time. For example, success is not realized if only the community feels progress is being made, while students and staff may not.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. has worked with districts to understand how the concerns and opinions of students, staff and the community can be used to develop plans and benchmark progress. Student and staff surveys can be distributed in the school buildings, while community surveys conducted by telephone are quick and cost-effective methods of conducting research. Similar questions on all three surveys allow for comparisons of the results from students, staff and the community, and clearly identify areas of consensus between the groups.

For more information, call (800) 724-9994 or browse the website www.perspec.com.

In the Next Issue:



How to Get the School Board on Board

Read a summary of a whitepaper we developed specifically for school districts.

Did you receive the Educational CD-ROM?

We have developed a **resource** for school districts that outlines the services Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. offers. If you are **interested in receiving the CD-ROM**, please e-mail Katie at info@perspec.com. We will be happy to send the information.



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