NCCTQ Issue Forum

From Planning to Action:
Effectively Using your Professional Development Resources
NYS Teacher Centers

• The Greater Capital Region Teacher Center
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Teacher Centers

- Teacher Centers were originally founded in the United Kingdom
- Funded in U.S. as a national program in the 1970’s
- Lost national funding in 1982
- Established in NYS in 1984 with the advocacy of union groups especially NYSUT
Teacher Centers

- Teacher driven: professional development for teachers by teachers
- Must have a majority of teachers on the governing Policy Board appointed by the union
- Funding comes from the NYS Legislature and is now at $40,000,000
- There are 133 Teacher Centers in NYS of varying sizes
Greater Capital Region
Teacher Center

- Serves 22,000 educators in 93 school districts, 4 BOCES and 80 private schools
- Offers approximately 400 professional development programs a year to P-12 teachers in all subjects
- Programs range from expressed teacher needs such as forensic biology to national and state initiatives like National Board support groups and mentoring
Characteristics of teacher centers

- We are governed by teachers
- We work on the premise that the classroom teacher is the expert
- We are more flexible than most SED networks
- We partner with many, many other educational networks including but not limited to higher education, cultural institutes and businesses
Supporting Federal and State Initiatives

- NYS requires that each district have a Professional Development Plan that includes:
  - A mentor plan
  - Annual Professional Performance Reviews
  - Provision for every teacher to receive 175 hours of professional development every 5 years

And addresses NCLB requirements
NYS Professional Development Plans

- PDP teams must have a majority of teachers
- Must be based on local needs as identified by student data and local expertise
- The plan must be approved by the school board
Supporting Federal and State Initiatives

• The PDP must be based on student assessment data (we begin with a close examination of 3-8 ELA and math assessments)

• It must include specific programs tied to what students need to know and be able to do

• Must evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and the plan in improving what students know and can do
Professional Development Institute

- In addition to periodic dinner briefings on PDP, the Center heavily subsidizes three day-long professional development institutes.
- These are overnight experiences at beautiful and remote sites suitable for supporting sustained team building and intensive analysis and planning.
The PDP Institute

• Each district has a teacher Liaison, appointed by the union president, who serves as a contact between the Teacher Center and the district.

• Teams arrive with the following members
  – Teacher leaders
  – Administrators
  – Parent member
  – Higher ed. member (if there is one)
The PDP Institute Agenda

• Update on Federal and State Educational mandates
• Review of State regulations related to PDP (sometimes will have expertise from SED)
• Examine district specific student assessment data especially 3-8 ELA and math assessments (with expertise from BOCES data analysts)
• Develop a team work response to emerging gaps and strengths
• Develop an evaluation plan
How does this work continue?

- District PDP teams may return for further time working as a team on district identified focus.
- Districts may seek professional development from a number of providers including all of the educational networks in NYS.
What are the results

• Teams leave with
  – A binder of material on PDP including all relevant regulations and Federal allocations of funding
  – The skill to use student assessment data to inform instruction (and the PDP)
  – An awareness of some of the PD resources available
  – A sense of team work fostered between administrators and teacher union leaders