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Organizing for Staff Development in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D.)
Capstone

Submitted by
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To the Harvard Graduate School of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education Leadership

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Dedication

For Dad

Carl E. Brown I

(1949–2003)

Thanks for all of the sacrifices you made for our family; they were not made in vain. I know that you would be so proud of my journey, so this capstone is for you.

Acknowledgements

I would like to start by extending a heartfelt thanks to my capstone committee. Andres Alonso and Elizabeth City, I am humbled to have had the opportunity to work with you. Thank you for freely sharing your expertise, pushing me to think more deeply, and supporting me through all of the unexpected challenges of this year. Christine Fowler-Mack, I learned so much about leadership merely from being in your presence and watching the way you navigated the daily challenges of leadership in an urban district. Thank you for your mentorship.

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Finally, I thank God for life and for being the ultimate source of my strength.

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Abstract

In 2012 the Cleveland Metropolitan School District undertook a major reform effort known as the Cleveland Plan. The foundation of the Cleveland Plan is the transition from a traditional district structure to a portfolio management model. With this major change also came the new Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES). This system was designed as a tool for transformative staff development as well as evaluation, but as the early years of TDES implementation focused on understanding and using the new evaluation rubric, the developmental focus took a back seat. Now in the third year of TDES districtwide implementation, district leadership has established staff development as a priority. The portfolio model has unique implications for instruction, central office organization, and instructional leadership, all of which must be considered to create a comprehensive staff development plan. In this capstone I describe my residency in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and my work with a cross-departmental design team to articulate a professional development strategy for the district. I explain the benefits and challenges of engaging teachers and central office staff in strategy development and execution. I conclude with recommendations to keep Cleveland schools on the path toward improved staff development and with lessons for other portfolio districts seeking to improve teaching and learning.

Background: Cleveland Metropolitan School District

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), located in Cleveland, Ohio, is the second-largest school district in the state, with an enrollment of 39,000 students in its 103 schools. In 2011, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson organized a group of stakeholders, which included CMSD leadership, community foundations, and charter operators, to create a plan for dramatic transformation known as the Cleveland Plan. The district was ripe for bold changes, considering that in the previous decade CMSD had faced a host of difficulties, including an enrollment decrease of 30,000 students and resulting school closures, mounting fiscal challenges, a significant number of low-performing schools, and a graduation rate among the worst in the nation. With the backing of the teachers union and bipartisan political support, implementation of the plan began during the 2012–2013 school year. "Our goal is that at the end of six years, we will have tripled the number of Cleveland students enrolled in high-performing district and charter schools, and eliminated failing schools" (CMSD, 2012, p. 12). Only 8% of students were in high-performing schools prior to the start of this initiative.

Under the Cleveland Plan, CMSD adopted a portfolio approach. As a portfolio district, CMSD operates as a system of autonomous district and charter schools that offer a variety of educational programs from which families can choose. The portfolio strategy has four main parts (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The Cleveland Plan's Portfolio Strategy.

Source: CMSD, 2012, p. 6.

1. *Grow the number of high-performing district and charter schools*[1] *in Cleveland and close and replace failing schools.* This is achieved by giving greater autonomy to high-performing schools, opening new innovative school models, and intervening with the lowest-performing schools.
2. *Create the Cleveland Transformation Alliance to ensure accountability for all public schools in the city.* The alliance is composed of members from the school district, charter schools, the business sector, and community organizations. This group is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Cleveland Plan, assessing school quality, and communicating with parents about school choices.

[1]In Ohio, *charter schools* are schools that are publicly funded and privately operated. The schools are tuition free and have fewer regulations than district schools may have. The Ohio Department of Education grants authority to sponsors to open and manage the charter schools. CMSD is one of the 65 charter school sponsors in the state and currently sponsors 10 schools and partners with 7 others.

3. *Focus district's central office on key support and governance roles and transfer authority and resources to schools.* Central office is responsible for providing supports to the schools and coordinating processes such as enrollment, payroll, and facilities management. With this structure, more money is distributed to schools and spending decisions are controlled at the building level.
4. *Invest and phase in high-leverage system reforms across all schools from preschool to college and career.* These reforms include expanding preschool programs, a focus on college and workforce readiness, the opportunity to increase learning time for students through a year-round school calendar, an intense focus on teacher recruitment and development, investing in instructional technology, and partnering with high-performing charter schools.

Although the portfolio strategy emphasizes school autonomy, it is important to note that the district identified twenty-three schools as "investment schools," which are among the lowest-performing schools in the district. The CEO and district leaders can create corrective action plans that outline the goals for these schools and identify community partners who will work with the schools to improve their outcomes.

The Cleveland Plan has unique features, some of which required special legislation (i.e., House Bill 525) to be implemented (Appendix A contains a

summary of House Bill 525). One aspect of relevance to my project was the creation of the Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES). The goal of TDES was to replace the checklist-style evaluation tool with a system that encouraged self-reflection, goal setting, and "transformative" feedback for personalized professional development. The TDES steering committee, composed of representatives from CMSD administration and the Cleveland Teachers Union, has been leading the project since 2010. The new evaluation rubric, based on the work of Charlotte Danielson, was piloted in the 2011–2012 and 2012-2013 school years, and districtwide implementation followed in the 2013–2014 school year.

Another significant aspect of the plan was the design of the Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System. House Bill 525 required the district to abandon the traditional form of teacher compensation, which determined salary based on years of experience and level of education. The new Cleveland Differentiated Compensation System bases pay increases on the attainment of Achievement Credits (ACs). Currently, the only way teachers can accumulate ACs is through their TDES annual performance rating. The following table shows the four possible TDES ratings and the ACs that are earned with each.

Teacher Development and Evaluation System Rating	**Number of Achievement Credits Earned**
Accomplished	15
Skilled	8
Developing	5
Ineffective	0

This radical plan for transformation was in many ways a lifeline for the district. Without the Cleveland Plan, the district would have faced the possibility of a state takeover. It also seems to have helped to restore the community's faith in the district. After the Cleveland Plan was announced, the community voted for the first time in sixteen years to pass an operating levy, without which the district would have faced a $50 million budget deficit and the possibility of 500 layoffs. Also, after years of poor performance metrics, there are now glimmers of hope. For the first time in more than a decade, Cleveland has shown growth on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The district improved in all four sections of National Assessment of Educational Progress, one of only three urban districts to do so. Additionally, CMSD saw gains in K–3 literacy on the state report card and a record high graduation rate of 66%.

The Cleveland Plan has also come with its share of challenges. Implementation of the plan has caused an even greater rift in the already strained relationship between CMSD administration and teachers. Teachers do not feel like they can trust administration, and they believe that administrators don't trust and respect them as professionals. At the April 28, 2015, school board meeting, Cleveland Teachers Union president David Quolke reiterated these sentiments:

> So tonight—my colleagues and I are here together to stand before you and let you know that the antics and deprofessionalization continues and the district's current actions are now forcing you to also go back on the

> promises and commitments that you voted on in 2013 and 2014 (Quolke, 2015b).

The collective bargaining agreement between CMSD administration and the Cleveland Teachers Union expires in 2016, so CMSD and the union are working to negotiate a new contract during the 2015–2016 school year.

Strategic Project

I attended the senior leadership team retreat in August 2015, at which the superintendent and cabinet set out the high-priority work areas for the 2015–2016 school year. One priority was to create a teacher development framework. Over the past three years, there has been a heavy focus on designing and implementing the new evaluation and compensation systems. Teacher development was intended to be a large part of the plan's implementation, but to date, professional development has understandably centered on helping teachers learn and understand the new evaluation tool. Now the focus will shift to embedding the teaching framework into practice and engaging teachers in the types of learning and growth activities that lead to improved instruction and better outcomes for students.

The need for a staff development strategy is a symptom of other challenges the organization faces. First, there is a quality problem: many teachers report ineffective professional development activities. Sometimes teachers are required to participate in school-based professional development that is unrelated to the subjects they teach, and the professional development

leaders in the district do not have a shared understanding of what high-quality professional development looks like. Second, there are problems of clarity: teachers often hear conflicting messages about instruction from the leaders of professional development. This indicates a lack of coherence in the definition of high-quality instruction. The district must address these quality and clarity problems in a way that considers the unique contextual challenges that come with a portfolio district that is struggling to regain the trust of its teaching force.

I was brought on board to convene a design team to develop a professional development framework for the district. The framework would help clarify instruction and provide guidelines for how CMSD develops teachers' practice. Several questions guided my project: How do you organize for learning in a portfolio system? What does it mean to have a coherent approach to staff development in a portfolio system? How much can be directed from the district level without compromising school autonomy?

Review of Knowledge for Action

To answer my guiding questions and inform the actions I would take over the course of my project, I turned to research and best practice literature. This review of knowledge for action examines four topics: the portfolio management model, central office transformation, professional development practices, and teaming.

CMSD is in the early stages of its portfolio strategy, so an understanding of the foundational principles of a portfolio management model would help to ensure that we create a staff development strategy that supports this model. With the transition to a portfolio model, CMSD has been making changes to the central office structure. Central office is shifting from a "highly bureaucratized, standardized and tightly controlled organization" to "a differentiated management system" that "drives resources to the school building" (CMSD, 2012, p. 7). Therefore, we must understand this new model of a central office that supports schools' needs.

Since one problem in the district is ineffective professional development activities, I discuss best practices in staff development and adult learning. I also examine the relationship between professional development and teacher evaluation since the TDES system is intended to be both evaluative and developmental. Finally, since my task was to create a team to design the staff development strategy, I explore the concept of teaming to determine how it guided my work in CMSD.

Portfolio Management Models

More than forty U.S. cities have made the transition to a portfolio management model for their school districts. In a traditional district, a central office manages a group of schools that are relatively similar in their structure and functioning. In portfolio management models, the central office oversees a portfolio of schools (including charter schools), each of which might have a distinct structure and curricular model.

The specifics of a portfolio management model can vary from place to place. The Center for Reinventing Public Education (Yatsko, 2012) has identified seven pillars that make up strong portfolio management models.

1. *Good options and choices for all families.* Portfolio systems should offer a variety of school models. Families choose the schools their children will attend, which may or may not be the neighborhood school.
2. *School autonomy.* In a traditional system, the district determines the curriculum and instructional priorities and communicates them to the schools, and the principals make sure their schools are in compliance. The district also plays a large role in personnel decisions. The portfolio model introduces school autonomy, which gives principals more authority in hiring, school budgeting, and making curricular decisions.
3. *Performance-based accountability for schools.* District leaders in portfolio systems use a variety of tools to measure school progress. They analyze

standardized assessments, other student growth measures, attendance and graduation rates, and school climate indicators. Additionally, district leaders identify external factors that influence student performance. The district may choose to replicate successful school models while offering more support to struggling schools. Consistently underperforming schools may be closed or reopened with a new model.

4. *Pupil-based funding.* In a traditional district, money is allocated based on teaching positions and programs. Pupil-based funding means that money is allocated based on student enrollment. The portfolio model gives principals the flexibility to establish a budget that supports the goals and programs of their schools.
5. *Talent-seeking strategy.* Portfolio districts revise their recruiting strategies to ensure they are attracting high-performing teachers and principals.
6. *Sources of support.* A portfolio district has a variety of school operators, ranging from groups of teachers and administrators, charters, nonprofits, and community groups. Additionally, school support and services come from varied sources. Principals can use external vendors, local universities, businesses, and nonprofits to get the assistance they need.
7. *Public engagement.* Portfolio district leaders create a clear and consistent plan to communicate about the changes that are part of the transition to a portfolio model. Leaders present multiple opportunities for parents, families, and the broader community to voice their ideas and concerns.

District leaders also are intentional about building relationships with local businesses and nonprofits.

These seven pillars represent a significant pivot from traditional district operations. The central office can help or hinder the transition to school autonomy by the extent to which it supports the changes. As autonomous schools create their own unique identity and programming, a district's central office must respond with structural and functional changes in order to support all schools in a way that will improve instruction.

Central Office Changes

The typical central office function and structure has not been sufficient for supporting teaching and learning in schools. The traditional district central office was designed for administrative and compliance functions: facilities management, enrollment and other logistical concerns, and monitoring for compliance with state mandates.

In an effort to be more intentional about supporting teaching and learning, district central offices have begun making changes; for example, some districts are totally eliminating central offices in an effort to support school autonomy. Honig (2013) notes that these types of changes are inadequate and suggests that central offices should still support autonomous schools, but using a new structure.

Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, and Newton (2010) assert that true central office transformation happens when work is no longer done in silos and when everyone prioritizes the development of principals as instructional leaders. Principals—especially those in a portfolio model—are required to take on greater responsibility than ever before, and they require new types of support to help them meet these new demands. Each individual in central office should see his/her work as directly or indirectly tied to principal development. This type of transformation aligns with the portfolio management strategy, which places emphasis on the principal as the driver of change.

Honig et al. (2010) studied three districts that had undergone central office transformation. In all three, designated central office staff members, known as Instructional Leadership Directors, were responsible for principal development. They engaged in activities such as modeling and developing tools for principals, and they supported the principals' function as instructional leaders in the school. Others in the central office supported Instructional Leadership Director functions by providing professional development for them and by making sure their schedules allowed time for one-on-one work with principals.

These district offices also shifted from a project management approach to a case management approach. Case management means that staff from previously separated central office units (e.g., human resources, facilities maintenance) began working together to become experts in the needs of groups of schools. The focus was no longer on delivering services; rather, central office

staff collaborated to help schools strategize and solve problems. Honig (2013) found that central offices can function in this way by making sure a menu of support options are available from which principals can choose. The options are determined by taking stock of the types of instructional supports available from central office as well as those from external providers. These efforts should be coupled with an effort to decrease the amount of central office oversight (Honig, 2009).

Promoting Teacher Learning and Growth

In addition to revising central office structure and principal responsibilities, districts embarking on professional development redesign must also commit to embracing research-based strategies for professional development and adult learning.

Adult Development

Eleanor Drago-Severson (2007, 2008) conducted a study of public and private school leaders and identified the practices that led to "transformative learning" with their teachers. She describes transformative learning as a "process of changing our taken-for-granted mindsets and frames of reference . . . by making them more open, inclusive, reflective, and integrated. This enables us to envision alternative ways of thinking and to develop beliefs that can more appropriately guide behavior" (Drago-Severson, 2007, p. 75). This type of learning can lead to changes in teacher practice. She found that principals used four main strategies to promote transformative learning.

The first strategy is *teaming.* Principals in the study gave staff members opportunities for collaboration. Collaborative activities included team teaching, study groups, book clubs, shared decision making with school administration, and the chance to learn from teachers at other schools. Teaming supports an adult's development because it creates "a safe context for broadening perspective, taking risks, and considering new ways of thinking and acting" (Drago-Severson, 2007, p. 92).

The second strategy these principals employed was collegial inquiry. Collegial inquiry is "a dialog that centers on reflecting on one's assumptions and values as a part of the learning process" (Drago-Severson, 2007, p. 103) Examples include collaborative goal setting, written reflections used to prime group discussions, and curriculum mapping.

The third strategy the principals used was to design leadership roles. The principals created opportunities within schools for their teachers to lead or they encouraged district or outside leadership roles. These roles included teaching graduate courses, leading technology integration at the school level, and taking on decision-making authority. Leadership roles allow teachers to reflect with the administrator and colleagues about their own thinking and assumptions so that they can see how their assumptions influence their decision making. "The support of and challenging of one another's thinking [which is] established by the provision of leadership roles potentially and ideally facilitate transformational learning" (Drago-Severson, 2007, p. 102).

The final strategy was mentoring. Teachers were allowed to share their expertise, to work with others to inspire faith in the school's mission, and to be an emotional support to staff members.

Professional Development

Many of the structures that these principals put in place align with what other researchers have identified as best practices in school professional development. High-quality professional development has the following features:

- *Alignment*—aligning with school goals, district and state assessments, and other requirements
- *Content* —providing a clear connection to the content that teachers teach, with a focus on content-specific instructional strategies
- *Problems of practice*—creating strategies to help teachers address real problems they face in their contexts
- *Active learning*—presenting opportunities to see new strategies modeled and to practice new strategies
- *Collaboration*—offering opportunities to plan with colleagues, observe one another, and give feedback
- *Follow -up* —providing ongoing and sustained follow-up, which includes coaching and feedback (Darling-Hammond, 2013; DeMonte, 2013; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007).

These features characterize high-quality professional development, but researchers have also identified some significant challenges with professional

development in schools. Professional development activities are often disconnected from classroom practice, and the execution is short-term, often through single-session workshops (DeMonte, 2013). The New Teacher Project (2015) studied professional development in three large urban districts and one charter management organization, and its results called into question the billions of dollars spent annually on professional development. In their analysis of teacher evaluation ratings, the project researchers found that 70% of teachers maintained the same rating over time or showed a decline in performance despite professional development activities. This plateau in teacher growth was most evident for those with ten years or more of experience. Almost half of the experienced teachers were rated less than effective in one or more instructional skills. Those who showed improvement and those who did not improve engaged in similar types of professional development activities. Additionally, they spent roughly the same amount of time in these activities and displayed similar attitudes toward professional development. Therefore, it was difficult to draw conclusions about which activities or dispositions were correlated with teacher growth.

The teachers in the charter network—both novice and experienced teachers—showed a more consistent rate of growth. One hypothesis is that this is a result of the organizational structure; that is, the charter management organization had more clearly delineated roles related to supporting teachers.

> While a small number of central office staff do support teachers through observations and feedback, most central office staff are not dropping in

> and out of teachers' classrooms. Instead, the central office focuses primarily on setting instructional expectations, overseeing coaching school leaders on progress towards those expectations, generating data to support teachers and school leaders and organizing CMO-wide professional learning experiences (New Teacher Project, 2015, p. 31).

The building principals operated more like managers, and assistant principals were responsible for supporting teachers through weekly observations and 30-minute post-observation conferences. The districts they studied generally did not coordinate efforts to support teachers. Multiple central office personnel were doing the work of supporting teachers, but in different and sometimes conflicting ways.

Despite the dismal picture this research paints about the effectiveness of professional development efforts, they do not recommend a complete abandonment.

> While we found no set of specific development strategies that would result in widespread teacher improvement on its own, there are still clear next steps school systems can take to more effectively help their teachers. Much of this work involves creating the conditions that foster growth, not finding quick-fix professional development solutions (New Teacher Project, 2015, p. 3).

The New Teacher Project recommends that districts and networks acknowledge that professional growth is an individualized experience. Therefore, leaders should focus on making sure that teachers have (a) a clear picture of their performance, (b) a clear vision of what high-quality teaching looks like, and (c) a mechanism to see how they are progressing toward that vision.

Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

In the past 10 years, states and districts across the nation have completely revamped their teacher evaluation models. In many cases the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top grant competition was the impetus for this effort. Race to the Top required the implementation of a "rigorous" evaluation system that used multiple rating categories, used student growth as one measure for determining a teacher's rating, provided "timely and constructive feedback to teachers," and used evaluation data to make professional development decisions (Institute for Education Sciences, 2014). In response to the new evaluation systems, many districts are now working to align their staff development strategy with the competencies reflected in the evaluation rubric (Hamilton et al., 2014).

Darling-Hammond (2014) sees the potential teacher evaluation has for promoting professional growth but warns that this cannot be accomplished if evaluation is seen in isolation. Rather, there must be alignment between teacher evaluation and other functions, such as new teacher induction, daily professional practice, and professional learning opportunities. Goe, Biggers, and Croft (2012) echo Darling-Hammond's assertion that teacher evaluation should be part of a larger system that is focused on improving teaching and learning. Included in this system are high-quality professional growth opportunities: "When evaluation is aligned with professional development opportunities, we begin to see its formative uses and how evaluation itself becomes a form of professional development" (Goe, Biggers, & Croft, 2012, p. 15). Therefore, districts need to

spend time identifying the ways in which all initiatives work together to promote quality teaching and learning (Minnici, 2014).

Darling-Hammond (2013) suggests that a comprehensive teacher support and evaluation system should have the following attributes:

- Clear teaching standards that can be used to assess everyone from novices to accomplished teachers
- Evaluators who are instructional experts
- Multiple opportunities for high-quality feedback
- Formal or informal professional development opportunities that are connected to teachers' needs and goals
- The use of expert teachers to provide extra support to novice teachers and to experienced teachers who are having difficulty
- A committee of teachers and principals that oversees the evaluation process from development to ongoing monitoring.

Darling-Hammond cautions against a common mistake that can compromise the integrity of evaluation systems: relying on the building principal to bear the entire burden. When the principal is the sole entity responsible for all events (observations, feedback conferences, mentoring new teachers, coaching, making dismissal recommendations) in addition to all the other management responsibilities, teacher support often gets pushed to the back burner. Districts need to plan proactively to prevent this problem; for example, by distributing such responsibilities among accomplished teachers in the system.

> Access to expert teachers who are given time for coaching is critical to an effective evaluation system. Because good practice is best developed in practice, rather than in workshops, and because intensive assistance for struggling teachers is best provided by content-area teachers who can support planning and instruction, being able to deploy teaching experts where they are needed is an important resource for principals to have available (Darling-Hammond, 2013, p. 121).

One such example at use in schools is Peer Assistance and Review, in which an expert teacher is given full-time or part-time release to coach other teachers. Another way to use expert teachers is as evaluators, and teachers can opt into having one or more of their observations completed by these lead teachers.

DeMonte (2013) studied the Houston Independent School District as one district that is aligning professional development to evaluation standards. Houston hired 130 coaches to work as content area experts. The coaches received intensive training in the evaluation system and in strategies for supporting teacher growth. The district then used evaluation data to identify trends, and coaches were dispatched to schools based on their weak areas. The new strategy enabled the district to limit its reliance on external experts. It also invested in creating a video library that demonstrates the best practices of its own teachers in each of the evaluation areas.

Hamilton et al. (2014) conducted a study of seven sites (three districts and four charter management organizations) that were using teacher evaluation data to guide their professional development programs. One strategy that aided this alignment was to leverage technology resources. Districts created online platforms to make it easier to find professional development offerings that

aligned with each of the evaluation rubric categories. They also provided online classes, resources, and videos aligned to rubric areas. Districts and networks in the study utilized group learning strategies such as professional learning communities and instructional rounds. Leaders opened up more opportunities for effective teachers to provide professional development. Support was also differentiated based on performance. Some districts provided mandatory intensive coaching supports for teachers scoring on the lowest level of the rubric and offered the coaching as an option for those who were rated as needing improvement.

Some factors can complicate efforts to link evaluation directly to professional development. One such factor is that many teachers do not trust the evaluation system and do not trust that their evaluator can effectively coach them toward improvement (New Teacher Project, 2015). Fewer than half the teachers surveyed believed that their evaluation systems were fair and useful for identifying effective and ineffective teachers (Hamilton et al., 2014). Teachers' perception of the validity of the evaluations can influence their level of engagement with any professional development that may be tied to it:

> If teachers do not believe their evaluation systems are measuring their performance accurately, they will be unlikely to favor decisions to use these measures to determine what PD they receive. Similarly, if teachers believe that the evaluation system as a whole is unlikely to benefit them or their students, their level of support for evaluation-driven PD may be diminished (Hamilton et al., 2014, p. 22).

Still, the majority of the teachers surveyed agreed that the evaluation system helped them identify personal growth areas, noting that the observations were more useful than student achievement data (Hamilton et al., 2014).

Teaming

As CMSD moves toward articulating its staff development strategy, it is important to consider all the audiences that will be directly or indirectly affected. Principals, network leaders, instructional coaches, curriculum specialists, teachers, and others will have staff development responsibilities, and therefore it is critical that the strategy represent a coordinated, cross-departmental approach. I intended to work with individuals from multiple departments to collaboratively develop the strategy and implementation plan, and Edmondson's teaming approach provided the structure necessary to approach this task.

Amy Edmondson (2012) recommends teaming for situations in which group membership may be fluid or the team is assembled for a temporary purpose. Edmondson describes teaming in this way:

> Simply put, teaming is a way of working that brings people together to generate new ideas, find answers, and solve problems. . . . Teaming is worth learning, because it is essential for improvement, problem solving, and innovation in a functioning enterprise. The complex interdependencies involved in learning and innovation require the interpersonal skills necessary to negotiate disagreements, overcome technical jargon, and revisit ideas or problems until solutions emerge—all activities supported by teaming (Edmondson, 2012, p. 24).

Edmondson identified four leadership actions that promote teaming:

1. *Frame the situation for learning*. The leader does this by promoting collaboration and emphasizing that the goal is not to produce a perfect

product the first time. If leaders can present themselves as interdependent group members who will also need feedback, the team will be more likely to collaborate. When leaders ask questions and listen to group members, it creates an environment where group members feel comfortable providing their input. Also, a leader who clearly communicates a compelling purpose motivates group members to persist through the project.

2. *Make it psychologically safe to learn*. Psychological safety is a state in which group members feel they can express their opinions without fear. Group members believe that when they make a mistake, they will still be highly regarded by the group. Psychological safety does not imply the absence of conflict. Conflict is inevitable, but it can be productive when it occurs in an atmosphere of trust and respect. Additionally, psychological safety encourages innovation because group members feel comfortable enough to share ideas that may seem unorthodox. Leaders can promote psychological safety by being accessible to group members, acknowledging their own limitations, demonstrating that they value the input of others, and setting clear boundaries for what is acceptable.
3. *Learn to learn from failure.* The leader identifies organizational failures as opportunities to change course. Edmondson defines failure as "a deviation from a desired outcome" (2012, p. 152). When people remain silent about small failures, the organization does not have the opportunity to learn

from them. Larger-scale failures often occur because small failures were overlooked.

4. *Span occupational and cultural boundaries*. The leader encourages collaboration that extends beyond the boundaries of the team members' identity groups. Boundaries can exist as a result of physical distance, status or rank, and level of expertise. Leaders can encourage boundary spanning by articulating a superordinate goal. Although individuals may have their own smaller tasks to work on, the superordinate goal is the larger goal that all smaller tasks are working together to support. Leaders can also promote boundary spanning by being inclusive of all members during conversations and by helping the group to establish a collective identity.

Theory of Action

As I consider the literature on portfolio models, central office reorganization, teacher learning and growth, and teaming, I will approach the design of a professional development framework with the following theory of action:

If I…

- Assemble a team with representatives from various departments
- Establish a trusting team environment in which team members are willing to share their perspectives and engage in an iterative process
- Establish a clear vision for the team's work

- Create processes for communicating with and gathering feedback from district stakeholders

Then…

- The team will work together to develop a professional development framework that represents best practices in professional development
- The team will develop a prioritized implementation plan that has approval from the CEO and buy-in from teachers
- Stakeholders in the district will have a consistent understanding of the CMSD approach to professional development
- The district can implement a coherent approach to staff development in Cleveland's portfolio system

Description of the Strategic Project

Current State of Professional Development in Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Since my project concerns improving professional development in CMSD, it is helpful to understand the previous professional development structure. The 103 schools in the district are divided into eight networks. In the past, clusters of schools were led by an academic superintendent whose primary function was to monitor operations and ensure compliance. Now, under the Cleveland Plan's portfolio strategy, the school groups are led by network support leaders. This change in title represents a shift from a focus on compliance to a focus on supporting principals. Each network has a support team that includes curriculum and instruction representatives, an action team coach, a barrier breaker, a special education partner, a Humanware[2] partner, a financial partner, a talent partner, and a family and community engagement coordinator (Table 1).

Table 1

Network Support Leaders and Their Jobs

Role	Description
Network Support Leader	The network support leader's primary responsibility is supporting the principals in his/her portfolio of schools.
Action Team Coach	There are 1–3 action team coaches per network. The action team coach is responsible for working collaboratively with principals and building leadership teams to analyze data, assessing the schools' needs, and developing a plan of

[2]The Humanware initiative focuses on students' social and emotional development. "In addition to the Hardware we employ to ensure safe schools—CMSD is committed to addressing the social and emotional element of school safety, to head off safety incidents before they occur" (http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/Page/398)

	action to address those needs. This person also coordinates the rest of the support team to make sure they are providing the resources and services schools need.
Humanware Partner	Humanware partners support schools with the implementation of social-emotional learning programs and provide guidance on how to create a safe and supportive school environment.
Curriculum and Instruction Manager	Each network has 2 or 3 curriculum and instruction managers. They help their schools with curriculum implementation and professional development needs.
Barrier Breaker	The barrier breaker assists his/her portfolio of schools with operational and logistical issues, such as purchasing and following up on necessary school repairs. The barrier breaker takes care of noninstructional tasks so that the principal has more time to engage in instructional leadership activities.
Talent Management Partner	The talent management partner works with the principal to analyze school-based human resources data (e.g., evaluation ratings, absenteeism) and helps to fill school vacancies.
Special Education Partner	The special education partner assists schools with monitoring data, timelines, and IEPs while supporting intervention specialists.
Financial Partner	The financial partner helps principals and their leadership teams with the student-based budgeting process.
Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinator	The FACE coordinator works with schools to help them create and implement plans for interacting with families and community organizations.

Support teams attend monthly meetings with the network support leaders and conduct weekly learning walks in the schools they support. This service model has been compared to a medical team. The principal is the instructional leader at the school and is supported by "a team of skilled professionals [who] rally for each school in such a way that organized analysis, diagnosis and prescription serve student learning" (Pierre-Farid, 2015), rather than the old model, which designed a set of standardized supports for schools. A principal

may choose to use the budget to pay for additional supports, such as an instructional coach or a curriculum and instruction specialist on staff.

With the shift to school autonomy under the Cleveland Plan, more staff development occurs at the school site. The district's current agreement with the Cleveland Teachers Union calls for 200 minutes per week to be used for professional activities. Teachers can choose how to spend 50 of those minutes, and a minimum of 50 minutes are to be used for collaborative activities (e.g., professional learning communities). Each school has an academic progress team, composed of teachers and paraprofessionals, that is supposed to identify the needs of the teachers in the building and plan the calendar for how the remaining minutes will be used. The professional development activities that occur during these remaining minutes are sometimes facilitated by the building principal and sometimes by an outside consultant or a person from the school's support team.

CMSD has an Office of Professional Development, whose function is largely logistical. The three-person department manages room reservations at the district's professional development center, awards continuing education units to teachers for attending professional development sessions, and reports licensure renewal information to the state. The administrator of the Office of Professional Development also schedules the dates for the required new-teacher professional development sessions and secures curriculum and instruction personnel to present for these required sessions.

This year there were three districtwide professional development days, and the activities for those days were coordinated in a variety of ways. The curriculum and instruction team arranged a small selection of offerings for specific audiences on each day. For example, the early childhood department planned an early learning conference on the February professional development day. Up to 350 K–3 teachers could choose from various sessions offered during this full-day conference. Network leaders could also choose to coordinate staff development activities on these days. One network leader organized the elementary schools in her network to attend sessions on the reading and math curriculum. Those not attending district- or network-sponsored events attended school-based sessions or worked independently in their buildings. In addition to these professional development days, the early childhood department sponsors a monthly professional development session for pre-kindergarten teachers.

Professional development is implicit in the TDES. Four domains in the TDES rubric are used for evaluation: Domain 1, Planning and Preparation; Domain 2, Classroom Environment; Domain 3, Instruction; Domain 4, Professional Responsibilities. Teachers begin the year with individual self-reflection, considering their strengths and weaknesses in each domain as well as their students' needs. They write out goals for the year in a growth plan and review the goals with their principal. Once goals are set, there are five observation events: a formal announced observation, a formal unannounced observation, and three walk-throughs. The formal announced observation is

accompanied by pre- and post-observation conferences with the principal. A post-observation conference also occurs after unannounced observations. These conferences with the principal are intended to help teachers continue to reflect on their practice and give principals the chance to offer support as teachers work toward their goals.

The labor agreement provides additional direction for professional development as it relates to TDES: "A rating of Ineffective in one or more of the power components may trigger interventions to assist teacher development of improved practice" (Cleveland Teachers Union, 2013, p. 59). Currently teachers with ineffective ratings receive coaching support from master teachers through the district's Peer Assistance and Review program.

The TDES steering committee oversees the implementation of all TDES processes: "Additionally, it will be the task of this steering committee to oversee the implementation, TDES-related professional development, communication, and data produced by TDES. They may also make recommendations for continued developmental changes to TDES" (Cleveland Teachers Union, 2013, p. 189). Because my project was directly related to the developmental focus of the evaluation system, the co-chairs of the steering committee sent a letter to teachers and administrators during the first week of school to introduce me and the work I would be doing (Appendix B).

Project Phases

My project consisted of four main phases. I started with a series of introductory interviews and a review of district documents that gave me insight into the current state of professional development. From there, I formed the Teacher Development Design Team to work on creating a professional development strategy for the district. Next I invited feedback from various stakeholder groups to help inform our strategy. Finally we drafted the professional development framework and an implementation timeline. I discuss each phase in detail below.

Phase 1: Document Review and Interviews

One of the first things I did upon entry was to get to know the organization by reviewing documents. The three documents—the TDES survey, the Conditions for Teaching Survey, and the School Quality Review report—gave me insight into some teachers' perspectives on TDES and professional development. It is important to note that each of these documents represented a small sample: only 31% of teachers completed the TDES survey, 43% completed the conditions for teaching survey, and only 10 schools were involved in the pilot year of the School Quality Review.

CMSD administered the TDES survey in the spring of 2015 to all classroom teachers. The survey asks teachers a series of questions to gauge their understanding of the TDES process and to capture their perceptions about how it is influencing their practice. Those who responded generally had negative

feedback on the process and its impact. More than half the respondents felt they had not been properly trained in the evaluation process. Two-thirds of the teachers did not believe that TDES accurately reflected their teaching performance. Only 30% of the respondents felt the TDES process was helping to improve their practice.

CMSD, the Cleveland Teachers Union, and the American Institutes for Research collaborated to create the Conditions for Teaching survey, which was also administered to both teachers and administrators in the spring of 2015. Respondents gave feedback on their perceptions of their school's leadership and district policies, staff connections within the school, and the school's conditions. Overall, responses were positive regarding staff relationships and were more negative for district policies. More than half the respondents believed there were too many programs at the school and it was hard to keep up, with 71% saying that the district does not communicate initiatives in a timely manner. Only 35% felt that the district's communication with staff demonstrates mutual trust and respect, and 71% thought the district did not clearly communicate how various priorities connect to the district's vision and mission.

In the 2014–2015 school year, CMSD partnered with SchoolWorks to pilot the School Quality Review process. Teams of three or four people spent three days in each school observing instruction; speaking with teachers, students, and principals; and reviewing school documents. One of the areas assessed measured educators' opportunity to learn and the extent to which the "school

designs professional development and collaborative supports to sustain focus on instructional improvement." Only one of the ten schools was identified as established in this area. The others were in need of targeted or intensive support. In these schools, the professional development activities did not support the school improvement plans and teacher collaboration did not result in instructional improvement. The School Quality Review teams also reported the absence of a trusting professional climate, with respondents from one school pointing to the new Teacher Development and Evaluation System as the source of the strained relationship between leadership and staff. It is important to note again that due to the small sample size, these results may not be indicative of trends in the district. Nonetheless, this was an opportunity to get a more in-depth snapshot of professional development at ten of the district's schools and how TDES affected relationships in those buildings.

This document review helped me identify topics that I needed to explore more deeply. I needed to know more about TDES implementation. I wanted to understand the tensions between teachers and administration. I also wanted to know more about school-based professional development.

With these ideas in mind, I began to build relationships through a set of introductory interviews. I talked to various stakeholders in the district, including teachers, principals, district leadership, and Cleveland Teachers Union representatives, to learn about their roles in the district, and more importantly, to hear their perspectives about what is working well in the district and potential

growth areas related to teacher staff development. I conducted a total of 21 interviews. In regard to strengths in the system, respondents noted the following:

- *Strong partnerships.* Several schools had partnerships with community or other organizations that assist with staff development needs.
- *Cohort-based staff development.* In previous years, cohorts of teachers came together quarterly based on grade level or subject taught to learn and work together on that quarter's curriculum. (This model is no longer in place.)
- *Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies training.* The district implemented a social-emotional learning program called Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies in all K–8 schools. The ongoing professional development and accessible resources led to effective implementation in many buildings.
- Site-based professional development. A few principals were commended for planning strong professional development activities at the school site, but respondents also noted that this area is a challenge for many others.

Five recurring themes pointed toward professional development growth opportunities:

1. Most of the time staff development was not differentiated for teachers based on career stage, ability level, and content taught. In particular, the

school-based professional development was described as being designed in a one-size-fits-all manner.

2. Teachers and leaders in the system were not sure what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning. One participant said, "When we go on learning walks as a team we can't agree on what differentiation is. Everyone has their own definition." At the district level, there was no definition for terms such as *differentiation* and *rigor*—terms that appear in the evaluation rubric and academic focus areas. Because of this, the ways a principal, instructional coach, or curriculum and instruction partner support a teacher toward the practice could differ drastically.
3. There was a culture of mistrust. Teachers and administrators alike articulated this theme. There appeared to be a great divide between central office administration and teachers. Teachers expressed the feeling that the district administration does not follow through on promises and does not consider teachers' opinions when making decisions. They repeatedly expressed a fear that being vulnerable about one's practice and honestly acknowledging growth areas would set them up for retaliation or a negative evaluation. Administrators also voiced problems with trust. One principal noted feeling chastised and treated like a child. This theme of distrust in the district continued to surface beyond my formal interview period.

4. The district had few formal mechanisms for highlighting and sharing the best practices occurring throughout the district. A principal or teacher who is struggling with his/her practice might have no idea who in the district is succeeding in that area.
5. Principals had concerns about their capacity to do their jobs. Capacity concerns were articulated in two ways. First, principals felt that with all their other responsibilities, little time was left to invest in coaching and developing teachers. Principals also referred to capacity in terms of their skill set. The TDES cycle requires that principals meet with teachers and give them feedback to help improve instruction, but some principals didn't feel they could do that effectively with little or no experience teaching the subject or grade they were evaluating.

Phase 2: Design Team Meetings

Based on my document review and interviews, I knew that the need for more trust was a major part of the district culture that I had to remain cognizant of throughout my project. Therefore, I convened the Teacher Development Design Team as the working group that would create the professional development framework. My hope was that having teachers and union leadership on the team would help all the teachers feel like their voice was represented in the development of a district strategy. With principals and curriculum and instruction directors on the team, it meant that those who would be largely responsible for making shifts in their practice would be informing the strategy.

Also, I saw the design team as an opportunity for communication across the silos that exist in the organization. Early on I saw examples of the need for communication across silos. For example, several people work to support new teachers in the district: a coordinator who manages the state-mandated new-teacher induction program; the professional development administrator, who plans sessions that new teachers must attend to fulfill contract requirements; and the TDES coordinator, who is required to train all new teachers on the evaluation system. These departments had not previously worked together to plan the new teachers' experiences to make sure they are building on and not contradicting each other. This is one of many examples, and my goal was to begin the type of cross-departmental communication that can help all involved do their jobs more efficiently.

I invited 25 people to participate in the design team based on recommendations from individuals in senior leadership and teachers on assignment, 24 of whom agreed to participate. They represented various rungs in the district hierarchy: senior leadership, classroom teachers, and every layer in between (Table 2). Many would be meeting for the first time and gaining a new awareness about other roles and departments in the district, which demonstrates the size of the organization and the silos in which some departments operate.

Table 2

Design Team Composition

Teacher Development Design Team Members		
Category	**Number of Members**	**Notes**
Senior Leadership Team Members	2	—
Classroom Teachers	3	One is on the Cleveland Teachers Union Leadership Team.
Teachers on Assignment[3]	9	One is on the Cleveland Teachers Union Leadership Team.
Instructional Coach	1	—
Principals	2	—
Curriculum and Instruction Representatives	7	Three of these members joined three months into the project.

I collaborated closely with six teachers on assignment who made up the Joint Governing Panel. This group was convened in 2013 to recommend a menu of Achievement Credit (AC) opportunities, which could include professional development activities. At this time professional development had not been approved as an AC-worthy activity, but they were willing to work closely with me since it would make sense for the design team strategy to align with what they recommend. Together we planned the kickoff and the two subsequent meetings.

The goals for the kickoff were to introduce the team to one another, explain the project, answer questions about the project, and energize the team

[3]*Teachers on assignment* refers to teachers who have been assigned to work a full-time role outside of the classroom. Roles include TDES coordinator and Peer Assistance and Review Liaison.

to engage in the work. We also spent time as a team coming to consensus about the norms that would guide our work throughout our time together.

I introduced the project to the team by first reminding the group of the intention that TDES would be a developmental system. I showed them a copy of a 2012 communication that articulated the original vision of an evaluation system emphasizing teacher development:

> TDES is not solely an evaluation, as it was also designed to guide personalized professional development. Teachers identified as struggling in a specific attribute in a domain can receive professional development in that area during the school year so that growth and change can be documented and appreciated.[4]

In order to concretize what we as a team would do to work toward that vision, I presented the team with the following charge: *The Teacher Development Design Team will be responsible for developing the strategy for improving the professional development system, ensuring coherence within the system, developing a prioritized implementation plan, and identifying the conditions required for implementation* (adapted from Curtis and City, 2009). I chose this language for a few reasons. First, as I talked with people before our first meeting, many were confused when I spoke of creating a professional development "framework." So I opted for the word *strategy*, hoping it would better communicate that our goal was to articulate how professional development works in CMSD. I included coherence as part of the charge because of the frustrations some had expressed over the conflicting ideas about high-

[4]Excerpted from TDES Update flyer https://cleveland.schoolnet.com/Outreach/Content/ServeAttachment.aspx?outreach_content_id=c17e1402-d4f3-47a4-b066-c6253a44b8c8

quality teaching and because of the silos that prevent coordinated approaches to teacher support. The implementation plan would be necessary to provide some direction on how to put the strategy into practice. Finally, because of the mistrust within the district culture, the team had to be intentional in thinking about the conditions necessary for successful implementation.

I administered a brief survey to get an understanding of the team's initial perceptions on staff development. The questions in Table 3 were a subset of the questions in the PD Redesign Toolkit Readiness Assessment.[5]

Table 3

Initial Survey of the Teacher Development Design Team

Using what you currently know about teacher professional development in the district, rate your level of agreement with the following statements. Then discuss with your group:					
The PD currently offered is differentiated enough to meet the needs of all teachers.	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 1	Not Sure 1	Disagree 11	Strongly Disagree 5
Teachers are engaged in the development of district and school PD offerings.	Strongly Agree 0	Agree 2	Not Sure 7	Disagree 7	Strongly Disagree 2
There are formal structures in place to allow for teacher collaboration.	Strongly Agree 0	Agree 8	Not Sure 3	Disagree 7	Strongly Disagree 0

[5]PD Redesign is a collaborative online platform developed in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. They created the readiness assessment, which is available on line at http://www.pdredesign.org/.

Teachers find the formal collaboration structures to be effective. (Answer based on your perception.)	Strongly Agree 0	Agree 3	Not Sure 6	Disagree 8	Strongly Disagree 1
Staff can access meaningful, actionable data analyses to inform PD.	Strongly Agree 0	Agree 3	Not Sure 3	Disagree 6	Strongly Disagree 4

N = 18

I selected the questions in Table 3 because they represented some of the needs that emerged from my initial interviews (e.g., differentiation) and they represented best practices in staff development (e.g., collaboration and data analysis) that we would be discussing as a group. Participants responded individually and then discussed similarities and differences in small groups.

Two incidents occurred during the first meeting that would prove to be significant over time. During the reflection and question-and-answer period, two members mentioned concerns that the work of the team would end up being an exercise in futility and that nothing would come of it. The reactions from others on the team showed that this statement resonated. I decided that one of the ways to address this concern was to find ways for the team to hear from senior leadership throughout our process.

Also significant were the two separate heated exchanges between a principal and a teacher who was also a union leader. The others in the room remained silent during the verbal volleying. One of the exchanges began with the teacher's accusation that principals are largely responsible for the problems we

see with professional development because they don't know what they are doing. I was able to intervene and turn the attention back to our work as a team and to reframe it as an opportunity to be solution oriented. Still, I considered it a small-scale example of the mistrust in the district and that was evident on our team.

In many ways the team was a microcosm of the district at large. Since I knew that the lack of trusting relationships was a major factor, I had to be intentional about building trust within the team. I did several things in each meeting to help the team get to know one another and build trust. I started the meetings by having each member respond to a check-in question so that we could begin to build trust by knowing one another personally. Some questions were related to education topics (e.g., What is the best professional learning experience you've ever had? Why did you choose a career in education?). Others were more general (e.g., What is your favorite indoor or outdoor cold-weather activity?). I also implemented specific protocols to guide conversations and elicit ideas. The protocols helped to ensure that all voices are heard and gave specific language to use for challenging ideas or presenting an alternative view.

Because team members represented varied roles, I first sought to build a common knowledge base for all of us. One of our first activities was to make an inventory of all the ways teachers' development is supported throughout the district. In order for us to cast a vision for the future and define the path for getting there, we had to be clear about what is currently happening in the

system. This activity allowed us to identify strengths in the system that we could build upon and areas for growth. I also had them work in small groups to process the five growth opportunities I had identified from my initial set of interviews.

In our second meeting, we spent time beginning to build a common understanding about best practices in adult learning and development. One resource that we used throughout our process was the Ohio Standards for Professional Development (Appendix C). Though most people on the team had at some point done staff development work, only one team member had heard of these standards, which were supposed to be guiding staff development work in the district. We further engaged the topic by reading articles on job-embedded collaboration and the impact of state policy and collective bargaining on professional development, and then we used protocols to discuss how the information could inform our recommendations. This common background knowledge would ensure that our professional development strategy would be based on what has been shown to help adults grow and change their practice.

After unpacking the state standards, I asked the team to reflect on and then vote for the ones the district should prioritize in the next year. *Flexible designs* was a top choice because the portfolio strategy requires a new emphasis on the principal as the instructional leader, and principals must keep increasing their abilities to use proven strategies to promote adult learning and development. *Learning communities* was another top choice because of the need

to strengthen the activities occurring during the 200 minutes allotted for site-based professional development, a portion of which has to be used for collaborative activities.

In addition to the standards and other resources that explained theory, I exposed the team to examples of districts enacting these practices. We spent a significant amount of time using Houston Independent School District as a case study because it had recently redesigned its professional development system along the lines we were following. Through articles, a review of its professional development website, a conference call with a representative from Houston's Elementary Curriculum and Development Office, and a video conference with the former assistant superintendent who coordinated the redesign, we learned more about the strategy, which hinged on a strategic redeployment of instructional coaches.

The first part of the professional development strategy that we worked to produce as a team was the mission and vision statements.

> **Vision**: We will be a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk-taking and innovation as we strive to produce continual growth in student achievement.
>
> **Mission**: The Cleveland Metropolitan School District promotes teacher growth and development in order to improve effective teaching practices which positively impact student learning.

We also used the theory of action from Learning Forward, which was adopted by the Ohio Department of Education (Figure 2).

We believe that if we develop a standards-based professional development system, teachers will have the supports they need to increase their knowledge and skill set. This will increase the effectiveness of our teaching force and ultimately improve student results.

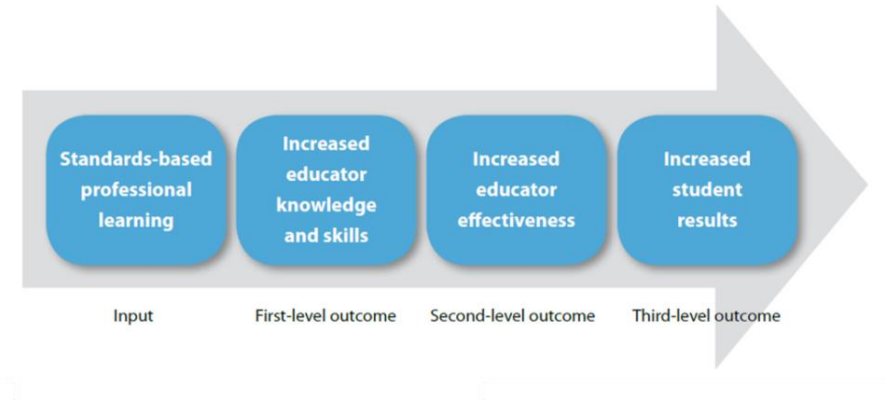


Figure 2. Theory of action from Learning Forward.

Source: Learning Forward, 2013.

By our third meeting we were ready to divide into working groups. At that point I was relying heavily on the strategies and recommendations from Learning Forward in *Comprehensive Professional Learning Systems: A Workbook for Districts and States* (Killion, 2013). I decided to use this resource because it provides a road map for districts that are revising their professional development systems and because the Ohio Standards for Professional Development are adapted directly from the Learning Forward standards. The workbook identifies twenty-two operational components for a professional learning system. Based on our previous discussions about professional development strengths and growth opportunities, we formed working groups around the most relevant components: mentoring and induction, job-embedded collaboration, flexible designs, roles and

responsibilities, evaluation of professional learning, leadership for professional learning, incentives and recognition for professional learning, and technology/learning management system. I gave each team guiding questions to help them identify how the component works in the district and then reflect on the desired state for that component. Their responses to these questions became the basis for our preliminary framework (Figure 3) and would launch the brainstorming protocols that would help us formulate concrete recommendations.

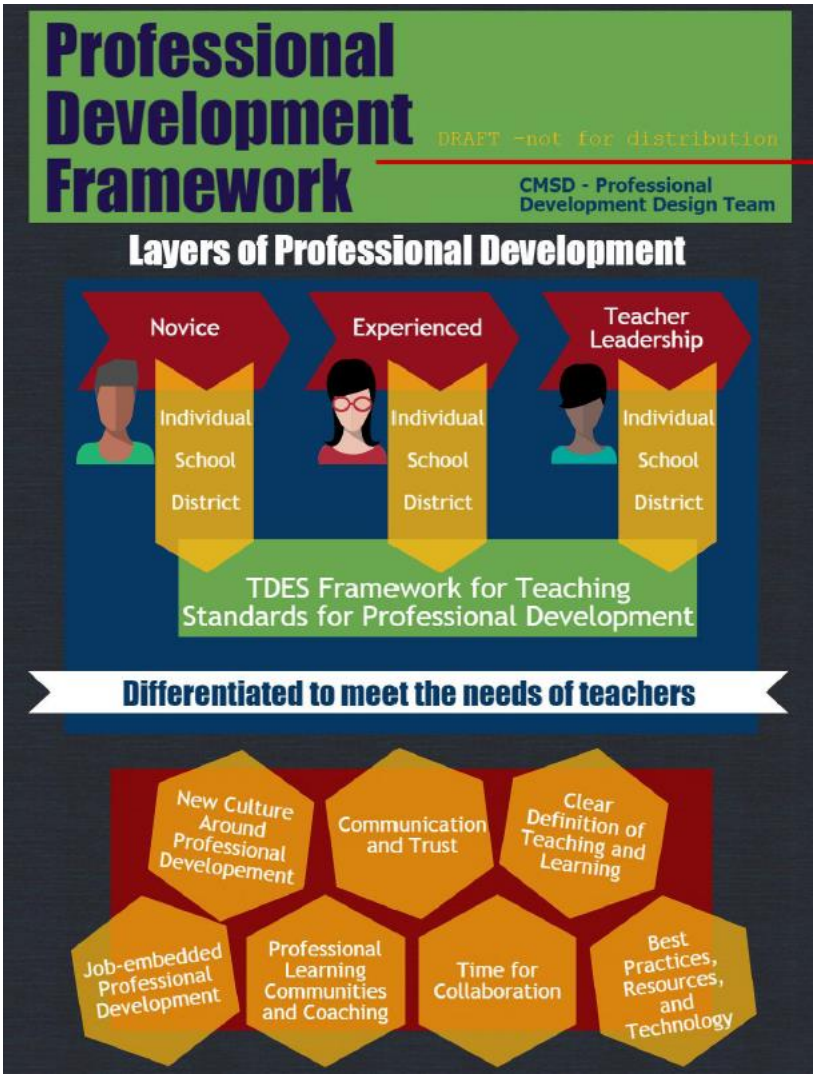


Figure 3. First draft of professional development framework graphic.

For the preliminary framework, we agreed that professional development in CMSD should align with the Ohio Standards for Professional Development. This would require a few conceptual shifts. The first shift was to acknowledge that professional development does not merely refer to attending an event or session; it can also occur through job-embedded professional collaboration. The other shift was to start using the term *professional learning* interchangeably with *professional development* as a way to acknowledge that teacher learning is part of the process.

The team also agreed that professional development had to be approached in a differentiated manner. From my interviews and from commentary during team meetings, I saw that teachers are often required to participate in professional development programming that does not relate to their content area or that their experience has made redundant. It seemed clear that leaders of professional learning should consider how the needs of the novice differ from the needs of the experienced teacher, and the district should support those who are pursuing teacher leadership opportunities. One team member was adamant that CMSD already upholds the professional development standards and already practices differentiated professional development, and therefore we were not proposing anything new. Still she agreed to formal articulation of these practices as part of the strategy.

As we got deeper into the working group tasks, we struggled. The mentoring and induction group was hesitant to make specific recommendations because the existing contract stipulates that new teachers must have 30 hours of professional development per school year. They believed they could not make recommendations without knowing whether or not this requirement would be in the new contract. The team did make the recommendation that the district create two pathways for new teachers—those new to teaching and those who are experienced but new to the district—rather than requiring the same activities of these teachers. However, the team did not engage in the protocols designed to help teams brainstorm the specifics. I encouraged the team to think holistically about what we want new teachers in the district to learn and be able to do in their first year and to define some general objectives even if we don't yet know the final structure, but the team seemed unwilling to respond to my prompts to move beyond this recommendation. Notably, one group member, who was also a union leader, managed the district's mentoring and induction program.

I consulted with my supervisor, the Chief Portfolio Officer, who sent me to a consultant who had been working with the union leader on implementing the district teacher induction program. Given that she was already working with the union leader on this team, I thought she could help the group work toward more concrete recommendations. I invited the consultant to work with the team about midway through the project. She and I collaborated to plan the last three

meetings of the design team, and she facilitated the mentoring and induction breakout group during one of the working group sessions. The group still hesitated to make specific suggestions about the pathways for new teachers, but the consultant did identify one area where team members felt they could make recommendations: communication to new teachers. The team identified the questions that new teachers have and began prototyping a website that could be a new teacher landing page to answer those questions.

Phase 3: Feedback from Stakeholders

Armed with our mission, vision, and preliminary framework, we set out to get feedback that would inform the rest of our process. In December, the senior leadership team was the first group to hear a report from our team. I invited a teacher on assignment to present alongside me. We presented, responded to their questions, and then they reflected in table groups and wrote notes on the feedback form about the mission, vision, graphic, and overall framework. We assembled the comments into one document that would be shared with the design team. One major theme that arose from this feedback session was the recommendation that a differentiated professional development framework should be organized by the four areas of the TDES rubric, not by level of experience.

The following day I shared the feedback with the TDES steering committee in a conference call. They too had the chance to ask questions and offer feedback. They recommended that we avoid using the terms *professional*

learning communities or *teacher-based teams*[6] in our documents because they carry negative connotations; rather, we should speak more generally about encouraging site-based collaboration. When I asked each team member to weigh in on the senior leadership team's recommendation that professional development be differentiated according to the TDES rubric, they unanimously preferred the original framing of differentiation for novice, experienced, and teacher leadership because it supported the forthcoming teacher career pathway structure that is described in the labor agreement but has yet to be implemented. When asked about their priorities, they identified the need for administrators and teachers to agree on a description of high-quality teaching and they felt that strengthening job-embedded professional development should be a priority.

The next group to give feedback was the curriculum and instruction team. This team comprises specialists in all core subject areas, electives, multilingual and multicultural education, career and technical education, early childhood education, and gifted education. These specialists support teachers and principals through curriculum adoptions, provide districtwide professional development, and support site-based professional development. With the transition to the portfolio management model, many of these representatives are also responsible for working outside their assigned content area. They are

[6]Teacher-based teams are a school-based collaborative structure that is similar to a professional learning community, but this structure is mandated by the state of Ohio for schools that are implementing the Ohio Improvement process.

considered "flexible content experts" who assist with curriculum and instruction problems in their assigned network schools.

I presented to this team in December as a part of their full-day staff retreat. The focus of the retreat was to plan for professional development, and I was first on their agenda. I shared the five growth-area statements that came from my initial interviews and gave an update on the work of the committee. I answered questions and collected written feedback from their small-group discussions. During the whole-group discussion about clarifying high-quality teaching, one person exclaimed, "Yes, let's define these terms. We want that." A second person offered, "I don't know why the district won't just define these terms." Another expressed worry that defining high-quality teaching might stifle teachers' creativity. The written feedback shed more light on the topic: "Terminology [differentiation, rigor] . . . we talk about it, but leadership is NOT defining . . . then [differentiation, rigor] appear in documents continuously."

Another topic in the feedback—which the curriculum and instruction leader also emphasized—was that this team wanted to see TDES data to help inform their work, but the data had not been shared with them. Finally, they identified the district culture as a challenge that might hinder implementation:

"Our current culture impedes communication and trust."

"Challenges—internal communication . . . complacency; intimidation."

"Challenge—trust, consistency."

Based on this feedback, I made slight changes to the original design team working groups. I made two new work groups focused on teacher leadership and clarifying high-quality teaching, since these were important parts of our initial version of the framework that the original working groups had not addressed. We began taking the information from our brainstorming sessions and narrowing it down to concrete recommendations with implementation steps.

Classroom teachers were the final group to give feedback. I drafted a letter (Appendix D) to all CMSD teachers introducing the team and explaining our work to date. I asked them to complete a three-question survey on what should be prioritized in our implementation since part of the team's charge was to create a prioritized implementation plan. It was important to me that this letter be sent from the CEO because I wanted the teachers to see that professional development is a priority for him. I also hoped seeing the district leader's public acknowledgement of their work would help the team feel their work was valid.

I wanted the letter to go out to all teachers in early January so that by our design team meeting that month, we would have had feedback from all stakeholder groups. Unfortunately the letter did not get sent out until late February, so we continued to work through January and February without the teachers' input.

The CEO sent my letter to teachers at a particularly tense time in the district: one week after the CMSD administration and the Cleveland Teachers Union ended face-to-face bargaining and just days after 400 union members

attended a board meeting to express their displeasure about the breakdown of negotiations. This would be followed by a majority of the union voting "no confidence" in the CEO. The original version of the letter introduced team members by name and title, but I removed the team names once I learned when the letter was to be sent. I anticipated that team members, especially those who were union leaders, would not want their names on an email being sent out from the CEO. Given that context, I was also anticipating a low response rate to the survey questions, and in fact 450 of the 2,800 teachers responded.

The teachers were asked to consider the priorities the design team had identified earlier in the process and to rank them in order of importance:

- Strengthening job-embedded professional development, including formal professional development sessions at the school site, professional learning communities and other school-based collaborative structures, and instructional coaching
- Technology: Providing access to online modules and collaboration tools for professional learning
- Clarifying instructional terms: Defining terms such as *differentiation* and *rigor* at the district level and providing resources to teachers and principals to help implement related strategies
- Improving supports for new teachers (those who are new to teaching and/or new to the district)
- TDES calibration: Continuing to help principals and teachers have a common understanding of what constitutes skilled teaching on the TDES rubric
- Providing supports for those who want to know more about teacher leadership

The respondents rated "strengthening job-embedded professional development" as the top priority. "TDES calibration" and “clarifying instructional terms” were nearly tied for second and third place. I have categorized some of the teachers' comments in the following table.

Instructional Clarity/TDES clarity	“It's great to hear about differentiation and implementing flexible groups, but show us a physical example of how it's done and an example of a day's lesson plans/schedule that incorporates these things. A lot of teachers love the ideas, but struggle with how and when to implement them.” "TDES is very unorganized and every principal has different expectations." "TDES is vastly dependent upon the evaluator. It shouldn't be, but it is." “Create a workshop that includes tangible examples (tasks) of descriptions in the TDES rubric, in order to provide teachers and administration with clarifying and concrete information.”
Job-embedded professional development	“Mandatory 200 minutes must be eliminated.” “Please do not allow administration to create their own PD and if you do, create checks and balances for the PD. For one whole day we did a scavenger hunt, another day we watched a movie. If you are going to let building level admin give PD, make sure the PD is something worthwhile.” “Allow teachers to use the 200 built-in minutes to do what they were intended to . . . to collaborate and plan/develop for our students.”
Culture	"Because PD has been such a disappointment for so long, it will take a culture shift in order for teachers to buy in to a new system."

Although this information came to the team later than we would have liked, it confirmed that the working groups were the right ones.

Phase 4: Final Recommendations and Planning for Implementation

Our iterative process of brainstorming, getting feedback, learning about best practices in staff development, and incorporating the feedback and new knowledge helped determine the final articulation of the strategy and implementation recommendations. I began drafting a guidance document that outlines the strategy and implementation steps, and as of this writing, a subgroup is working to complete the document (Appendix E).

Our strategy for approaching professional development in CMSD is to support teacher growth and development by committing to embodying the Ohio professional development standards. We recommended an initial focus on using data to inform the development of differentiated professional learning opportunities, providing varied resources and structures to support collaboration, and engaging teachers as drivers of their own professional growth. We recommended putting the standards into action by approaching professional learning and development as an improvement cycle (similar to the school improvement cycle currently in use) so that professional development is linked to student learning.

The strategy calls for intentional efforts to differentiate activities for teachers based on their teaching assignment and career stage. The district will do this by providing structures and support for leaders of professional development to help them learn about and implement best practices in professional development and adult learning. A subcommittee is working on

developing a prototype of the yearlong learning experiences to be piloted in two schools next year. Another of our differentiation recommendations concerned the new teacher experience. The team recommended that the district create two professional development pathways for new teachers: one for those who are brand new to teaching and another for those who are experienced but new to the district.

In response to the charge to identify the conditions for implementation, the team identified trust as a necessary condition. The team recommended that the lack of trust be addressed through continual efforts to make sure TDES is executed with fidelity. One way this will be achieved is by working as a system to define what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning. The team was also concerned that no department or individual owned the professional development strategy, and so the team recommended that the district create a cross-functional team (similar in composition to the design team) that would manage and monitor staff development in the district.

In essence, we moved from our original borrowed theory of action, in which standards-based professional learning was the sole input, to recommendations that acknowledge three levels of inputs—culture, capacity, and coherence—in order to lead to improvement in educator knowledge and skills, educator effectiveness, and student results (Figure 4).

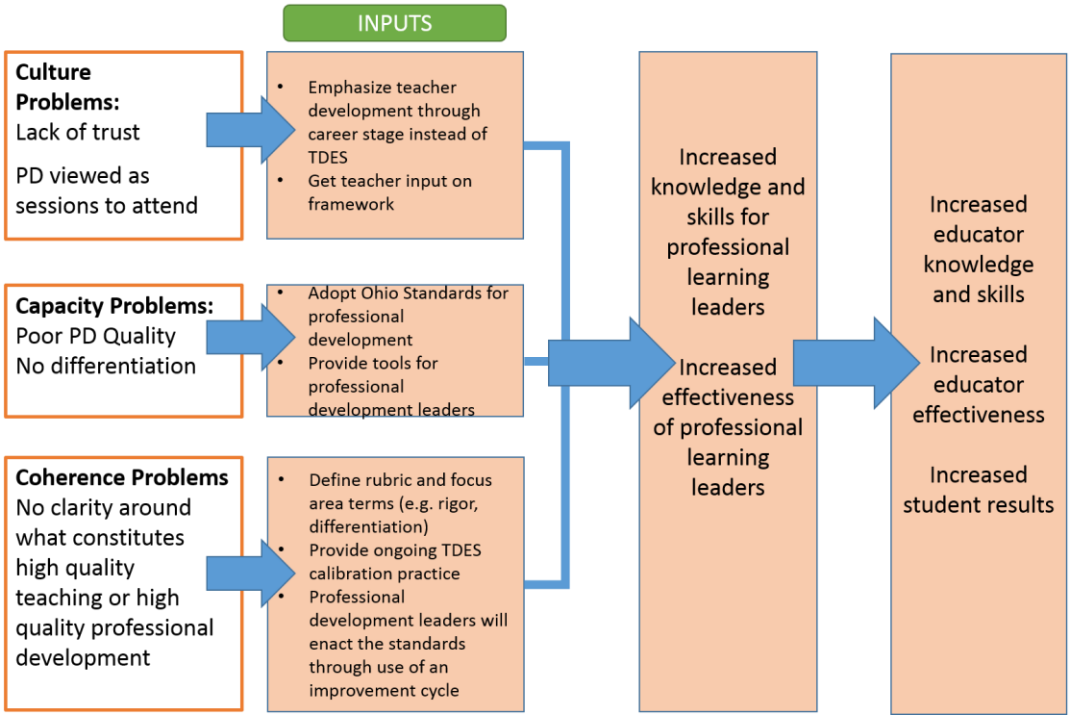


Figure 4. Proposed solutions for problems of culture, capacity, and coherence.

More team challenges arose when we resumed conversations about implementation. With our draft strategy in place, the next task was for the working groups to review our preliminary implementation steps and determine the personal next step each member would take to advance the staff development strategy. Each working group identified action steps, but at the end of that session, when the groups reported to the rest of the team, none of them had personally attached themselves to an action step as the protocol had asked them to do. So in the next session I gave each member of the design team my recommendation for their personal implementation step and asked them to reflect on it with a small group. For example, I recommended that the two

individuals who work with new teacher induction (who are in different departments) have a planning meeting in order to coordinate their efforts to build on one another's work and prevent future duplication. They both responded with reasons why it would be difficult to coordinate induction efforts. I asked curriculum and instruction members to have a conversation with a network leader during the next network support team meeting to get a sense of the greatest needs for site-based professional development. They said it would be difficult to have that conversation with network leaders, but offered to survey a subset of principals about the types of supports they need for site-based professional development. Others who rejected the action step I had offered talked with a small group and determined an alternate action step.

Results

I will discuss the results of this strategic project by identifying the extent to which we accomplished each part of my initial theory of action.

If I...	
Assemble a team with representatives from various departments	Completed
Establish a trusting team environment in which team members are willing to share their perspectives and engage in an iterative process	Partially attained
Establish a clear vision for the team's work	Partially attained
Create processes for communicating with and gathering feedback from district stakeholders	Completed
Then…	
The team will work together to develop a PD framework that represents best practices in professional development	Completed
The team will develop a prioritized implementation plan that has approval from the CEO and buy-in from teachers	Partially attained
Then…	
stakeholders in the district will have a consistent understanding of the CMSD approach to professional development	Next steps
the district can implement a coherent approach to staff development in Cleveland's portfolio system	Next steps

Assemble a team with representatives from various departments. This step was completed. Once the contract negotiation process started, some members were no longer available to participate. Still, the team represented teachers, principals, curriculum and instruction leaders, union leaders, and senior leadership team members, and we worked consistently over a six month period.

Establish a trusting team environment in which team members are willing to share their perspectives and engage in an iterative process. This step was partially attained. One of my goals was to establish an atmosphere of trust in this fluid group who would be spending limited time with each other. To monitor trust, I introduced the safety check in our second meeting in order to gauge whether individuals were being passive observers or felt comfortable fully participating. Although this was still early in our formation as a team, I thought it was good for us to begin the practice of checking in to see how each team member is feeling about our interactions.

To conduct the safety check at the end of the meetings, I gave each design team member a sticky note, making sure they were all the same color, and had them write a number from 1 to 5 on it, representing the following:

> 5—No problem, I'll talk about anything.
> 4—I'll talk about almost anything; a few things might be hard.
> 3—I'll talk about some things, but others will be hard to say.
> 2—I'm not going to say much; I'll let others bring up issues.
> 1—I'll smile, claim everything is great, and agree with the most dominant personality.

Someone then collected them and arranged them on the board at the front of the room so that we could see how many people chose each number.

	Safety Check Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Safety Check 1	0 people	0 people	2 people	5 people	9 people
Safety Check 2	0 people	1 person	0 people	7 people	5 people
Safety Check 3	0 people	0 people	1 person	6 people	7 people

After the second safety check, I asked participants to share pluses (what went well in the meeting) and deltas (things they would like to change) and to share their ideas about what might help improve the safety level in the team. These comments were also collected anonymously on sticky notes. Three people directly addressed the safety check in their comments:

- "Plus—the protocol—I think the protocols provide safety."
- "The safety check does not get the heart of the issue which is more about trust."
- "Should be a trust scale, not necessarily about safety."

One person told the group that the answer to these prompts may depend more on personality than level of safety. Since someone noted that protocols promoted safety in communication, in subsequent meetings I made sure I was using structured protocols for sharing and giving feedback. Still, I rate this area as partially attained because by the last safety check, no members self-rated at the 2 level and only one member rated a 3, so most were freely sharing their perspectives.

The goal of engaging in an iterative process as a team was partially attained. Generally speaking, team members were willing to revisit work and make adjustments based on feedback and new knowledge. For example, we took the feedback from the senior leadership team to iterate on the graphic representation for the teacher development framework. We made designs that did and did not prominently feature TDES because of the difference of opinion between the leadership team and the TDES steering committee (Figure 5).

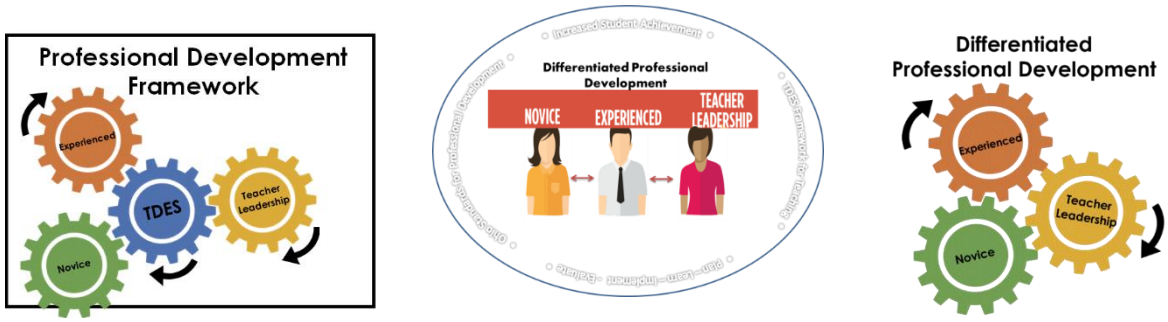


Figure 5. Iterations of the Graphic Representation for the Staff Development Strategy

We used feedback from the senior leadership team and the curriculum and instruction team to get our mission and vision statements from their original form to their current state. For example, we started with two options for the vision statement:

> Vision Statement Option 1: CMSD is a standards-aligned learning community committed to fostering collaborative learning, where each educator engages in high-quality professional development that produces maximum student achievement.
>
> Vision Statement Option 2: We are a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk taking, and innovation.

The feedback led us to the final version of our vision statement:

> Final Vision Statement: We will be a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk-taking and innovation as we strive to produce continual growth in student achievement.
>
> However, there were some exceptions to our ability to update

recommendations based on feedback and new learnings. The group working on

mentoring and teacher induction was reluctant to engage in thinking about specific ways to strengthen the current mentoring and induction structure because of the pending contract negotiations. The team working on clarifying high-quality teaching was reluctant to iterate on their recommendations about how to the system could deliver clearer instructional expectations. The team's initial recommendation was to "develop a cadre of subject area experts to be available to conduct evaluations in lieu of the principal." After a root cause analysis exercise, the team agreed that the skill set of principals was the root cause for an inconsistent understanding of high-quality teaching. This team acknowledged that the use of content area experts can help to clarify the process of teacher evaluation, and I wanted to push them to consider other actions the subject experts could take (besides conducting evaluations) that could clarify high-quality teaching. I reminded them of the Houston school district's example and had the group read about the steps the Fort Wayne Community School District took to reach clarity about instruction. They were to pull from these examples and find activities that we could do in our system (e.g., define terms, create a video library, calibration practice). I also had them individually work through another root cause analysis to surface other possible root causes for the lack of clarity. Still, when the group reconvened, they simply added to their initial recommendation:

> Develop a cadre of subject area experts to be available to conduct evaluations in lieu of the principal.
>
> - Domain #1 evaluations would be handled by content specific/grade level experts.

- Principals would handle the evaluations for domains 2-4.
- Principals will work collaboratively to calibrate their understanding of and come to consensus about what high-quality or "accomplished" teaching looks like in domains 2-4.

I collaborated with the same consultant I used for the mentoring and induction group to determine the next course of action for this working group. She met with this group during one of our breakout sessions and shared her expertise about what could not be changed in the evaluation procedures. The group eventually changed their recommendation to this:

> Support evaluators with content area expertise (offering direct support and also identifying content area experts who can be referred to principals in need of additional support. These teachers would be compensated by Achievement Credits).

This was still quite similar to their initial recommendation, but without proposing changes to the evaluation process. The group iterated to an extent, adjusting the initial recommendation, but they did not consider new avenues or methods. In the guidance document, I added the additional recommendations that the curriculum and instruction team define rubric terms and create documents and videos to support the definitions. I explained my rationale to the team: that even though this may seem hard to accomplish, it is necessary in order to have a more coordinated system of teacher supports. Otherwise these newly identified subject-area experts will become a part of an already uncoordinated system by communicating a message that differs from that of the curriculum and instruction managers, instructional coaches, or network leaders.

Establish a clear vision for the team's work. I partially attained my goal of establishing a clear vision for the team's work. In every meeting I reviewed the charge to the team; that is, we would be developing the strategy for improving the professional development system, ensuring coherence within the system, developing a prioritized implementation plan, and identifying the conditions required for implementation. I neglected to explicitly communicate an implicit part of the vision, that the design team would be the ones to begin the work of implementation. During our February design team meeting, it became clear to me that I should have been explicit from the beginning about how I saw their role in implementation. I asked each team member to talk about what excites them and what concerns them about the work we have done all year. Most team members expressed uncertainty about the future of this work. Their comments included these:

> "I fear this work will get dropped or be minimized after hand-off."
> "When this work is communicated throughout the system, will the message be consistent?"
> "Will there be continuity in the hand-off?"

It was interesting to hear the term *hand-off* since I had never said that a next step would be to give the strategy over to an entity. Still, their responses were a reminder that I had communicated only part of my vision.

Create processes for communicating with and gathering feedback from district stakeholders. I completed this portion of my theory of action. I was able to get feedback from three major groups who would ultimately influence the strategy implementation: the senior leadership team, the

TDES steering committee, and the curriculum and instruction team. Though the letter to teachers went out later than desired, they were still briefed about the process and had the opportunity to share their feedback.

The team will work together to develop a professional development framework that represents best practices in professional development. We completed this aspect of the theory of action. Our guidance document explains our strategy and the steps for implementation. To assess whether or not the plan represents best practices in professional development, I refer to the characteristics of high-quality professional development I set out in the Professional Development section of my Review of Knowledge for Action and comment on how our professional development strategy reflects these characteristics.

Characteristic	Evidence in Strategy
***Alignment*. Aligning with school goals, district and state assessments, and other requirements**	Our strategy aligns with the state standards for professional development and is used in support of the district Teacher Development and Evaluation System.
***Content.* Providing a clear connection to the content that teachers teach with a focus on content-specific instructional strategies**	We recommended the use of content-area experts to help principals with evaluations and understanding content-specific instructional expectations.
***Problems of practice.* Creating strategies to help teachers address real problems they face in their contexts**	We emphasize the use of data (e.g., teacher data, student data) to inform the types of professional development activities that occur both at the school site and districtwide to make certain that activities are supporting classroom needs.
***Active learning*. Presenting opportunities to see new**	We provide examples of types of job-embedded collaborative activities that

strategies modeled and to practice new strategies	allow for active learning, such as lesson study and action research.
***Collaboration*. Offering opportunities to plan with colleagues, observe one another, and give feedback**	Time and space have already been allotted for collaboration. One of our action items for year 1 of implementation is to pilot intensive supports in two schools that will help improve job-embedded collaboration practices.
***Follow–up.* Providing ongoing and sustained follow-up, which includes coaching and feedback**	Our strategy calls for a shift away from the traditional practice of professional development as merely a session to attend; instead, the strategy proposes that sustained experiences and collaborative activities support teachers' development.

The team will develop a prioritized implementation plan that has approval from the CEO and buy-in from teachers. This was partially attained. I presented a summary of the professional development strategy in an individual meeting with the CEO, who approved of the framework. At this time the entire plan has not been shared with teachers, but the comments from the teacher survey indicate that the strategy addresses the needs in the field.

Analysis

As I reflect on the results of my project, several themes emerge that explain why events unfolded the way they did. My positioning, the contract negotiations happening in the background, the organizational culture, and my assumptions and related actions all drove the results in this project.

The Local Outsider

One of my goals was to build trusting relationships within the design team, which means I also had to work to get the team to trust me. In my first meeting with the team I shared a short personal narrative that highlighted my Cleveland roots and my experience as an Ohio educator. I believe that my identity as a "local outsider" in the district helped the team succeed. I understood that there was some resentment about the number of new leaders and consultants from outside the area in recent years. Therefore I thought it was important to position myself as a local outsider: though I was new to the district, I was born and raised in Cleveland. Also, I had spent my entire career as an Ohio educator and working with teacher evaluation, so I was quite familiar with the state mandates.

Positioning myself this way made it easier for me to begin establishing rapport right away. Team members were anxious to know what high school I had attended, whether I was on the east or west side now, and what teacher evaluation looked like in my previous district. Small conversations like these helped me to begin building trust. Also, though I was administrative staff, the

fact that I was new helped some members see me as separate from the Cleveland Plan, which in this instance was a positive. A member of the design team said, "We feel like we can trust you because your concern is staff development. You don't have some other agenda you are trying to achieve."

Competing Commitments

As my theory of action articulated, I was leading the team through an iterative process, using stakeholder feedback and engagement with best practices as the content to guide revisions. I noted a resistance from the mentoring and induction working group. One likely cause for this resistance was that my strategic project took place during a contract negotiations year. More than half the members of the design team were Cleveland Teachers Union members. Only one member of the mentoring and induction working group was not a teacher on assignment, which meant that almost everyone in that group was a Cleveland Teachers Union member. I composed the group this way because the role of teachers on assignment requires that they interact with new teachers, so they would bring a deep understanding of what supports are already in place for new teachers in the district. Still, this meant that the group would likely have a vested interest in what the union would like to see in the new contract regarding professional development.

I thought that by having union leaders on the design team it would signal administration's desire for a more collaborative approach to professional development. However, contract negotiations interfered with the potential for

authentic collaboration because the union leaders felt they had a responsibility to show teachers that they are working for professional development contract provisions that meet their needs. During our final design team meeting, which occurred after the breakdown of contract negotiations, a union leader mentioned that the district had not taken the time to review the comprehensive professional development proposal the union had presented. The proposal was said to have highlighted the role of teachers in professional development, but the details were not shared with the design team. So while we were working as a design team to create a district professional development strategy, the union leaders on our team were working simultaneously on a professional development strategy they would bring to the bargaining table.

Understanding "the Cleveland Way" for Implementation

Another thing I hoped to do during this project was to set a clear vision for the work of the team. The team knew that our main goal was articulating the high-level strategy and explaining the vision of supporting teachers' development in CMSD. If I could go back and do this again, I would have articulated my goal differently. I wanted the team to have a vision, but I also wanted team members to see themselves as the ones who would make implementation of the strategy a reality.

It became clear that most team members did not see themselves as the champions who would make sure the district is taking steps toward an improved

approach to professional development. One explanation is that I did not make certain facilitating moves, which allowed the group to continue feeling disconnected from the implementation of staff development. I thought that by giving the team the charge, along with the structured activities of our meetings, members would understand what we were working toward and how they were implicated in implementation. I should have been more intentional about fostering a sense of ownership throughout the project. For example, some groups worked together between our face-to-face sessions, although I had not required this. I did a lot of the heavy lifting myself between our formal meetings, thinking that I was helping team members not to feel too burdened by their participation on this team. I assigned people to working groups based on their role-based expertise while purposefully distributing union and central office leaders throughout each group; but to promote ownership, I could have allowed individuals to choose a group, or even more than one group.

Another likely explanation is the district culture. I have learned that the departmental silos are strong. Since my departmental affiliation was with the Portfolio Office, I could not authorize work for anyone in the room. I have also learned that in this district a change does not get implemented until the work is authorized by a chief, deputy chief, or a director, and members of the design team knew this from experience. For example, a subset of the design team said that in the previous year, they had worked to develop an extensive set of recommendations and implementation action steps regarding the compensation

structure, only to have the recommendations rejected and never revisited. This explains why team members talked about preparing to hand the strategy off to someone else. Even after CEO approval, the team knew that nothing in this strategy would be implemented until it was owned by a senior-level member who would delegate authority for implementation. The same sentiments were expressed during the curriculum and instruction retreat, when several people made comments about "the district" and "leadership" not defining the instructional terms. These individuals did not see themselves as "the district" and "leadership" who could help to bring instructional clarity because a senior leader would have to direct this activity.

I learned about these aspects of district culture early in my project, and I worked to try to lessen the impact. One move I made was to include the deputy chief of curriculum and instruction on the design team. Scheduling conflicts prevented her from attending most meetings, but she encouraged her team members to attend the meetings and included me in her team's retreat. Still, because she was not the owner of this work, her team members did not see personal opportunities to take on implementation steps. I included the opportunity for feedback from the CEO and senior leadership team early in our process because I wanted to avoid a situation where the team worked to develop something that would get rejected in the end, and I wanted an early opportunity for the team to see their work validated. I composed the design team of individuals from the academics, talent, and portfolio departments because I

thought that our teaming process would be the launching pad for the type of collaboration necessary for a coherent staff development strategy. However, I grossly underestimated the power of the deeply ingrained operational culture. The senior-level feedback, the participation of the deputy chief of curriculum and instruction, and my focus on teaming were not enough to circumvent the silos and the need for a senior leader to declare ownership of the professional development strategy, and they were not enough to motivate the team to create implementation steps.

Instructional Clarity in a Portfolio District

The other working group that struggled with iterating on their recommendations was the clarifying of high-quality teaching group. Several audiences had identified the need to clarify high-quality teaching as a priority, but the working group struggled when I pushed the team to iterate on their recommendations and to identify personal action steps.

One possible explanation for this is that the representatives in that working group did not feel they had the capacity to make recommendations for how the district as a whole could begin to agree on instructional expectations. The working group was composed mostly of curriculum and instruction representatives because of my own bias in thinking that the curriculum and instruction department should be taking the lead on moving the district toward clarity about instructional expectations. Although I created opportunities to

explore practices that other districts had used to clarify instructional terms, this only helped them see possible actions without helping them build capacity. The activities were not enough for them to implicate themselves in the solution.

Since some members of the curriculum and instruction team believed that senior leadership was avoiding the issue of clarifying instructional terms, I decided to follow up with a few senior leaders to find out more about this perception (or reality) that instructional terms cannot be defined. One senior leadership member encouraged me to ask more questions and "challenge the mythology" that there is an unspoken rule against defining instructional terms. Another senior leadership team member suggested that if the district starts to get more specific and give examples for the focus areas or rubric terms, teachers might look at it as a checklist and do the minimum required. The third senior leadership member I spoke with said that a lack of capacity was one reason for the problem, and that no one has taken the time to lead the work. This person went on to say that the more likely root cause was that it would just be too difficult to get all the leaders (chief level, network support leaders, and curriculum and instruction leaders) to agree to the same definition, noting two departments with whom it had been difficult to collaborate.

The comments from these senior leaders led me to believe that another reason for the design team's reluctance to recommend clarifying teaching terms was that leadership had not addressed this topic. The organizational silos and the questions of ownership were once again at play, although in this instance the

organizational culture was complicated by the transition to the portfolio strategy. It was not clear which senior leaders should be leading the system's effort to clarify high-quality teaching and learning.

The Cleveland Plan hinges on principals taking the helm as the instructional leaders in their schools, with central office restructured to offer support rather than top-down direction. However, the question that needs to be revisited is this: When schools have autonomy, does there need to be a common understanding throughout the system about instruction? The design team (based on their opinions and feedback from stakeholders) says that the answer is yes, but the senior leadership team has not unanimously reached the same conclusion. If I could start over, I would have concentrated the first part of my residency on working with senior leadership. I would have spent more time in the beginning with the deputy chief of curriculum and instruction, the chief academic officer, and the chief talent officer to confirm which department would own the professional development strategy. Then I would have recommended to the team that clarifying instructional expectations at the central office level is an imperative next step, so that any principals who struggle with their newfound autonomy, as well as the network support teams who are still learning, can have a common foundation. If I had spent the first half of my residency engaging with the leadership team to come to agreement in these areas, and the latter half with the design team strategizing about ways to help the system learn about and

implement high-quality professional development, we might have been better positioned to move forward with implementation steps.

Urgency

Though I have spoken of the challenges we faced as a team and as a system, there were successes too. The team persisted over the course of several months and created a strategy with prioritized implementation steps. One reason for this was the sense of urgency about improved staff development that seemed to permeate the district. Every member of the design team, with one exception, felt that attending to staff development in the district was a priority. This sense of urgency helped team members to engage in the process to the fullest extent they felt possible. The team knew the unspoken boundaries that limited what they could recommend and what actions they could take, but they still engaged in the process from beginning to end.

The question of ownership has not been answered at the senior level, but the leadership team did acknowledge staff development as a priority. By working with the chief portfolio officer to get on one senior leadership team meeting agenda, I was able to brief the entire team on our work in progress. So, even though the question of departmental ownership had not been answered, I was able to engage all departments in the project through that meeting. As a result of reaching out to the deputy chief of curriculum and instruction to check in about the project, I was invited to participate in the team's retreat. The urgency around this topic at all levels of the organization gives me hope that the district

will continue to take steps to build on and implement the strategy we have developed.

Implications for Self

During my time with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, I learned a lot about my own leadership tendencies and how they can help and hinder a change effort.

Pushing against Silos

I learned quickly about the organizational culture in CMSD; specifically, that ownership and authorizers matter. I was confident that by teaming, I would be helping to address the siloed nature of the organization while fostering buy-in from those on the team and the departments they represented. The challenge was that even though the organization was working toward a more collaborative culture, change efforts generally were authorized by an individual. Ultimately the team was able to work together to create a strategy, but I believe we could have gotten further faster if I had started my work by coordinating conversations among senior leaders to get everyone on the same page about instruction and professional development.

When leading future change efforts, I may have to decide whether to approach change by fitting into the existing culture or by supporting the culture the organization is striving toward. I've learned that as a newcomer to an organization, the better route is to operate within the existing cultural norms—within the silos. Once relationships and reputation are established, I will be better positioned to push against the status quo.

Facilitating versus Being Directive

Throughout my work with the team I had to make many decisions about when it was time to facilitate and bring forth the team's best thinking and when it was time to be more directive. During the design team meetings I defaulted to operating as a facilitator the majority of the time. This was beneficial because I grew in my ability to facilitate, and I believe that facilitation can be a way to exercise leadership. Also, facilitation helped the team to communicate openly during our sessions. I struggled more with figuring out when and how to be more directive. I tried providing direction to the team in subtle ways—through the articles we read, the activities we did, the guest speakers we had—to make sure the group looked toward the future in staff development practices. But I facilitated activities that helped team members make their own sense of those moments. The most directive move I made was telling each design team member what I thought his/her next step should be. This came only after the team members seemed unable to generate their own personal next steps, and we were nearing the end of the project. Given my position (i.e., no one in the room reported to me) and the fact that I was there on a temporary basis, I think this was the right balance.

In hindsight, I realize that I was treating facilitation and being directive as a dichotomy. I believed that at any moment I was on one side or the other, and the side where I landed determined the extent to which each member would buy in to the work of developing a professional development strategy. Upon further

reflection I see that I also acted in a third way; namely, that I was doing the work that could have (or should have) been the work of the team. At the time, I was miscategorizing those actions as being directive when really I was just favoring my own personal work preference. For example, I knew that it would be important to capture our work in some way so that our learning would not be lost, and so I decided on the guidance document as the format. That was setting a direction. However, I then created the document and used the notes and charts after each meeting to add to it. That was me doing work I could have shared with the team.

In my description and analysis I noted that team members were hesitant to take ownership of action steps in the strategy partially because of district culture and partially because of how I structured the experience. For my future leadership, I need to learn to be more intentional about determining when to facilitate, when to propose a direction, and how much of the work I should take on. I leaned too much on my personal preference for processing information independently, and therefore I have to be careful not to let my personal preference interfere with the greater goal. If my independent work comes at the expense of team building and garnering buy-in, the better choice would be to find ways to process on my own while still giving work to the team.

Implications for Site

To continue working toward the goal of tripling the number of high-performing students, CMSD can support instructional improvement by aligning as a system in two main areas: (1) expectations for high-quality teaching and learning and (2) expectations for best practices in professional development. When there is alignment in these two areas, leaders of professional learning can work in concert with one another to support teacher growth rather than giving conflicting messages. CMSD must also continue to identify how adults in the system can improve their craft and operate in the new ways that district restructuring requires.

Professional Development as School Improvement

Jensen, Sonnemann, Roberts-Hull, and Hunter (2016) studied high-performing education systems internationally to see how these systems approached the issue of professional learning. They found that British Columbia, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore had a similar view of professional learning as essential to the school improvement process. Rather than present a prescriptive set of professional learning mandates, however, they articulate these districts' strategic direction:

> Setting strategic directions for these systems does not, however, entail being "tight" on the specific professional learning programs that schools implement. . . . Rather, high performing systems control and elevate the quality of professional learning across schools by helping schools to

> organize school improvement around the principles of effective professional learning and holding them accountable for doing so (Jensen et al., 2016, p. 11).

These systems do not dictate the structure for site-based professional learning; it is up to the school to decide whether lesson study, professional learning communities, or another format will be what drives their job-embedded development. Rather, what these systems have established is that all professional learning will occur through an improvement cycle that has student learning as the driver.

Similarly, CMSD has to declare the strategic direction for professional development in the district, and the design team has begun this work with the strategy and implementation recommendations. CMSD must embrace the idea that professional learning and development is essential to the school improvement process. The approaches of the successful systems just listed align with what CMSD is attempting to do with the portfolio strategy in that the types of professional learning activities are determined at the school level. However, the quality of school-based learning experiences will not improve until leadership makes decisions about how the district will ensure leaders in the system are learning and implementing effective professional learning experiences.

Coherence through Cross-Departmental Collaboration

Johnson, Marietta, Higgins, Mapp, and Grossman (2015) identify three main areas of coherence that districts should attend to: resources, structures, and systems. Strategy implementation requires that district resources, structures,

and systems work in tandem. CMSD can grow toward a more coherent system through a commitment to cross-departmental collaboration.

Since the lack of ownership of the professional development strategy proved to be a challenge during the course of the project, the senior leadership team has to identify the home for professional development work. I recommend that this work should be housed under the deputy chief of curriculum and instruction in the Academics Department, but the work of professional learning must be a highly collaborative effort. For example, if there is a director of professional learning on the curriculum and instruction team, that person has to work closely with the talent office on issues of evaluating instruction, partner with network support teams to strengthen site-based professional development, and work with curriculum and instruction managers on districtwide professional learning opportunities. This is critical in order to achieve a coordinated effort in which messaging and expectations from all entities are complementary and not contradictory.

Leaders as Learners

CMSD is on a journey to become an organization that values learning at all levels. This is evident through the newly implemented leadership labs and consultancy opportunities during leadership team meetings, the Wallace Foundation grant to support the learning of network leaders, chief academic officer roundtables, and the new curriculum and instruction professional learning

community. CMSD must now take a step back to look at the learning and support for the system's principals and network support teams.

The district needs to ensure that all leaders of professional development have a deep understanding of best practices for adult learning. Structures such as the chief academic officer roundtable and network meetings are already in place, but some time must be used for learning and planning for teacher development. For example, school leadership teams have come together throughout the year to discuss progress on their academic achievement plans and receive feedback from colleagues in the network. This could be strengthened by asking the teams to specify the professional development practices they are using in their schools. Then they can receive feedback on how to strengthen their practices rather than allowing the teams to merely report in generalities that there was professional development on a topic.

For some principals, the autonomy over instruction and site-based professional learning (among other autonomies) has proven to be more than they can handle effectively. The goal is school autonomy, but I believe that a more centralized set of instructional standards and school supports should be in place first, and then gradually release responsibility and autonomy for instruction and professional learning back to the building level once principals and support teams have demonstrated competency.

Focus on Instruction

One of the ways to increase support is to focus on centralizing instructional expectations for the system. This is necessary for several reasons. One is that the network support teams and other learning leaders are not aligned in their efforts to support teachers, which leaves teachers confused about expectations. Second, the TDES rubric was a starting point for getting the district to use common language about instruction, but much work remains to help teachers and administrators alike understand how to use the rubric to help set goals and strengthen instructional practice.

Therefore, CMSD leaders must clarify the vision of high-quality teaching and learning. Wagner et al. (2006) explain that having a shared vision of good teaching is one of the seven disciplines for strengthening instruction:

> If good instruction—in every classroom for all students—is the central focus of systemic change in education, then districts and schools need to define "goodness" and come to a shared understanding of what is meant by great, or even competent teaching (p. 37).

One of their recommendations is to use learning walks to approach a common understanding. Since CMSD already has the learning walks structure in place, the director of professional learning can build on it by using the recommended protocols to calibrate the team. As a first step, these walks can be the launching pad for calibrating what is really meant by the terms *differentiation* and *rigor*, since they are instructional focus areas and related to TDES expectations.

Focus on Site-Based Professional Development

As a portfolio system, CMSD will be prioritizing school-based collaboration and professional development; it has already taken the important first step of creating the time for these activities. One thing that rang forth loud and clear from my initial interviews, the design team members' comments, and the teacher survey was that in many locations, the 200 minutes per week designed for site-based collaboration and professional development is not being used effectively.

The director of professional learning can address this first by studying the schools in which site-based activities are succeeding and record the practices in use at these schools (e.g. collaborative inquiry, lesson study, data teams). Since no formal mechanisms are in place for evaluating site-based learning and collaboration,[7] these schools must be identified by feedback from network leaders. The district also should study the new school models that have opened over the last three years since teachers there are continually learning how to implement distinct instructional models.

Once strong district practices are recorded, the director of professional learning can work with network support teams to replicate the practices in two schools as a pilot. The original practices, as well as new learning from the pilot, will be the beginnings of a set of CMSD-specific resources that teams can reference for site-based professional development support.

[7] The School Quality Review process provides data on site based professional development, but this has been done with only a small subset of schools to date.

Gradual Release of Responsibility

Though the efforts to clarify instructional expectations and provide specific supports for site-based professional activities seem to be a return to centralization, they are really efforts to clarify the bounds of school autonomy. District leaders will have to determine which criteria to use to decide when principals can have more autonomy over curriculum and professional development. For example, a principal may have to display the ability to clearly communicate instructional expectations and design professional learning experiences that support teachers' growth effectively before being granted the autonomy to break away from the centralized instructional model. All other schools would follow centralized guidance.

Reestablish Trust

Almost immediately upon my entry, I became aware of feelings of mistrust in the district. But I also had the pleasure of witnessing the CEO's efforts to encourage and support teachers. The celebratory emails thanking teachers for their hard work and the treats delivered to schools – these efforts make a difference and should be continued.

CMSD must continue to consider the impact the Cleveland Plan has had on relationships between teachers and administration. With any major organizational reform or change, resistance is to be expected. Still, it is necessary to acknowledge the impact that TDES, and the fact that pay is tied to

evaluation, has on the district culture. The Cleveland Teachers Union president wrote the following in his reflection on a March 2015 school board meeting:

> Perhaps the greatest amount of anger was directed at district administrators who use our evaluation system as nothing more than a "gotcha" moment. Hundreds of CTU members echoed in agreement when asked if they or a colleague they knew had been a victim of abuse and misuse of our TDES system (Quolke, 2015a)

Achieving a system-wide understanding of what makes good teaching and learning and how it is evaluated can help to rebuild trust. Steps to improve the implementation of TDES are steps toward improving the culture.

Implications for Sector

My work on staff development in CMSD highlighted the primacy of instruction and student learning. The only way to know if staff development is effective is to clearly understand exactly what teachers are working toward. This challenge for clarity about teaching and learning expectations is not unique to Cleveland; other districts have faced the issue during the transition to a portfolio model.

Enter Portfolio Strategy with a Hybrid Instructional Approach

When a district is transitioning to a portfolio strategy, it can lose focus on improving teaching and learning because of the energy spent attending to other aspects of the strategy. Traditional districts that are transitioning to a portfolio model must therefore intentionally maintain a focus on instruction.

Milwaukee Public Schools is one district that was implementing a portfolio strategy and had to regroup by becoming more centralized in its instructional approach. In the early 1990s, Milwaukee Public Schools began implementing policies to promote school choice and autonomy. As in Cleveland, the portfolio strategy led to increases in the graduation rate but not increases in overall in student achievement. Montgomery, Darling-Hammond, and Campbell (2011) studied this district and found that when implementing the portfolio strategy, the district put its energies into reorganizing for decentralization and redirecting resources to schools, but this came at the expense of strengthening instruction.

The superintendent recognized that principals held widely varied beliefs about effective instruction and responded by adopting a centralized instructional improvement plan. For example, common textbooks and syllabi were adopted for mathematics and math coaches and teacher leaders had clearly defined responsibilities.

In efforts to strengthen instruction in a portfolio district, it is necessary to abandon the idea that an instructional strategy must be either centralized or decentralized. Rather, a hybrid approach is required. Montgomery, Darling-Hammond, and Campbell (2011) describe the hybrid approach as "an approach that combines systemic practices across the district and schools with flexibility for the needs within individual schools" (p. 54). This means that a district exercises strong centralized control over curriculum and instructional expectations and couples those expectations with intensive supports in order to build capacity in school personnel. As a result, principals and teachers would learn and demonstrate skills (e.g., building content-area expertise and collaborating for instructional improvement) before being given the autonomy to move to a specialized school model. With the hybrid approach, both centralization and elements of the portfolio model can be in play at the same time.

Evaluating Portfolio Models

The Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) currently provides guidance to nearly forty districts on portfolio management. As described earlier in the paper, the CRPE model is composed of seven elements: options and

choices for all families, school autonomy, pupil-based funding, talent-seeking strategy, sources of support for schools, performance-based accountability for schools, and extensive public engagement. CRPE districts assess their progress with portfolio implementation by rating themselves on several subcomponents of each of the seven elements using the CRPE snapshot tool. Figures 6 and 7 show excerpts from the CRPE snapshot assessment tool. In regard to school-level transformation, districts measure success in terms of whether or not universal autonomy has been reached in staff selection, budget, pay, curriculum choice, and freedom to seek contract waivers (see Figure 6). Although the snapshot can help districts to track how they are making progress in the portfolio model over time, it is clear that using autonomy as the sole metric can leave the issue of instructional quality unaddressed.

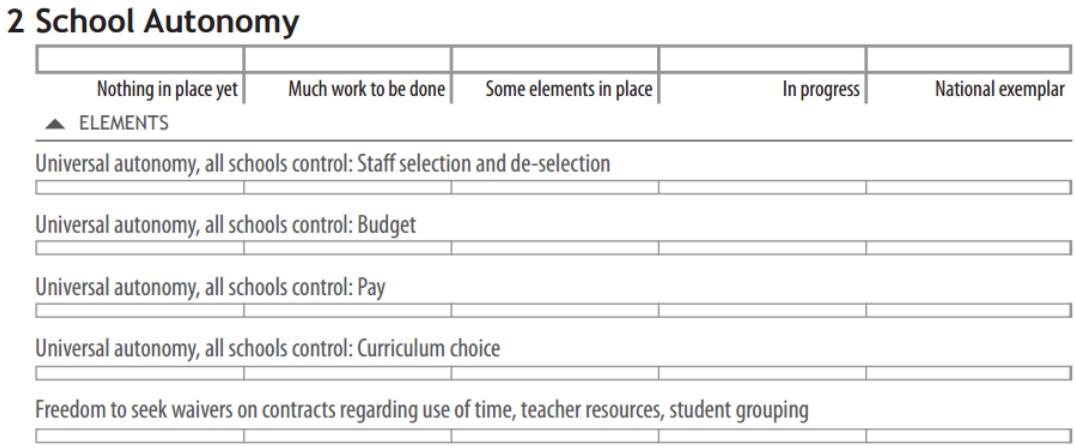


Figure 6. CRPE snapshot tool: school autonomy
Source: http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/Blank%20Snapshot.pdf.

For sources of support for schools, Figure 7 shows that for the CRPE, success is articulated in terms of whether or not schools have the freedom to engage outside providers. This does not allow space to rate the extent to which district resources are being used to build capacity in teachers and school leaders.

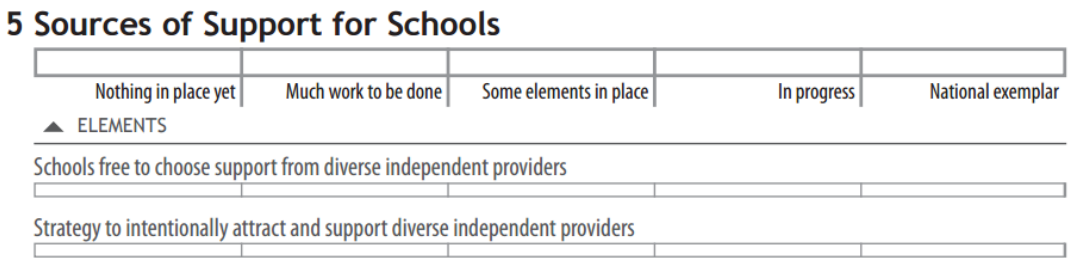


Figure 7. CRPE snapshot tool: sources of support for schools
Source: http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/Blank%20Snapshot.pdf.

I encourage districts to think outside of CRPE's model for evaluating progress toward the portfolio model. In a hybrid approach that prioritizes clear centralized expectations and intense supports that build capacity as prerequisites for autonomy, the transition to full school autonomy will be slower but more effective.

Johnson et al. (2015) studied five districts to understand the relationship between central offices and schools in each district. Three of the districts took a more centralized approach, making decisions about curriculum and staffing at the district level. The other two districts granted autonomy to the schools to make these types of decisions. Though they had different approaches to governance, all these districts were making improvements. What they had in

common was coherence. "What mattered most was whether the parts of that strategy worked together coherently to support the work of teachers and administrators at the school and in classrooms" (Johnson et al., 2015, p. 42). Rather than striving for pure centralization or decentralization, districts should focus on a coherent system in which resources, structures, and systems are supporting each other (Johnson et al., 2015). This means portfolio districts that embrace a hybrid instructional approach with a gradual release of responsibility should measure the coherence of this strategy: Are central office personnel working to make instructional expectations clear (structures)? Has the district created an accountability system for monitoring teachers' and principals' growth toward instructional leadership skills (systems)?

Districts transitioning to a portfolio strategy need to regularly assess the coherence within the strategy rather than having autonomy as the sole indicator of a successful transition.

Conclusion

I entered CMSD excited about the opportunity to help shape the way teachers learn and are supported so that students also would achieve at higher levels. The district has undergone significant changes since the Cleveland Plan's implementation to create the portfolio system. Principals were repurposed as instructional leaders, and network teams were established to support schools in implementing their academic plans. The new teacher evaluation system came with the promise of an intense focus on teacher development, and the time had come to articulate the plan for making that happen.

Throughout this project, I found that some of my assumptions and strategies were on target. I anticipated that there would have to be ongoing learning throughout the system about effective adult development practice and that building the capacity of learning leaders to create effective staff development opportunities would need to be a priority. I entered with a strong conviction that the executors of the strategy needed to be the ones informing the strategy.

I also missed the mark in some areas. I knew that the portfolio strategy would present unique implications for staff development (e.g., continuing to support the principal as a learning leader, putting supports in place for site-based professional development). I didn’t know that one of those implications would be the need to become more centralized about instruction. I incorrectly assumed that the time spent in the previous years on TDES implementation would mean

that the district had a common language about instruction and that a common understanding about teaching and learning expectations permeated the district. I also underestimated the power of how change was traditionally implemented in the district. Central office had been reorganized and in that process, leaders decided that there was no further need for someone to direct professional learning. I was therefore confident in the teaming strategy and believed that cross-departmental collaboration could sustain the professional development strategy, even if no chief claimed ownership. What I found was that even with the reorganization and the work toward collaborating across silos, it still mattered greatly that a senior leader be responsible for professional learning, even if the ultimate goal is to decide most professional development activities at the school site.

My original theory of action focused heavily on my interactions with the design team and the need to help the system learn about high-quality staff development practices. I now know that for the strategy to permeate the system, especially during a contract negotiation year, I needed to position myself to work with the existing culture rather than trying to push the strategy through the design team members. In addition, I have learned that the question of what we believe about teaching and learning has the potential to be lost in a portfolio district if a strong system of expectations and supports are not there from the beginning.

CMSD has made great strides in its effort to become a system with high-quality school choices. With a renewed attention to instruction, a commitment to helping all leaders of learning understand and implement effective professional development practices, an intense focus on strengthening site-based professional development, and continued efforts by senior leaders to work across silos to clarify the Cleveland Plan strategy, I expect that teaching and learning in the district will continue to improve.

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Appendix A

House Bill 525 Summary

Excerpted from *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools*
http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/theclevelandplan

CLEVELAND PLAN LEGISLATION SUMMARY

The Cleveland Plan identified a range of policy conditions necessary to ensure successful implementation of the plan. Following extensive dialogue with the Cleveland Teachers Union, legislation was drafted and ultimately signed into law through House Bill 525 on July 2, 2012. This landmark legislation includes three broad areas of impact:

DISTRICT AUTONOMY AND FLEXIBILITY

- Enables the CEO to take corrective action to improve the district's lowest-performing schools; allows the CEO to go beyond existing collective bargaining agreements; and provides a role for affected unions to provide input on the CEO's plan.
- Provides the CEO with authority to determine the school calendar and school day.
- Allows the district to apply for exemptions from specific statutory provisions or rules under the innovative education pilot program.
- Permits the district to direct any monies received from the sale of property into the district's general fund (with a few exceptions).

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- Requires the district, the teachers' union and principal association to develop a new performance-based evaluation and compensation system.
- Establishes building-level hiring committees comprised of the principal, union representation and others based on factors including performance and expertise.
- Eliminates seniority as the sole or primary factor in personnel decisions, including layoffs and recalls.
- Allows the district to terminate teachers who are rated "ineffective" for two successive years.
- Provides the district significant flexibility in determining teacher and principal contract terms and duration.

CHARTER QUALITY AND COLLABORATION

- Establishes a Transformation Alliance to ensure fidelity to the plan, to recommend to ODE what charter school sponsors can open schools in Cleveland, to provide input in the development of new district schools and partnering community schools, and to report annually on the performance of all public schools in Cleveland.
- Authorizes the school district to share a portion of levy proceeds with high-performing charter schools who partner with the district.
- Authorizes the school district to include the academic performance and enrollment data of students enrolled in partnering charter schools on the district's report card.

Appendix B

Introductory Letter from Steering Committee

TDES Weekly Updates 15 - 16
8.24.15

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to a new year! We are optimistic that it will be a good one. TDES continues to guide our work as a priority in enhancing professional practice and we appreciate the way you have remained engaged in the work.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge that the work has been hard and challenging for all involved. Yet, we remain encouraged and committed to getting it right, which means having a system that is supportive and provides meaningful feedback. Towards that end, our priorities for TDES and the associated supports continues to include the following: (1) Facilitating a focus on the understanding of the TDES rubric for Teachers and Evaluators (2) Ensuring that the "D" (development) in TDES is strong and meeting the needs of Teachers and Educators (3) Improving our best practices of recording strong evidence.

While TDES professional development primarily occurs through the work of TDES building teams, offered in a job-embedded manner, it would be helpful if each school began to discuss what support it needs from the District and TDES Steering Committee. We are pleased to report that a point person, Jacquinette Brown, is focused on working with a committee to develop a professional development strategy for CMSD. Additionally, picking up with the work that began last spring, a group of teachers has agreed to serve as Domain Trainers for TDES. They will be offering training soon so please be on the lookout for those offerings.

To be sure we start off right, we are asking that your TDES building teams meet to discuss your needs around TDES implementation and training. Further, we request that identify your current TDES committee members. As you recall TDES teams are comprised of the Principal, Chapter Chair and 3-5 members jointly selected. Please remember the TDES building team is responsible for both observation and growth measure information. So, please be mindful of the knowledge of and interest in those areas when identifying members for this committee. Jill Cabe will contacting you soon for your TDES team names.

Thank you, in advance, for all you are doing to support teaching and learning in Cleveland. Should you need assistance with TDES please feel free to contact the TDES Steering Committee at TDES@clevelandmetroschools.org .

Christine Fowler-Mack, TDES Co-Chair CMSD
Chief Portfolio Officer

Jillian Ahrens, TDES Co-Chair CTU
First Grade Teacher, Memorial School
3rd Vice-President, K-8 Schools, Cleveland Teachers Union
Co-Director of Grievances, Cleveland Teachers Union

Appendix C

Summary of Ohio Standards for Professional Development

Source: http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Professional-Development/Organizing-for-High-Quality-Professional-Developme/FinalPD-Standards_Quick-Reference-Guide_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Ohio Standards for Professional Development	
Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students…	
Standard 1: Learning Communities …occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility and goal alignment.	**Core Elements:** • Engage in continuous improvement • Develop collective responsibility • Create alignment and accountability
Standard 2: Leadership … requires skilled teacher leaders and administrators who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.	**Core Elements:** • Develop capacity for learning and leading • Advocate for professional learning • Create support systems and structures
Standard 3: Resources … requires prioritizing, monitoring and coordinating resources for educator learning.	**Core Elements:** • Prioritize human, fiscal, material, technology and time resources • Monitor resources • Coordinate resources
Standard 4: Data … requires the use of a variety of sources and types of student, educator and system data to plan, assess and evaluate professional learning.	**Core Elements:** • Analyze student, educator and system data • Assess progress • Evaluate professional learning
Standard 5: Learning Designs … integrates theories, research and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.	**Core Elements:** • Apply learning theories, research and models • Select learning designs • Promote active engagement
Standard 6: Implementation … applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning.	**Core Elements:** • Apply change research • Sustain implementation • Provide constructive feedback
Standard 7: Outcomes … aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.	**Core Elements:** • Meet performance standards • Address learning outcomes • Build coherence

Appendix D

Communication to Teachers about Design Team Work

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO: Feedback needed on Professional Development priorities



Gordon, Eric S

Reply | Mon 2/29/2016 11:01 AM

Good morning CMSD Educators,

Please see the important note below from Jacquinette Brown, who has been working with a number of CMSD teachers and leaders to improve the professional development offerings for our District. Ms. Brown is seeking your feedback on a short survey. The results will be used to help inform our professional development programming for next school year. Please take a moment to read Ms. Brown's letter and to answer the three question survey enclosed.

As always, thank you for all you do for our student scholars and their families and caregivers!

Have a great day!
Eric

Good Morning!

My name is Jacquinette Brown, and you may recall my introduction in the August 24, 2015 edition of the TDES update newsletter. Over the past few months I have had the exciting opportunity to engage with a group of CMSD teachers, teacher leaders and principals, as well as representatives from Curriculum and Instruction, Talent and the Office of Professional Development to work on creating a professional development strategy. I would like to update you on the work we have done to date and get feedback from CMSD teachers to help us identify priorities as we plan the next steps towards a strong professional development system.

Our work has been driven by needs that have been voiced by educators in the district. One such concern is the need for high-value, differentiated professional development experiences so that teachers are always participating in activities that are relevant to their teaching assignment and career stage. A second concern is the need to continue to become clearer as a system about the definition of high quality teaching and what it looks like in practice. Finally there is a need to work on building a culture in which it feels safe to reflect, give feedback and collaborate.

Using these needs as our guide, we began the year by studying best practices in staff development as well as the newly adopted Ohio Standards for Professional Development. We have continued to meet regularly to use this knowledge as our foundation as we work towards a clearly defined professional development strategy. The vision is that we will become a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk-taking and innovation as we strive to produce continual growth in student achievement. We have identified a preliminary set of goals as a part of the professional development strategy:

- Differentiate professional development to meet the needs of teachers in every career stage: **novice teachers** (new to teaching, new to the district, or new to a role), **experienced teachers** (both struggling and skilled), and those who are pursuing **teacher leadership,** as we believe they should have specific guidance to help them improve their practice
- Develop specific supports for principals and building leadership teams that will help to strengthen site based, job-embedded professional development
- Use technology to support individual professional learning goals and to facilitate cross-district professional learning and collaboration.
- Use the Ohio Standards for Professional Development as the foundation for designing high quality professional development experiences that help teachers grow in the TDES competencies.

In our next phase of work we will be identifying priorities and specific action items for the 16-17 school year to improve professional development, and we want to make sure your voice is reflected in the process. Please visit this link to give us your feedback. There are **only three questions**! Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jacquinette Brown, NBCT
Education Leadership Resident

Eric S. Gordon
EDUCATOR: Chief Executive Officer

Appendix E

Cleveland Metropolitan School District Professional Development Guidance Document

Teacher Professional Development in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District

2016-2019

CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

DRAFT

DRAFT *

Introduction

This is a working document that outlines our goals for improving staff development in CMSD. The development strategy discussed here is specific to teacher professional learning and development, but can be applied in multiple contexts. This document is for leaders of professional learning – principals, coaches, teacher leaders, curriculum and instruction specialists and others – to help you understand our fundamental beliefs about effective staff development and to serve as a reference as you design professional growth experiences for your colleagues. We also hope that teachers will use this document to understand the staff development shifts we will be making over the next few years and the steps we plan to take in order to achieve our vision of becoming a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk-taking and innovation as we strive to produce continual growth in student achievement.

Teacher Development Design Team Members 2015-2016

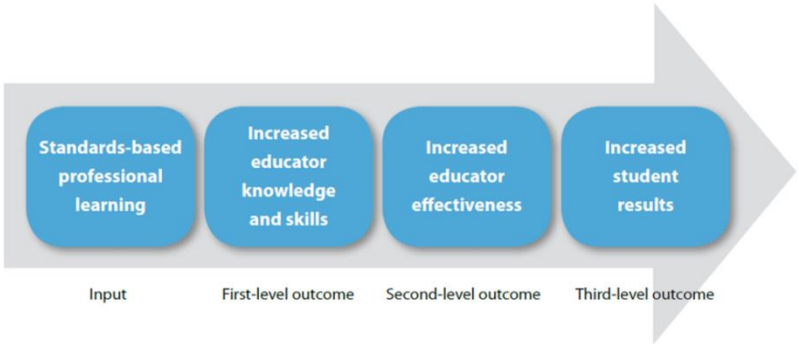
(Names have been removed.)

Professional Learning and Development Strategy

"The term 'professional development' means a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement…"
-Learning Forward

Theory of Change

We believe that if we develop a comprehensive, standards based professional development system teachers will have the supports they need to increase their knowledge and skill set. This will increase the effectiveness of our teaching force, and ultimately improve student results.



Source: Learning Forward (2013). Comprehensive Professional Learning System: A Workbook for Districts and States.

The Vision

We will be a community committed to collaborative learning, best practices, risk-taking and innovation as we strive to produce continual growth in student achievement.

The Mission

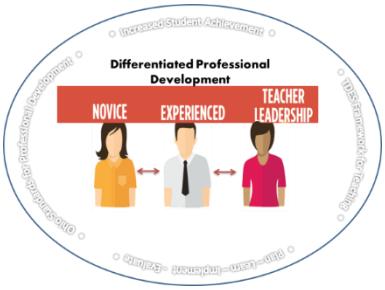
The Cleveland Metropolitan School District promotes teacher growth and development in order to improve effective teaching practices which positively impact student learning.

We aim to do this by:

- using data to inform the development of differentiated professional learning opportunities,
- providing varied resources and structures to support collaboration within schools and across the district, and
- engaging teachers as drivers of their own professional growth

A Deeper Look

We believe in a differentiated approach to staff development and that teachers in every career stage should have guidance on their path. It is important to note that the categories are meant to guide efforts for differentiation, but are not intended to be limiting. Rather the categories are fluid, and a teacher could move back and forth between them over the course of his/her career.



A novice could be someone who is new to teaching, new to the district, or someone with years of experience who is new to a particular content area, grade level, or instructional technique. The experienced teacher category includes both skilled teachers and teachers who are struggling. Finally, we understand that teachers who are seeking out teacher leadership opportunities could be from any experience level, but need a distinct set of supports for this career transition.

In order to build a strong professional development system, it is important to clarify roles and responsibilities. At the **individual** level, teachers are taking more ownership of their professional growth. This starts with self-reflection and goal setting through a growth plan or improvement plan to determine the TDES domains that need the most attention. Teachers then may seek out professional reading, college courses, district supports, or other resources to strengthen those areas. At the **school** level, teachers will engage in job embedded professional development which includes feedback and coaching with principals, instructional coaches, colleagues, and teacher leaders. Job embedded professional development also includes school based collaboration structures. The **district** will be responsible for providing the structure and support for an effective development system. This includes but is not limited to: developing leaders of professional learning; setting and defining instructional priorities; determining professional development evaluation practices; providing structure and time for site based professional development; setting expectations for professional learning, highlighting best practices in the district, providing technology that supports professional learning, and providing open and frequent communication about staff development issues.

The Foundation

Two bodies of work form the foundation for our professional development system: The Teacher Development and Evaluation System (TDES) Framework for Teaching and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development.

TDES Framework for Teaching

The comprehensive evaluation system, known as TDES (Teacher Development and Evaluation System), was created by CMSD based on the work of Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: Framework for Teaching*. It includes a reflective process which includes observations, coaching, feedback, and continuous professional growth. The goal is for TDES to

be a transformed evaluation system focusing on teacher development, and providing opportunity for reflective and meaningful learning.

Ohio Standards for Professional Development
The Ohio Standards for Professional Development are based on the research-based standards developed by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council). These seven standards will guide professional development in our district:

- Standard 1: **Learning Communities** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students *occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility and goal alignment.*

- Standard 2**: Leadership** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students *requires skilled teacher leaders and administrators who develop capacity, and advocate and create support systems for professional learning.*

- Standard 3: **Resources** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all *students requires prioritizing, monitoring and coordinating resources for educator learning.*

- Standard 4: **Data** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students *requires the use of a variety of sources and types of student, educator and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.*

- Standard 5: **Learning Designs** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students *integrates theories, research and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.*

- Standard 6: **Implementation** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students *applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning.*

- Standard 7: **Outcomes** - Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all

CONCEPTUAL SHIFTS

These new standards for professional development represent a shift from traditional professional development expectations:

- In the past professional development has been seen as an event to attend. However, we now acknowledge that professional learning and growth can happened as a result of a variety of activities, including professional learning communities.

- "Professional Learning" is often used in place of "professional development" as a way to emphasize teacher ownership of their growth, and to acknowledge that learning is a part of this process.

- Resources for professional development are not just monetary in nature, nor do they only refer to external expertise. Strong professional learning systems tap into the expertise of the teachers in the system, and provide the structures for those teachers to share.

students *aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.*

(Ohio Standards for Professional Development, 2015)

PRIORITY STANDARDS

Though we will be operating under all seven standards, four have been identified by the design team as priority focus areas:

Data – Educators who make decisions about professional development in CMSD should analyze data to inform those decisions. Data should include, but is not limited to, student achievement data, staff surveys, TDES data, etc.

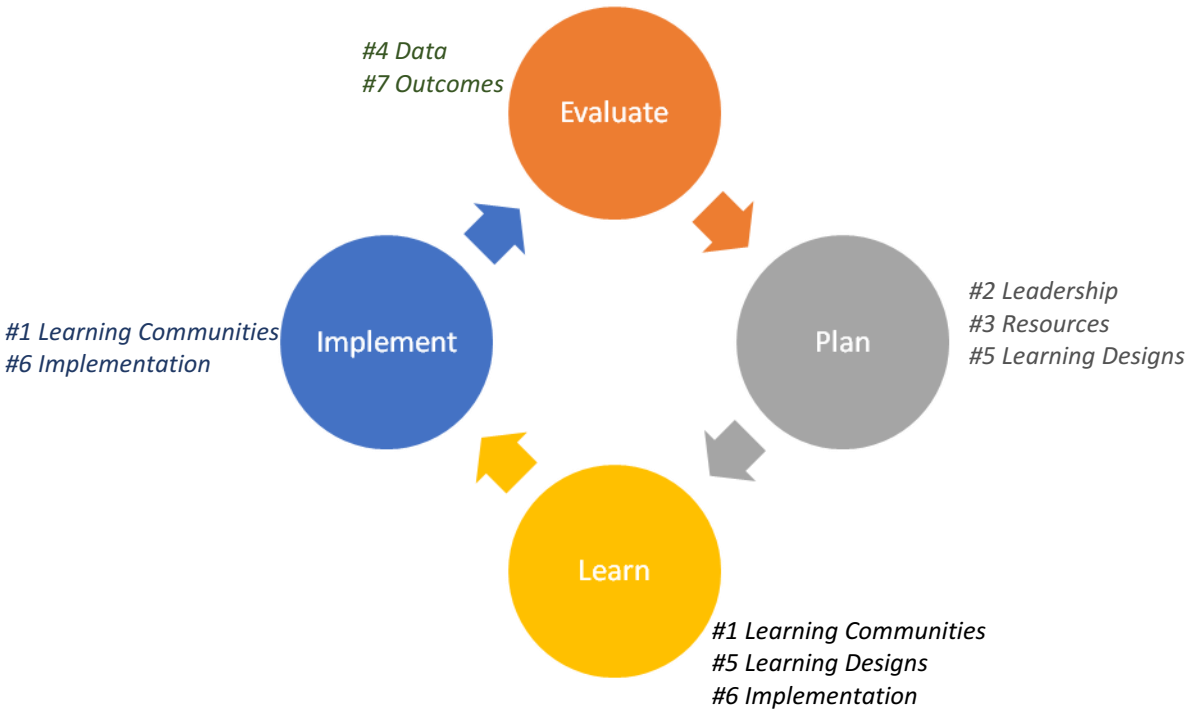
Learning Designs –TDES requires that "Teacher sets and regularly modifies short-and long-term professional development goals based on their self-assessment and analysis of student learning evidence" (indicator 4e). Principals need to be prepared to support these goals, so CMSD will work to systemically strengthen the capacity of building leaders to differentiate their approach to coaching and leading staff to implement research-based instructional practices.

Learning Communities – As a part of the portfolio strategy, CMSD emphasizes job-embedded, site-based professional development. We will intensify our efforts to provide supports to schools that will make professional learning communities more effective. Additionally, we acknowledge that learning communities can extend beyond the walls of the school building, and will begin to explore the use of technology resources to help CMSD educators connect and engage.

Implementation –We will commit to designing the professional development system in a way that is sustainable over the long term. We will apply research on change and sustainability to support high fidelity implementation of professional learning. We will continually engage in a cycle of research, application, and consulting multiple sources of constructive feedback to provide sustainability.

Professional Development Cycle

The professional development cycle helps to further explain what adherence to the professional development standards looks like in action. Similar to the Ohio 5 step cycle of inquiry (see Appendix 1), the figure below shows the Evaluate - Plan-Learn-Implement-Evaluate cycle, and the associated professional development standards are on the outside of the circles.



(adapted from Duval County Public Schools Professional Development Plan)

Evaluate – Professional development starts with analysis of data to determine the needs of the students, teachers and the school. Data that should be considered include: student achievement data, School Quality Review reports, TDES data, AAP, CFL results, etc.

Plan - From there, individuals and leaders of professional learning design the professional development experiences that will support teachers' learning goals and the school's goals. At the individual level, this occurs through a teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and through TDES growth plans. At the school level, the principal and APT team plan ongoing job-embedded professional development opportunities that will help teachers learn and implement effective instructional and assessment strategies.

Learn – This is where educators are engaging in a professional development activity that will help teachers acquire or strengthen a skill that is related to their personal, school, or district goals. See Appendix 2 for examples of job-embedded professional learning formats.

Implement – Teachers apply the new learning in their classroom instruction and monitor student growth. During this phase teachers are collaborating with one another

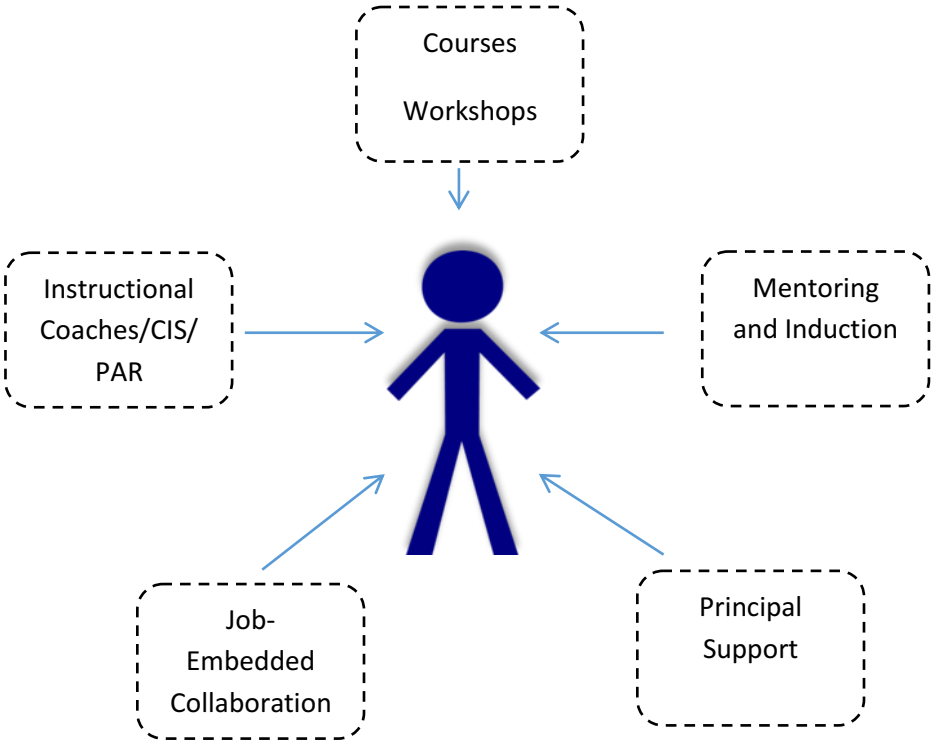
Evaluate – This time we are determining the level of effectiveness for this professional development cycle in order to plan the next set of professional development activities…

Coherence

In order to become a more coherent system as it relates to professional development, we have to align around two areas:

1. Expectations for high-quality teaching and learning
2. An understanding of best practices in professional development

When we align as a system around these two areas, we can design professional learning experiences that complement one another. Teacher support systems will be working in concert with one another and communicating a consistent message. The district will be working to make sure that teachers and administrators build a common understanding of what high-quality teaching looks like in practice.



Recommendations

The design team developed a set of recommendations in the following areas. The ones marked with * were recommended by the Learning Forward's (Killion, 2013) *Comprehensive Professional Learning System: A Workbook for Districts and States.*

Component Area and Definition	Synopsis of Recommendations
Mentoring and Induction* *Those assuming new positions, or those with new certifications or licenses , receive personalized support for success and acculturation as they transition to their new work responsibilities*	Professional learning should be embedded into induction by creating two pathways for new certificated employees: Experienced teachers new to the district who hold a 5-year professional license and new teachers with RE license.
Roles and Responsibilities * *Delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and other contributors to effective professional learning*	Leaders of professional learning will use data to identify professional development needs, and develop flexible modules to address (online self-paced modules, pre-packed materials for facilitating around topics, etc.)
Job-Embedded Collaboration* *Promotes job-embedded collaboration among peers within professional learning and during application and refinement of practice.*	Continue to build on collaborative practices at the school site by providing the space, time and structure for job-embedded professional development. Provide specific tools and protocols for leadership teams to support implementation of job-embedded collaboration.
Clarifying High-Quality Teaching and Learning *Clear instructional expectations*	Provide supports to help all in the system become clearer about what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning. This includes helping all understand how to rate using the rubric, providing examples of what skilled looks like in practice for each area, and defining terms that are used in the rubric and academic focus areas.
Teacher Leadership *Opportunities for teachers to demonstrate leadership without taking an administrative position*	Provide support and training for teachers who are interested in teacher leadership opportunities; build out teacher career ladders.

Evaluation of Professional Learning* *Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for both accountability and improvement.*	Use Guskey's five levels of evaluation to create an evaluation plan for professional learning in the district.
Technology/Learning Management System* *Uses a technology solution that links with educator and student databases to manage and increase access to professional learning*.	Create technology tools that promote personal ownership of professional development.
Incentives and Recognition for Professional Learning* *Uses application and impact of professional learning as criteria for incentives or recognition for professional learning*	Continue the work started regarding career pathways; implement the recommended policies for making college coursework eligible for ACs; implement procedures and policies that allow professional development presenters and participants to earn ACs.

PD Design Team
Recommendations and Timeline

Mentoring and Induction

Those assuming new positions, or those with new certifications or licenses, receive personalized support for success and acculturation as they transition to their new work responsibilities.

Synopsis of Recommendations	Professional learning should be embedded into induction by creating two pathways for new certificated employees: 1. Experienced teachers new to the district who hold a 5-year professional license 2. New teachers to CMSD who have a Resident Educator License or Alternate Resident Educator License

2016-2017

1. Centralized information/resources for new teachers – handbook/New teacher landing page on website
2. Create a consistent point of contact for new teachers via HR

2017-2018

1. Collect feedback from users
2. Update info from year 1 to make sure it's accurate and posted in real-time

2018-2019

1. Update improve and revise the process for sustainability
2. Visit and review for updates and revisions

Roles and Responsibilities

Delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and other contributors to effective professional learning	
Synopsis of Recommendations	**District Responsibilities:** Use data to identify professional development needs, and develop flexible modules to address (online self-paced modules, pre-packed materials for facilitating around topics, etc.)
2016-2017 1. Chief Level Establish clear ownership for learning design in CMSD (*Potential cross-functional team at district level:* action team coaches, C&I, Talent, Office of PD, special education, RE) 2. Curriculum and Instruction & Network Leaders a. Utilize data (i.e. TDES/OIP/AAP/Network/SQR) and compliance requirements to determine staff development needs/trends b. Develop and/or secure "expert" facilitators to design flexible modules that address current needs/trends	
2017-2018	
2018-2019	

Job-Embedded Collaboration *Promotes job-embedded collaboration among peers within professional learning and during application and refinement of practice.*	
Synopsis of Recommendations	Continue to build on collaborative practices at the school site by providing the space, time and structure for job-embedded professional development. Provide specific tools and protocols for leadership teams to support implementation of job-embedded collaboration.
2016-2017 1. Provide building level TDES report to principals so that they can see trends/PD needs	

2. Pilot job-embedded collaboration structure (lesson study, action research, etc.) in 3 good to great schools (voluntary teacher teams)
3. Assess effectiveness of pilot

2017-2018

1. Add more schools to pilot and continue to assess effectiveness

2018-2019

Clarifying High-Quality Teaching and Learning

Synopsis of Recommendations	Provide supports to help all in the system become clearer about what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning. This includes helping all understand how to rate using the rubric, providing examples of what skilled looks like in practice for each area, and defining terms that are used in the rubric and academic focus areas.

2016-2017

1. C&I team and CAO: Definition for terms used in focus areas
2. Create supporting documents and resources to further define terms (modules, videos of best practice in CMSD)

2017-2018

1. Support evaluators with content area expertise:
    a. Support from C&I team is first level of support
    b. Identify teachers who can serve as content area experts and offer additional support (These teachers can be recommended by principals who have rated teachers accomplished. These teachers would be compensated by ACs)
2. Create a series of protocols for principals to support teachers when there is a lack of calibration

2018-2019

Teacher Leadership

Synopsis of Recommendations	Provide support and training for teachers who are interested in teacher leadership opportunities

2016-2017

1. ontinue work started regarding career pathways, including:
    a. etermining school (based on school focus) and district needs areas
    b. evelop description of specific opportunities for advancement within the Leader and, eventually, Expert tiers of the career pathways
    c. evelop a rubric for movement to Lead and Expert Pathways to be used by designated committee to evaluate the scope and impact of professional practice
    d. n conjunction with the JOC, create a review process for maintaining Lead and Expert Teacher status and create timeline for length of each position

2017-2018

2018-2019

Evaluation of Professional Learning

Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for both accountability and improvement.

Synopsis of Recommendations	Consistently evaluate site based PD, district sponsored PD, and the PD system as a whole.

2016-2017

1. Review School Quality Review data from 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 to see trends for district staff development needs

2017-2018

1. Review School Quality Review data from 2016-2017 to see trends for district staff development needs
2. Use Guskey's five levels of evaluation to create a plan for evaluating professional learning in the district (this should include SQR and CGCS tool for system level evaluation)

2018-2019

Technology/Learning Management System

Uses a technology solution that links with educator and student databases to manage and increase access to professional learning.

Synopsis of Recommendations	Create technology tools that promote personal ownership of professional development

2016-2017

1. Redesign professional Development website - include the ability to search for district PD sessions

2017-2018

1. Create a digital portfolio that connects TDES, PD, IPDP, SLOs.

2018-2019

Incentives and Recognition for Professional Learning *Uses application and impact of professional learning as criteria for incentives or recognition for professional learning*	
Synopsis of Recommendations	Continue the work started regarding career pathways; implement the recommended policies for making college coursework eligible for ACs; implement procedures and policies that allow professional development presenters and participants to earn ACs.
2016-2017	
2017-2018 1. Create procedures for and vet proposals by teachers and related service providers for professional development opportunities – opportunities for both presenters and participants to earn Achievement Credits. This professional development should show connections to:	
2018-2019 1. Implement Cycle of Development, evidence submission requirements, timelines, flow charts for College Coursework portion of CDCS (presented to JOC) 2. Revise, update and edit College Coursework process, requirements, evidence submission, timelines, and rubric for approval * Once college coursework evidence is submitted, the JGP is responsible for reviewing and approving/denying recommendation for ACs and make that referral to the Joint Oversight Committee.	

Implementation Timeline – Year 1

Mar. 2016	April 2016	May 2016	June 2016	July 2016	Aug. 2015	Sept. 2016	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017	Mar. 2017	April 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017

TDES evidence review committee

Debrief evidence review findings with principals/evaluators and plan roundtable sessions to address problems

C&I team and CAO: Definition for terms used in focus areas

Create supporting documents and resources to further define terms (modules, videos of best practice in CMSD)

Provide 1-3 TDES calibration exercises for principals and teachers

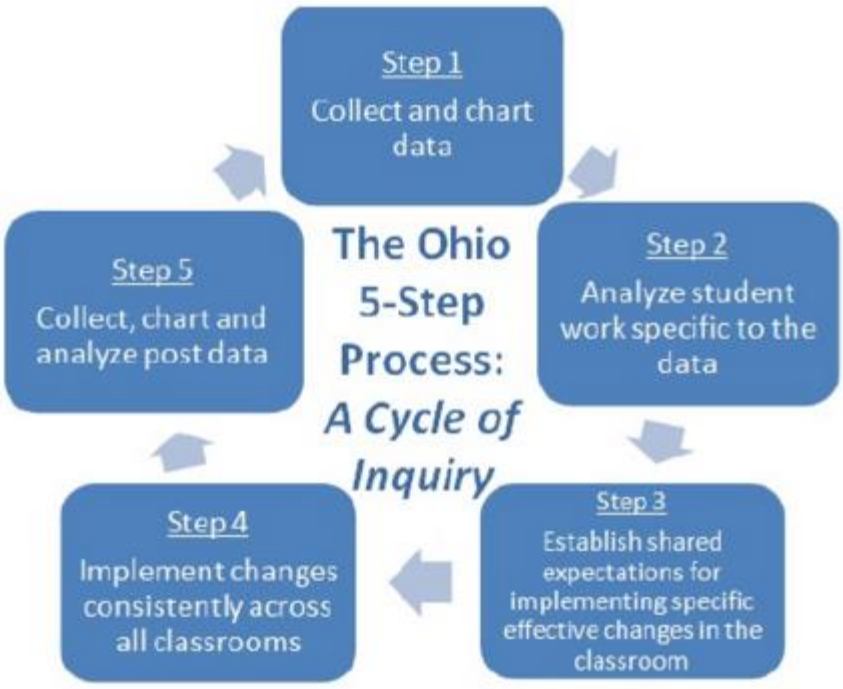
Technology:
1) Create centralized information/resources for new teachers 2) Include the ability to search for PD sessions on website 3) Provide school based TDES summary reports to principals

C&I Team and Network leaders: Utilize data and compliance requirements to determine trends and staff development needs for the 2016-2017 school year

Pilot new PD supports in two "good to great" schools

Implement career pathways

Appendix 1 - Ohio 5–Step Cycle of Inquiry



Appendix 2 - What is Job-Embedded Professional Development?

"Job-embedded professional development (JEPD) refers to teacher learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and is designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hirsh, 2009). It is primarily school or classroom based and is integrated into the workday, consisting of teachers assessing and finding solutions for authentic and immediate problems of practice as part of a cycle of continuous improvement (Hawley & Valli, 1999; National Staff Development Council, 2010). JEPD is a shared, ongoing process that is locally rooted and makes a direct connection between learning and application in daily practice, thereby requiring active teacher involvement in cooperative, inquiry-based work (Hawley & Valli, 1999). High-quality JEPD also is aligned with state standards for student academic achievement and any related local educational agency and school improvement goals (Hirsh, 2009)."

Taken from pg. 2 of Job-Embedded Professional Development: What It Is, Who Is Responsible, and How to Get It Done Well (2010) Croft, A., Coggshall, J. G., Dolan, M., & Powers, E. *National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality*.

Research-Based Job-Embedded Professional Development Formats

Action Research	"Teachers select an aspect of their teaching to systematically investigate, such as their wait time during questioning. They record data and consider theories from the research literature, drawing conclusions about how teaching is influencing learning and vice versa, and informing future instructional decisions. The primary intent of action research is to improve the teachers' immediate classroom teaching.
Coaching	An instructional coach provides ongoing consistent follow-up by way of demonstrations, observations, and conversations with teachers as they implement new strategies and knowledge. Typically, instructional coaches have expertise in the applicable subject area and related teaching strategies.
Critical Friends Group	Teachers meet and analyze each other's work, including artifacts such as student work, a lesson plan, or assessment. They also may discuss challenges they are facing with presenting the subject matter or with

	meeting a particular student's needs.
Data Teams/Assessment Development	Teachers meet together and analyze results from standardized tests or teacher-created assessments. Together, they formulate what the evidence from the data tells them about student learning and discuss teaching approaches to improve student achievement. Teachers also may work on refining assessments to gather more useful student data.
Implementing Individual Professional Growth/Learning Plans	Teachers develop their own professional growth plans in order to understand what professional development opportunities they should engage in, as well as to track their growth in a competency area.
Lesson Study	During sessions known as "research lessons," teachers alternate in preparing a lesson to demonstrate a specific teaching and learning goal (e.g., help a student master a mathematics concept, conduct a peer review of writing within groups). Other teachers observe and document what they see through video, a word processor, or pencil and paper. After the lesson, the teachers meet and discuss the strengths of the lesson and make suggestions for improvement.
Professional Learning Communities	Teachers collaborate to analyze their practice and discuss new strategies and tactics, testing them in the classroom and reporting the results to each other."

Taken from pg. 6-7 of Job-Embedded Professional Development: What It Is, Who Is Responsible, and How to Get It Done Well (2010) Croft, A., Coggshall, J. G., Dolan, M., & Powers, E. *National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality*.

Appendix 3 - Guskey's Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation

Figure I. Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation[1]

Evaluation Level	What Questions Are Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered?	What Is Measured or Assessed?	How Will Information Be Used?
1. Participants' Reactions	• Did they like it? • Was their time well spent? • Did the material make sense? • Will it be useful? • Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? • Were the refreshments fresh and tasty? • Was the room the right temperature? • Were the chairs comfortable?	• Questionnaires administered at the end of the session	• Initial satisfaction with the experience	• To improve program design and delivery
2. Participants' Learning	• Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?	• Paper-and-pencil instruments • Simulations • Demonstrations • Participant reflections (oral and/or written) • Participant portfolios	• New knowledge and skills of participants	• To improve program content, format, and organization
3. Organization Support & Change	• What was the impact on the organization? • Did it affect organizational climate and procedures? • Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported? • Was the support public and overt? • Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently? • Were sufficient resources made available? • Were successes recognized and shared?	• District and school records • Minutes from follow-up meetings • Questionnaires • Structured interviews with participants and district or school administrators • Participant portfolios	• The organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition	• To document and improve organizational support • To inform future change efforts
4. Participants' Use of New Knowledge and Skills	• Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?	• Questionnaires • Structured interviews with participants and their supervisors • Participant reflections (oral and/or written) • Participant portfolios • Direct observations • Video or audio tapes	• Degree and quality of implementation	• To document and improve the implementation of program content
5. Student Learning Outcomes	• What was the impact on students? • Did it affect student performance or achievement? • Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being? • Are students more confident as learners? • Is student attendance improving? • Are dropouts decreasing?	• Student records • School records • Questionnaires • Structured interviews with students, parents, teachers, and/or administrators • Participant portfolios	• Student learning outcomes: – Cognitive (Performance & Achievement) – Affective (Attitudes & Dispositions) – Psychomotor (Skills & Behaviors)	• To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up • To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development

1. Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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