

Scheduling Lesson Study at School #2, Paterson, New Jersey

Lynn Liptak, Principal Emeritus

Our school built the Lesson Study schedule on the following principles:

- If lesson study is going to become part of the school culture and conducted over a long period with a goal of gradual improvement, then time must be allocated during the school day. Lesson study has no chance of becoming a prevalent feature of the school culture if it is conducted with a few enthusiastic volunteers working after school.
- Time is one sure measure of commitment. When teachers see serious time committed to lesson study, and the administrators taking time to engage in lesson study, they feel confident of a high level of support for the process on a day-to-day basis and over the long haul.
- Lesson study should be scheduled by reallocating currently existing resources. In our school, it does not rely on “soft” money or the hiring of substitute teachers.
- Quality instruction must be provided in the classroom while the teachers are engaged in lesson study.

Time for lesson study was thus built into the regular school day using non-classroom teachers and pre-service teachers. Each classroom teacher is paired with a non-classroom partner teacher. The partner teacher has contact with the class during the week by teaching during teacher preparation periods, downsizing the class for mathematics or reading, or tutoring individual students. It is the responsibility of the partner teacher to know the students and become familiar with classroom routines. In the event of absence, the partner teacher helps to orient the substitute and assist, as

needed, with the class. The partner teacher often teaches the class while the classroom teacher engages in lesson study. Students in grades 7 and 8 are in special area classes during 80 minutes of the lesson study time.

School #2 has worked in partnership with William Paterson University to develop a Teaching/Learning Collaborative (TLC) which provides pre-service teachers with extended clinical experience. As the TLC pre-service teachers gain experience, they become valuable teaching resources to help ensure the quality of instruction during lesson study time. They also frequently participate in the lesson study process.