



Washington Center School Strategic Plan

Professional Development

Schools committed to improvement must re-culture themselves for change. They must establish new systems for teamwork, communication and collaboration. These schools must create new norms of behavior, and must develop leadership and continuous improvement skills in *all* employees. This process of creating a new school culture requires that teachers, principals, and staff be able to work well together- to communicate clearly and effectively with each other and to trust and respect each other.

In effect, most schools working to improve are asking staff to change significantly the manner in which they work-how they make decisions; analyze and use data; plan for change; teach; monitor student achievement; evaluate and train personnel; and, assess the impact of new approaches to instruction and student assessment.

Improving schools also ask staff to change significantly the manner in which they *think* about work- to replace assumptions and hunches, especially about students and their learning, with facts; to open up their classroom doors and work with colleagues in teams; to consider their every action in terms of its impact on others and the school organization.

On-going professional development activities that are planned in congruence with the school goals and calendar provide school staff with opportunities both to improve personal performance and to learn the new skills they need to reform the school culture and support the development of a true learning organization.