

Role of Staff Development and Professional Days

“The key to student growth is educator growth and everyone must participate in growth.”

...Joyce and Showers

The Elizabethtown Area School District believes that staff development must be continuous and focused on the improvement of teaching practices that result in measurable student learning. As Joyce and Showers stated, “We believe any other considerations are secondary with respect to the selection of content. Educators serve students” (1995, p. xv). A comprehensive staff development system serves the needs of individuals, schools, and the District, both by providing opportunities for the professional growth of employees and by directly addressing student learning.

All professionals must continue to expand their knowledge and skills in order to meet the changing needs of students and the society in which we all live. The System To Enhance Professional Practice seeks to connect many human resource areas that have often operated as separate processes in the past. Professional Performance Standards set forth in this document, not only state the core knowledge and skills expected of EASD professional employees, but also provide a framework for staff development. Performance expectations are the connecting factor which brings induction, supervision, evaluation, and staff development together into one integrated system.

Reflective practice and annual goal setting individualizes the system for each professional. The goal setting process, which is part of the three professional development models, is also a basis for planning professional development needs. Research has proven that attendance at occasional workshops rarely results in significant changes in classroom teaching or student learning. Targeting professional development to specific individual, building, and/or District goals, however, has achieved measurable results. The area of focus, selected by the professional employee or his/her supervisor, now becomes the focus for supervision and for professional development. Requests for summer trade days, attendance at workshops and conferences, release time, etc. should be directly related to individual, building, and/or District goals and be in accordance with the EASD Act 48 Professional Education Plan.

