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ETEC 530 – Dr. Bindman
One Year PD Plan
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Introduction

Sweetwater Union High School District serves around 42,000 students in southern San Diego County in grades 6-12 and adult education. Among its 23 campuses, 1,5000 staff members teach, mentor, and inspire those students. Eastlake High School is the largest campus in the district, with a staff of 150 and 2,800 students.

In Fall 2019, the district became aware of massive financial deficits, which included gross negligence in budgeting procedures, salaried position controls, student enrollment calculations, and borrowing from various funds that paid for others. Due to this massive shortfall, the educational technology personnel infrastructure was gutted. Each school saw a .6 FTE (equivalent to three teachers for a period each, or a single teacher released for three periods) district allotment for blended learning specialists be reduced to nothing. District personnel, including a manager and director of Educational Technology, were reassigned as school sites were left to produce and implement their educational technology-based professional development.

The plan that follows is based upon a presentation by Stephanie Avera, Director of Educational Technology at Capistrano Unified School District, presented at the San Diego CUE Conference in November of 2019. Ms. Avera headed the creation and implementation of an online professional learning platform. Due to budget cuts, the district found itself unable to offer professional learning consistently to certificated and classified staff. Further, the district is large geographically, that for some, a trip to the district office for professional development could take at least 45 minutes one way. Thus, an online/hybrid option was created to fill these gaps.

With a reduced budgeting and staffing at the district level, it has become apparent that a professional development system ought to be created at the site. A coordinator will oversee that system to look to staff to create, monitor, and instruct hybrid courses for colleagues. These courses will be targeted to meet overarching site goals. They will focus on a myriad of topics, including ed-tech applications, strategies to target teaching methods, or staff, student, and community needs.

Goals

This professional development plan will use a similar structure built by Capistrano Unified to implement a professional development model that makes up for the lack of professional development sponsored by the district. Through planning between the coordinator, curriculum specialists, and administrators, the following goals will guide implementation and success for this program:

- Using suggestions, feedback and volunteers, offer two cycles of six courses, each cycler per quarter covering topics that cover educational technology, teaching techniques and strategies, and social-emotional learning to accomplish and support overarching site goals.
- To grow the program and provide opportunities for many different instructors to show off their expertise (or borrow expertise), use end of cycle course feedback as the catalyst to gather ideas for future offerings, both course topics and those interested in practicing their virtual teaching skills

- Create templates for the courses to standardize syllabi, course structure guidelines, marketing and feedback surveys that can support multiple courses and instructors running at the same time and have those courses archived for future use

Coordinator Duties

The coordinator will act as the system administrator for this system. This person will create the framework for the system, develop templates for the course materials, including a standardized syllabus, create guides for the course instructors and coordinate with curriculum specialists and administrators. They will also create and publicize marketing for the courses, create and maintain an online course catalog, verify course completion and track progress for participants.

Professional Development Course Structure

Each course will be offered for three weeks out of the school year. The course will be open to anyone in the school. The instructor/creator, using a syllabus template, will plan for three hours' worth of content and accompanying assignments for participants to complete in 3 weeks. The instructor may create their content course and materials. For instructors who may want to practice teaching a course but are unsure of a topic, many educational technology applications make and provide training materials and slide decks that need a warm body to present and model. Further, these courses can be replicated easily with other instructors.

Once the syllabus has been signed off, the instructor will create the course in Google Classroom, including materials and assignments to be reviewed and moderated by the instructor. The course will be available for three weeks. Instructors are expected to hold weekly office hours for support and answering questions; perhaps as a 30-minute review of content then opening up for questions. It is imperative for the instructor of the course to make the system coordinator a co-instructor in the class so that others could replicate courses or to make sure that moderators are proceeding with the course as planned.

Development and Selection of Courses

At the end of this school year, staff will be polled asking for presentations, courses, and applications they would like to learn more about to improve their craft. Further, they will be asked if there are any topics or applications they would like to create as a course to teach others. At this same time, a team of curriculum specialists that head each department will meet to plan the curricular and site-wide focus for the upcoming year. Those plans will then look to the information provided in the polling from staff as to which sessions and presentations will support those goals, which courses could be fine-tuned to align to the site-wide goals and any gaps to be filled.

To have courses ready at the beginning of the school year, the curriculum specialists will be asked to create two courses, with one being taught in the first month of return. As a backup, any volunteers will be asked to create a course and be ready in the first month of return. The five-week summer break will allow for course materials to be created and compiled so that instruction can begin in the second week of school.

Timeline

Below is a quarter calendar, broken down by instructional week. Next to each week lists what the coordinator, the instructors, and the participants will be doing for the week.

Instructional Week	Coordinator	Instructor(s)	Participants
Week #1	• Final review of materials for each course, offering feedback for improvement • Publication and marketing sent out to all staff about upcoming courses being offered • Enrollment instructions sent out later in the week	• Final preparations for their course • Final review of course materials and posts/assignments in Google Classroom	• Review of marketing materials • Select one course to attend, and perhaps one as a backup in case a course is full
Week #2 – First week of courses	• Send out an e-mail to be on the lookout for courses starting • Checks in on course progress and supports any issues or difficulties	• Opens course/invites participants to their course. • Begins moderating and supporting participants, offering office hours and instructing on first week activities	• Joins and familiarizes with the course • Begins work on first week materials and seeks out the instructor for help, tips, and completion of tasks
Week #3 – Second week of courses	• Checks in on course progress and supports any issues or difficulties • Sends out messaging and preparation work for the 2nd cycle of courses and instructors	• Continues moderating and supporting participants, offering office hours, and instructing on first week activities	• Continues work and completion of assignments and tasks
Week #4– Third/Last week of courses	• Finalizes courses and begins the creation of course catalog for cycle 2 • Preps marketing for publication • Approves courses and asks instructors to begin the creation of their course material	• Wraps up assignments and grading • Sends out course evaluation to participants • Sends out congrats messaging for completion of course • Sends list of "finishers" to the coordinator for documentation	• Wraps up assignments • Completes final course evaluation

		• When finished, archives course.	
Week #5 – Week off	• Final review of materials for each course, offering feedback for improvement • Publication and marketing sent out to all staff about upcoming courses being offered • Enrollment instructions sent out later in the week	• Final preparations for their course • Final review of course materials and posts/assignments in Google Classroom	• Review of marketing materials • Select one course to attend, and perhaps one as a back up in case a course is full
Week #6 - First week of courses	• Send out an e-mail to be on the lookout for courses starting • Checks in on course progress and supports any issues or difficulties	• Opens course/invites participants to their course. • Begins moderating and supporting participants, offering office hours and instructing on first week activities	• Joins and familiarizes with the course • Begins work on first week materials and seeks out the instructor for help, tips, and completion of tasks
Week #7 – Second week of courses	• Checks in on course progress and supports any issues or difficulties • Sends out messaging and preparation work for the 3rd cycle of courses and instructors	• Continues moderating and supporting participants, offering office hours, and instructing on first week activities	• Continues work and completion of assignments and tasks
Week #8 – Third/Final week of Courses	• Finalizes courses and begins the creation of course catalog for cycle 3 • Preps marketing for publication • Approves courses and asks instructors to begin the creation of their course material	• Wraps up assignments and grading • Sends out course evaluation to participants • Sends out congrats messaging for completion of course • Sends list of "finishers" to the coordinator for documentation	• Wraps up assignments • Completes final course evaluation

		• When finished, archives course.	
Week #9	• Final review of materials for each course, offering feedback for improvement • Asks instructors to start the creation of course	• Begin creation of course materials and assignments in Google Classroom	• Week off
2 Week Break (Year-Round Schedule)	• Review course evaluations for the successive cycles	• As needed, finalize course materials, but enjoy the break	• Enjoy break

Due to calendar dates and a year-round schedule, quarters are broken up by two to five weeks of breaks. These breaks could allow instructors for upcoming quarters to prepare for their courses they will instruct upon our return.

A quarter course schedule could include the following:

	Course #1	Course #2	Course #3	Course #4	Course #5	Course #6
Cycle 1 (Week 2-Week 4)	Desmos 101	Writing Strategies for all Courses	ELAC Skills	Digital Interactive Notebooks	Curating Books for Curriculum	Peardeck 101
Cycle 2 (Week 6-Week 8)	OneNote for Beginners	Implemented Video and Podcasting to Augment Curriculum	AVID Strategies for any Class	Screencasting for the Flipped Classroom	Teaching Lateral and Vertical Reading Strategies	Research Projects of every class

If every staff member were to sign up for a course, the six courses mean average class size of about 20. Courses would remain capped, and courses could be repeated if popular, but not in the same quarter.

Budget
One of the benefits of using Google Classroom is that the system is already district-supported and paid for use by teachers and students. Thus, hosting, storage and usage are covered by the district for use in day-to-day schooling.

The primary need for funding will be to pay for staffing the program. While I hope that some teachers would volunteer to moderate and instruct the courses, extra payment may be beneficial to fulfill the plans for this professional development. With recent funding becoming available due to State Bill 86, teachers were recently paid $51.30 in the district for teaching courses not their own, while some teachers returned voluntarily. For a three-hour course, plus an

additional allotment of three hours to prepare, each course would run $307.80. For a quarter's worth of courses (12 in total), that runs about $3693.60. A whole year would equal $14,774.40.

There can be cuts made, including a reduced rate for courses created by curriculum specialists, as professional development is a part of their job description and thus are already paid for their work in that area. Further, repeat courses could only be funded for the course meeting time since materials are ready to go.

Evaluation

At the end of every course, a standardized google form will serve two purposes. First, the participant will be able to rate and give feedback to the instructor. Questions will include scales measuring the effectiveness, usefulness, and ease of the course. Written feedback will be given on what worked and what could be improved upon. Second, the form will ask two essential questions for longevity; what course(s) would the participant like to see and the courses they think they could lead. Both these questions will allow for ideas for future instructors and for future topics.

Conclusion

When Ms. Avera presented, one of the things she mentioned was unsure how to reward instructors for this course through extra pay. I have hopefully settled that with payment based upon pay structures already in place by the district through extra duty options. The one concern is that there are many different codes, budget line items, and pay restrictions, that it is hard to select the correct one. Related to pay was that Capistrano Unified would move participants up on the pay scale for every 15 courses completed, which was the equivalent of 45 hours. I am unsure if this is even possible in our district, and seemed to be a lower standard between 45 hours completed in this structure and 45 hours completed in a graduate school setting.

One item accounted for in Ms. Avera's presentation, not covered in mine, concerning publicity and recognition on completing courses by the participants. In the Capistrano system, each instructor would fill out a postcard as a thank you for taking the course. Attached to that letter would be a 1-inch sticker, designed by Ms. Avera, that showed an icon and title of the course. The sticker was to be affixed to a rocket ship with 15 different spaces for stickers and hung in the classroom. Further, coding would be sent to the participant to update their e-mail signatures with a digital version of the badge that would link to the course description on the professional development site. Ms. Avera noted that when she presented this plan to stakeholders, including district personnel, the union, teachers, and administrators, the most significant pushback came from the teacher's union because of using this system to evaluate teachers. I chose not to include this aspect into my plan as I would like to solicit feedback on how this could be done, whether through a digital badging system or a sticker and chart, perhaps in the staff lounge. I certainly do not question the immaturity of stickers as my senior-level AVID course LOVED them for journal writing. For this item specifically, I would love to get stakeholder feedback and opinions.

References

Avera, S. (2019, November 02). *Online professional learning platform* [Presentation]. San Diego Computer Using Educators Conference, Santee, CA. https://bit.ly/sdcue19