

Board Retreat Meeting Agenda Friday, August 22 and Saturday, August 23, 2008

Attendees: Tamara Honvlez, Beth Blong, Mori Kemper, Patty Horn, Kristin Melter-Armijo, Andrew Szczepaniak, Lisa Koenig Bush

The Outcomes for the meeting include:

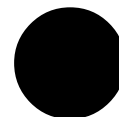
1. Continue to build community and trust with other SDCAz board members.
2. Gain clarity about all aspects of NSDC's definition of professional learning and understand the implications of the definition in action in their own work setting and for the affiliate.
3. Consider barriers to implementing the definition and various ways to address them and prepare for the affiliate's next steps related to educating leaders for implementation of the definition.
4. Evaluate current status of SDCAz Strategic Plan and determine evidence towards Strategic Priorities.
5. Revise and update strategic plan for SDCAz and develop action plan based on work done during the 2008 NSDC Affiliate Leadership Conference.
6. Revise and update SDCAz Constitution and By-Laws as necessary in order to parallel the SDCAz Strategic Plan and Priorities.
7. Develop budget to sustain affiliate and promote SDCAz Strategic Plan.
8. Designate roles and responsibilities within the leadership team of the affiliate.

I. Setting the Stage

The board members participated in a connecting activity, *What's New with You*, in order to begin to create a professional learning community and getting to know each other.

II. Examine the NSDC Definition for Professional Development

The new NSDC definition for professional development was examined. This new definition will be inserted in the congressional NCLB rewrite. See Attachment A at the end of the minutes. How do we implement the new definition in order to create change to raise student achievement?



First order change: Transform leadership beginning with the Superintendent
Second order change: Transform practices and processes of professional development
Third order change: Transform teacher practice

The Board listened to the pod cast of Distinguished Fellow, Hayes Mizell, as he challenged all of the state affiliates attending the NSDC Summer Affiliate Leader Conference to implement the new NSDC definition of professional development. The pod cast is available on the web site. The written notes are available in Attachment B.

Several questions were raised: "Where is the evidence that supports school based learning? How are we collecting evidence that professional development makes a difference in student achievement?"

Action items:

1. Kristin will e-mail Dale Hair, Hayes Mizell, Renee Islas, Stephanie Hirsch, and Joellen Killian at NSDC to include a series of questions regarding:
 - a. A request to NSDC that they provide to the state affiliates a rationale of why the district level as a support system for the school was left out of the new definition.
 - b. Adding the concept of the school district in items A2, A3, and B3 as they assist in writing the legislative language for NCLB.
 - c. The concept that the cost and funding must follow the requirement if the schools are to provide classroom-based coaching.
 - d. A statement to reinforce the idea that there has to be a balance between the leadership at the district level and the site level.
 - e. Remove the words "activities such as" in B.
 - f. Where did collaboration with the state affiliates occur?
 - g. NCLB is a separate document from NSDC and yet NSDC has introduced a document that impacts the organization and the state affiliates.

At this point, we cannot support the new definition of professional development. If the document was introduced as a new definition for professional development for NCLB, that is a different perspective. Further discussion was tabled until we receive a response from NSDC.

III. Three Case Studies

The Board members read three different case studies. Using the NSDC Definition of Professional Development, they examined each point of the definition as it related to the case study.

1. Based on the evidence in the case study, they answered the question: Where do you see the school aligned with the definition? Where does it fall short?
2. What additional factors/practices would need to be in place for the school to be "good enough" to meet the NSDC definition?

Discussion followed.

IV. Communicating the Vision - Tabled

V. SDCAz Strategic Plan

1. Priority #1 (NSDC #4 – Developing School Leaders)
 - a. Evidence:
 - i. Responses from state conference
 - ii. Increased 2008 SDCAz Conference participate
 - iii. Use Zoomerang
 - iv. Evaluation from 2008 SDCAz Conference
 - v. *Leading for Results*, Dennis Sparks at our state conference
 - vi. Discussed presentations at appropriate conferences to get NSDC Standards to non-participating districts
 - vii. Participants already asking questions about affiliate
 - viii. Progress has been made at 3 of 4 high schools in professional development with the leadership of principals
 - b. Questions:
 - i. Do we need a coach/mentor/leadership academy?
 - ii. Is our conference and two times a year meetings enough?
 - iii. Do we have networks/programs?
 - iv. What networks do we support/foster/facilitate?
 - c. Recommendations:
 - i. Create a marketing plan that would use the SWOT template– Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
 - ii. Create a needs assessment, gap analysis, and personal contacts will be influenced by the unification initiative and district overrides.
 - iii. Developing networks – online and face-to-face
 - iv. Posting NSDC Distinguished Fellows communications on our web site
 - v. Identify purpose for Fall and Spring
 - vi. Targeting positions that don't have other professional development opportunities
 - vii. Creating data footprints

2. Priority #2 (NSDC #5 – Thought Leaders)

a. Evidence:

- i. Meeting with several thought leaders at State conference networking
- ii. Sent invitations to thought leaders to meet at 2008 SDCAz Conference
- iii. Conducted first Thought Leaders Meeting at 2008 SDCAz Conference
- iv. Discussed marketing strategies to communicate to other thought leaders

b. Questions:

- i. What is our intent?
- ii. What is the specific purpose for meetings? How can we best communicate this?
- iii. Do those that are on the list really supportive of SDCAz?
- iv. How many invited really want to work with us?

c. Recommendations:

- i. Encourage thought leaders to attend a general meeting with a goal of actualizing professional standards and establishing a link to them
- ii. Invite thought leaders to a meeting, make personal contacts, create something on our website, or market
- iii. Attend conferences and hold meetings at break out sessions, i.e., Law Conference
- iv. What next? Forward direction
- v. Expand thought leaders group to include more diversity – university deans, superintendents, county superintendents, etc.
- vi. Contact thought leaders from last year's meeting to see if they are interested in supporting us with their practice

3. Priority #3 (NSDC #2 – Documenting the Evidence)

a. Evidence:

- i. Asked members at state conference and at final meeting, to start collecting evidence on the impact of professional development on student achievement.
- ii. Conversation has begun but nothing was submitted on paper
- iii. *Assessing the Impact* – Joellen Killian at our state conference
- iv. Call for request for documents

b. Questions:

- i. How do you document the correlation?
- ii. Is anyone collecting any evidence?

- iii. What is the benefit to them for submitting and collecting data?
- iv. Is the analysis of the data valid?
- c. Recommendations:
 - i. Develop a template to help organize the data that is district friendly
 - ii. Define purpose and explain "why and what for" in collecting data
 - iii. Send e-mail reminders to members asking them to respond with what data they are collecting for personal use
 - iv. Create a template for data collection and gathering evidence and post on our website
 - v. Need more marketing with suggestions and samples of what is being requested
- d. Resources:
 - i. Mori Kemper is willing to do more of assessing the impact at our general meetings and the state conference
 - ii. Andrew Szczepaniak will submit *MyLearningPlan* class evaluations but just beginning so he is not sure how the data will look

VI. SDCAz Bylaws and Constitution – Tabled until September meeting

VII. Budget Report and Treasury Update

FY 2008 Revenue - February Conference (\$30,000 approximately), February NSDC Institute (\$2160.37), February Membership (\$2,000 approximately) = \$32,000

FY 2009 Revenue - February Conference + membership = \$32,000 approximately + Vendor Contribution+\$8,000 = **\$40,000 Total**

Expenses:

Operating Costs:

Website	\$1,500
Fax costs	204
Incorporation License	60
Office Supplies	400
Audit	1,000
Total	\$3,164

Meetings:

Retreat	\$1,100
NSDC Leadership Conference	3,000

September Meetings	100
May Meetings	100
Planning/Board Meetings	500
Total	\$4,800
<u>State Conference:</u>	
Black Canyon Conference Center	\$23,000
Speakers	8,000
Brochure	2,600
Clerical	1,000
Miscellaneous	1,500
Decorations	
Hotel/Dinner	
Binders/thank you/Banner	
Postage	
Total	\$36,100
<u>NSDC Affiliate Meeting in December</u>	\$ 2,500
TOTAL	\$46,564

VIII. Other Misc. Items

Determine dates and topics for all meetings

September	Alignment of Budget with Strategic Plan
	By-Laws/Constitution
October	Needs Assessment
	Marketing Plan (Booths at other conferences)
	Institute/Academy
November	Submission for Conferences (ASBA, ASA, ARSA)
	Communicating the NSDC Vision

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm

Appendix A

NSDC Definition of Professional Development

(34) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - The term 'professional development' means a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement —

(A) Professional development fosters collective responsibility for improved student performance and must be comprised of professional learning that —

- 1) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards, as well as related local educational agency and school improvement goals;
- (2) is conducted among learning teams of educators, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and other instructional staff at the school;
- (3) is facilitated by well-prepared, school principals and/or school-based professional development coaches, mentors, master teachers, or other teacher leaders;
- (4) occurs primarily several times per week or the equivalent of three hours per week; and
- (5) engages established learning teams of educators in a continuous cycle of improvement that —
 - (i) analyzes student, teacher, and school learning needs through a thorough review of data on teacher and student performance;
 - (ii) defines a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of the data;
 - (iii) achieves the educator learning goals identified in subsection (A)(5)(ii) by implementing coherent, sustained, and evidence-based learning strategies that improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement, such as lesson study and the examining of student work;
 - (iv) provides classroom-based coaching or other forms of assistance to support the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the classroom;
 - (v) regularly assesses the effectiveness of the professional development in achieving identified learning goals, improving teaching, and assisting all students in meeting challenging state academic achievement standards;
 - (vi) informs ongoing improvements in teaching and student learning; and
 - (vii) may be facilitated and strengthened by external assistance.

(B) The process outlined in subsection (34)(A) may be supported and strengthened by activities such as courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences that:

- (1) must address the learning goals and objectives established for professional development by educators at the school level;
- (2) advance the ongoing school-based professional development; and
- (3) are provided by for profit and non-profit entities outside the school such as universities, education service agencies, technical assistance providers, networks of content-area specialists, and other education organizations and associations.

Appendix B

Remarks of Hayes Mizell on July 12, 2008 at a meeting of the National Staff Development Council's state affiliate leaders. Approximately 65 people attended the meeting held at the Marriott World Center Resort in Orlando, FL. The meeting preceded NSDC's annual Summer Conference at the same location. Mizell is the Distinguished Senior Fellow of the National Staff Development Council.

[An audio of these remarks is available by podcast at <http://www.gcast.com/u/hmizell/main.xml>]

NSDC's Definition of Professional Development:

The Second Dimension

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

This is it! This is what we have been waiting for – The National Staff Development Council's new definition of professional development.

Maybe you are familiar with Leonard Cohen's song, "Hallelujah," from the movie, "Shrek." It includes the line, "Love is not a victory march, it's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah." Well, making the National Staff Development Council's definition of professional development a reality in America's schools will not be "a victory march." In fact, it is likely to be at least a 10 year struggle. Let us hope today's "Hallelujah!" does not turn out to be "cold and broken."

Some people will call NSDC's new definition of professional development "provocative," if not "revolutionary." I call it "refreshing." The definition means that at long last, NSDC, *the* leader in the field of professional development, is prepared to describe explicitly how school systems and schools must organize and implement professional learning to increase student achievement. Note that while the definition is rooted in the essential elements of NSDC's *Standards for Staff Development*, it goes beyond the *Standards*. Whereas the *Standards* describe the broad conditions necessary for high quality professional development, the definition takes the

next step to delineate *specific* practices school systems and schools must put in place to improve the performance of educators and students.

This is bold. It is risky. Many educators will scoff at the definition because it is contrary to the professional development they have known, and the professional development they currently control and practice. There are thousands of educators heavily invested in their *own* definitions of professional development. In most cases, their definitions are not in writing. Frequently, they are vague, unfocused, and highly idiosyncratic. They regard their definitions as convenient; some would call them “practical,” because they are situational. Professional development is whatever these educators say it is, a resource they can configure and use in different ways to meet different needs. In many school systems and schools, these types of definitions, and the decisions and practices that flow from them, are responsible for the *failure* of professional development to raise the performance levels of educators and students.

We can expect, therefore, that practitioners will raise many questions about the definition. Some of these will be legitimate questions aimed at seeking answers about how to most efficiently and effectively implement the definition. The intent of other questions will be to challenge the need for or the feasibility of bringing the definition to fruition. Whatever the motivation of the questions, it will be necessary to answer them as candidly and forcefully as possible, not ignoring the very real implementation challenges the definition poses.

Debates about implementation are inevitable and they will undoubtedly focus on the definition’s concepts, words, phrases, and practices. However, there is more to the definition than may be apparent. It is, in fact, a two-dimensional rather than a one dimensional document. One dimension is what you see on the printed page. This will prompt most of the questions, discussion, and debate about the definition.

The other dimension of the definition is the values, beliefs, and assumptions that you cannot see. These are at least as important as the definition itself. This second dimension represents the wellspring of ideas that drive the definition. As advocates, it is important for you to keep in mind that the definition is not an arbitrary document, but one based on NSDC's core values and beliefs. Your resolve to advocate for the definition, and your effectiveness in doing so, will depend on how secure you are in NSDC's beliefs and how strongly you hold to them.

For example, the definition is based on NSDC's *confidence in teachers*. All teachers *can* learn. All teachers *should* learn. All teachers *will* learn if their school systems and schools provide them appropriate and sustained support. This is obvious to those of your in the NSDC family. It is not so obvious to some educators in leadership positions. They will, therefore, express doubts about whether teachers will conscientiously embrace the responsibilities the definition delineates. Unlike NSDC, these educators are not confident that teachers are willing and able to take responsibility and hold themselves accountable for their professional learning to increase student achievement. When you are talking to local leaders about the definition, hold fast to NSDC's confidence in teachers and listen for whether what others say reveals that they share your confidence or lack it.

Another element of the definition's second dimension is NSDC's belief that educators are most effective when they *use their minds as active learners and problem solvers*. This seems elementary, but some school systems use professional development in ways that discourage rather than encourage educators' intellectual development. In these school systems, the approach to professional learning is, in effect: "We've determined what you need to learn. We've determined the best way for you to learn it. We've determined how you should use the learning we provide you." It is no wonder, therefore, that some educators have so little investment in their learning or

so little commitment to applying their learning to benefit their students. We should not be surprised when educators replicate this same approach to learning in their classrooms.

In contrast, the NSDC definition rests on the belief that educators have minds and should use them. This is why the definition calls for educators to thoroughly review performance data, establish learning goals, implement evidence-based learning strategies, and assess the effectiveness of their professional development. Will these activities stretch educators? Certainly, but NSDC believes that educators can and should use their minds, and that the more they do so their practice is both more effective and more rewarding.

The definition also reflects NSDC's belief that *improving student achievement is a gestalt that requires more than the learning and practice of individual educators*. For most students, education is a roll of the dice. A student's learning depends almost entirely on whether he or she has an effective teacher. Some schools have many such teachers, others have few. Some students have parents who are vigilant and energetic in advocating for the assignment of their children to classes with the most effective teachers. Other students have parents without the knowledge, time, or motivation to make similar efforts. This is business as usual in most schools and low-performing students pay the greatest price.

NSDC, however, envisions a different approach. The definition calls for professional development that "fosters *collective responsibility* for improved student performance." This value of collective responsibility for improved student performance is perhaps the most profound concept in the definition. It simply means that educators will collaborate in teams to make sure that *all* educators learn what they need for "improving teaching and assisting all students in meeting challenging state academic achievement standards." Effective and less effective educators will work together to determine what they need to learn to increase student achievement.

This does not guarantee that all teachers will be equally effective, but it does create a venue and process where educators' collaborative learning and mutual accountability relentlessly focuses on "improved student performance."

NSDC also believes in the potential power of professional learning that occurs "at the school...several times per week." This reflects the value that professional development is a serious enterprise, not an option, not an add-on, not dependent on a season of the year. For this to be the case, educators must experience learning as integral to their normal work week and it must be as easily accessible in their schools as walking to a room down the hall.

Listen. Can you hear it? Can you hear the shredding of school systems' professional development catalogs? Can you hear the wind whistling through school districts' empty professional development centers? Do you see unemployed motivational speakers standing in bread lines?

I'm kidding—well, half-kidding—but this component of the definition is significant. NSDC is now saying that school-based professional learning is more than just a good idea. It is *the* best way to ensure that the learning of educators is relevant to the context of their daily work, providing the impetus for them to apply their learning *to* their work.

But as we all know, innovative school structures and processes have a way of eroding over time. School administrators and teachers come and go. A faculty's understanding of and commitment to a particular vision gradually diminishes. Processes that were once exciting and effective become routine and static, drained of life by new priorities. This can also happen to school-based learning teams, and for that reason the definition makes clear that teams must "engage in a continuous cycle of improvement." This underscores NSDC's belief that professional learning should never end.

The cycle of improvement section is the longest and perhaps the most profound part of the definition. It describes seven components of the continuous cycle of improvement. A learning team begins by using teacher and student performance data to evaluate “student, teacher, and school learning needs.” Next, the team uses the data to define “a clear set of educator learning goals.” The team then seeks to achieve the learning goals “by implementing coherent, sustained, and evidenced-based learning strategies that improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement.” In other words, the learning team seeks and uses sound strategies to increase the team’s learning. However, team learning is only an *interim* step. To ensure that team members *apply* their learning, the definition calls for “classroom-based coaching or other forms of assistance to support the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the classroom.” The learning team’s work then continues as it “regularly assesses the effectiveness of the professional development in achieving the identified learning goals.” That assessment should inform “ongoing improvements in teaching and student learning.” As you can see, working through this cycle will challenge the capacity of a learning team and for that reason, the definition provides that the team’s work “may be facilitated and strengthened by external assistance.”

No doubt, some people will be skeptical about the feasibility of translating this definition into practice at the school level. They will argue that most educators have demonstrated little interest, and taken little initiative, to identify what they need to learn to improve student performance. Critics will almost certainly say that even when educators are willing to acknowledge what they do not know, they rarely seek learning opportunities they can use to close their own achievement gaps. These concerns are well founded, but they do not point the way to improvement. On the other hand, inherent in NSDC’s definition is a belief that most educators *want* to improve their practice to better prepare their students. Educators’ cynicism about their

learning is primarily the result of their forced participation in weak, didactic, pre-service educational experiences and, subsequently, in low-quality staff development the educators do not find helpful. Like their students, educators do not enjoy learning because their experiences have so often been formulaic, lifeless, and unconnected to the challenges they face. NSDC believes that if educators have the framework for learning the definition provides, if they have the support the definition requires, and if educators have both more control over their learning and are more accountable for its results, they will make effective use of the opportunity.

Knowing what you know about the school boards, superintendents, and principals in your communities, many of you may see the definition as noble but daunting. It may be hard to imagine how the definition can become a reality in the state, provincial, and local contexts you know so well. Yet, I hope you will not flinch. NSDC's definition provides a strategy for you to reject the crumbs-from-the-table approach to professional development that characterizes so much local education policy. The definition leapfrogs time-worn arguments over the number of days that should be available for professional development, and posits that to be effective professional learning must occur at least several times each week at the school level.

Nevertheless, it is probably true that many district and school leaders will reject the definition out of hand. After all, it conflicts with their traditional understanding of professional development, as well as their desire to control it. From their perspective, the definition also raises the specter of administrative pain because it will require, at a minimum, a realignment of roles and responsibilities, as well as alterations of schools' schedules. Almost certainly, a huge education effort lies ahead for NSDC, its affiliates, and its members. Education leaders will have to *learn* how to organize professional development in their schools. Do not leave this to chance. Do not assume others will take action to translate the definition into powerful practice.

There is a great need for NSDC affiliates to provide leadership. Affiliates can form partnerships with state associations of district administrators and state associations of school principals to conduct seminars that probe the definition's implications for district and school practice. Affiliates can also collaborate with the same associations to sponsor small group simulations that address the details of *how* to organize school-based professional development so it reflects NSDC's definition.

There are many such opportunities for your affiliates to educate people about the definition and how to integrate it into the daily work of schools. As you do so, keep in mind that your advocacy is not for NSDC but for the thousands of educators who remain captives of mind-numbing, ineffective professional development. Whether or not these educators are NSDC members, and whether they know it or not, they are counting on your advocacy to lead the way to more fulfilling and productive learning experiences. This is your unique mission. No other organization, no other group cares as much or knows as much about professional development as your affiliates. No other organization, no other group is so committed to the proposition that *student* learning needs should define *educators'* learning needs, and that appropriate professional development can increase the performance levels of *both* educators and students. Very few education leaders and very few policymakers are carrying this message. Even fewer are able to communicate it with the conviction and experience you can. To paraphrase one of the presidential candidates, this is your moment; this is your time. Make the most of it, because if you do not, no one else will.

Hallelujah!

Thank you.

Additional speeches and articles by Hayes Mizell are available at:
<http://www.nsd.org/library/authors/mizell.cfm#system> and
<http://www.middleweb.com/mw/resources/HMreader.html>.

Appendix C