

## PROMISING PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The following is the Lever for Educator Excellence that most closely applies to the practice detailed below.

### Professional Development

- **Name and Position (Contact person):** Beverly Nelson, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
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- **Title of Promising Practice:** *Delivering and Reinforcing Professional Development Using Moodle*
- **District where implemented:** Medford Public Schools, 489 Winthrop Street, Medford, MA 02155
- **How would you describe this practice?** As federal and state mandates for professional development for all staff increase (e.g., bullying mandate, educator evaluation tool training, new ELL training), the charge to deliver professional development in an equitable and efficient manner grows ever more challenging. Because the district has limited mandated professional development time, it has been using Moodle to deliver and reinforce key professional development trainings, as all mandated trainings are now online.
- **What are the goals of this practice?** Moodle, an online learning management system, is available to all staff and its use for professional development delivery meets several goals, including the following:
  - Provides for access to mandated trainings when live one-to-one professional development is not available or allowable by contract.
  - Delivers mandated professional development to faculty members who are absent on the scheduled day of live workshops.

- Allows staff to revisit topics at any time in order to refresh or deepen their knowledge.
- Allows for staff to access professional development topics at times and in places that are convenient for them.
- Provides teachers with the opportunity to access professional development that is personalized for them and based on their own professional practice goals.
- Provides principals with professional development concepts and materials that they can use with parent and community groups as community ties are strengthened when parents know what teachers are learning.
- **How does this practice reflect your district's mission and core values?**

Online learning for both students and teachers is on the rise; in the first twelve years of this decade, online learning has replaced the more traditional face-to-face modes of instruction in both the world of business and post-secondary education. In fact, it has become the preferred delivery method of professional development for many educators whose busy schedules or family commitments preclude their participation in other forms of professional development. By using online learning in their own professional practice, Medford educators have become so familiar with using online tools that they are now better able to assist students in their use. Because the district is a partnership of school, family and community dedicated to providing all students with a 21st century education, the move to providing key professional development through Moodle enables Medford educators, as well as their students, to be life-long learners who can adapt easily to a diverse and rapidly changing world.

- **What grade levels are applicable? K-12**
- **How did you implement this practice so that it has been more successful than others you have used?** This mode of delivery of professional development is reliable, efficient, and highly regarded by

teachers and administrators for both its flexibility (allowing educators to review topics at their leisure, thereby reinforcing their learning) and its user-friendly format.

- **Which of the attached criteria for this particular lever does your practice most exemplify?**
- Professional development is structured to meet the varying experience, needs, and content of teachers and administrators.
- District has a comprehensive plan for providing educators with systemic access to all domains of the Common Core of Professional Knowledge and Skills.
- Professional development takes place in a variety of formats.
- Professional development aligns district-wide and individual priorities.
  
- **How has this practice changed your district?** Online learning has many positive benefits not only for students who wish to take courses not available in district, but also for teachers who are seeking professional development opportunities outside of the district's expertise.
  
- **What are the resources (time, money, materials, etc.) required for successful implementation?** This method of delivery for professional development is cost efficient, as the district had to pay an individual only once to develop the online format rather than having to pay numerous professional development facilitators for each of their repeat performances. The district's webpage employee monitors Moodle so there is no additional cost for that function.

Also, the district has joined the Learning Curve Consortium, a collaborative that supports its Moodle efforts through its office in Framingham, MA. Medford teachers can take graduate levels courses related to the use of Moodle and, because the district is a member of the Consortium, it shares other online offerings with the member districts.

Recognizing that educators must be supported in their use of Moodle, the district has designated a Moodle liaison who collaborates with principals and other administrators in identifying and supporting teacher needs related to Moodle. Both membership in the Learning Curve Consortium as well as the stipend paid to the Moodle liaison is supported through Medford's Title IIA professional development funds.

- **Please note the availability of the tools used to implement or advance this practice (surveys, needs assessment, technology tools, rubrics, feedback forms, etc.).**

On the Medford Public School webpage ([www.medford.k12.ma.us](http://www.medford.k12.ma.us)) there is a direct link to Moodle courses and other offerings under the heading *Staff Links*. The password needed to access this information can be obtained through the district's Moodle liaison. Please call the Deputy Superintendent's office number for that contact information.