

Professional Development Evaluation

Thomas Guskey's Model

“Using five critical levels of evaluation, you can improve your school’s professional development program. But be sure to start with the desired result- improved student outcomes” (Guskey, 2002). Pike Creek Charter Middle School will use Thomas Guskey’s five levels of Professional Development Evaluation Model for continuous improvement of professional development and our desired result of student outcomes. The five levels include, participant reaction, participant learning, organization support & change, participants’ use of new knowledge and skills and student learning outcomes.

Level 1: Participant Reaction

The first level of evaluation examines participants’ reactions to the professional development experience. This is the most common and basic form of professional development evaluations and is the easiest level to collect and analyze data. Level one is focused on questions around whether or not participants liked the experience. Level 1 data will be collected through questionnaires that will be handed out and collected at the end of the session. The questionnaire will include both rating-scale items and open-ended responses. Level one evaluations measure the initial satisfaction with the experience that will be used to

improve the design and delivery of future professional developments.

Level 2: Participant Learning

The second level of evaluation examines participants learning by measuring the knowledge and skills that participants gained from the professional development. These measures will show the attainment of specific learning goals that are outlined in the indicators of successful learning established before the session. Level 2 evaluations can involve several types of measurement instruments that include pencil-and-paper assessment, skill demonstration, personal reflections or portfolios that document participants learning. The evaluation data from level 2 will be used as a basis for improving the content, format and organization of the session.

Level 3: Organization Support and Change

The third level of evaluation focuses on the organization support and change. Questions will be focused on the organization characteristics and attributes necessary for success along with promoting changes that are aligned with the mission of the school. Level 3 evaluation data collection is more difficult than level one and two.

Procedures will differ depending on the goal of the session but may include analyzing school records, examining minutes from follow-up meetings and interviewing participants. Data will be used to document and improve organization support along with informing future change initiatives.

Level 4: Participants use of new knowledge and skills

The fourth level of evaluation measures how and to what degree the new skills and knowledge participants learned have impacted their professional practice. Dissimilar to Levels 1 and 2 where information is collected at the end of the session, enough time must pass for level four data to be collected to allow participants to adapt the new ideas and practices in their setting. Implementation is often a gradual process, so PCCMS would measure progress at several time intervals. Level 4 data would be collected through direct observations and would be used to help restructure future programs and activities to facilitate better and more consistent implementation.

Level 5: Student Learning Outcomes

The fifth level of evaluation measures how the professional development session affected student-learning outcomes. These measures include cognitive indicators of students' performance and achievement such as portfolio

evaluations, grades and scores from standardized tests. In addition to these measures, PCCMS will measure affective out-comes such as attitudes and dispositions and psychomotor outcomes such as skills and behaviors. PCCMS will also use level 5 data to measure school-wide indicators of success such as meeting school-wide academic achievement goals. Level 5 data will provide information on the overall impact of professional development and guide improvements including program design, implementation and follow up. Information from Level 5 data will also be used by the Board to estimate the cost effectiveness of professional development referred to as return on investment.

Professional Development Planning with the five levels of evaluation:

Pike Creek Charter Middle School will use the evaluation model working backwards, first focusing on what student learning outcomes we want to achieve (Level 5). Once student-learning outcomes are identified, PCCMS will determine what instructional practices and policies will be most effective and efficient in producing those outcomes (Level 4). Next, PCCMS will determine what aspects of the organization support need to be in place for those practices and policies to be implemented (Level 3). PCCMS will then decide what knowledge and skills the participating professional must have to implement the practices and policies (Level 2). Finally, PCCMS will consider

what set of experiences will enable participants to acquire the needed knowledge and skills (Level 1). This model of backwards planning is important because the decisions made at each level profoundly affect those at the next level.

Overall, the five levels of evaluation will serve as evidence about whether the professional development has contributed to specific gains in student learning. PCCMS recognizes the difficulty of level 4 and 5 evaluations but understands the value both professionally and financially that solid professional development has to offer.