School Technology Inquiry Groups as Professional Development
~for~ TIES 2003

by:

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Note: PowerPoint slides, TIES handout, and related articles available at:
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Abstract:

This presentation proposes content-focused technology inquiry groups, a teacher professional development model that is guided by a situative perspective on teacher learning. We describe the main characteristics, gleaned from similar initiatives and past research, that facilitate teacher learning in technology inquiry groups. Based on more than a year's collaboration with an urban technology inquiry group, we describe three phases of group development: defining the group, identifying technology inquiries, and initiating technology inquiries. We then offer several recommendations for those interested in starting inquiry groups in your organization as well as present three possible preliminary activities that explore the differences in technology learning approaches. Finally, we introduce a future initiative and invite your participation and support. The presentation will close with time for comments and questions.

I. Introductions, Reflective Questions & Our Assumptions

II. Inquiry Group Model & Process
   a. Inquiry Group Characteristics
   b. Our Technology Inquiry Group Approach
   c. Example: Urban Technology Inquiry Group at "Halverson School"[1]

III. Research Results from Halverson School Inquiry Group[2]
   a. Phase 1: Defining the Technology Inquiry Group's Identity and Purpose
   b. Phase 2: Reviewing Inquiry Group Purpose and Identifying Technology Inquiries
   c. Phase 3: Initiation of Technology Inquiries

IV. Recommendations for Adoption of Inquiry Group Professional Development
   a. Establish group identity, focus, and ensure participation
   b. Consider both on-site and outside facilitation
   c. Focus on "problems of practice" in subject area
   d. Provide both in-school and after-school time to maximize progress

[1] All identifying names are pseudonyms.
[2] The focus of the research reported here was the process of establishing and supporting technology inquiry groups. Current and ongoing research analysis (not reported here) focuses on teacher learning and technology's impact on student learning.

e. Consider supporting coordinated action research projects - especially that which involves data-driven decision making (NCLB)

V. Limitations and Challenges
   a. Funding technology resources
   b. Time to invest in longitudinal professional development activities
   c. Finding sufficient number of subject-focused inquiry participants

VI. Three Activities to Explore Teacher Technology Learning
   a. Approach 1: Tech Skill Development
   b. Approach 2: Video-case Examination
   c. Approach 3: Problems-of-Practice

VII. Future Initiative that Merges Inquiry Learning and Data-Driven Decision Making

VIII. Questions & Consultations
   a. Contact us by phone/email/web for more information.
   b. I am available for consultation and collaboration when establishing technology inquiry groups at your school/organization.

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