Teacher Professional Development Department

As part of the 2007-2008 restructuring of the Central Office and the promised delivery of world-class customer service to an entire clientele of teachers, students, and parents, CMS created six specific Learning Communities with an embedded targeted Achievement Zone and developed the Teacher Professional Development Department. The overarching goal of the Teacher Professional Development Department is to provide high-quality, data-driven, research-based professional development that is circular in nature in that every new learning experience provides teachers the opportunity to return to the field, implement the new learning, and return again to reflect, analyze, and revise in preparation for continued implementation. Collaborating and learning in their professional learning communities, teachers are empowered to decide the best instruction for their particular students.

**Vision:**

Teacher Professional Development supports and empowers educators to ensure that every CMS student has a highly effective teacher.

**Our Mission:**

The mission of Teacher Professional Development is to empower teachers through relevant learning experiences that improve student achievement through leadership development, talent development, and professional support, with the goal of strengthening pedagogical content knowledge through comprehensive, research-based, job-embedded learning experiences.

Aligned with our Strategic Plan 2014, Teacher PD organizational chart includes four domains that encompass seven strands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Strands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Differentiated Instruction, Literacy Across Discipline, Urban Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Teacher</td>
<td>New Teacher Development and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Learning</td>
<td>Virtual PD Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We offer academy courses in differentiation, urban education, literacy across discipline, instructional coaching/mentoring and new teacher development. We also provide many support services to CMS teachers in the areas of National Board Certification, classroom learning labs, virtual learning, etc.

Highlights on our academies and initiatives include:

**Differentiation Academy**

The curriculum is based on the work of Sandra Kaplan, Carol Ann Tomlinson, and Jay McTighe. Each participant is versed on differentiating instruction based on knowledge of students and learning environment, content, product, and process. Each participant designs a unit based on the Common Core State Standards/Essential Standards with differentiated instruction based on students’ readiness, interests, learning profile and achievement level. There is focus on all areas of differentiated instruction as well as the use of the tools of depth and complexity. Assessment is built into each unit daily so that participants are able to make adjustments based on student needs. Based on teacher needs identified in CMS, participants also are required to look at and analyze student work using protocols designed to fairly assess the work and encourage collegial conversations regarding instruction. Learning labs are used during two days of this four day Academy so that teachers are able to observe differentiated practice within the classroom.

**Instructional Coaching**

Instructional Coaches partner with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices into their teaching. They are skilled communicators, or relationship builders, with a repertoire of excellent communication skills that enable them to empathize, listen, and build trusting relationships. Instructional Coaches also encourage and support teachers’ reflection about their classroom practices. Thus, they must be skilled at unpacking their collaborating teachers’ professional goals so that they can help them create a plan for realizing those goals, all with a focus on improving instruction.

Instructional Coaches deeply understand many scientifically proven instructional practices. They focus on a broader range of instructional issues, which might include classroom management, content enhancement, specific teaching practices, formative assessment, or other proven ways to improve instruction. In addition, they help teachers choose appropriate approaches to teaching for the different kinds of learning students are experiencing. They frequently model practices in the classroom, observe teachers, and engage in supportive, dialogical conversations with them about what they observed. An Instructional Coach, in other words, partners with teachers so they can choose and implement research-based interventions to help students learn more effectively.

**National Board Support Program**

The CMS National Board Support Program provides support for National Board Candidates pursuing certification and for NBCTs serving as teacher leaders. The National Board Support Staff includes approximately 50 part-time NBCTs.

This Support Program provides a number of key components. Specific information will be sent to all Candidates as plans are finalized each year. Support Program information is also advertised in the weekly staff newsletter. Interested potential Candidates should also attend a
National Board Information Session. The Information Sessions are also advertised in the weekly staff newsletter.

- **Annual NBCT Celebration**: celebrates all new and renewed NBCTs each January
- **Annual Candidate Institutes**: offers Portfolio and Assessment Center preparation assistance in three separate Institutes
- **Banking Program**: supports Advanced Candidates who are redoing Portfolio entries and/or retaking Assessment Center exercises
- **Leadership Team**: serves as leadership foundation for Support Program, conducts leadership training for NBCTs, and promotes teacher leadership in education
- **National Board Professional Library**: offers available resources for all teachers
- **NBPTS Recruitment Team**: conducts Information Sessions for prospective Candidates
- **Professional Reader Program**: provides individual feedback on Candidate writing
- **Renewal Program**: offers support groups and professional reading for NBCTs renewing their National Board Certification
- **Study Group Program**: offers small-group interactions led by trained NBCT Facilitators

**Professional Development Master Teacher (PDMT)**

The Professional Development Master Teacher Initiative promotes effective teaching by strengthening pedagogy and content using laboratory-based professional development. This initiative is designed to identify Professional Development Master Teachers who use best instructional practices and to have them share their expertise with other teachers.

CMS currently uses the classrooms of 40 master teachers at 37 schools as learning labs. This allows new and experienced teachers to observe instructional strategies they’ve studied in a Teacher Professional Development course actually used in a classroom. Courses include Differentiation Academy, New Teacher Academy, Literacy Across Content Areas and the Lateral Entry Advancement Program. Teachers may also visit a learning lab individually by completing an online request form. Central Office Support Personnel as well as school administrators may recommend that a teacher visit a lab. Teachers who visit a lab develop and teach at least one new lesson based on strategies they learn. The master teacher analyzes the lesson plan and student work samples provided by the visiting teacher during a post-conference. The master teacher also provides support throughout the process to guide teacher development and mastery of effective instructional strategies.

**S.E.E.K. (Supporting Educational Excellence for Kids)**

The Teacher Professional Development Department is dedicated to making a positive impact on teacher development and retention. S.E.E.K. provides new teachers, (0-3 years of teaching experience), with opportunities that include two 12-hour New Teacher Academies (NTA) that focus on solidifying the “basics” for effective teaching and professional networking opportunities through on-the-job professional development. New Teachers receive the monthly S.E.E.K. & FIND newsletter highlighting district professional development designed specifically for new teachers and other professional development opportunities and resources for teachers. New Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of Learning Lab Visits to Professional Development Master Teachers (PDMTs). An individual visit to a PDMT Learning Lab includes
a pre-conference conversation to discuss the focus for the visit and a post-conference to ensure the successful implementation of new strategies in the visiting teachers’ classrooms. Visiting teachers develop and implement a lesson plan as a result of the visit and analyze student work samples before attending the post-conference to discuss the impact of teacher learning on student learning. The investment we are making in new teachers today will ultimately create teacher leaders tomorrow.