

# Staff Development

The concept is nothing new and neither are the strategies, but what we provided became **addictive, like caffeine**, and has proven to be some of the best staff development around.

Think back to the best professional development experience you have ever had. What made it so effective? In most cases, memorable learning opportunities are fun, collaborative, and influential. Six years ago, we mixed the model of instructional technology with the essentials for high-quality professional development using National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards. (See PD Cadres on page 14.) At that time there was a noticeable gap between the professional development provided by IT trainers and curriculum staff developers. Though their intentions were good, many of the IT trainers demonstrated applications with no hands-on activities or very directed hands-on activity with no connection to curriculum or teaching and learning. On the opposite end, curriculum staff developers were using strategies and collaboration that engaged participants but were still chained to the overhead projector and chalkboard.

The mission was clear: Meld these skills and teach the IT trainers how to be effective staff developers while teaching the staff developers how to integrate technology. Thus, the EdTech Professional Development Cadre emerged. The concept is nothing new, and neither are the strategies, but what we provided became addictive, like caffeine, and has proven to be some of the best staff development around.

In its root form, it is a train-the-trainer model. What gives it life is the creation of an environment that brings participants back again and again—an essential in high-

quality professional development. Ongoing staff development is imperative to encourage growth and change, so participants commit to a year, which equates to three, two-day trainings and one online meeting.

Our content revolves around:

- Time to collaborate, discuss, and put together learning in a culminating project
- Hands-on, all-the-time learning, designing, and planning
- Excitement of emerging technologies (Web 2.0)
- Constant modeling of instructional technology into the curriculum, classroom, and job
- Overt, concretely stated staff development strategies with understanding of how we learn (Show a strategy and tell them why and how they can use it.)
- Planning to prepare our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Utilizing ISTE's National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)

Now, we take the content and put it in a comfortable environment that resembles all the good things about a chic coffee shop: collaboration, individual focused time, movement, energy, and, of course, food. There's a reason we meet our friends and close colleagues in coffee bistros. It's relaxing, and we're free to talk and listen.

Imagine that you are in a coffee shop. Two days would fly by with fun and learning. The Staff Development Menu to the right is just an example of what you would experience.



## Staff Development Menu

### First Day

- 20 min. G2KU (Get to know you) activity that is out of chairs, conversations with other participants, always within the first 10 minutes of starting the cadre.
- 10 min. Movie clip and research to support pedagogy and content for two days.
- 20 min. Collaborative discussion around pedagogy and content.
- 20 min. Blogging. Recording pedagogy content and discussion into an online reflection.
- 60 min. Lunch. Time to talk collaboratively with colleagues around the state. Sometimes there are guided discussion topics.
- 150 min. Web 2.0. Working in teams to learn one Web 2.0 tool to show the NETS, posting it on the blog, and sharing with another team. Snack break included.
- 120 min. Digital GPS activity. Incorporating movement into content. Going outside on a scavenger hunt (an afternoon walk) while having fun, learning, and using a GPS, digital camera, and problem solving. Post pictures to the blog.
- 60 min. Dinner and regional discussions about what is working in staff development.
- 30 min. Closing activity that involves movement and laughter.

### Second Day

- 240 min. Learning Innovation Skills (21st Century Partnership) and NETS Project. Learning the new standards for students while incorporating them into a project using technology. Sharing projects with small teams, incorporating how to present this to your district/regional cadre.
- 45 min. Lunch and cross district/regional cadre discussions.
- 30 min. Next Training Plans. Spending time reflecting and planning what and how to teach the material to teachers.
- 10 min. Partner sharing. Sharing with a partner about your next training.
- 30 min. Posting reflections, pictures, and artifacts on the blog.

Here is what this agenda would look like for the first couple of hours of a session focused on NETS•S 1—Creativity and Innovation:

### Creativity and Innovation Session

- 8:00 A.M. Welcome and Video Teaser Chocolate: the 2006 movie about child slave labor on the Ivory Coast
  - How can technology enable creativity and innovation?
  - What support structures need to be in place to support creativity and innovation?
  - When have you had a chance to be creative or innovative?
 [PD Strategies: Quiet Reflection & Talking Chips]
- 8:15 A.M. Purpose and Task
  - Review standards focused on creativity and innovation
  - Review examples of projects that highlight creativity and innovation
  - Make connections to how creativity and innovation affect our work with staff and students
- 8:20 A.M. The Medici Effect (Web site)
  - What does it mean to be creative or innovative?
  - How are the terms different?
  - The Medici Effect examples
 [PD Strategies: Think-Pair-Share & Different Colored Cards]

*Menu cont. on page 14.*



Menu cont. from page 13.

- 8:50 A.M. Unveiling the NETS and Learning and Innovation Skills  
[PD Strategies: Music/Sound Cues; How Many Fingers Time Check]
- 9:05 A.M. Creative and Innovative Projects  
[PD Strategies: Four Corners]  
Category #1: Podcasting—Radio WillowWeb and Our City  
Category #2: Cross Cultural Collaboration—Rock Our World (ROW)  
Category #3: Blog Projects—Voices of Success and Secret Life of Bees  
Category #4: Digital Stories told through Movie Projects
- 9:45 A.M. Four Corners Report Out  
As a group, post a single comment summarizing the project, its value, and the connection to NETS and Learning and Innovation Skills.
- 10:05 A.M. Four Corners Debrief  
Return to your original table group. Take 1 minute to share your experiences during the Four Corners Activity.
- 10:20 A.M. PD Strategies and Resources Recap
- Download Strategies
  - Music Wands
- 10:30 A.M. NETS Reflection  
Review the NETS handout and reflect on your experiences this year both with the cadre and back in your own district/organization.

For a complete description of the two days with resources and URLs for the activities, go to the OETC Web site. The site also has a database of the PD strategies such as Quiet Reflection and Talking Chips.

Cadre participants come with the responsibility to train others in their district or region, building value into the experience. As they learn the skills to present and the content necessary to prepare administrators, teachers, and students, participants are challenged to design their own district or regional cadre as a replica of the state group. As one participant stated, “they pay it forward.” Stories about the cadre’s impact support their purpose. Take a look:

Recently I was visiting South Lane School District. I happened to sit next to a first grade teacher, Reta Cochrane, who explained how her students used Web 2.0 Voki avatars to read stories they had written. She put them on her Web site so parents could hear their child’s story. I asked her how she came up with that idea, and she told me about this incredible opportunity she was a part of in her district—a cadre run by Todd Hamilton, a member of our state cadre. They spent time learning tools that could be integrated in the classroom. Her enthusiasm was contagious and brought tears to my eyes.

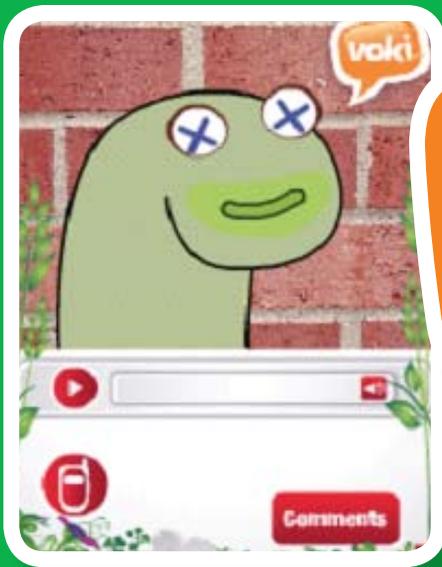
Brooks and Dean Phillips work in two of Montana’s small, rural school districts with maybe two classrooms total. They have been a part of the state cadre for a couple years now. They were asked by the Small Schools Alliance to train other small schools in technology integration. They came to the state group with a trainers’ dilemma: How would they train rural districts in technology integration when some of the students’ religions do not allow for the use of technologies that use electricity? We put this challenge in a collaborative Google doc and set about to help them plan a staff development that allows for students to meet the state standard proficiencies in technology while allowing for individual religious beliefs. At the next cadre meeting, Claudette Morton, executive director of the Montana Small Schools Alliance, greeted me. She came to personally tell me what an incredible job the Phillipses had done training. She not only recognized them and their outstanding skills, but the cadre for the significance in helping and modeling quality staff development.



## PD Cadres

Oregon and Montana EdTech Professional Development Cadres are a partnership between OETC and the state’s departments of education. That partnership has afforded us the strength, support, and funding essential to make this project ongoing and sustained. Both states have required Title IID federal ed tech grant recipients to have a participant with responsibility in training attend the cadre. This has raised the quality of the staff development being provided and lends itself to a more effective integration at the teacher and student levels. Reports from our cadre members indicate that technology integration is less about giving teachers the technology and more about the hands-on experience and support using the digital tools. It has been this networking and sharing that has helped us improve educational technology in schools throughout Oregon and Montana.

When Joe Buglione from the Umatilla-Morrow Education Service District opened up registration for three ed tech cadre sessions in June 2007 to all teachers in his service district, he had no idea that every session would fill up in less than two days, with attendance increasing the next year. A typical UMESD Cadre session runs from 4:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. on a Tuesday night. According to Buglione, each session includes teachers actively participating as well as a lot of sharing, laughing, and teaching each other. And then these teachers go back and share what they’ve learned with other teachers in their district.



Voki enables users to express themselves on the Web in their own voice using a talking character. The character can be customized to look like the user or it can take on a variety of other identities, such as animals, monsters, and anime.

Each cadre participant has the time and support to use the tools for implementation in his/her job. There are many successful uses of Web 2.0 tools, such as the teacher who used Voice-Threads as the sub plans with students adding to the content, or the school district that used wikis for grade level curriculum sharing and mapping.

In these and many more cases I see the impact on teachers, students, and parents. The measured and anecdotal evaluations suggest the far-reaching effect of the cadre is due not only to the environment and teaching of the tools, but constantly modeling technology while we use strategies for learning. For example, we never talk more than 15 minutes without a processing activity, collaboration, or hands-on activity on the laptop. We make sure we state why we do these things and encourage participants to model the activities in their training and classrooms. We always model sound instructional practice that has a foundation in what we know about brain-based learning and project-based instruction.

Another factor that improves the effect is inviting participants based upon a specific job responsibility. They are required to have a role in

their job to mentor or provide professional development. They may be a classroom teacher or the district curriculum coordinator, but training others is a requirement for participation so we can be sure the cadre content matches the audience. It is the cadres' job to give participants tools and content that they can use immediately to achieve our ultimate goal—preparing our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Like the coffee bistro, the cadre meets specific needs and niches for many different people. From the non-fat, no foam latte lover to the house coffee junky, we make sure they are satisfied by catering the experience to meet the needs of a diverse group.

### Resources

Medici Effect: [themediceffect.com](http://themediceffect.com)  
 National Staff Development Council:  
[www.nsd.org/](http://www.nsd.org/)  
 Organization for Educational Technology  
 and Curriculum: [pdc.oet.org](http://pdc.oet.org)



*Jennifer Arns has served as the Instructional Programs director of OETC since 2001. She is involved in connecting and supporting effective technology integration programs. These include the Instructional*

*Technologies Strategy Conference, Northwest Council for Computer Education, and the Professional Development Cadres.*

Welcome to

## K12IMC.ORG

Over 2,100 carefully selected and annotated resources provide you with the tools you need to create exciting, topical lesson plans and curriculum. Like an Instructional Media Center in the real world, you will find...



- a solid foundation for supporting standards and assessment practices,
- classroom projects, lessons, units, field trips, extended studies, and international databases in almost every subject and across subjects,
- references and projects to challenge your students,
- ideas & resources to integrate the new media tools,
- tips for school, family, industry, and community partnerships,
- tools for planning, using and managing your own environment,
- professional development and publishing opportunities.

The K-12 Instructional Media Center is chockfull of the best-of-breed resources for designing, implementing, and refreshing lesson plans and curriculum.

### Your One-Stop Resource For Curriculum And Professional Development.

*Used as a professional development resource by the Stanford School of Education and the Exploratorium, K12IMC.org is a non-profit resource, maintained by Dr. Bonnie Tenenbaum.*

Check it out today!

<http://www.k12imc.org/iste>