PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:

ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND STAFF PERCEPTION OF

THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MODEL AND

THE IMPACTS ON GROWTH AND LEARNING

A Doctoral Capstone Project

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Dedication

This capstone project is dedicated to all of the lifelong learners who never settle, who continue to work hard, and who believe that they will indeed make a difference! Stay hungry for information; stay committed to your mission; find encouragement and joy in the learning journey!

To my daughters, Brooklyn and Mackenzie, may you always be curious about life and may you always possess the motivation and inspiration and drive to keep learning, because the world is a magical and extraordinary place. Stay true to who you are and never give up on your goals and dreams! Remember, hope always anchors the soul! I love you!

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Abstract

Professional learning is a term used to describe the learning opportunities and experiences that are offered to the faculty and staff of a school district. Professional learning is different from professional development. In previous years, the school district offered professional development to the staff. These experiences did not typically involve active engagement or allow the staff to determine what they may or may not need to improve their own practices. Professional learning is designed to offer faculty and staff a voice and a choice, allowing them the power to guide their own professional growth. This mixed-method research study utilized action research to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of the administration, professional staff, and support staff regarding the effectiveness of the current professional learning model. Three research questions were designed to guide the research. Surveys, interviews, and exit tickets were used as data to determine the effectiveness of the model and to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of those who participate in professional learning. The data was analyzed by identifying trends that occurred through each data instrument. Triangulation of the different data points helped to determine the validity of the results. Final conclusions support the continuation of the current professional learning model, as the overall perception is that the model supports the growth and learning of the faculty and staff. Recommendations for improvement and future research were also determined so that the professional learning model can continue to be effective and meaningful for the administration, faculty, and staff of the school district.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Albert Einstein once explained that education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think. Educators are responsible for providing quality education to students, an education that trains them to think, explore, and grow. That is an awesome responsibility to have as an educator. In order to remain current with the latest trends in education, faculty and staff must be exposed to new ideas and new ways of teaching students. This is typically done through professional development opportunities and trainings. These training programs should be designed to increase performance among educators and students. However, if not approached carefully and thoughtfully, training can be a waste of time and produce very few results. How should school districts approach professional development so that it can be meaningful for everyone?

Background

Five years before this research started, a group of administrators and coaches gathered for a meeting to discuss the professional development that had been taking place in the Bellefonte Area School District (BASD). The model had turned into days of training that involved people (usually administrators) standing in front of the staff telling them what they needed to do, or what the next initiative would be. The teachers were not engaged in any learning and little progress was being made regarding teaching strategies, curriculum development, or assessment tools. There was no doubt that it was time for a change. From that moment on, BASD switched from professional development to professional learning.

I serve as the Principal of the Bellefonte Area Middle School and also the Principal of the district's cyber academy, BeLA (Bellefonte eLearning Academy). As someone who was responsible for and dreaded professional development days in the district, I was very interested in being a part of changing the professional development model and volunteered to be a part of the process, then was appointed as the administrator in charge of professional learning for the district. I was eager to begin a new journey that would hopefully lead to motivation and inspiration for the entire faculty and staff.

Around the same time that the district moved to this type of professional learning, Chromebooks were purchased for all students in grades K - 12. It was important to offer constant training to the teachers on how to appropriately integrate Chromebooks into their classrooms in a way that supported the learning of the students as opposed to just being another tool that could be used to write a paper. The district has offered an immense amount of technology training to the teachers in an effort to support their integration of technology into the classroom. This includes regular training in the Google Suite and Tools as the teachers are expected to use Google Classroom with their students. As a result of the pandemic in the Spring of 2020, all teachers were finally required to use Google Classroom as a means of teaching virtually. With the multitude of unknown situations that may present themselves in future school years, it is imperative to continue offering technology trainings, especially in regards to Google Classroom, so that students and staff may continue their teaching and learning not only in person but virtually as well.

The final addition to the professional learning model was to include all of the members of the support staff in the trainings and to offer additional trainings to these members that may be most beneficial to their distinct roles. The support staff is encouraged to attend all of the professional learning days and are paid for any time that they spend with the district on these days. There has been a struggle to increase the participation rate of the support staff, even though some involvement is growing slightly from the paraprofessionals and secretarial staff.

To continue with the evolution of professional learning at Bellefonte Area School District, the perceptions of the faculty, staff, and administration need to be considered in order to create an effective action plan for future development.

Professional Learning at the Bellefonte Area School District

With the current professional learning model, teachers are offered multiple opportunities to guide their own learning. On average, 25 different learning sessions are offered on each of the professional learning days, and the teachers are able to choose the sessions that they feel will be most valuable to them. Teachers are asked to set goals at the start of each year, based on the Danielson Framework, to help guide their learning. Sessions that are offered include the topics of technology, differentiation, mental health, special education, wellness, and more. There has been an increase in teacher engagement and the feedback from each exit ticket is used by the Professional Learning Committee to help drive the learning. The Professional Learning Committee is comprised of close to 30 faculty and staff members who meet quarterly to discuss the professional learning needs of the district and strive to continue to improve our practice. All professional learning sessions are open to the support staff, and they are paid for the sessions they

attend. Over the last four years, the district has operated more like one district instead of six separate buildings. These trainings give all faculty and staff time to come together and connect and create better learning environments for the students. There have also been occasions when BASD partners with other local school districts and the local technical school, and invite others to participate in the professional learning days alongside the district employees. As the district moves forward with plans for professional learning, I believe that we must take time to reflect on our current practices.

Research Questions

For professional learning to be effective, it is important to understand the needs, wants, and perceptions of the faculty, staff, and administration. Data from surveys, interviews, and exit tickets will be used to complete the research process for this topic. There will be three guiding questions throughout the research. These questions are as follows:

1. How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of the professional staff?

2. How do administrators and the support staff perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of support staff?

3. How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact of training in technology in regards to the implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom?

Anticipated Outcomes

The voices and opinions of the staff will be essential to the continued evolution of the BASD professional learning model. Faculty and staff surveys will be conducted anonymously, in an effort to elicit honest feedback regarding the professional learning

that occurs at BASD. The staff surveys will be sent to a wide range of teachers, in grades kindergarten through 12th grade. Surveys will be administered to the support staff in an effort to understand their perception of professional learning and how it has helped to support their needs. Surveys will also be given to the administration to determine if the perceptions of professional learning and the staff are the same as the administrative team. Once those surveys are returned, exit tickets will be reviewed from each of the professional learning days over the last several years to help identify trends in the perceptions of the faculty and staff now based on feedback from the beginning of the experience with professional learning. One desired outcome of this process is to learn that the faculty, staff, and administration still find value in the professional learning model and that they believe that their learning and growth needs are being met through these experiences, including any additional support that may be needed regarding technology. Another desired outcome is to learn how to better support the members of the support staff category so that they may continue to grow and learn through these opportunities. The results from this research will be utilized to improve the professional learning model for the Bellefonte Area School District.

Fiscal Implications

The majority of professional learning opportunities that occur within the district are through sessions offered by BASD employees. The professional learning committee reaches out to various members of the district who may have expertise in diverse areas and those members are asked to present sessions on professional learning days. Those staff members are paid for their time to plan their presentation. Outside agencies and members from local universities have also volunteered their time to present on

professional learning days. Members of the support staff who are not considered to be twelve-month employees are not required to work on professional learning days. To help encourage those members to attend the professional learning sessions, they are paid for any sessions they attend on professional learning days.

As was stated earlier, the professional learning committee is comprised of approximately 30 faculty and staff members from across all levels and groups of the district. This committee meets quarterly to plan professional learning opportunities for the district. When this committee meets during the school year, substitute teachers are needed so that the teachers can be in attendance at the committee meetings. There is one meeting in June after the school year has ended. Members of the committee are paid for their attendance and work on this day. The committee makes every attempt to be fiscally responsible in the planning of professional learning events. I would expect that this trend will continue with the ongoing implementation of future professional learning programs.

Summary

Professional learning at the Bellefonte Area School District has certainly been a work in progress since its redesign several years ago. The action research that follows will be used to identify areas of growth and strength so that the faculty and staff may be able to engage in professional learning opportunities that are relevant and meaningful.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Why do we need to learn? Why do we need to change? Why can't we continue to do what we have always done in the past? Understanding WHY something needs to happen provides the essential background for moving toward HOW something should happen. "A clear sense of WHY sets expectations." Simon Sinek's 2009 book, titled Start with Why; How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action, explains in detail the importance of explaining why something should happen. "When we don't know an organization's WHY, we don't know what to expect, so we expect the minimum...But when we do have a sense for the WHY, we expect more." (Sinek, 2009, p. 147) He goes on to explain that knowing WHY holds everyone in an organization accountable to HOW. Why do the faculty and staff of a school system need to participate in professional development? How should professional development be delivered? The research that follows will explain why we must engage in professional development/professional learning. Best practices on how to deliver professional development and training to faculty and staff has varied over the years. Technology now plays a lead role in professional development/professional learning, and has become an essential part of education. This research will explore professional development and learning topics for all faculty and staff. The evolution of technology will also be reviewed, as well as the impact that using technology in the classroom has on our students, faculty, and staff.

The Evolution of Professional Development to Professional Learning

Professional development is a term that is used to describe the training and learning that occurs among those who work in the field of education. The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires all certified educational professionals to constantly grow in their field and update their skills. This requirement, known as Act 48 of 1999, dictates that all certificate holders must earn 180 hours of professional development every five years (PA Department of Education, 2019). Professional staff can earn these hours through college credits or through professional development opportunities that are offered within the school district or at an educational conference. Professionals could lose their credentials if they do not achieve 180 hours every five years.

According to the Pennsylvania teacher evaluation system, professional development must be aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, which is the instrument used for teacher evaluation (The Danielson Group, n.d.). This framework includes four main domains and consists of categories within each domain. Those are as follows:

- Domain 1: Planning and Preparation
  - 1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
  - 1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
  - 1c Setting Instructional Outcomes
  - 1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
  - 1e Designing Coherent Instruction
  - 1f Designing Student Assessments
- Domain 2: Classroom Environment

- 2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

- 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning

- 2c Managing Classroom Procedures

- 2d Managing Student Behavior

- 2e Organizing Physical Space

- Domain 3: Instruction

  - 3a Communicating with Students

  - 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

  - 3c Engaging Students in Learning

  - 3d Using Assessment in Instruction

  - 3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

- Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

  - 4a Reflecting on Teaching

  - 4b Maintaining Accurate Records

  - 4c Communicating with Families

  - 4d Participating in a Professional Community

  - 4e Growing and Developing Professionally

  - 4f Showing Professionalism

The Department of Education provides the following as examples of professional development activities (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.):

- Training in assessing students and analyzing data to implement effective change in instruction

- Training to align and embed literacy, mathematics and science standards and instructional strategies within other academic content areas

- Acquiring technology skills and designing strategies to integrate technology into the instructional setting

- Acquiring secondary strategies to increase student engagement and personalize learning

- Improving understanding of the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of all learners

- School or district-wide planning (strategic, professional development, induction, special education, gifted education, school improvement, interventions for struggling students, technology, student support, and wellness)

As school districts consider the professional development plans for their district, they must remember the requirements set forth by the Department of Education, as well as those set by the state level department of education. These plans outline the basic expectation for professional development.

Professional development has taken on many forms over the years. As such, so have the perceptions of the faculty and staff who must engage in the professional development activities. Some teachers are willing to be involved in their own learning, and do so as a means to grow and improve their own practices. They see themselves as learners, working continuously to develop new understanding and improve their practice, and they consider professional development as a need (Saydam, 2019). On the other hand, some teachers see professional development as simply a task they must do because they do not see the value in participating in professional development. Some

professionals may believe that the knowledge and experience that they have already

gained is good enough for their teaching career and that there is no need to further their

own education regarding best practices in teaching and learning. Another reason that is

given for teachers not wanting to participate in professional development is time; some

believe that they have little or no time to plan for lessons now and that engaging in

professional development will only take away more time that they already feel they do

not have. Teacher perceptions of professional development have also been described as

the "I have to get my hours so I am here" teacher, to the teacher who chooses to sit in the

back of the room so that they can be on the internet and remain disengaged, to the new

teacher who is eager to learn anything and yet scared of everything, to the veteran teacher

who believes that they know more than the presenter and is cynical about the entire

presentation (Jones, 2018). Recognizing the perceptions of professional development

will be important in implementing future professional development activities and

professional development should be developed so that it is not a waste of their time.

Three ways districts can strive for this is to be sure that professional development

provides for flexibility in formats, engagement, and choice in content (Jones, 2018).

These may be the beginning steps of shifting perceptions of professional development

from negative and useless to positive and useful. Professional development is part of the

lifelong learning that educators experience when they are part of the teaching profession.

Standards for professional development were created after President Obama

signed Every Student Succeeds Act into law on December 10, 2015 (U.S. Department of

Education, n.d.). These standards were developed by the professional learning association

Learning Forward (Learning Forward, n.d.). The beliefs of Learning Forward are that

professional learning improves educator effectiveness which is fundamental to student

learning; that all educators have an obligation to improve their practice; that more

students achieve when educators assume collective responsibility for student learning;

that successful leaders create and sustain a culture of learning; and that effective school

systems commit to continuous improvement for all adults and students. In addition to

these core beliefs, Learning Forward provides seven standards for professional learning:

1. Learning Communities: Professional learning that increases educator

   effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities

   committed to continuous and improvement, collective responsibility, and goal

   alignment.

2. Leadership: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results

   for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and

   create support systems for professional learning.

3. Resources: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results

   for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for

   educator learning.

4. Data: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all

   students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data

   to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

5. Learning Designs: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and

   results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning

   to achieve its intended outcomes.

6. Implementation: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students, applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

7. Outcomes: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

The question may still remain regarding the effectiveness and purpose of professional development. One may ask the question why does professional development matter? Mizell (2010) states:

> Effective professional development enables educators to develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges. To be effective, professional development requires thoughtful planning followed by careful implementation with feedback to ensure it responds to educators' learning needs. (p. 10)

Most school districts are responsible for designing their own professional development activities throughout the school year. Those activities may be based on documented needs of the district, teachers, and students, or they may be based on the activities that the leadership team thinks that the teachers must have. Mizell (2010) explains that "unfortunately, many educators responsible for organizing professional development have had no formal education on how to do so" (p. 10). Groups such as Learning Forward have been created to help educate those who are responsible for providing professional development to faculty and staff so that school leaders do not have to rely on

their own experiences to design learning opportunities for the variety of needs that exist

within a school system.

John Hattie is another resource for educators as the journey of teaching and

learning continues to evolve.   Hattie is a researcher who spent almost 20 years

completing a meta-study that analyzed approximately 80,000 studies which included

roughly 250 million learners. He used the results to develop the concept of Visible

Learning (Hattie & Zierer, 2018). Hattie describes Visible Learning as such:

> Visible Learning seeks to get to the crux of this multitude of findings from
>
> educational research and identify the main messages by synthesizing meta-
>
> analyses. The aim is to move from "what works" to "what works best" and when,
>
> for whom, and why. (p. xviii)

Hattie and Zierer (2018) reviewed multiple factors of teaching and learning and the

effectiveness of each factor. They placed these factors on a scale of -0.5 up to 2.0. The

factors are grouped by 6 basic categories: student, curricula, home, school, classroom,

and teacher. Each subcategory is then assigned an effect size. The key for rating the

effect size of each factor is based on its potential to considerably accelerate student

achievement, its potential to accelerate student achievement, likely to have a positive

impact on student achievement, likely to have small positive impact on student

achievement, likely to have a negative impact on student achievement. Examples of

factors that are in the "likely to have a negative impact on student achievement" include:

- Retention -0.32

- Students feeling disliked -0.19

- Suspension -0.20

- Boredom -0.49

- Depression -0.36

Examples of factors that have the "potential to considerably accelerate student

achievement" include:

- Phonics instruction .70

- Collective teacher efficacy 1.57

- Teacher credibility .90

- Teacher elaboration and organization .75

- Strategy to integrate with prior knowledge .93

- Scaffolding .82

- Response to Intervention 1.29

Hattie presents teachers and leaders with additional support in all of the categories,

including how the professional development of educators can make an impact on student

learning and engagement.

Hattie and Zierer (2018) delve into professional development of teachers and

staff, which they assign an effect size of .62. They explain, "Successful professional

development programs are characterized by working together to understand, enhance, and

evaluate the impact of teachers on their students" (p. 29). They go on to explain that

professional development should be focused on the needs of learners and that it should

be appropriately chosen based on those needs.

Teachers profit greatly from professional development if it provides them with

concrete goals and steps for improving and evaluating their instruction in the

future. Just as important, the participants should receive an opportunity to give

feedback on the professional development measure so it can be adjusted to fit

their learning level. (Hattie & Zierer, 2018, p. 30)

This approach to professional development is different from the traditional approach.

According to Hattie, when implemented correctly, professional development falls into the

category of "potential to accelerate student achievement," which is considered to be in

the second most effective tier of support. Another key factor that Hattie points out is that

feedback contributes to the success of professional development. Teachers should have

the opportunity to have a voice in the professional development opportunities and should

be able to express their views and opinions regarding what they need in order to continue

their own growth as educators.

Teacher agency is a term that places value on empowering teachers to act

intentionally and purposely to grow in their own learning and assist with the growth and

development of their colleagues. As educators make the transition from professional

development to professional learning, improving teacher agency is at the heart of the

discussion. Teachers must want to drive their own learning, and they also must find the

value in doing so. Laurie Calvert, a National Board-Certified teacher, served as the US

Department of Education's first Teacher Liaison from 2010-2015. She currently serves as

an advisory for NCTAF (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future) and

Learning Forward on educational policy. Calvert (2016) believes "The heart of the matter

is this: For many teachers, professional development has long been an empty exercise in

compliance, one that falls short of its objectives and rarely improves professional

practice" (p. 2). Her work includes interviews with and stories from many teachers who

described their professional development activities as events that served little purpose to

their own growth:

> They characterized PD days' as episodic, irrelevant, and uncoordinated - an
>
> experience they usually dread. Their stories ring like different verses of a sad
>
> song lamenting "top-down" instruction that is too general to help them, that
>
> doesn't offer solutions to challenges in their classrooms, and about which they
>
> have little or no choice. (p. 7)

These sentiments became a turning point for moving from professional development, a

time in which teachers are simply "developed" based on the ideals of others, to now

professional learning. Teacher agency, again, is the idea that teachers have a say in their

own learning which creates ownership of the progress they each make as an individual

teacher and as a collective teaching group for their students. Calvert (2016) explains "At

the core of our use of the term professional learning is the belief that there is an important

relationship between the adults' professional learning environment and what students

learn in school" (p.10). In an effort to help school districts make the transition from

professional development to professional learning, Calvert suggests the following:

1. "Tap into teacher leadership to design professional learning that works for

   teachers." Leaders should reach out to the experts in the district, teachers who

   have a proven record for achieving student progress. It is important to empower

   these teacher leaders within the district to help strengthen teams and inspire

   teacher growth.

2. "Support teacher engagement with learning networks and teacher leadership

   organizations." Teachers who are truly dedicated to improving their craft will

seek out their own professional learning experiences outside of the district. This can be done through various conferences, webinars, and trainings offered by the local intermediate units. When teachers seek this additional support on their own, they tend to share those experiences with other teachers, which could in turn, inspire others to also seek these additional training opportunities. Leaders of districts should support this additional training for the teachers.

3. "Balance loose and tight control with support." When creating professional learning plans for teachers, it is important to allow teachers freedom in choice while still providing parameters and expectations. For example, dictating every professional learning activity that a teacher must do reverts the activities back to professional development, where teachers felt as though they had little control over their learning. To the other extreme, allowing teachers to decide all of their own learning opportunities could leave teachers lost and confused, because sometimes teachers do not know or realize what they may need. It is suggested that districts provide choices on professional learning days. The choices can include a variety of sessions based on a centralized theme, such as using technology appropriately to drive and support instruction. Another key factor to this being successful is to provide a type of accountability for the teachers in their learning. If teachers are not held accountable for their sessions, then the sessions could turn into things they have to do instead of things they get to do. Asking teachers to share what they learned with their colleagues and even administrators helps to support the structure and accountability for the day.

4. "Hire leaders who believe in professional learning." Calvert believes that "For teacher agency to contribute to quality professional learning, teachers and district leaders told us it is critical for leadership in the school to believe in professional learning and establish a culture of continuous learning." This means that leaders need to follow up with their teachers regarding their professional learning. If the teachers believe that the leader does not care about the learning, or if the leader will not do anything to follow up with the learning in their own building, then the meaning of professional learning is diminished. Leaders should have an understanding of what their teachers need and how to support those needs through professional learning.

5. "Start small and go deep." When making the initial transition into professional learning, schools should start with small steps, such as helping teachers to understand the meaning of teacher agency and the power that can exist when someone takes charge of their own learning experiences. Not everyone will believe at first and not everyone will be on board, as it is simply easier at times for the leader to just tell the teacher what to do. "Teachers who have not been given much responsibility or agency in the past will have to learn to use them well. Schools and districts need to provide capacity building and support so teachers can fully take advantage of the opportunity." Leaders and teachers should not expect extensive changes overnight, yet develop an understanding that change takes time and that building capacity to take charge of one's learning will produce profitable dividends for the future.

Calvert's research supports the argument that when teachers have ownership of their learning that is supported by the leaders of the district, morale improves and teachers take more responsibility for their own personal growth and learning in their profession.

As school districts embrace the idea of teacher agency, they too should embrace the opportunity for teachers to be involved in and engaged with the what and how of professional learning. "In much the same way that leaders analyze student achievement and growth data and observe trends to identify professional learning needs, they must listen to teachers' voices early in the professional learning design process" (p. 12). Rodman (2018) suggests that schools should conduct a staff needs assessment which can help leaders take a deeper look at the topics, formats, schedules, and resources that will best meet the needs of the teachers at that time. Teachers should also be asked to be "co-designers" of the professional learning plans in which they help to design and facilitate learning sessions for their peers. Allowing time for collaboration and social interaction can also help the success of a professional learning model, as this encourages teachers to share with and learn from one another. Professional development was focused on teachers receiving training. The training was decided for them and they had little choice in the type of training they received. This created an atmosphere of teachers who were not engaged or invested in their own learning process. Professional learning is focused on teachers, faculty, and staff being partners in the training and learning process. Teacher agency is about empowering teachers to take control of their own learning. Giving them a voice and a choice can be fundamental in this change.

Professional Learning for All Faculty and Staff

Professional learning does not end and/or begin with the teachers or only those who are considered to be members of the professional staff. School districts are comprised of a variety of roles and responsibilities. Often, the first people that someone may think about will be the classroom teacher or the principal. In the past, most professional development opportunities were only for the teachers, and the principals/administrators were the one who typically created these trainings. However, there are many who work in the category of support staff and these employees are crucial to the success of a school. When training is not offered to all members of a faculty and staff, a divide is created. This divide can prevent other members of the faculty and staff from feeling like valued members of the team. It can also limit the amount of information that faculty and staff members receive which can be helpful in supporting the students of the school. As school districts transition to the professional learning model, all members of the faculty and staff should be included in the plans for professional learning. Employees in this category include secretaries, custodians, cafeteria staff, maintenance staff, technology support, guidance and attendance clerks, paraprofessionals, van drivers, bus drivers, and health room assistants. Regarding perceptions of these employees:

> When students (and certainly their parents) enter the school's office, a secretary greets them; school-bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and playground aides also set the cultural tone for their areas of work, and custodians and maintenance workers help keep the school running while serving as additional adult role models for students. The entire staff, not only the teachers and administrators, creates the culture of a school. (Danielson, 2002, p. 65)

Each category performs specific roles that contribute to the daily operation of the school and the success and growth of the student.

Dr. James Comer is a child psychiatrist with the Yale University Child Study Center. He believes that all members of the support staff "are involved in ways that support everybody in the school and decrease behavioral problems" (Comer, 2017, as cited in Rosales, 2017). According to Comer, there are approximately three million members of the support staff group in the nation and it is imperative that they be included in training and expectations for the school. He goes on to say that "approximately 75 percent of support staff live, vote, worship, and work in the same school district. They often live in the same neighborhoods and shop at the same stores as students and their families. They have knowledge of the community that they bring to school. There is bonding" (p. 1). Considering this point, members of the support staff bring another level of understanding to a school district. They may be the first and last person that a student sees of the school day. They may be the one serving the student breakfast/lunch. They may be the ones sweeping the hallways during class and saying hello in the hallway. Members of the support staff interact with the community on a daily basis, answering questions for parents, providing a service that is essential to the operation of the school. As such, Comer believes that members of the support staff should be offered development programs to help enhance their skills and deepen their understanding of how to support all students. "Professional development of school staff is vital for the whole village model to succeed." This is based on the mantra "It takes a village to raise a child." It takes every member of a school system to raise our students.

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This transitioned public education from the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that was in effect since 2002. Over the years, the expectations under NCLB proved to be unrealistic for schools and as a result, ESSA was created (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Along with the creation of ESSA, Title VIII introduced the term "paraeducator" into federal statute for the first time, and defines professional development to mean activities that provide educators, paraprofessionals specifically included, with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to meet academic standards (National Education Association, 2020). Funding and grants are now available to assist school districts in providing professional development opportunities to all members of the support staff. Examples of general professional development include:

- Title I funding for paraprofessionals to attend schoolwide programs that improve instruction

- Title II funding for paraprofessionals to attend trainings focused on recognizing child abuse, literacy at various grade levels, transition students from early childhood education to elementary school

- Title IV funding for technology and school safety training for various members of support staff

The National Resource Centre for Paraeducators makes additional connections between the ESSA requirements and the training and support of paraeducators:

Paraeducators need to have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities tied to relevant, quality, ongoing training and supervision. They also need to have administrators, teachers and other educational staff recognize

the scope of their responsibilities and demonstrate respect through appropriate

job assignments. (Njuguna, 2016, p.1)

Paraeducators should not be asked to perform tasks for which they have not been trained.

This role has evolved dramatically over the years when this position used to be

considered a "teacher's aide". Now, paraeducator means "alongside the educator" and

holds the support staff members to a higher regard and responsibility. As such,

appropriate levels of training and support should be provided so that the paraeducators

can perform their responsibilities to the best of their abilities. Examples of these

trainings could include effective classroom and behavior management, effective

instructional practices as it relates to their assignment, and communication strategies to

be used with students, parents, and teachers.

The National Education Association (NEA) continues to list the many benefits

that can result from additional training and support of a school district's support staff.

The following are a sample of the benefits as included in the article "How Education

Impacts Education Support Professionals":

- Student attendance may be influenced by clerical professionals who are many

  times tasked with tracking attendance and are often the first contact with the

  absent student or student's family. Additionally, custodians and maintenance ESP

  (Education Support Professionals) who keep our schools clean and free of

  allergens are actually keeping students healthy and at school.

- Appropriate assessment systems need the input of paraeducators who are frontline

  educators.

- School climate is a major contributing factor to students' academic success and healthy attitudes towards learning. ESP should be trained and fully participatory in anti-bullying intervention and prevention programs, mentoring initiatives, and cultural awareness.

Aaron Sauberan is a special education teacher in California. Sauberan (2015) shares the perspective that "Developing greater team collaboration between teachers and paraprofessionals benefits children and has the potential to deepen the relationships and job satisfaction of all staff" (p. 53). This involves not only training the paraprofessionals on the expectations of the job, but also making sure that teachers are aware of the responsibilities that paraprofessionals can have in the classroom. Creating time for learning and collaboration together will assist the communication that should occur to support the students.

Training and support should be extended to all members of the support staff team. With the development of the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the custodial, maintenance, and cafeteria staff have been required to alter previous practices and implement new plans based on the requirements of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Effective cleaning practices take priority to keep schools open and all who enter the schools safe (Ferguson, 2020). Training had to occur quickly and required follow-up from supervisors to ensure that the ones who were responsible for these practices demonstrated an understanding of these new expectations.

All members of the support staff are an integral part of a school system. As professional learning plans continue to develop, school districts must consider the

varying levels and positions that exist within the support staff structure. The same type of training would not be appropriate for every member as their roles are vastly different. A paraeducator may require training on how to support a student in a classroom, while a custodian will need training on proper cleaning procedures, and a secretary may need additional support on a particular computer program that is used within the district. Developers of professional learning will need to understand these roles and how each role supports the school district. Once that has been achieved, appropriate levels of professional learning can occur for each group within the support staff realm.

Integrating Technology

As the training needs have evolved for professional and support staff, so have the needs of our students. Students in schools now are considered part of the digital generation. This is because they are growing up in a world that allows them to be automatically digitally connected through smartphones and computers. Students are not learning the same way they did even ten years ago and as educators, it's important to understand how to support the needs of the students now as well as how to learn as an educator to teach them in a way that will produce academic growth (Study.com, 2020). Lessons should be designed in a way that fully engages students, which may entail incorporating technology in a meaningful way into the lesson that is being taught. "Constant exposure to digital media has changed the way the digital generation processes, interacts, and uses information. As a result, they think and communicate in fundamentally different ways than any previous generation" (Jukes et al., 2010, Introduction). Our world today is fast-paced and information can be immediately

retrieved any time of day, any day of the year thanks to technology. Students are used to their "digital cocoons".

What school districts must face is that our world is changing, and so must the way we teach our students. Schools have been rooted in the Industrial Age since the early 1900's. However, the world has shifted to the Information Age which represents a shift in life experiences and learning styles (Kelly et al., 2009). Because of the technology access that the digital generation has had since an early age, their needs are different from the students of the past, which requires teachers to shift their own educational practices.

Digital learners prefer receiving information quickly from multiple multimedia sources, but many nondigital teachers prefer slow and controlled release of information at conventional speed and from limited sources. Digital learners prefer parallel processing and multitasking, but many nondigital teachers prefer singular processing and single or limited tasking. Digital learners prefer active, engaged learning, but many nondigital teachers have more experiences with passive learning such as lectures. Digital learners prefer processing pictures, sounds, and video before text, but many nondigital teachers prefer to provide text before pictures, sounds, and video. Digital learners prefer to network simultaneously with many others, but many nondigital teachers prefer students to work independently before they network and interact. (Kelly et al., 2009, p. 23)

In the introduction of his book, Jared Covili (2012) explains how students of today have been exposed to more media than any other generation. He presents the reader with these statistics:

- 89% of 18-24-year-old Americans are online

- Digital Natives aged 12 to 24 spend 4.5 hours a day viewing screen media (TV, Internet, Internet video, mobile video, excluding games)

- 82% of 7th to 12th graders "media multitask" while doing homework, e.g. IM, TV, web surfing, etc.

Covili wrote his book in 2012 and used data from 2010. Almost 10 years later, the statistics continue to climb.

The digital generation is also referred to as Generation Z. People born between 1997 and 2012 are considered to be a part of "Gen Z". This generation has never had to live without technology. They have also grown up with social media, something that prior generations did not have access to when they were adolescents. Social media has and continues to make an impact on the way people think and act. The instant access to the internet has also evolved how people communicate and interact, providing more opportunities for students to engage in collaboration and work with people all over the world (Seymour, 2019). Students of this generation are utilizing technology as a way of life. Ryan Jenkins is a Millennial and Generation Z speaker and author who has made it his mission to help leaders and organizations to better understand these generations so that companies, industries, schools, and employers can support the people of this era in a more successful manner. According to Jenkins (n.d.), 45% of Generation Z receive a mobile service plan between the ages of 10 and 12; 91% of Generation Z have their digital devices in bed in the evening; 66% of Generation Z list gaming as their main hobby; 72% of Generation Z have access to all mobile wireless services including voice, messaging, and data.

Even though the statistics of technology use among students and the digital generation/Generation Z remain high, educators are not always comfortable with the use of technology in their classrooms. Often, educators may resort to how they learned and were taught when they were in school, whether that be in grade school or college. Technology was not as important twenty, thirty years ago as it is today, so learning to integrate technology in a skillful manner can be a foreign concept to educators, and one that produces anxiety and fear of the unknown. Through professional learning, educators can receive the necessary training to implement technology into their classrooms on a daily basis. Effective technological change for school systems must include three phases: planning, installation, and ongoing management (Atkins & Vasu, 2000). It is not as simple as giving every student a laptop or giving every teacher a Promethean Board. Providing the tools does not mean that everyone will know how to best utilize those tools. "Before the buying should come the buy-in: Leaders need to articulate the value and purpose of the initiative" (Tucker, 2019, p. 55). Educators and students should be trained on how to utilize these devices to maximum learning potential.

Various methods for preparing teachers for technology integration have been suggested. Oliver and Townsend (2013) recommend six types of training programs to meet the varying needs of educators as they begin the implementation process.

1. Pre-service Training Programs: Educators may receive stand-alone technology training courses in their pre-service training programs. Higher education entities are starting to include more training programs for future educators. The increase of these courses through the pre-service programs should then equate to buy-in from the educators as they enter their first teaching positions.

2. Long-Term Course Approaches: These courses are designed to last more than one or two sessions and tend to be several weeks long. This allows for more time for the educators to practice what they need to do with technology integration.

3. Short-Term Workshop, Institute, or Academy Approaches: These include several different forms that an educational institution may use for technology training. This can be done through the district's professional development activities throughout the year, making this a focus that is revisited on multiple occasions.

4. Coaching/Mentoring Approaches: Technology experts are assigned to specific teachers or groups of teachers to act as the personal mentor/coach during the technology integration period. These coaches/mentors are often called upon for not only quick tips, but long-term support as well.

5. Learning Community Approaches: Professional learning communities are created around technology to provide time for educators to collaborate with one another around common goals and practices. This is ongoing throughout the school year and may continue into the next school year.

6. Product and Assessment Approaches: A sense of urgency can be created when an educator knows that their final product regarding technology will be assessed. Proper support should be provided to the educators if assessment of their skills is going to be utilized.

School districts will need to consider their own needs as they develop professional learning opportunities for the faculty and staff. School districts vary in size, resources, and internal experts which could change the types of training that occur within each district.

Leaders need to have a vision when implementing the use of technology in education and the training that should occur to support the varying needs of the faculty and staff.

Devices that are not used purposefully can quickly become a distraction. This mindset that technology distracts from learning is the exact opposite of the mindset that leaders want to foster in their teachers during a blended learning or similar technology initiative. Teachers have to learn how to use technology effectively for any blended learning or tech-related initiative to be successful in classrooms. The traditional approach to professional development, in which large groups of teachers are mandated to attend a handful of presentations or workshops throughout a school year, isn't effective in an era of hyper connectivity and rapid technological change. (Tucker, 2019, p. 57)

Tucker proposes the following progression for creating a shift in educational practices.

1. Creating a Spark - Get teachers excited! Help teachers understand this shift in teaching and learning and work to pique their interest, demystify the ideas of blended learning that they may have heard or already developed, and help them to explore new ideas. Prior to starting this phase, district leaders should conduct a needs assessment of the school so that they understand where the faculty and staff currently stand with their current implementation, use, and understanding of best practices with technology. Leaders should also create a learning environment for the teachers where they can be fully involved in the learning process and not just be a passive learner in the training where they sit and listen to the training.

2. Cultivate a Coaching Culture - There will be a gap in implementation. Some teachers will try new things with technology and will be successful from the beginning. Others may try and fail and give up after a few attempts. Fear and complacency will keep some teachers from even trying one time to explore new uses with technology. Leaders need to be prepared to support all of the phases that the teachers will go through during this transition. Providing a coach for the teachers can be crucial in this support. Coaches are not administrators, and they are not teachers, their sole purpose is to provide support in a non-threatening or evasive way. Coaches can help the teachers establish their own personal goals and provide individualized support meeting each teacher at their own level of implementation. Coaches may also support teachers by planning co-taught lessons so that teachers can have a model of how to implement the technology appropriately and effectively in their classrooms.

3. Empowering PLCs - A PLC is a professional learning community. The PLC model groups teachers together in learning teams that meet regularly to connect, collaborate, and continue learning. Leaders should find ways to create technology PLCs which would provide time for teachers to work with and learn from one another as they continue their journey through the implementation of technology in the classroom.

Change is not easy for many people and changing the way teachers instruct students now is different than the way they did in the past. School leaders should be aware of the varying needs of their staff and develop a clear vision for the implementation and sustainability of technology in the classroom.

As the evolution of teaching continues to progress, faculty and staff have moved at different rates to embrace the change. Teachers who have already started to implement technology in the classroom were far more prepared for the events of 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). As a result of this world-changing event, education as we knew it has had to immediately change. Schools across the country closed in March of 2020 due to COVID-19. Students, teachers, parents, everyone, had to immediately move to a new way of teaching and learning. Technology became a must-have in this format, as teachers and students were separated from one another for the remainder of the school year. Those who had already embraced the use of technology in their classrooms had a slightly easier transition to this new way of teaching. People who have been opposed to or reluctant to use technology in the classroom faced new struggles and challenges since so much of the world of technology was still foreign to them. Virtual learning was the only option. At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, virtual learning is a major component for most students and teachers. Some students are learning 100% in a virtual environment while some students are participating in a hybrid program where they are in school for in-person learning a couple of days of the week and then are learning virtually from their homes a couple of days of the week. To adjust to this change, teachers have had to adapt the way they are teaching their students. As a result, the professional learning needs of faculty and staff have also changed. Professional learning should "support teachers in creating student-centered learning experiences regardless of whether students experience learning in person, digitally, or with pencil and paper" (Rivero, 2020, p. 26). To do so, the following steps have been recommended:

1. Allow teachers to practice with the new tools, resources or strategies as well as time to receive feedback. Time should be dedicated to finding, using, and learning to implement these new tools.

2. Sessions and collaborative work time should be grouped by grade/content so that teachers can work with and learn from their peers who are teaching similar content.

3. Ongoing collaboration and work time should be provided on a regular basis so that teachers can continue to refine their practices throughout this new learning environment.

A tool was developed in coordination with the Danielson Framework for Observation and Supervision. As was previously mentioned, there are four domains and various categories which are used for supervision and observation. Those domains and categories have been expanded to now include an evaluation rubric for online education. This rubric now includes evidence and examples for what a teacher could/should do to be considered failing, needs improvement, proficient, or distinguished for each category in each domain (PA-ETEP, 2020). For example, Table 1 provides an example of the supervision and observation rubric used to evaluate teachers when teaching in an online environment. This particular example explains the virtual components of category 3a: Communicating with Students which falls under Domain 3: Instruction.

Table 1

Domain 3: Instruction, Component 3a: Communication with Students

Domain 3: Instruction		
Component	**Failing**	**Needs Improvement**
3a: Communicating with Students	➤ Teacher fails to explain the lesson's purpose or connect the lesson to the larger curriculum. ➤ Teacher explains content using vocabulary and language incorrectly and/or above or below grade level; content explanations contain major errors. ➤ Teacher's explanations lack procedures or strategies for student use. ➤ Teacher standards for instructor responsiveness and availability are not posted.	➤ Teacher attempts to explain the lesson's purpose with minimal success. ➤ Teacher explains content using vocabulary and language inconsistently and/or above or below grade level; content explanations contain minor errors. ➤ Teacher's explanations of procedures are unclear or incomplete preventing students from successfully completing the learning task. ➤ Teacher's standards for instructor responsiveness and availability are unclear.
Evidence/Examples	➤ Teacher fails to use content language and/or uses the language incorrectly. ➤ Students use online space (discussion, blogs, etc.) to communicate inability to follow lesson instead of communicating directly with the teacher.	➤ Content is posted but there is no communication and/or alignment of learning objectives. ➤ Teacher-created content is of low quality and difficult for students to view and understand. ➤ Teacher inconsistently and/or rarely responds to students' posts on discussion boards. ➤ Teacher minimally uses content language throughout the lesson. ➤ Directions for submitting assignments are unclear.

Component	Proficient	Distinguished
3a: Communicating with Students	➤ Teacher clearly states the lesson's purpose and uses vocabulary and language appropriately and accurately. ➤ Teacher explains content using appropriate vocabulary and language consistently; content explanations are thorough, accurate, complete and on grade level. ➤ Teacher's explanations are clear and emphasize procedures that support successfully completing the learning task. ➤ Teacher posts clear standards for instructor responsiveness and availability.	➤ Teacher creates a learning environment where the lesson's purpose is clearly known by students as demonstrated through extending and connecting the lesson to the larger curriculum. ➤ Students demonstrate knowledge of content by using appropriate vocabulary and language consistently with peers in both oral and written forms; content explanations are thorough, accurate, and complete. ➤ Teacher acts proactively, bringing attention to possible areas of student misconceptions.
Evidence/Examples	➤ Teacher directions and procedures are delivered using a variety of digital tools necessary to access content. ➤ Synchronous instruction and/or videos are accompanied by written lesson objectives and outcomes. ➤ During one-on-one contacts, the teacher and student share progress and concerns around student learning. ➤ Students demonstrate understanding of teacher expectations by engaging with the learning task presented.	➤ Students collaborate with each other using digital tools to share strategies that lead to deeper content understanding with minimal teacher intervention. ➤ Students hold synchronous online meetings to review and explain procedures. ➤ Students use digital tools to collect and share resources that make authentic connections. ➤ Teacher and students use digital tools to communicate evidence of learning.

The evidence/examples for each category provide teachers with ideas that they can utilize

when aiming for the proficient and/or distinguished rating. School leaders and staff can

access this document prior to any observations and may use this information to help support and guide discussions around virtual teaching and learning.

Summary

Technology continues to shape how we teach and learn. Professional learning opportunities mirror these changes. There are health and safety guidelines currently that prevent faculty and staff gathering in large groups for professional learning opportunities. Utilizing virtual meetings allows faculty and staff to still connect and collaborate while adhering to social distancing regulations (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Presenters, trainers, and coaches are able to model how to effectively and appropriately utilize technology in the classroom through their own virtual trainings with faculty and staff. Online professional learning can occur at any point of the day, as educators gain access to endless webinars, resources, and online materials that they may not have otherwise accessed (Callard et al., 2020).

Professional learning is a requirement for anyone who is involved in education. Understanding why it must occur leads to how it can occur. Communication between everyone who is involved in a school district is essential for leading to a successful professional learning program. Resources exist to help leaders know where to start when planning professional learning. Gaining feedback from professional and support staff members can help to drive the direction of professional learning. Integrating technology is now a must and not just a maybe and training and support must be provided to help educators navigate the future of education. This is a topic that will continue to develop for school districts as the needs of the students and teachers and support staff continue to change and evolve in the future.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The Bellefonte Area School District moved to a professional learning format four years prior to this study and research. Since its inception, a professional learning committee continues to meet regularly throughout the year to develop the ideas and sessions which are offered during each professional learning day. It has always been the belief of the committee that we must continue to reevaluate our program on a regular basis so that we can be sure we are offering sessions and trainings to the faculty and staff that are appropriate and necessary to continue making growth with our students. Gaining feedback with respect to professional learning is essential to ensure that quality programming is being offered.

Chapter Two, the literature review, detailed various research to support the use of professional learning in a school district. This chapter also explained the difference between professional development and professional learning. The professional development model focuses more on someone being "developed" through a less involved training model where the participant is not given options for learning. The professional learning model involves the participant in the training sessions and encourages teacher agency, which is when a teacher is empowered to take ownership of their own growth and learning. The research on this topic explains how proper professional learning should be conducted to yield the best results for everyone who is involved. The research also explained why school districts must continue to implement training and support regarding the use of technology, as technology plays a major role in the lives of students

of this generation. The information provided in the previous chapter lays the foundation

for the research that will be conducted throughout this action research project.

This chapter will focus on the type of research that is being gathered, including

the research method, designs, and data collection methods.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the

faculty, staff, and administration regarding the current professional learning program.

These perceptions will help to identify the areas of growth and strengths that exist with

the program so that the professional learning committee may continue to provide

professional learning sessions that are significant and purposeful to the faculty and staff

of the district. Over the last five years, the professional learning model has shifted

slightly but the main components remain. The goal of the committee is to continue

offering a variety of sessions that will be helpful to all members of the faculty and staff.

With the increase in the use of technology, the focus of many recent sessions has shifted

to more training in technology programs and resources. However, are the sessions that

are being offered truly meeting the needs of the members of our school district? Is it time

for the current professional learning model to change and if so, how? The following

research questions will be used to help uncover these answers:

1. How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact that the professional

    learning model has had on the growth and learning of the professional staff?

2. How do administrators and the support staff perceive the impact that the

    professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of support staff?

3. How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact of training in technology in regards to the implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom?

A mixed-method research approach was used to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the faculty, staff, and administration regarding professional learning. Qualitative research is described as the "collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, largely narrative and visual in nature, to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest" (Mertler, 2019, p.77). A Likert scale was utilized during the survey portion of the data collection. Likert scales produce measurable results, or present varying degrees in research. As such, the data collected through the use of a Likert scale is considered to be quantitative data. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through this action research process.

Members of the faculty, staff, and administration from all levels, roles, and responsibilities were asked to complete surveys that include questions to help identify and understand their current perspective of what is being offered through the school district. Members of the professional learning committee were interviewed with the goal of understanding their perspective of the planning and implementation process of professional learning. One desired outcome included developing an understanding of the perceived needs and supports that the faculty and staff receive through professional learning. Another desired outcome was that the faculty and staff still find value in the current professional learning model and still embody the initial excitement and willingness to participate in this type of learning and growth for themselves as employees of the school district.

Demographics

The Bellefonte Area School District is located in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, which can be found in the middle of the state in Centre County. The district serves approximately 2,700 students and employs approximately 425 administrative, professional, and support staff members (Bellefonte Area School District, n.d.-a). There are six brick-and-mortar schools and one cyber academy. Those schools are the Bellefonte Area High School, the Bellefonte Area Middle School, Bellefonte Elementary, Benner Elementary, Pleasant Gap Elementary, Marion Walker Elementary, and BeLA (Bellefonte eLearning Academy).

The Bellefonte community consists of approximately 6,240 people (United States Census Bureau, 2019). Table 2 provides a breakdown of the community demographics.

Table 2

Bellefonte Borough Demographics

Percent of residents over 65 years of age	20.4%
Percent of residents under 18 years of age	16.2%
Percent of White residents	94%
Percent of Black or African American residents	4.4%
Percent of Hispanic or Latino residents	2.6%
Median home value	$191,600
Median gross rent	$807
Households with a computer	90.5%
Median household income	$56,250
Percent of persons in poverty	7.1%

There are additional townships that fall within the Bellefonte Area School District

boundaries. The region of the school district is similar across district lines, yielding

similar results in demographics and socioeconomic status. Bellefonte has been assigned

the county seat of Centre County. The major employers of the community include the

Bellefonte Area School District, State Correctional Institution at Rockview, State

Correctional Institution of Benner, Geisinger Health Systems, and various private

factories/employers such as Graymont, Restek, and Supelco.

District Highlights and Accomplishments

Bellefonte Area School District prides itself on being a progressive school district

in regards to curriculum, technology, and course offerings to our students. The

Bellefonte Area High School has been recognized by the College Board as one of 425

districts across North American for its large selection of advanced placement courses as

well as the many college-in-the-high school courses. The entire district has been

recognized for the program "Bellefonte READS" which is a program that strives to place

free books in the hands of everyone in our community. The Bellefonte Area Middle

School participated in a BAMS in Space program which allowed the school to contact the

International Space Station. The Middle School was one of five schools in the nation to

be chosen to participate as a result of the work that was completed by a team at the

school. The district is also known for its involvement in global learning and travel,

mindfulness, and school safety practice. Many athletic programs have won district and

state titles and the fine arts program is one of the strongest in the regions, winning

multiple awards each year for performances.

Integration of Technology

The Bellefonte Area School District has also been recognized as a Google for Education Reference District. This is an honor given to school districts by Google as a result of the complete implementation of Google and G Suite throughout the school district as a means to drive instruction in an innovative way. According to the Bellefonte Area School District Story of Impact (Bellefonte Area School District, n.d.-b), prior to the full implementation of Google and Chromebooks in the district, there was a 1:2 ratio of computers to students. Teachers were sharing laptop carts and computer labs. Students, faculty, and staff were not being given an equitable amount of time with technology. Realizing that this was not satisfactory for the vision of the district, Bellefonte Area School District made the decision to purchase additional Chromebooks so that every student in the district would have access to their own device. The following timeline explains the process of fully implementing Google and a 1:1 Chromebook plan for the district:

- 8 years prior to intervention - All faculty and staff were assigned G Suite for Education accounts, including a full transition to Gmail for the use of email.

- 7 years prior to intervention - The high school social studies department received a Chromebook cart for each classroom. Each cart included enough Chromebooks for each student to use during the class period. This was designed to be a pilot program for the implementation of more Chromebooks in the future.

- 6 years prior to intervention - Additional Chromebook carts were purchased for each building. Teachers were required to share the carts. The use of Google

Classroom, Google Docs, and other applications from Google was introduced to teachers and students. Training began to take place with the teachers.

- 5 years prior to intervention - All elementary students were provided with their own individual Chromebooks to use in the classroom each day.

- 3 years prior to intervention - All students in the middle school and high school were provided with their own individual Chromebooks to use in the classroom each day. Students in grades 9-12 were permitted to take their Chromebooks home each night.

- The year of the intervention and research regarding technology - All students, kindergarten through twelfth grade are permitted to take their Chromebooks home each night. This provides students with the opportunity to work virtually should there be a need to do so.

Throughout this implementation of 1:1 Chromebooks to the students, teachers and office staff received their own laptop. Paraeducators were given Chromebooks. It is now expected that all students and staff utilize Google Classroom on a daily basis, regardless of whether the learning is in person or remote. In addition to Chromebooks and laptops, Promethean boards can be found in every building. Educational tools and applications such as Kami, PearDeck, SeeSaw, Class DoJo, and EdPuzzle are used across all levels of education. The district has assigned technology trainers in each building to assist teachers with the implementation of the technology as well as to troubleshoot any technical issues that may occur. The instructional coaches are also well versed in the use of various technology applications to support innovative learning methods. The coaches are often used to help teachers effectively utilize technology in their instruction and in the

classroom. The way that technology is used has changed and continues to change constantly. The tools are being provided to the students, faculty, and staff. As such, it is imperative that training and support continue to be offered to assist with the continuous integration of technology.

Participants

To remain a progressive district, it is vital to the students and school organization that the district continue learning as professionals. Recreating the professional learning model five years ago has helped the district continue to make gains in many of the aforementioned areas. So, how does the Bellefonte Area School District keep moving forward and making gains? Research has shown that providing faculty and staff with a voice regarding their own learning increases teacher agency, which produces more accountability and willingness to grow and learn (Calvert, 2016). The surveys that have been issued through the mixed-method research provide all faculty, staff, and administration with a voice and an opportunity to provide honest, anonymous feedback. Every member of the faculty, staff, and administration has been asked to voluntarily participate in the research study. It was not a requirement that they participate, therefore it was difficult to predict the number of participants in advance. There are approximately 20 members of the administrative team. The team is comprised of a superintendent and directors of curriculum and instruction, human resources, business affairs, technology, food services, athletics, and special education. In addition, there are six building principals and three vice principals. There are approximately 225 members of the professional staff and 165 members of the support staff. It was desired that at least half of each group choose to complete the surveys. Prior to completing any survey, an

informed consent form was shared with the administration, faculty, and staff. The

informed consent form was approved by the Institutional Review Board (Appendix A)

and explained the following topics:

- What will I be asked to do if I take part in this study?

- Where will this study take place?

- How long will the questionnaire take to complete?

- What happens if I don't want to participate?

- What are the risks?

- How will I benefit from participating?

- Will my responses be kept confidential and private?

- Who do I contact if I have questions about this study?

This consent form was included in the initial invitation to participate in the research

survey. To gain final approval for each submission, a final question was included in the

online survey which stated the following: By completing this survey, I agree to

participate in this study. I understand that it is my choice to participate. Completion of

the survey is voluntary and will indicate my consent to use the data in research.

Participants were asked to choose "I agree" or "I do not agree". This was included to

ensure that consent was given to utilize the information that was provided in the surveys.

In addition to the surveys, four members of the professional learning committee

were interviewed. Three of the interviews were conducted with instructional coaches,

who are also responsible for providing professional learning to their colleagues. The

fourth member to be interviewed was a fellow administrator who has been heavily

involved in the implementation of technology and resources for the last eight years.

These committee members have assisted with the creation of the annual professional

learning plan as well as the development of each professional learning day. The purpose

of the interviews was to take a more in-depth approach to the perceptions of the

individuals who have been a continuous part of the evolution of professional learning.

These committee members not only help to create the sessions, they also act as presenters

on most professional learning days. They each also bring a different viewpoint and

curriculum strength to the district, which helped to provide a variety of perspectives

throughout the interview process.

The final piece of data that was utilized was the information from "exit tickets"

that have been submitted for the last three years. Faculty and staff are asked to complete

a form after every professional learning experience. This form is called an "exit ticket".

The purpose of the form is to allow the faculty and staff an opportunity to provide

immediate feedback after each professional learning day. The professional learning

committee reviews all of the exit tickets and utilizes this information to develop future

plans. The committee is comprised of representatives from the elementary, middle, and

high school levels. Administrators also participate in committee meetings. The

committee has made attempts to also include members from the support staff, although it

has been difficult to maintain any of those members for an extended period of time on the

committee. The committee meets quarterly with the goal of discussion, brainstorming,

and planning.

Intervention and Research Plan

A comprehensive literature review was completed prior to beginning the action

research process. Three research questions were used to lay the foundation for the

literature review. Prior to uncovering the research to support each question, the first

priority was to understand how professional development evolved into professional

learning. Professional development was based on people sitting and listening to a

topic/idea/initiative that was decided upon for them. Professional learning is intended to

involve the participants in learning and enact teacher agency, which is a term used to

describe the moment when teachers act intentionally and purposefully and take charge of

their own learning (Calvert, 2016). The professional learning association Learning

Forward created standards for professional learning, which include the idea that all

educators have the responsibility and obligation to improve their own teaching practices

(Learning Forward, n.d.). If professional learning is implemented properly within a

school district, it should provide the teachers with opportunities to learn and grow and

have a voice in how that occurs.

Research also explains that teachers are not the only ones who should receive

regular training and support. The number of support staff members is almost as much as

the members of the professional staff. These members include paraeducators, custodians,

cafeteria staff, maintenance workers, van drivers, and secretarial staff. The members are

equally important to the daily operations of any school district and as such, should be

offered training opportunities so that they may continue to grow in their experiences and

understanding of best practices for their roles.

The final piece of the research review included that of integrating technology into

school districts. Students learn in different ways now than they did when their teachers

were in school. With 24/7 access to information on the internet through a variety of

devices, students are interacting and communicating differently with one another. As a

result of this constant access to technology, school districts must prepare their faculty and staff so that they can implement technology in an effective way in the classroom. Various training programs and approaches were uncovered throughout the research review. Oliver and Townsend (2013) explained that there should be a combination of short-term and long-term training programs and approaches to successfully support and implement the increase of appropriate technology use in education.

A research plan was created to address each of the three main research questions. Table 3 explains each research question, the type of data that will be used to answer the question, the type of data sources to be utilized, and the timeline for collecting each piece of the data.

Table 3

Data Collection Plan and Timeline

Research Question	Type of Data to be Collected	Data Source	Timeline for Collecting Data
#1 How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of the professional staff?	Qualitative Quantitative	Administrator Survey Professional Staff Survey Exit tickets Committee Interviews	February - March

#2 How do administrators and the support staff perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of support staff?	Qualitative Quantitative	Administrator Survey Support Staff Survey Committee Interviews	February - March
#3 How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact of training in technology in regards to the implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom?	Qualitative Quantitative	Administrator Survey Professional Staff Survey Committee Interviews	February - March

The participants of the surveys, interviews, and exit tickets are all employees of the school district, including administrators, professional staff, and support staff. Each member of the team was asked to complete three surveys. The surveys were administered through an electronic Google Form. Administrators were asked to complete the surveys voluntarily at a time that was convenient for them to do so. The surveys included basic information questions first such as years in education and years with the district. The remainder of the surveys included varying questions regarding opinions of the implementation of professional learning and technology into the classroom.

Members of the professional staff were asked to participate in two different online surveys which were administered at different times through the use of Google Forms. The members were asked to voluntarily complete the surveys at their convenience. Members of the support staff were also asked to complete a survey at their convenience through the use of a Google Form. These surveys included basic information such as

years in education and years with the district. The remaining questions focused on

technology and professional learning experiences.

The interviews were conducted on-site, during the school day, with several

members of the professional learning committee. The researcher wanted to engage the

interviewees in conversation around the topic of professional learning, which is why it

was determined that completing an in-person interview would yield the most information

for the research process. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes.

Exit tickets are completed at the end of each professional learning day. Faculty

and staff are provided with time at the end of each professional learning experience so

that they may focus on the exit ticket and provide feedback to the professional learning

committee. Exit tickets are available online through a Google Form. There are two

open-ended questions on the exit tickets. On average, the exit tickets take approximately

five to ten minutes to complete.

Fiscal Implications

The action research that occurs should not have any negative or positive impact

on fiscal implications. The yearly budget includes a portion for professional learning

which includes payment for any trainers/sessions that are involved with professional

learning. These funds are pulled directly from the Superintendent's "Staff Development"

budget line. The average cost per year for this budget line is approximately $85,000.

Items in this section of the budget include all forms of Staff Development, including

trainings that occur outside of the district. Approximately $18,000 of this part of the

budget is earmarked for the expenses for professional learning. These expenses include

the planning time that trainers submit payment for when they create their professional

learning sessions. It also includes the payment to support staff members who attend these sessions, as the professional learning days are not regular workdays in the support staff contract. The district has been able to utilize funds from the Ready to Learn Grant to offset the costs of big-name speakers who have been brought to the district on various occasions. These speakers include Jon Gordon, Sam Glenn, and Shauna King.

The technology budget has been created in a way that allows for regular maintenance and upkeep of the technology tools that are used by the district. The district buys and leases its equipment and has created a turnover plan that allows the district to provide updated laptops and Chromebooks every couple of years. An anticipated outcome as it relates to fiscal implications is that the district is not spending unnecessary money on programs and resources because the money that is being spent is done so in a fiscally responsible and educationally appropriate manner.

Methods of Data Collection

This is an action research project. Action research is described as "a systematic inquiry conducted by educators with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process, for the purpose of gathering information about how their school operates, how they teach, and how their students learn" (Mertler, 2019, p. 147). Because this particular topic is based on the perceptions of the administration, faculty, and staff, a mixed-method research approach was chosen. Qualitative research is conducted for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of a particular phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon is professional learning and the perceptions around its impact on growth and learning. As such, a phenomenological research method will be utilized since the data to be collected

will be based on opinion and perceptions. Quantitative research occurred through the use of the Likert scales that were utilized in the surveys.

Prior to conducting any research or moving forward with the action research process, approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the California University of Pennsylvania. The formal approval letter is outlined in Appendix B. Once approval was granted, the process of collecting data could begin.

The first surveys that were administered were the surveys to the administration (Appendix C) and to the professional staff (Appendix D) regarding their perceptions of professional learning at the Bellefonte Area School District. The administrative group received questions regarding their perceptions of professional learning and how the professional staff is utilizing the information that is offered during each professional learning day. The survey for the professional staff included questions regarding how they prefer to participate in professional learning, the usefulness of the sessions that are offered, how important continuing professional learning and growth is to them, and the overall effect that the current professional learning model has had on their career.

The second round of surveys was conducted with the administrative group (Appendix E) and the members of the support staff (Appendix F). This survey served a similar purpose to the professional staff surveys. Administrators were asked to share their thoughts on how the support staff utilizes the professional learning days and who may benefit the most from sessions that are geared specifically towards this group. Members of the support staff were surveyed on their feelings of inclusivity with professional learning as well as the relevance of the types of sessions that are offered on professional learning days.

The third and final survey is again for the administrators (Appendix G) and the members of the professional staff (Appendix H). This survey focuses on the technology trainings that have occurred over the years. Administrators were asked to weigh in on how the professional staff is using the information from these days and whether or not they feel that the technology trainings truly meet the needs of the staff and the students to further the implementation of technology in the classroom. The professional staff members' survey focused on the types of training that are offered, if their needs are being met, if there is enough variety in the trainings that are offered, and their opinion on the overall effectiveness of technology support that is provided through the professional learning model.

Each of these surveys was administered over the course of two months. A Likert scale was used in each survey, with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree. The purpose of using the Likert scale was to provide a range of agree/disagree to each question, allowing each member of the administration, faculty, and staff to share their own perceptions of the professional learning model. This method also falls into phenomenological research and allows the researcher to "interpret the experiences or reactions of participants to a particular phenomenon from the individual perspective" (Mertler, 2019, p. 82). The ultimate goal of this part of the action research is to identify trends in the perspectives of each group and then to make recommendations for the future of the professional learning model based on these perspectives.

Conducting semi-structured interviews with members of the professional learning committee was the next data source that was utilized in this process (Appendix I). At the onset of the new professional learning model, a professional learning committee was

created. The committee meets four times throughout the school year. Each meeting

begins by reviewing what the committee believes to be working or not working. The

committee reviews all exit tickets that have been completed since the previous meeting.

Planning takes place for the next round of professional learning days and the committee

members remain involved in setting up sessions, contacting presenters, and preparation

for every professional learning day. Each June, the committee meets to review the

professional learning model from the previous school year and set goals for the upcoming

school year. There are approximately 30 members of the school district who participate

in this committee. Most members have been a part of the committee since its inception.

There has been some turnover throughout the years which has brought new perspectives

to the committee. This group of professionals has remained dedicated to this process. As

such, part of the action research that was conducted included interviews of several

members of the professional learning committee. The purpose of the semi-structured

interview questions was to gain a better understanding of the perspective of these

members, as they have been a part of each discussion regarding the professional learning

model. Each interview began with the same predetermined questions; however, the

interviewer and/or interviewee were afforded the opportunity to expand upon any

discussions as a result of those predetermined questions. These opinions will also be

utilized to adjust the future of the professional learning model.

    The final data source that was utilized is information from exit tickets from the

past three years. After each professional learning experience, participants are asked to

complete an exit ticket. The exit ticket is designed to be a short, open-ended survey that

is completed electronically. Along with their names and title of training, participants are

asked two additional questions which are to list any sessions they would like to see in the future as well as what feedback they have for the professional learning committee regarding the training/sessions. As was already stated, the professional learning committee reviews every exit ticket that is submitted and utilizes that information to help plan future professional learning sessions. For the purpose of this research, the researcher once again reviewed all of the exit tickets from the previous three years with the goal of identifying trends of concerns or compliments that have been offered by faculty and staff immediately after a professional learning day. The identifiable trends were then compared to the outcomes of the surveys with an anticipated outcome of confirming that the results of the surveys are consistent with the opinions and perceptions that have been shared over the past three years.

Validity

Mertler (2019) explains that "when dealing with the validity of qualitative data, researchers are essentially concerned with the data's trustworthiness." Trustworthiness is broken into four categories (Mertler, 2019, p.178):

- Credibility - the perspective of the participant is believed to be credible based on the results of the research.

- Transferability - the provided statements are descriptive enough so that someone can relate to the identified setting.

- Dependability - the researcher explains every change that occurred during the research process and explains how these changes affected the research.

- Confirmability - maintaining a neutral and objective perspective throughout the research process.

Including multiple sources of data in this process helps to support the validity of the research. Since perception is being used as a main component of the research, it is important to be sure that the perceptions of the administration, faculty, and staff are based on actual things that are occurring within the Bellefonte Area School District as opposed to what they may hear or on misinformation that they may believe to be true. Following the process of triangulation assists with this portion of the validity check. Triangulation occurs when "a given finding is supported by showing that independent measures of it tend to agree with or at least do not directly contradict each other" (Mertler, 2019, p. 179). The results from the surveys were compared to the interviews which were compared to the exit tickets. These three sources of data help to support the results which will be shared in Chapter Four, Data Analysis and Results.

The perceptions of the administration, faculty, and staff were representative of what people were thinking/feeling at the time of the surveys. Some of the members who participated in the survey have been with the district since the beginning of the new professional learning model. Others will have joined the district at some point over the last several years. The same will be true of the exit tickets. The last three years of exit tickets have been utilized in the process for the purpose of reviewing a prolonged feedback approach to the professional learning model. Including data points from several years assists in determining the validity of the data.

Peer debriefing and conducting an external audit have occurred throughout this entire research process. There are several members of the professional learning committee who work together very closely as the core team. These members have been a part of the committee for at least five years. The data from the surveys and exit tickets

was discussed with these members for the purpose of identifying trends that occurred throughout the research. The members will use this information to help guide the future of professional learning and to make suggestions to the whole committee as well as top administration regarding changes that may need to occur with the professional learning model.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to explain why this action research was conducted. As stated in the literature review of Chapter Two, professional learning is a requirement for school districts. The Bellefonte Area School District is following a professional learning model that allows for voice and choice among the administration, faculty, and staff. The three main research questions that have served as the basis for this research will help to determine the impact that this professional learning model has had on the administration, faculty, and staff of the district along with recommendations to maintain or improve the current model.

The chapter which follows will provide an analysis of the data and the final results of the action research project. The ultimate goal of this action research project is to ensure that the members of the Bellefonte Area School District are recipients of quality education and learning opportunities that support their growth and development as leaders, educators, and members of the public-school system.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis and Results

Is the professional learning model in this school district working? Is it valued by the administration, professional staff, and support staff? Are there trends to support changes or continuation of the process? The previous chapters have laid the foundation for best practices in professional learning and the desired outcomes of the action research that has occurred throughout this process. "Action research offers a process by which current education practice can be changed to better practice" (Mertler, 2019, p. 135). The action research that was conducted has focused on the professional learning model that was created several years ago. The qualitative and quantitative data that was collected through the action research has been used to determine future recommendations. This chapter will review the results of the surveys, interviews, and exit tickets that were used to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of the administration, faculty, and staff regarding the professional learning model and the impacts on growth and learning.

Data Analysis

Surveys were created to address all three research questions that have been shared in previous chapters. There were six surveys in total, two for each research question. The administration was asked to complete three surveys. The professional staff was asked to complete two surveys. The support staff was asked to complete one survey. The purpose of the surveys was to provide a voice to the administration, professional, and support staff members so that they could share their feedback and experiences regarding the professional learning model. A Likert scale was used on the surveys, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Participants were asked a variety of attitudinal

questions regarding the perceptions of the professional learning model. The questions were closed-ended questions. To analyze this data, the researcher determined the percentage of responses for each question and for each level of the Likert Scale which was selected per question. The researcher was then able to identify the most popular choice(s) for each question, thereby identifying the overall trends that emerged through every survey that was administered.

In addition to the surveys, interviews were conducted with four members of the professional learning committee. The four members were selected to be a part of the interview process because of their involvement in the professional learning process. These members have been a part of the professional learning committee since the inception of the new model. They each bring a different perspective to the process and are able to view professional learning through the lens of different members of the staff. They were asked the same questions through a semi-structured interview process. By conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to ask the interviewee to expand upon an answer to assist with further clarification. Once all of the interviews were complete, the researcher compared the answers for each question and recorded the themes that were present for each question. It was important to find any differences and to identify the similarities that existed in their perspectives, especially because each member is closely involved with the professional learning model. Those questions and answers will be discussed in this chapter as the data is shared and analyzed.

Exit tickets are completed by the professional and support staff after each professional learning experience. The questions included as part of the exit ticket are very broad and open-ended. The purpose of the exit tickets is to allow the staff to offer

immediate feedback after a professional learning session. The professional learning committee reviews the exit tickets after the professional learning days and utilizes this information to create future training sessions. Exit tickets from the previous three years were reviewed and analyzed in an effort to identify trends that may exist regarding growth and suggestions for the professional learning model. When analyzing the exit tickets, the researcher identified three main themes to assist with breaking down the information. These themes included positive feedback, negative feedback, and suggestions for improvement/future professional learning sessions. Identifying these trends in the exit tickets allowed the researcher to determine if there were more positive or negative outcomes as well as trends for recommendations over the course of three years.

The surveys, interviews, and exit tickets were all used in the triangulation process. According to Mertler (2019), using multiple methods of data collection sources supports and enhances the validity of the research results. For each research question, the researcher focused on information that may contradict the trends that arise in the data.

Research Question #1 Results

Research question number one was based on the results of the qualitative and quantitative research that was conducted through the administrator survey, the professional staff survey, the exit tickets, and the committee interviews. In this section, the results from the surveys and exit tickets will be shared as they relate to the research question. The interview results will be shared later in this chapter, as they encompass all of the research questions instead of being specific to just one research question.

Research question number one is as follows: How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on growth and learning of the professional staff?

The administrator survey was distributed to 25 administrators. Thirteen administrators completed the survey. Table 4 includes each question that was asked of the participants and the collective results for each question.

Table 4

Administrator Survey: The Impact of Professional Learning

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
It is important to me for the faculty and staff to continue their own education and learning.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	15.40%	84.60%
I believe faculty and staff have time to continue their own education and learning outside of the school day.	0.00%	7.70%	38.50%	38.50%	15.40%
I think the school should provide time for faculty and staff to increase their own education and learning.	0.00%	0.00%	23.10%	30.80%	46.20%
Faculty and staff should have the freedom to choose how and when they learn for their own professional growth.	0.00%	7.70%	30.80%	53.80%	7.70%
I want the school to determine all of the learning and growth needs and opportunities.	15.40%	46.20%	38.50%	0.00%	0.00%
Personally, I like to be involved in professional learning and take part in active sessions.	15.40%	23.10%	23.10%	30.80%	7.70%
Personally, I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other participants.	15.40%	23.10%	23.10%	30.80%	7.70%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
Faculty and staff typically use the things that they learn during professional learning in their own classroom/area.	0.00%	15.40%	30.80%	46.20%	7.70%
Professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective for teaching.	61.50%	30.80%	7.70%	0.00%	0.00%
My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.	0.00%	0.00%	7.70%	61.50%	30.80%
This professional learning model inspires me to want to continue learning as an educator.	0.00%	0.00%	15.40%	61.50%	23.10%
This professional learning model has very little overall effect on me as an educator/school employee.	38.50%	46.20%	15.40%	0.00%	0.00%
Professional Learning is an important part of being an educator/working for a school.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.80%	69.20%
I feel like the staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	61.50%	38.50%
The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped the faculty and staff to be better prepared in regards to the social and emotional needs of the students.	0.00%	7.70%	30.80%	46.20%	15.40%
The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped the staff to be better prepared with the use of technology in the classroom.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	38.50%	61.50%
As a result of the professional learning model, I have seen more	0.00%	0.00%	23.10%	53.80%	23.10%

faculty and staff rise as leaders who are helping others in their building/department/area become better at various things.					
I believe that this current professional learning model allows the teachers to find the professional learning that they want and need.	0.00%	0.00%	15.40%	46.20%	38.50%

Overall, the administrators believe that the current model supports the learning and growth of the faculty and staff. There are some areas, such as training related to social and emotional learning, that the administration believes could be stronger. Ultimately, the survey results indicated that the administration believes that professional learning is an important part of being an educator.

The members of the professional staff were asked to complete a survey regarding their perceptions of the impact of professional learning on their own growth. Out of the 228 members of the professional staff, 78 chose to complete the survey. Table 5 will share the collective responses from that survey.

Table 5

Professional Staff Survey: The Impact of Professional Learning

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
It is important to me to continue my own education and learning.	0.00%	1.30%	1.30%	20.50%	76.90%
I have time to continue my own education and learning outside of the school day.	9.00%	20.50%	47.40%	19.20%	3.80%
I want the school to provide time for me to increase my own education and learning.	1.30%	0.00%	10.30%	28.20%	60.30%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I want to have the freedom to choose how and when I learn for my own professional growth.	0.00%	1.30%	7.70%	24.40%	66.70%
I want the school to determine all of my learning and growth needs and opportunities.	57.70%	33.30%	7.70%	1.30%	0.00%
I like to be involved in my professional learning and take part in active sessions.	0.00%	3.80%	15.40%	33.30%	47.40%
I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other participants.	16.70%	19.20%	29.50%	23.10%	11.50%
I typically use the things that I learn during professional learning in my own classroom/area.	0.00%	12.80%	25.60%	44.90%	16.70%
I think that professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective to my own teaching.	20.50%	34.60%	26.90%	12.80%	5.10%
My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.	1.30%	9.00%	25.60%	48.70%	15.40%
This professional learning model inspires me to want to continue learning as an educator.	1.30%	10.30%	35.90%	29.50%	23.10%
This professional learning model has very little overall effect on me as an educator.	20.50%	37.20%	25.60%	10.30%	6.40%
Professional learning is an important part of being an educator.	0.00%	2.60%	5.10%	21.80%	70.50%
I feel like the staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning opportunities in our district.	6.40%	6.50%	30.80%	42.30%	14.10%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I am comfortable with the amount of professional learning experiences I can gain on my own without the District directing each of the professional learning days.	6.40%	24.40%	25.60%	28.20%	15.40%
I believe that there is adequate support of my own teaching and learning through the current professional learning model.	7.70%	17.90%	38.50%	29.50%	6.40%
I think that the variety of sessions that are offered throughout the year allow me to gain exposure to many different topics in education.	2.60%	14.10%	21.80%	50.00%	11.50%
The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped me to be better prepared in regards to the social and emotional needs of my students.	5.10%	19.20%	35.90%	30.80%	9.00%
The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped me to be better prepared with the use of technology in the classroom.	1.30%	1.30%	16.70%	46.20%	34.60%

In reviewing these results, the professional staff, in general, do believe that professional

learning is important and valued. Most believe that it is important to continue learning as

an educator and that professional learning is a means to this growth. There were mixed

reviews in areas regarding the types of sessions that are offered and the amount of

involvement and active learning and participation that occurs within the professional learning sessions.

Exit ticket results from the past three years were the next piece of data to be analyzed. There are four questions that are to be answered on each exit ticket. These questions are:

- Name of training or workshop

- Date

- Please list any sessions that you would like to see offered in the future.

- What feedback do you have for the professional learning committee regarding this training?

Overall there are positive results and comments from the exit tickets. Most responses thank the committee for the sessions and provide positive feedback regarding the particular sessions in which they participated.

Examples of the positive feedback include:

- I love what you all do! The choices of sessions are great! Thank you for your hard work!

- I always enjoy hands-on technology sessions to learn new ideas but also improve on what I already know.

- I just want to say thank you for all of your time and commitment toward organizing these days.

- All the sessions that I attended were organized and informational. I really appreciated the variety of options offered - both for mental well-being and for professional development. It was a very nice balance for an in-service day!

- I liked the diverse sessions that I was able to choose from for today's professional learning day.

- Thank you for the efforts to make trainings meaningful to everyone!

- This training was so moving and well prepared. I can relate to every aspect of the topic that it truly quenched my heart. The information shared out loud is so valuable! Thank you!

- ALL THE SESSIONS LIKE THIS! No seriously, these were awesome, I loved the speakers, I loved everything about it! THIS is what we need more of. I didn't even care about the virtual aspect of it because it allowed us to unpack some really big information in a smaller environment that was less overwhelming.

- I really appreciated the thoroughness of the presentations and the time to implement what we learned. Thank you!

- Today was awesome. I have lots of ideas and new things that I can't wait to take back to my classroom.

- Love the interactive nature of the sessions today. We had time to actually do some work after, ask questions, etc.

- Really like the round table discussion option. Excellent options today.

- You're doing a great job, thanks for all of your hard work!

- Excellent sessions with a great community outreach. Thank You!

Even though most responses on the exit tickets are positive in nature, there are submissions which include negative feedback as well as session suggestions for the future. One suggestion that is offered more than once is to build in more time for sessions so that participants have time to try the new strategy or create a game plan of

what to do with the new information. It can be overwhelming to learn new things and then not have the time to really think about how that information can translate back to a classroom or into a lesson. Participants seem to appreciate the sessions that include "work time" so that they can leave the session with an implementation plan of the new ideas. Examples of the suggestive feedback from the exit tickets include:

- I liked the longer sessions to get things accomplished. Especially anything technology related.

- Limiting the number of sessions to three and, consequently, providing additional time to employ the skills introduced was so helpful. The opportunities were wonderful. Thank you.

- I think we should go back to four sessions. These were extremely long sessions that I think had too much down time.

- Just hard to find sessions that are interesting and worthwhile.

- More of a variety of courses.... maybe more guest speakers from outside the district...more psychologists, therapists, to talk about behavior management and helping students get through tough times, etc.

Variety of sessions and time are the most requested items on the exit tickets. The professional learning committee strives to provide sessions that are applicable for everyone, which is why there are often thirty different sessions from which to choose on each professional learning day. However, there are times when professional staff members struggle to find a session that they believe will be valuable to them. When that occurs, responses such as "hard to find sessions that are interesting" are shared through the exit tickets.

Research question number one focused on the perceptions of the administration and the professional staff. During the triangulation process for this research question, the majority of the feedback was positive. Even though there were negative aspects of the data, the positive results outweighed the small amount of negative results, which led to minor contradictions within the research. A final interpretation of all of the results will be explained later in this chapter.

Research Question #2 Results

Professional learning is intended for the professional staff and the support staff. The members of the support staff who typically attend professional learning are paraprofessionals, personal care assistants, and office staff. There are professional learning sessions that are mandatory to attend for all faculty and staff members of the district. This year, attendance was required for a professional learning day that focused exclusively on inclusivity, diversity, and equity. When attendance is not mandatory, the members of the support staff who choose to attend the sessions tend to be the members who work directly with students in the classrooms. Research question two is: How do administrators and the support staff perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on growth and learning of support staff? To gain a better understanding of these perceptions, the survey results from the administration and the support staff will be reviewed. As stated earlier, the interview questions and answers will be revealed later in this chapter.

For this survey, 10 out of 25 administrators answered the questions. Table 6 includes the questions and responses from the administration.

Table 6

Administrator Survey: The Impact of Professional Learning for Support Staff

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
It is important for support staff to continue with their own personal growth and learning in their field.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
I think most members of support staff would prefer to just do the job to which they are assigned and not be forced to participate in professional learning.	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	50.00%	10.00%
I have seen members of the support staff utilize something they have learned from a professional learning session.	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	50.00%	10.00%
I think the members of the support staff feel welcomed at professional learning sessions.	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	30.00%	20.00%
I feel like the district offers sessions on professional learning days that are relevant to what members of the support staff do with the district.	10.00%	10.00%	30.00%	40.00%	10.00%
I feel like members of the support staff are considered when creating and planning professional learning opportunities.	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%	40.00%	20.00%
Which groups do you believe would benefit the most from professional learning?	Paraprofessionals		Personal Care Assistants		Office Staff

According to these results, the administrators believe that professional learning

opportunities should continue to be offered to the members of the support staff.

However, the results indicate that the administrative team does not believe that there are always sessions offered which are relevant to the support staff.

There are 163 members of the support staff. Of those 163, only 27 chose to complete the survey, which is less than 20% of the support staff group. Nonetheless, the results still matter and that percentage alone indicates that the professional learning committee should consider doing more to include the support staff so that they may be more willing to participate in the future. Table 7 includes the results from their survey.

Table 7

Support Staff Survey: The Impact of Professional Learning

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
It is important to me to continue my own education and learning in regards to what I do for the district.	0.00%	3.70%	3.70%	22.20%	70.40%
I would prefer to just do the job to which I am assigned and not be forced to participate in professional learning.	25.90%	18.50%	33.30%	3.70%	18.50%
I want the school to provide time for me to increase my own education and learning.	0.00%	0.00%	44.40%	25.90%	29.60%
I want to have the freedom to choose how and when I learn for my own professional growth.	3.70%	3.70%	25.90%	18.50%	48.10%
I want the school to determine all of my learning and growth needs and opportunities.	44.40%	33.30%	18.50%	3.70%	0.00%
I like to be involved in my professional learning and take part in active sessions.	7.40%	3.70%	37.00%	25.90%	25.90%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other participants.	11.10%	25.90%	18.50%	25.90%	18.50%
I typically use the things that I learn during professional learning in my job.	7.40%	22.20%	18.50%	37.00%	14.80%
I think that professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective to my position with the school district.	22.20%	18.50%	22.20%	14.80%	22.20%
I feel like the district offers sessions on professional learning days that are relevant to what I do with the district.	22.20%	14.80%	40.70%	14.80%	7.40%
I feel like members of the support staff are considered when creating and planning professional learning opportunities.	22.20%	25.90%	25.90%	18.50%	7.40%
My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.	7.40%	7.40%	22.20%	40.70%	22.20%
This professional learning model has little overall effect on me as an employee of BASD.	11.10%	22.20%	29.60%	18.50%	18.50%
I feel like the support staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning opportunities in our district.	37.00%	18.50%	37.00%	3.70%	3.70%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I think that the variety of sessions that is offered throughout the year allows me to gain exposure to many different topics in education and in my field of work.	7.40%	29.60%	29.60%	22.20%	11.10%

According to these results, the members of the support staff believe that it is important to keep learning and growing for their role in education. However, these participants had varied responses and perceptions regarding the sessions. The participants are not sure they always can use what they learn in the professional learning sessions and that the sessions which are offered are not always relevant to what they do at school. There is also a belief that they do not have enough of a voice when it comes to professional learning opportunities.

The feedback which was provided by the administration and support staff was not a surprise to the researcher, as this has been identified as an area of weakness with the model in the past. Triangulation of this data does not contradict feedback results that have been gathered since the inception of the professional learning model.

Research Question #3 Results

Research question number three focuses on the perceptions of the administrators and the professional staff. This time, the primary topic is technology and the professional learning opportunities that have been offered specific to the implementation and integration of technology. Research question number three is: How do administrators

and teachers perceive the impact of training in technology in regards to the

implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom?

The administrator survey was completed by 12 of 25 administrators. Table 8

includes the questions and results.

Table 8

Administrator Survey: The Impact of Technology Training

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I believe that the faculty and staff technology needs are being met through the sessions in professional learning.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	41.70%	58.30%
I think that the district offers too many technology trainings.	41.70%	50.00%	8.30%	0.00%	0.00%
I think that the district does not offer enough variety regarding technology training.	50.00%	25.00%	16.70%	8.30%	0.00%
I find the technology trainings to be helpful for the various teaching methods that are used in the classroom.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	41.70%	58.30%
I think teachers enjoy using technology in the classroom with their students.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.70%	33.30%
I think most teachers work to balance the use of technology with traditional teaching methods.	0.00%	16.70%	0.00%	66.70%	16.70%
I think that there are some teachers who do not like to utilize technology in the classroom.	0.00%	8.30%	33.30%	50.00%	8.30%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with the amount of technology that is used by the teachers in their classrooms.	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%	25.00%
I think we can still be doing more with technology and we need to continue to provide technology-related trainings.	0.00%	0.00%	16.70%	25.00%	58.30%

The administrators believe that the professional learning model helps to meet the needs of the staff regarding their technology training. However, there should continue to be more sessions and more variety when offering technology-related trainings.

The professional staff also completed a survey regarding their perceptions of the technology sessions and support that is offered by the district. For this survey, 59 out of 228 professional staff members completed the survey. The results of this survey are shared in Table 9.

Table 9

Professional Staff Survey: The Impact of Technology Training

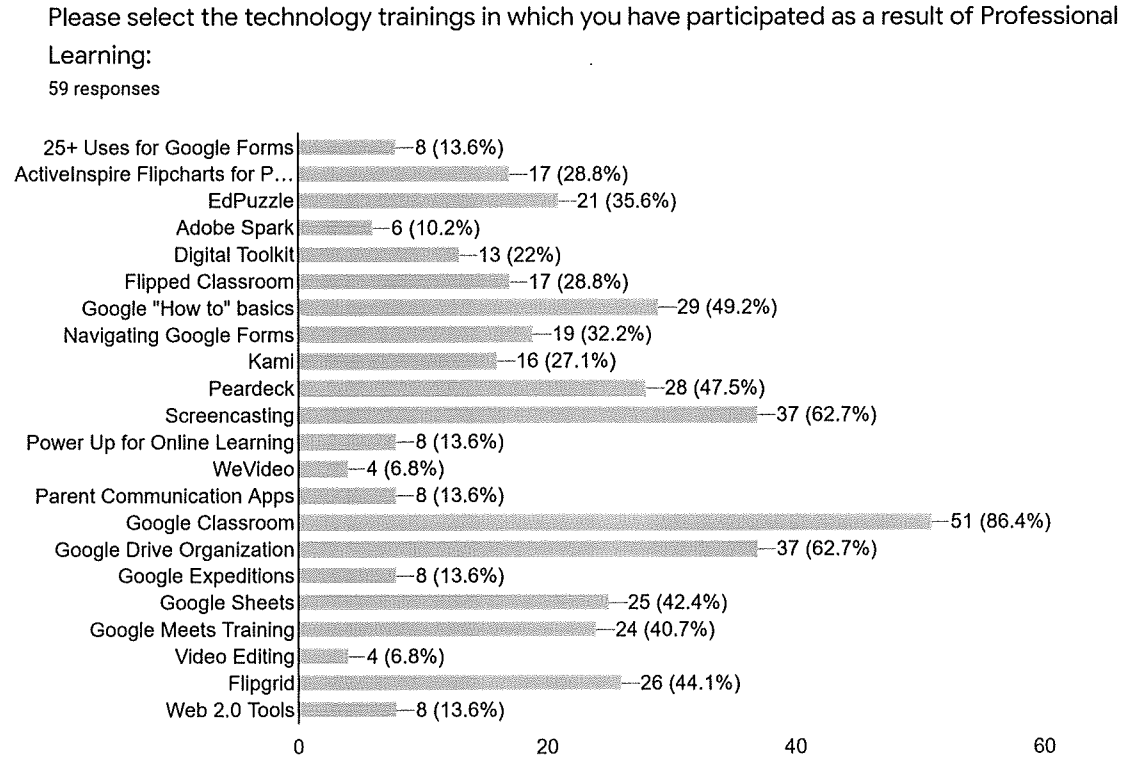| Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I believe that my technology needs are being met through the sessions in professional learning.	0.00%	5.10%	23.70%	49.20%	22.00%
I think that the district offers too many technology trainings.	35.60%	28.80%	22.00%	10.20%	3.40%
I think that the district does not offer enough variety regarding technology training.	20.30%	33.90%	32.20%	11.90%	1.70%

Statement	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5-Strongly Agree
I find the technology trainings to be helpful to me personally and enhance the teaching methods that I use in the classroom.	0.00%	8.50%	23.70%	45.80%	22.00%
I enjoy using technology in the classroom with my students.	0.00%	0.00%	20.30%	44.10%	35.60%
I prefer to balance the use of technology with traditional teaching methods.	0.00%	1.70%	18.60%	22.00%	57.60%
I feel prepared to help my students with their technology needs.	0.00%	5.10%	40.70%	35.60%	18.60%
I would like to engage in monthly technology trainings.	18.60%	13.60%	42.40%	15.30%	10.20%

The professional staff would like to see a greater variety of technology sessions being offered, however, overall, they appear to like using technology in their classrooms alongside their traditional teaching methods.

The professional staff were also asked to identify the professional learning technology sessions in which they have participated over the years. Table 10 includes a breakdown of the technology sessions that have been offered and the participation of the professional staff in these sessions.

Table 10

Participation in Technology Trainings

Please select the technology trainings in which you have participated as a result of Professional Learning:

59 responses

Training	Count (Percent)
25+ Uses for Google Forms	8 (13.6%)
ActiveInspire Flipcharts for P...	17 (28.8%)
EdPuzzle	21 (35.6%)
Adobe Spark	6 (10.2%)
Digital Toolkit	13 (22%)
Flipped Classroom	17 (28.8%)
Google "How to" basics	29 (49.2%)
Navigating Google Forms	19 (32.2%)
Kami	16 (27.1%)
Peardeck	28 (47.5%)
Screencasting	37 (62.7%)
Power Up for Online Learning	8 (13.6%)
WeVideo	4 (6.8%)
Parent Communication Apps	8 (13.6%)
Google Classroom	51 (86.4%)
Google Drive Organization	37 (62.7%)
Google Expeditions	8 (13.6%)
Google Sheets	25 (42.4%)
Google Meets Training	24 (40.7%)
Video Editing	4 (6.8%)
Flipgrid	26 (44.1%)
Web 2.0 Tools	8 (13.6%)

In addition to using Google applications for instructional purposes, the district has invested in other programs for the teachers to use with the students and in the classrooms. The professional staff has engaged in the programs which are most widely used in the district.

Contradictions in data were more prevalent during the triangulation process of this research question. While participants agree that training in technology resources is important, there were data points to state that not enough variety of sessions have been offered, while other points state that too many technology sessions are being conducted during each professional learning day. The use of attitudinal questions on this survey

presented the participants with the opportunity to share their opinions about using technology and the training that is provided. This survey yielded the widest range of responses regarding professional learning in the district.

Interview Results

Interviews were conducted with four members of the professional learning committee. Each interview was conducted privately, with only one interviewee being questioned at a time. These members of the committee play a crucial role in the development, operation, and organization of the professional learning opportunities. These four members fulfill different roles within the district and are able to offer viewpoints from elementary, middle, and high school levels. All four of these interviewees share the same sentiment regarding professional learning. They all believe in the value that professional learning can provide to everyone and they are all committed to developing and improving the professional learning model for the school district. They collectively believe that the time they invest in the planning and implementation of professional learning pays off as they see the faculty and staff utilize the new content that they acquire through professional learning. Each interviewee also stated that they use the information they gain from the professional learning committee to improve various aspects of the teaching and learning that occurs within the school district. They use that information in their conversations with the faculty and staff and believe that the information helps them to have a better understanding of what they can do in their roles to help support the success within the classroom. All four interviewees also share the same belief that this model has been effective over the last four years. They believe that

the atmosphere has changed and that true engagement occurs by the majority of the faculty and staff who attend the professional learning sessions.

When asked how the current model of professional learning differs from the professional development model of the past, each interviewee noted that the element of choice is more prevalent now than it was before the model was changed. There is also a greater variety of sessions that are offered in this model. One interviewee noted how much he looks forward to the professional learning days and being a presenter for the sessions.

The interviewees were asked to identify one thing that they believe has gone really well for the new model. Their comments included more choices for the faculty and staff, giving the teachers from within our district the opportunity to take a more active role in professional learning and to have the opportunity to facilitate professional learning for their peers, having a system in place to create new sessions and continue to grow the professional learning model, and creating opportunities for teachers to share and highlight the "cool things" that they do in the classroom.

Regarding areas of improvement for the professional learning model, every interviewee noted creating a balance between mandatory and non-mandatory sessions. While they are all in agreement that having choices for sessions is an excellent idea, they also believe that there are some topics that all faculty and staff should have to learn. Mandatory sessions could include topics such as inclusivity and diversity, social and emotional learning, specific teaching strategies, and district initiatives.

Another question they were asked was "What type of sessions do you think have had the greatest impact: sessions on technology, sessions on social and emotional

learning, or sessions on teaching strategies?" Interviewee 1 believes that sessions on

teaching strategies have had the greatest impact, as these sessions truly get to the heart of

instructional practices. Interviewee 2 stated that the sessions on technology have the

greatest impact because it is possible to instantly see the impact of the sessions through

the technology that is being used in the classroom. Interviewees 3 and 4 believe that

right now, technology sessions have been the most needed due to the increase in virtual

learning. However, they both agree that sessions on teaching strategies should and could

make the greatest impact in the classroom.

The final question that was asked of these participants was "Should the committee

offer a greater variety of sessions? If so, what are some areas in which the committee

should expand?" Each member believes that while there is a need to continue to offer a

variety of sessions, that variety must be balanced across the topics which are offered.

Ideas for changes and ways to expand included combining with other school district to

have more opportunities for sessions, bringing in more outside presenters, finding

different formats for presentations such as more of a "workshop" model, and combining

instructional strategies topics with technology topics instead offering the topics during

separate sessions.

The members of the professional learning committee who participated in these

interviews have demonstrated a true dedication to the purpose and vision of the

professional learning model for the district. Including motivated and inspired

professionals such as these representatives has helped the professional learning continue

to evolve and transform. These members will continue to play a crucial role in the

continued advancement of the professional learning program.

Interpretation of the Results

Anticipated outcomes of the research were shared in chapter one. These anticipated outcomes included receiving honest feedback regarding the perceptions of the professional learning model and the impact on growth and learning. Another desired outcome was to receive recommendations and feedback on how to improve the current professional learning model for all faculty and staff members of the district. The data that was collected allowed the researcher to achieve these results and gain a better understanding of the perception of the professional learning model.

Because the surveys were designed to be anonymous, it is believed that the results of the surveys did provide an avenue for the participants to be honest in their reflections. Not every response was positive or stated that the model is 100% perfect and effective. The variances in these responses allowed the researcher to determine areas of growth and improvement for the future of the program.

Analyzing the exit tickets that were completed over a three-year span provided the researcher with the opportunity to identify trends of positive and negative feedback over an extended period of time. The professional learning days have included a variety of sessions and formats. Some of the formats were not as successful as other formats. One consistent trend was that the faculty and staff appreciated having the opportunity to choose the type of sessions they attended. However, there is room for improvement regarding the variety of sessions which are offered throughout the year.

The interviews were valuable because they were conducted with members of the professional learning committee who are extremely involved in the process of creating professional learning sessions. Each interviewee provided a unique perspective based on

their own role within the district. These members will continue to be a part of the planning process as the future of professional learning continues to evolve in the future.

Summary

Professional learning will continue to occur in the district. The model will continue to change as the needs of the students, faculty, and staff continue to change. The final chapter will provide additional insight into the validity of the data that was collected along with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." Benjamin Franklin, as well as the Chinese philosopher Confucius, have both been credited for this statement (Quote Investigator, 2019). Regardless of where the quote originated, it falls directly in line with professional learning. As was discussed throughout the literature review, involving the faculty and staff in their own professional learning creates teacher agency and ownership of their own learning and growth. The Bellefonte Area School District has been dedicated to this type of learning for the past four years. Each year, the professional learning committee strives to provide learning opportunities that are valued by the administration, faculty, and staff. The action research that was completed in this field has provided the researcher with valuable information to help guide the future of the professional learning program.

Conclusions

Three research questions formed the foundation for the mixed-method research purpose. Answering these questions helped the researcher to draw conclusions and make recommendations to the school district and the professional learning committee on how to improve the professional learning model for the district as well as topics to consider for future research and growth of the professional learning model.

The action research that took place was intended to determine if the current professional learning model provided the professional and support staff members with opportunities to further their own growth and learning in a valuable and meaningful way. Prior to the implementation of this intervention, professional

"development" included non-interactive sessions which provided the faculty and staff

with very little choice or voice in the training sessions. The goal of the professional

learning model has been to encourage teacher agency and to involve all members of the

faculty and staff in the continuation and development of their own professional growth.

The surveys which were conducted provided the most recent feedback from

participants. The interviews were based on experiences that the interviewees had with

professional learning since the implementation of the new professional learning

model. The exit tickets provided feedback from the previous three years. Each of the

data points provided the researcher with the opportunity to analyze data from multiple

sources across an extended period of time. Through the method of triangulation, the

researcher determined that the results were consistent across all forms of research and

data that was collected.

Research Question #1 Conclusions

The first research question to be answered was: How do administrators and

teachers perceive the impact that the professional learning model has had on the growth

and learning of the professional staff? The data that was collected through the surveys,

interviews, and exit tickets all support the perception that the current professional

learning model has indeed had an impact on the growth and learning of the professional

staff. The administration believes that the professional staff utilizes and implements the

content that they learn in their classrooms and through their work with their

students. The administration finds professional learning to be valuable and is in support

of the continuation of the professional learning model. The professional staff has

appreciated having a choice in their professional learning options and would prefer to see

this model continue in the future. Overall, the professional staff believes that they are

able to receive beneficial and meaningful professional learning experiences through this

model which helps to support their own learning and growth as an educator.

Research Question # 2 Conclusions

How do administrators and the support staff perceive the impact that the

professional learning model has had on the growth and learning of support staff? This

was the second research question to be answered through the action research

process. The conclusion was that while the professional learning model does provide an

avenue for the support staff to become more involved in the professional learning

process, the current model must be improved to make a greater impact. The support staff

members did not feel as though the majority of the professional learning topics were

meaningful to their role with the district. The members of the support staff believe that

there should be more opportunities for them to share their opinions, thoughts, and

suggestions regarding professional learning. The administrative perception aligned with

the perception of the support staff. They also believed that the support staff is not as

involved as they could be in their own growth and learning as a member of the school

district. The intention of the current model has been to include the support staff and

create pathways for them to further their own growth and learning. An avenue to do this

was created, however, it must be expanded and include more input from the support staff

in order for the professional learning model to truly be a valuable and meaningful way of

learning and growing for the support staff.

Research Question #3 Conclusions

Technology-related training was the focus of the third and final research question which was: How do administrators and teachers perceive the impact of training in technology in regards to the implementation of Chromebooks in the classroom? The conclusion from the administrative perspective is that the current professional learning model does provide multiple opportunities for the professional staff to expand their knowledge in the area of technology and effectively utilizing Chromebooks and technology in their classrooms to support the students. As the world of technology continues to evolve, so should the technology-related topics that are offered during professional learning days. The perceptions of the professional staff were similar to the perceptions of the administration in that they value the technology sessions which are offered. However, the professional staff wishes to see a greater variety in the format and topics of technology-related sessions so that they may gain exposure and support on different areas of technology that will help to support not only their own growth but the growth of their students.

Fiscal Implications

The final conclusions from the research support the continuation of the current professional learning model. From a financial perspective, this includes continuing to pay presenters for their preparation time that is necessary to provide quality professional learning sessions. If a professional learning session is scheduled to be an hour in length, the presenter will be paid for two hours of preparation time for that session. The rate at which the presenter will be paid is the extra-duty extra-pay rate which is determined through the collective bargaining agreement.

An additional fiscal implication will be for the members of the professional learning committee. Thirty employees make up the professional learning committee. This committee meets one time in the summer. The purpose of that summer meeting is to review and assess the professional learning that occurred throughout the school year which just ended, discuss best practices and if the professional learning model is aligned to those best practices, and prepare and set goals for the next school year. Since this meeting occurs during the summer months, the members of the professional learning committee are paid for their attendance at this meeting. They are paid the extra-duty extra-pay rate for each hour of the meeting, which is typically a six-hour meeting. The committee will meet an additional two or three times throughout the school year with the goal of planning the specifics of each upcoming professional learning day. Most of the committee members require a substitute teacher to cover their classrooms so that they may be in attendance at the meeting. The district would have the financial responsibility of paying for the substitute teachers who would be needed on these committee meeting days.

Another fiscal implication would include the possibility of hiring a special presenter for one of the mandatory professional learning sessions. This typically occurs at least once during the school year. In the past, the district has been able to utilize various grants to help support the cost of the presenter. If the district is not able to utilize a grant, then the district would be responsible for issuing the payment that would be required by the presenter.

A final fiscal implication for consideration would include paying the support staff to attend more mandatory professional learning days. There have been two previous

occasions when all support staff members were expected to attend specific professional learning days. On those mandatory professional learning days, the district paid approximately $3,000.00 in wages for every member of the support staff to attend those specific days. If the district required every member of the support staff to attend at least half of the professional learning days, the fiscal implication would be approximately $3,000.00 for three days of training, equaling an additional $9,000.00 in wages.

Validity and Limitations of Data

"Validity of research data deals with the extent to which the data collected accurately measure what they purport to measure" (Mertler, 2019, p. 178). As was explained in the methodology section, the data must be checked for its trustworthiness. To do so, four categories need to be considered. Those categories are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

The researcher must determine if the results are credible and believable from the perspective of the participant. The results are deemed credible because the results were submitted electronically from individuals who are employed by the school district. Because the participants were kept anonymous, it is believed that the participants provided honest feedback. The researcher also included various forms of data collection, including recent surveys, recent interviews, and exit ticket information from the past three years. Comparing the various points of data permitted the researcher to identify trends that existed, not only from recent feedback but also from previous submissions over an extended period of time. Similar trends presented themselves

throughout all three data points, regardless of when the data was collected. These factors provide enough evidence to determine that the data is in fact reliable and credible.

Transferability

The demographics of the Bellefonte Area School District were revealed in chapter three. To determine the transferability of the data, it is important to understand the particular setting in which the data was delivered and collected. All of the participants were members of the administration, faculty, and staff of the Bellefonte Area School District. The participants were asked to share their honest feedback regarding their own experiences and perceptions of the professional learning model of the district. The participants were informed that their answers to the survey would remain anonymous. Representatives from outside of the district with no experience with this particular model were not included in the research. Everyone who responded to the surveys, interviews, and exit tickets had first-hand experience and knowledge of the current professional learning model.

Dependability

During the research process, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred and impacted the entire world. The pandemic created a new wave of chaos, confusion, frustration, and panic. Schools were closed and full-time virtual teaching ensued. Everyone had to learn a new way to teach and to learn. This impacted the way that professional learning was delivered to the faculty and staff. Limitations in gathering size prohibited the district from offering many in-person professional learning opportunities during the course of the school year. As such, most of the professional learning was delivered virtually. The professional learning committee made attempts to have small gatherings when

appropriate and found ways to virtually connect these small groups so that the

participants could still interact with other faculty and staff from across the

district. Sometimes this worked, other times it did not and as a result, faculty and staff

became frustrated with this new way of learning and engaging in professional learning

sessions. Teachers were also expected to handle things in a different manner for their

students and had to incorporate many new strategies and teaching methods into their

classrooms. Teachers in this district were expected to teach students through various

models. Some students attended a hybrid model of school, meaning students attended in-

person learning two days a week and logged in to their classes remotely from home three

days a week. Other students were part of the fully remote learning option in which the

students logged in to all of their classes from home during the school day for

synchronous learning. Synchronous learning occurs when a student virtually attends a

class at the actual time that the class occurs and virtually participates in the lesson. The

teachers had to learn how to balance the instruction of students who were sitting in their

class in front of them with the instruction of the students who were logged in virtually to

their class. This left teachers feeling overwhelmed and as though they could not take on

one more new thing or did not have the time to learn something else. Some members of

the faculty and staff questioned why there even needed to be professional learning

sessions during the pandemic school year as they believed that time would be have been

better served by allowing them to work in their rooms on new lessons and learning

platforms. The pandemic affected the willingness of the faculty and staff to have any

desire to engage in new learning for themselves. This information was taken into

consideration when analyzing the dependability of the surveys. The surveys were

administered roughly two-thirds of the way into the pandemic school year, during the

winter months which included roughly five days of school which were modified due to

snow and weather. The lack of participation in the surveys could have been a direct

result of when the surveys were issued. The administration, faculty, and staff may not

have been interested in participating in something that was not a requirement of their time

at that moment in the school year. Another point to question is whether or not the

feedback on the surveys would have been the same if it were not for the pandemic. This

is when the information from the exit tickets played a critical role. The exit ticket

information was reviewed from the past three years, including the most recent pandemic

school year. Comparing the exit ticket information to the survey information allowed the

researcher to determine if the survey results were skewed due to the perception of the

staff at the moment in time in which the survey was completed. Although there were

more variances in the survey than in the exit tickets, the trends in the data remained the

same. The overall perception was that the professional learning model is working and

does provide opportunities for the faculty and staff to take ownership of their own

professional learning and growth.

Confirmability

When analyzing the data, the researcher based the analysis on the actual data that

was presented, rather than allowing one's individual perception to influence the outcome

of the results. During the research process, the researcher reflected on the process and

findings, being mindful to only use the data that was presented when forming the final

conclusions and outcomes of the action research which was conducted. Being aware of

one's own potential bias regarding a subject is important so that the researcher can be

sure to focus on the actual data that was collected as opposed to the researcher's opinion of the data. The researcher is responsible for leading the professional learning committee and assisting with the continuation of the learning opportunities. Creating and improving the professional learning model has become a personal mission of the researcher, a mission that has been taken seriously, and one that the researcher desires to continue to improve for the sake of the administration, faculty, staff, and students. As such, the researcher considered every part of the research that was conducted and the data that was collected. Regardless of whether the results from the data were positive or negative, the researcher made an honest effort to make reasonable and research-based recommendations for the future of the professional learning program.

Limitations

The Collective Bargaining Agreement dictates the number of days/hours that an employee must work for the district. The current Collective Bargaining Agreement for the members of the support staff does not include professional learning days, and as such, the members of the support staff are not required to attend on all professional learning days. In this instance, the Collective Bargaining Agreement limits time and money for the support staff. If this were to be changed in the future, it could provide more opportunities for the support staff to attend professional learning days.

Recommendations and Future Research

The research which was conducted through the literature review process combined with the data results have enabled the researcher to provide recommendations to the district regarding the future of the professional learning model.

Recommendation #1

The model should include an updated format through which the faculty and staff are able to provide more feedback and recommendations. The exit tickets were created to be a quick and simple way for participants to share their immediate feedback regarding the sessions in which they just participated. It is recommended that the exit tickets be modified so that the participants have the opportunity to provide more detailed feedback regarding specific sessions and formats, as opposed to the exit ticket being so broad and general. The purpose of modifying the exit tickets is two-fold. The first purpose is to provide the participants with opportunities to share their voices and experiences in a more descriptive and meaningful manner. They should be able to name the professional learning session they attended, list one or two "take-aways" that they learned and/or will use, and be able to provide any comments they may have regarding that particular professional learning session. The exit ticket should also include a space for the participant to identify themselves as either a member of the professional staff or a member of the support staff. Doing so will allow the professional learning committee to be more aware of how many professional staff members participated and how many support staff members participated in each of the professional learning days. The recommended changes would be to add these questions to the exit ticket:

- Name
- What best describes what you do:
  - Professional Staff
  - Support Staff
- Please select your grade level(s):

- o Elementary

- o Middle

- o High

- o Not Applicable

- o Other

- Name of Training Session (Participants would be asked to choose from a specific list of sessions that were offered.)

- What is one "take-away" you will use from this training?

- Do you have any feedback specific to this session?

- Please list any sessions that you would like to see offered in the future.

By making these adjustments to the exit ticket, the second purpose will be fulfilled which is to allow the professional learning committee to have more detailed feedback to refine future sessions and formats for professional learning. The committee should continue to use this feedback to research relevant and meaningful professional learning topics that will support all faculty and staff members.

Recommendation #2

How can the professional learning committee continue to influence the motivation and inspiration of the faculty and staff so that they want to continue pursuing their own learning opportunities? Are the faculty and staff aware of what the research says regarding the importance of professional learning? These are questions that should continue to be discussed with the administration as well as with the professional learning committee. Having leaders who are committed to quality professional learning makes a difference in the implementation of the model. As the professional learning committee

updates its online resources, a section should be created to include resources that support

professional learning. The information that was gathered for the literature review in

chapter two could serve as a starting point for the committee to utilize as they create a

new learning section for their resources and website. Since this topic continues to evolve,

the committee should also dedicate time during each professional learning committee

meeting to review the latest research and check for alignment of the district's model to

the best practices for implementing quality professional learning. This information

should then also be shared by the researcher with the administrative team so that they

have a better understanding of the purpose of professional learning and the role that they

play in the continued growth of the faculty and staff.

Recommendation #3

The support staff needs to be involved in the professional learning process at a

deeper level. The members of the support staff should include all members and all

members should be able to find sessions that are relevant to their own growth. To

accomplish this goal, it is recommended that a new professional learning committee be

created that is comprised solely of members of the support staff. The researcher will

meet with these members at least twice a school year to gather feedback and brainstorm

session ideas that will be relevant to the members of the support staff. It is also

recommended that the researcher meets with support staff representatives in each

building in an effort to gain a better understanding of their wants and needs for the future

of their professional learning. There are currently 228 members of the professional staff

and 163 members of the support staff. Those 163 members deserve to have a voice and

choice in the professional learning process. There should be sessions that are relevant

and meaningful to the work that they do in the district. It is imperative that these

opportunities are improved upon within the current professional learning model.

Recommendation #4

A greater variety of session topics and formats should be offered throughout the

school year. The professional learning committee has been committed to keeping the

learning new and relevant, because it is believed that when the faculty and staff become

bored and/or not engaged in the learning process, then the committee has not successfully

implemented the professional learning model as intended. There are on average six

professional learning days built into the school calendar each school year. Typically,

these days occur before the first day of school in August, and then again in October,

January, February, March, and May. The professional learning committee should vary

the format of the professional learning days, offering some days with four rounds of

sessions, some days with mandatory learning sessions, and some days with more work

time built into the sessions. The committee should also strive to include a greater variety

of presenters, including experts from the community and potentially other school

districts. When the professional learning committee meets in the summer to plan the

upcoming school year, the committee should identify several main topics of interest for

the school year. These topics could include social and emotional learning; inclusivity,

equity, and diversity; and teaching strategies to support all learners. As technology

continues to advance, and as the technical skills of our students continue to evolve, the

district must also be sure to offer technology trainings that support not only the growth of

the faculty and staff but also the implementation of technology into the classroom in a

meaningful way. As was discussed in the literature review, students are of the digital

learning generation. Utilizing technology is a common and natural thing for most

students to do. Because of this, teachers need to be utilizing technology in an effective

manner in the classroom. Providing meaningful technology sessions will help to support

the faculty and staff as they continue to work with technology and their students.

Future Research

What once was known as professional development is now known as professional

learning. The need for training in the use and implementation of technology and

Chromebooks has increased every year. As the school district continues to provide

professional learning opportunities to the faculty and staff, it will be important to

continue the research on the best practices in professional learning. The professional

learning committee should review the recommended best practices each year during the

summer meeting to make adjustments to the upcoming school year and sessions

offered. As was shared in recommendation #1, modifying the exit ticket will provide

more detailed feedback to the professional learning committee regarding the perceptions

of the faculty and staff surrounding the professional learning topics and formats that have

been offered. For the professional learning model to be successful, it will be vital for the

research to continue each year, adjusting where necessary to ensure that quality

programming is being provided to all school district members.

Summary

Professional learning should be used to uphold the continued growth and learning

of the administration, faculty, and staff who are responsible for educating the future. The

results from the surveys, exit tickets, and interviews all support the conclusion that the

current professional learning model is an effective learning model for the faculty and

staff. The current professional learning model also aligns with the best practices for professional learning, as explained during chapter two's literature review. Some of the key components of effective professional learning include giving educators choices regarding their professional learning, making sure that professional learning supports continuous growth, and involving faculty and staff in the creation of professional learning opportunities (Calvert, 2016). Teachers and support staff need to be involved in the implementation of professional learning, whether it be through providing feedback, participating in sessions, or being a part of the committee. It will be essential for the professional learning committee to apply these ideas as the future of the professional learning model is implemented.

Although there are recommendations for improvement, the results indicate that overall, the administration, faculty, and staff believe that the current model empowers the faculty and staff to engage in learning while being able to have a voice and choice in their own growth as educators and professionals. The world will continue to change. Education will continue to evolve. Life will teach something new every day. As professionals who are responsible for educating and influencing future generations, it is essential that one's own learning and growth never cease to exist.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Consent Form

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As a member of the faculty, staff, and administration of the Bellefonte Area School District, you are being asked to participate in a research study regarding faculty, staff, and administration perception in regards to the professional learning model. Your participation in this study will help the researcher learn more about how you perceive the professional learning model and the effects that it has had on your professional growth and learning.

What will I be asked to do if I take part in this study?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete Google Form electronic survey questionnaires. The questionnaires will ask you questions about your background with the school district as well as your perceptions on the effectiveness and value of the professional learning model.

Where will this study take place?
The survey will be available via an online survey tool (Google Forms) using a secure website.

How long will the questionnaire take to complete?
Total participation time will vary. The questionnaires may take from 5 to 15 minutes to complete.

What happens if I don't want to participate?
Your participation is voluntary; you can choose whether you want to participate in the study or not. There will be no penalty if you choose not to participate.

What are the risks?
There are minimal risks to this study. You will not be asked questions of a sensitive nature. The survey may make you feel uncomfortable as some people do not like to volunteer information/feedback that could be perceived as negative or complaining. However, participants are reminded that they are not required to answer any questions of which they choose. Participants may also stop their participation at any time without question. Personal information such as your name will not be required on the survey.

How will I benefit from participating?

If you decide to be in this survey, you will assist the researcher in better understanding the current perceptions of the faculty and staff and the effectiveness of the current professional learning model.

Will my responses be kept confidential and private?

Yes, the survey data we collect from you will be kept confidential, which means only the researcher will see or have access to it. Your survey responses will anonymous. No names will be reported in the report of the findings. Data will be stored on a secure server which will be password-protected and/or stored in a locked office.

Who do I contact if I have questions about this study?

If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher, Sommer Garman, at gar7305@calu.edu or at sgarman@basd.net. If you would like to speak with someone other than the researcher, please contact Dr. Mary Wolf, Assistant Professor at California University of Pennsylvania, at wolf@calu.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sommer Garman

I have read this form. Any questions I have about participating in this study have been answered. I agree to take part in this study, and I understand that taking part is voluntary. I do not have to take part if I do not wish to do so. I can stop at any time for any reason. If I choose to stop, no one will ask me why.

By completing the online surveys, I agree to participate in this study. By doing so, I am indicating that I have read this form and had my questions answered. I understand that it is my choice to participate and I can stop at any time. Completion of the survey is voluntary and will indicate my consent to use the data in the research.

Approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board.

Appendix B

Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
California University of Pennsylvania
Morgan Hall, 310
250 University Avenue
California, PA 15419
instreviewboard@calu.edu
Melissa Sovak, Ph.D.

Dear Sommer,

Please consider this email as official notification that your proposal titled "Professional Learning: Administration, Faculty, and Staff Perception of the Professional Learning Model and the Impacts on Growth and Learning" (Proposal #19-072) has been approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board as submitted.

The effective date of approval is 8/19/20 and the expiration date is 8/18/21. These dates must appear on the consent form.

Please note that Federal Policy requires that you notify the IRB promptly regarding any of the following:

(1) Any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented)

(2) Any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects

(3) Any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

(4) To continue your research beyond the approval expiration date of 8/18/21 you must file additional information to be considered for continuing review. Please contact instreviewboard@calu.edu

Please notify the Board when data collection is complete.

Regards,

Melissa Sovak, PhD.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix C

Administrators - The Impact of Professional Learning Survey

As an administrator, please list your area: Elementary, Secondary, Central Office, Other

How many years have you been in the field of education/worked with schools?

Less than 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, More than 20

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. It is important to me for the faculty and staff to continue their own education and learning.

2. I believe faculty and staff have time to continue their own education and learning outside of the school day.

3. I think the school should provide time for faculty and staff to increase their own education and learning.

4. Faculty and staff should have the freedom to choose how and when they learn for their own professional growth.

5. I want the school to determine all of the learning and growth needs and opportunities.

6. Personally, I like to be involved in professional learning and take part in active sessions.

7. Personally, I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other participants.

8. Faculty and staff typically use the things that they learn during professional learning in their own classroom/area.

9. Professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective to teaching.

10. My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.

11. This professional learning model inspires me to want to continue learning as an educator.

12. This professional learning model has very little overall effect on me as an educator/school employee.

13. Professional Learning is an important part of being an educator/working for a school.

14. I feel like the staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning.

15. The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped the faculty and staff to be better prepared in regards to the social and emotional needs of the students.

16. The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped the staff to be better prepared with the use of technology in the classroom.

17. As a result of the professional learning model, I have seen more faculty and staff rise as leaders who are helping others in their building/department/area become better at various things.

18. I believe that this current professional learning model allows the teachers to find the professional learning that they want and need.

Appendix D

Professional Staff - The Impact of Professional Learning Survey

What best describes what you do? Elementary Teacher, Secondary Teacher, Specialist

Please select your grade or department: kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, ELA, Math,

Science, Social Studies, Health/Phys Ed, Fine Arts, Business, Technology,

Guidance/Nursing/Psychologist/Library/Coach, Foreign Language/ESL, Special

Education

How many years have you been in education?

Less than 3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20, More than 20

How many years have you been with BASD?

Less than 3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20, More than 20

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. It is important to me to continue my own education and learning.

2. I have time to continue my own education and learning outside of the school day.

3. I want the school to provide time for me to increase my own education and

    learning.

4. I want to have the freedom to choose how and when I learn for my own

    professional growth.

5. I want the school to determine all of my learning and growth needs and

    opportunities.

6. I like to be involved in my professional learning and take part in active sessions.

7. I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other participants.

8. I typically use the things that I learn during professional learning in my own classroom/area.

9. I think that professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective to my own teaching.

10. My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.

11. This professional learning model inspires me to want to continue learning as an educator.

12. This professional learning model has very little overall effect on me as an educator.

13. Professional Learning is an important part of being an educator.

14. I feel like the staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning opportunities in our district.

15. I am comfortable with the amount of professional learning experiences I can gain on my own without the District directing each of the professional learning days.

16. I believe that there is adequate support of my own teaching and learning through the current professional learning model.

17. I think that the variety of sessions that is offered throughout the year allows me to gain exposure to many different topics in education.

18. The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped me to be better prepared in regards to the social and emotional needs of my students.

19. The sessions offered through this professional learning model have helped me to
be better prepared with the use of technology in the classroom.

Appendix E

Administrators - The Impact of Professional Learning for Support Staff Survey

As an administrator, please list your area: Elementary, Secondary, Central Office, Other

How many years have you been in the field of education/worked with schools?

Less than 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, More than 20

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. It is important for support staff to continue with their own personal growth and learning in their field.

2. I think most members of support staff would prefer to just do the job to which they are assigned and not be forced to participate in professional learning.

3. Please select which groups you believe would benefit the most from professional learning:

   PCAs   Paraprofessionals   Secretaries   Cafeteria

   Custodians   Van Drivers   Maintenance   Clerks

4. I have seen members of the support staff utilize something they have learning from a professional learning session.

5. I think the members of the support staff feel welcomed at professional learning sessions.

6. I feel like the district offers sessions on professional learning days that are relevant to what members of the support staff do with the district.

7. I feel like members of the support staff are considered when creating and planning professional learning opportunities.

Appendix F

Support Staff - The Impact of Professional Learning for Support Staff Survey

What best describes what you do? Custodial/Maintenance Staff, Secretarial/Office Staff,

Paraprofessional/PCA, Cafeteria Staff, Other

Please select the level(s) at which you work: Elementary, Middle, High, Central

Office/All Buildings

How many years have you been with this school district?

Less than 3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20, More than 20

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. It is important to me to continue my own education and learning in regards to

    what I do for the district.

2. I would prefer to just do the job to which I am assigned and not be forced to

    participate in professional learning.

3. I want the school to provide time for me to increase my own education and

    learning.

4. I want to have the freedom to choose how and when I learn for my own

    professional growth.

5. I want the school to determine all of my learning and growth needs and

    opportunities.

6. I like to be involved in my professional learning and take part in active sessions.

7. I like to sit in a session and learn without having to interact with the other

    participants.

8. I typically use the things that I learn during professional learning in my job.

9. I think that professional learning sessions are mostly not helpful and effective to my position with the school district.

10. I feel like the district offers sessions on professional learning days that are relevant to what I do with the district.

11. I feel like members of the support staff are considered when creating and planning professional learning opportunities.

12. My personal experiences with professional learning have been mostly positive.

13. This professional learning model has little overall effect on me as an employee of BASD.

14. I feel like the support staff has a voice when it comes to professional learning opportunities in our district.

15. I think that the variety of sessions that is offered throughout the year allows me to gain exposure to many different topics in education and in my field of work.

Appendix G

Administrators - The Impact of Professional Learning and

Technology Training Survey

As an administrator, please list your area: Elementary, Secondary, Central Office, Other

How many years have you been in the field of education/worked with schools?

Less than 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, More than 20

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. I believe that the faculty and staff technology needs are being met through the sessions in professional learning.

2. I think that the district offers too many technology trainings.

3. I think that the district does not offer enough variety regarding technology training.

4. I find the technology trainings to be helpful for the various teaching methods that are used in the classroom.

5. I think teachers enjoy using technology in the classroom with their students.

6. I think most teachers work to balance the use technology with traditional teaching methods.

7. I think that there are some teachers who do not like to utilize technology in classroom.

8. I am satisfied with the amount of technology that is used by the teachers in their classrooms.

9. I think we can still be doing more with technology and we need to continue to

   provide technology type trainings.

Appendix H

Professional Staff - The Impact of Professional Learning and Technology

Training Survey

What best describes what you do? Elementary Teacher, Secondary Teacher, Specialist

Please select your grade or department: kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, ELA, Math,

Science, Social Studies, Health/Phys Ed, Fine Arts, Business, Technology,

Guidance/Nursing/Psychologist/Library/Coach, Foreign Language/ESL, Special

Education

How many years have you been in education?

Less than 3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20, More than 20

How many years have you been with BASD?

Less than 3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20, More than 20

Please select the technology trainings in which you have participated as a result of
Professional Learning:

25+ Uses for Google Forms	Kami
ActiveInspire Flipcharts for	Peardeck
Promethean Boards	Screencasting
EdPuzzle	Power Up for Online Learning
Adobe Spark	WeVideo
Digital Toolkit	Parent Communication Apps
Flipped Classroom	Google Classroom
Google "How to" basics	Google Drive Organization
Navigating Google Forms	Google Expeditions

Google Sheets   Flipgrid

Google Meets Training   Web 2.0 Tools

Video Editing

Answer the following questions based on this scale:

1 - strongly disagree   2 - disagree   3 - no opinion   4 - agree   5 - strongly agree

1. I believe that my technology needs are being met through the sessions in

    professional learning.

2. I think that the district offers too many technology trainings.

3. I think that the district does not offer enough variety regarding technology

    training.

4. I find the technology trainings to be helpful to me personally and enhance the

    teaching methods that I use in the classroom.

5. I enjoy using technology in the classroom with my students.

6. I prefer to balance the use technology with traditional teaching methods.

7. I feel prepared to help my students with their technology needs.

8. I would like to engage in monthly technology trainings.

Appendix I

Interview Questions for Members of the Professional Learning Committee

1. How many years have you been on the professional learning committee?

2. Why did you decide to join the committee?

3. Why have you remained on the committee?

4. What do you do with the information you gain from the committee? Do you share it with your administrator/supervisor? With your colleagues?

5. How does the current model differ from models in the past?

6. Do you believe that this model has been effective over the last 4 years? Why or why not?

7. Do you think that the faculty and staff enjoy having more choices OR do you think they would prefer to be told which sessions to attend and when?

8. What is one thing that you think has gone really well for the new model?

9. What is one thing that you think should be changed for future professional learning?

10. Do you think that the faculty and staff use the information they have learned from their professional learning sessions?

11. What type of sessions do you think have had the greatest impact: sessions on technology or social and emotional learning or teaching strategies?

12. Do you think we offer too many or not enough technology options?

13. Should the committee offer a greater variety of sessions? If so, what are some areas in which the committee should expand?