

**Franklin Public Schools  
Professional Development  
Fall 2017**

*By Dr. Joyce Edwards, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning*



Have you ever wondered what teachers do over the summer in addition to going to the beach and getting some much needed rest and relaxation? Many teachers use the summer as an opportunity to gain additional professional knowledge and to develop skills for the classroom. Many of our Franklin educators attend classes, contribute to the work of the district, work on school initiatives, and extend their own learning in order to stay current in the field of education and within the subjects that they teach. In fact, dozens of our teachers worked almost 2,000 hours on 70 different projects, spanning all levels of the school district, and all subjects and grades! These projects were identified by teachers as filling a need. Interested teachers wrote a proposal for the work that they wanted to complete and the proposals were submitted, reviewed, and approved last spring. The results of the work done collectively is now in use in our classrooms across the district.

During the school year we have two full professional development days as well a number of half days later in the year. The full professional development days were on September 1 and on November 7 and we have worked hard to have this time support the district-wide and school goals that were set for the year in our Improvement Plans. For instance, on September 1, everyone in the district had the wonderful opportunity to spend half of the day with Jessica Minahan, an expert in Social-Emotional learning. She was engaging, knowledgeable and faculty from Preschool-12 walked away with tangible knowledge and skills to immediately implement in classrooms. This directly supports our first goal, "To help students develop connections to school, support positive behaviors and increase academic achievement, the Franklin Public Schools will enhance programs and practices to enable all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills associated with the core competencies for social emotional learning. "

Additionally on September 1, all elementary classroom teachers as well as our middle school and high school Science teachers worked on the implementation plans for the new Science curriculum as noted in our second goal, "To ensure that all students are supported and challenged to reach their full potential, the Franklin Public Schools will align curriculum, best instructional practices, and varied assessment opportunities to personalize learning and meet individual needs." The broad agenda for all of the professional development activities for the district on September 1 can be found [here](#).

Similarly, for our other full professional development day on November 7, our plans address the two goals noted above. Many of our staff will be attending a presentation by Sara Ward, an expert on Executive Functioning. This aligns nicely with the first goal from the Improvement Plans. Staff will also continue the important curriculum work in every discipline to ensure that we have consistency of expectations across all schools and grades as well as the expectations for student outcomes as students move up through the district. This again addresses the second goal with regard to currency in our curriculum and the development of expertise for our teachers in both content and teaching strategies. This is a never-ending task that includes curriculum development and/or review, analysis of student data, and assessment development or analysis. Much of the work on these two days is facilitated by our own teacher-leaders and administrators. The broad agenda for all of the professional development day activities across the district on November 7 is [here](#).

It is our expectation that the work completed on these days is apparent in the classrooms and this professional development time for our staff ultimately benefits all students. While we understand that days off for the students presents challenges at home, this time set aside for the adult learning and work done by faculty, staff, and administrators is essential for a fantastic school district, like Franklin, to continue to function at the highest levels possible.