



## Year-round teacher training is results-based and begins with a clear focus on student learning needs

**Professional collaboration is essential if all students are to be successful. Teachers meet regularly for professional learning and to plan collective responses to student needs.**

When Spring Lake Park School District 16 staff members engage in professional learning, it is results-based and begins with a clear focus on student learning needs.

Professional collaboration and time for staff to work together is essential if all students are to be successful.

Professional learning is important. Improvements in student learning will not be realized in the absence of purposeful professional development.



**improve student achievement?**

**On a typical day teachers spend the vast majority of their day working with students.**

In addition, professional learning is also embedded in the daily, collaborative work of our teachers and staff.

All teachers participate in what we call professional learning community teams, on a weekly basis, during which they focus on individual and collective student learning needs.

**Teachers also have larger blocks of time during the year to work together when school is not in session.**

There are eight days within the school year when teachers are working and students are not at school. Two of these days are reserved for professional learning activities and staff training.

This professional learning relates directly to district and school initiatives. In addition, three "early release" days (school lets out two hours early) during the school year provides essential blocks of time necessary for teachers to learn and work together.

Another four days primarily involves preparation for conferences and grading, as well as professional learning activities. The final two days

are spent meeting with parents during fall and spring conferences.

As you can see, teachers are engaged in professional learning and communicating student learning with parents on the days we do not have students come to school.

**These blocks of time aren't the only ways teachers learn though.**

The Spring Lake Park School District offers a Professional Development and Learning Academy that offers all staff the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of classes that align directly with our district goals.

**Summers off? No, summer has become an important time for training.**

Summer learning and planning took place throughout the summer.

Activities included:

- Over 100 teachers and administrators from across the district participated in two days of leadership development and school improvement planning
- Teams of teachers spent many days engaged in professional learning and planning in a variety of curricular areas
- Over 50 teachers participated in SMART board training in anticipation of the new technology for their classrooms.
- 25 staff members participated in an online learning opportunity focused on positive behavior intervention strategies based on the book *Lost at School* by Ross Greene.

That is just a sampling of the time our teachers and staff put

in throughout the summer, engaged in professional learning so they are prepared to meet the many needs of our learners.

**What are our professional development initiatives for 2011-2012?**

We will continue to foster a professional learning community aligned around improving student learning through a focus on the following initiatives:

*Engaging technology-rich learning preparing students for a global ever-changing 21st Century.*

*Provide an immediate and systemic response to academic and behavioral needs through our System of Interventions*

*School-identified professional learning based on Learning Community Framework*

### *More information*

*Learn more about any of these initiatives by reviewing our professional development plan under the heading, "What are our staff doing to improve learning?"*

*You can also contact your school principal or Director of Educational Services Denise Waalen. Just click on "Contact Us" on our website.*



**So, how do we engage in professional learning to**