Hello from the President!

It is a deep privilege for me to hold the office of President of the Florida Association for Staff Development for 2004-05. Those who have held this office set a high standard of excellence that has me standing on my toes to match! I look forward to a great year with the best staff developers in the USA.

I saw many of you at the 2004 Fall Leadership Conference and hope that you received as much as I did from the conference. Todd Whitaker, with his invigorating style, held us captive as he delivered his presentation on “What great teachers and principals do differently”. I particularly remember his advice to make decisions based on the superstars of the organization. We will always have the “naysayers” but as long as we follow the superstars, we can move forward! AND to prove that can happen, Ric and Becky DuFou r shared their school experiences building professional learning communities capitalizing on the capacity of school personnel. They taught us the power of a collaborative school culture. No research or literature supports isolated work! The DuFours showed us that teachers working in collaborative teams, can improve student achievement. Other benefits include higher quality solutions to problems, increased confidence and support among all staff, new teacher support and an expanded pool of ideas, materials and methods for high quality teaching and learning.

Now, FASDers, if you’d like to collaborate with colleagues on these concepts contact your regional FASD director, listed on page 2, who will link you with other FASDers in your area. AND be sure to mark your calendars now for the FASD Spring Forum in Daytona, May 2-3, 2005.

Let the superstars shed their light so that “all teachers in all schools will experience high quality professional learning as a part of their daily work by 2007”…the NSDC goal supported by our Florida Association. Thank you for helping to make this goal a reality!

At your Service,
Jane Granger
FASD President 2004-05
Florida Association for Staff Development

FASD Spring Forum, May 2-3, 2005
The Plaza Resort & Spa, Daytona Beach
600 North Atlantic Avenue
Phone: 800-874-7420
http://www.plazaresortandspa.com
Cut-off Date for Reservations: March 30, 2005
Rate: $95.00 Single/Double Room - Free Parking

Regional Contacts

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Region V: Becky Shermis (754) 321-5044
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Web Resourcing

Visit http://www.firn.edu/doe/profdev/pdstandards.htm

◊ Information on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM):
A Model for Change in Individuals,
Visit http://www.nas.edu/rise/backg4a.htm
"Action research" is a term used to describe professionals studying their own practice in order to improve it. Applied to teaching, it involves gathering and interpreting "data" to better understand an aspect of their teaching that interests or concerns them. Action research is an important recent development in the broad territory of "teachers' professional development."

Action research offers an alternative to teachers who have been encouraged to look to others, rather than to themselves and their students, for ways to improve their teaching.

◊ Why is it called "research"? We encourage participants to avoid their everyday assumptions about "research" as they think about action research, but to focus instead on the action part of the term. The participants are told that action research has nothing to do with lab coats, number-crunching, and familiar stereotypes about "objectivity." The term "research" simply refers to trying to better understand what they are doing in their classroom.

◊ Who does action research? In Leon County action research is done by teachers who are encouraged to look to others, rather than to themselves and their students, for ways to improve their teaching. The following year the program was expanded to include a number of other initiatives and the number of interested teachers grew. Since 1999, there have been more than 500 teachers in Leon County Schools (LCS) who have participated in the “Teachers as Researchers” program.

◊ Why do teachers do action research? The support of “Teachers as Researchers” by Leon County is a significant signal that action research does not need to be limited to graduate work. The "climate" and support of individual schools by the administration in Leon County has been crucial to creating an environment that has supported the growth of action research in our district.

◊ What Do Teacher Researchers Do? Teacher researchers...

• develop research questions based on their own curiosity about teaching and learning in their classrooms;
• examine their underlying assumptions about teaching and learning;
• systematically collect data from and with their students;
• share and discuss their data and research methodology with fellow teacher researchers;
• analyze and interpret their data with the support of their colleagues;
• write about their research;
• share their findings with students, colleagues, and members of the educational community;
• discuss with colleagues the relationships among practice, theory, and research;
• assume responsibility for their own professional growth.

The purpose of the LCS Action Research “Teachers as Researchers” program is to collect a body of research relating to the impact of specific teaching strategies on the teaching and learning environment. As our school district continues to invest monies in new initiatives, teachers and schools must find ways to demonstrate the impact that these initiatives have on student learning.

The participating educators must collect qualitative and quantitative data to cover no less than 9 weeks. The data document the impact of the initiative on student learning. This data may include but is not limited to portfolios, journals, test scores, observations, and interviews. The Leon County Schools Action Research “Teachers as Researchers” program offers all k-12 teachers and administrators a grant opportunity to become “Teachers as Researchers”. Each participant is awarded a stipend and 30 in-service points for completing the program and submitting a final research project.
The PDSEP standards form the basis for a checklist used by reviewers to judge the quality of the professional development system at each level. Also, the PDSEP Guide to Judgment on the Standards is designed for school staff and school advisory councils to use as a self-check on the quality of professional development in their schools. It follows that schools receiving an overall rating of excellent are providing examples of best practices.

The PDSEP standards reflect three levels of the Professional Development System and each level is further classified into four strands. The first two levels, the Faculty and School levels, share most of the same strands.

The first strand is Planning; it is what occurs to organize and support the professional development for teachers. Take notice of the following Planning standards. The much condensed standards are beacons leading to best practices. For further understanding of the nuts and bolts in the area of Delivery considerations, refer to the Book Review, Taking Charge of Change (page 5).

The second standard of the Faculty and School levels is Administrative Review of Professional Development Plans. This standard requires teachers to meet individually with the principal (or designee) to review the IPDP as it is being developed.

Setting a Priority of Needs and Reviewing Annual Performance Appraisal Data are the third standards in which disaggregated classroom level student achieve-

What to do with the data collected during the Planning level?

Learn about ideas and techniques to help introduce, monitor and implement change. Refer to page 5, Taking Charge of Change.
School-wide Professional Development System are standards that are directly related to improving the skills and knowledge used in the classroom.

The Learning Communities standards describe small groups of faculty who discuss student needs, gather research and studies on new approaches, share findings, and study the effectiveness of new practices and then share the results with other faculty in the school.

Looking to make connections between the planning of learning communities and Action Research (refer to page 3)?

The PDSEP standards are useful as beacons to assist with creating and identifying best practices. These best practices are supported by documentation and overall excellent PDSEP ratings.

Where to go with the winds of change?

Try having professionals study their data, and their practice to increase the performance of their students through an Action Research project.
## Florida Association For Staff Development
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An Affiliate of the National Staff Development Council

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We’re on the web! http://www.FASDonline.org