

Module One: Brain-based Learning

Leader's Guide

Introduction

The Professional Development Series is designed to provide busy principals with ready-to-use in-service materials. Helping Every Child Succeed requires faculties to learn about, discuss, try, and reflect upon various lesson strategies that have been well-researched. Each school is encouraged to implement the modules in the way that works best for them. The modules will be as dynamic and collaborative as each faculty makes it.

Each module has the following four parts:

- Part One: Growth & Discussion
- Part Two: Planning & Implementation
- Part Three: Reflection & Revision
- Part Four: Extension Options

There is also a *Discussion Forum* area where principals and faculty members are encouraged to ask questions of or share results with the instructor and faculties from other schools. Teachers can make posts, attach student work samples, and respond to others' posts.

Part One: Growth & Discussion

Video: The video is 45 minutes long when watched straight through. There are five opportunities for discussion.

Handout: The handout includes the discussion questions with room to write answers on the handout. Principals can either print these off and distribute to the teachers, or you can ask each faculty member to download and bring to the meeting.

Options: There are several ways a faculty may complete Part 1: Growth & Discussion.

Group View and Discussion (90-120 Minutes): The principal should schedule a 90-120 minute meeting time when all faculty will view and discuss the video together, following the on-screen and handout discussion prompts. Faculty members plan their implementation strategies privately and/or as a group during this meeting or a future faculty meeting.

Part Two: Planning & Implementation

This step is critical for faculty members to extend the learning and put it into practice. Careful attention is necessary to help teachers remember what they learned and ensure it is actually implemented. Some planning suggestions are made in the video and listed on the handout. The principal is encouraged to have the faculty work on their written implementation plans together for three reasons: 1) the concepts are fresh in their minds, 2) their peers can be used for support, and 3) a written plan increases the likelihood that the strategy will be practiced prior to one day before the next meeting.

Part Three: Reflection & Revisions

In this step, the principal will create a timeline (see teacher reporting and peer feedback below) for implementation of brain-based learning in the entire school. Busy faculty may be tempted to skip this step entirely, or in part, but completing this step is key to increasing your professional community.

Teacher Reporting: This aspect helps hold teachers accountable for their plans and helps teachers learn more about each other's professional practice. It builds trust and respect.

Peer Feedback: Time must be allowed for teachers to respond to each other's work. They can provide positive feedback, ask questions, and offer new ideas or alternative approaches. This conversation increases trust and builds professional collegiality. It changes the conversations at recess and after school from complaints about students, parents, and staff to conversations about student learning and school improvement.

Part Four: Extension Options

The extensions are included to provide opportunities to learn more on the topic of brain-based learning. The video is a brief summary of all that is known. You may print the extension options for the teachers or direct them to access them from Moodle. The picture books may be used as read-alouds in your classrooms.

Discussion Forum

The discussion forum enables principals and teachers to maximize the opportunity to connect with the instructor, other principals, and fellow teachers. A larger community of learners is fostered when people pose questions or share results with others. Teachers can bring a new post to write a comment or questions and attach documents for others to see. Teachers can also reply to others.