

**LEAP Action Learning Report 2012**

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| Topic area  (The What) | Continuing Professional Development in a small school – how to achieve purposeful, valuable and relevant training and development in schools where the size of the school dictates that there will only be one teacher on a particular grade or stage |
| Context  (The Where and When) | Staff in P5 Category schools in NSW DEC schools and staff in small schools in England were asked to complete a simple survey. The schools involved were local P5 schools in the Woronora River network, Sydney Region and schools in the Braintree- Chelmsford area of the Essex County jurisdiction. |
| Research methods  (The How) | Staff were asked to comment on their Professional Development. How much time is spent / what proportion is self-directed compared to system required / what works for them / what they would like to see happening but is currently not available in their workplace |
| Initial findings | 1. All staff value professional dialogue with other teachers. 2. 25-50% of staff professional training time is needed to meet statutory requirements of the DEC or County system. 3. The promotion of opportunities for teachers in small schools to talk with other teachers in similar sized schools is seen as highly desirable. 4. All staff irrespective of where they are in their career value highly the capacity to plan their own professional development. 5. Mentoring is seen as a desirable and positive mode for encouraging and improving beginning teaches as well as providing opportunities for more experienced staff to reflect on their teaching. 6. Professional development planning is seen by a majority of teachers as closely linked to and driven by: firstly the learning needs of their students and secondly the impact of the school plan on their teaching skills and knowledge of curriculum. 7. “Teachers working with teachers – in each other’s schools – is a powerful formula!” Rosalind Welch – Headteacher, Essex |
| The author  For further information contact: | Name: Roger Caines  School/work place: Bonnet Bay PS  34R Tudar Road, Bonnet Bay 2226  Contacts:  Email: roger.caines@det.nsw.edu.au  Phone: 9528 4111(w) 0409 450 965 (m) |