



**Setting Up District/School  
Study Groups**



## PURPOSE

The purpose of study groups is to provide an arena where teachers can, on a consistent basis, build their knowledge and expertise through serious conversations and study. Study groups should enable them to design their own learning experiences and to implement what they have learned in the classroom to benefit of student learning.



## DETERMINING A FOCUS

Study group members should be encouraged to *investigate, analyze and discuss topics, concerns, and/or interests related to improving student learning through the articulation and implementation of standards and benchmarks*. This includes studying curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices within the school or district.



## **GUIDELINES**

Study groups may vary in duration, focus, and composition. To insure the intended results, study groups should:

- **consist of a small group of members that meet on a regular basis.**
- **have an established set of norms.**
- **have rotating shared leadership responsibilities.**
- **have an agreed upon communication mechanism.**
- **have a focus.**
- **provide direction for classroom practices/staff development opportunities.**

## **ORGANIZING STUDY GROUPS**

**Who are the members of the study group?**

**What are their roles and responsibilities?**

**What are the norms or ground rules for the study group?**

**When, where, and for how long will the study group meet?**

**How will the study group determine their focus and action plan?**

**How and to whom will the study group be asked to report their action plan?**

**How will the study group keep track of their progress?**

**How will the work of the study group be evaluated?**





## SELECTING MEMBERS

Study groups should be limited to about six members. This allows each member to participate, take greater responsibility, and feel more comfortable in engaging in conversations and asking questions.

*The composition of the study group is not a critical element.* The focus is on adult-to-adult relationships in a learning situation. Study groups may vary in composition based on the topic being studied.



## **ROLES**

*All members of the study group should have equal status. However, certain roles need to be taken on a rotating basis by group members.*

**In order to have an effective study group, members need to take turns carrying out the following roles:**

- **serve as study group leader.**
- **serve as a recorder for the Group Action Plan.**
- **serve as a recorder for the Study Group Log.**
- **relay information to school/district administrator.**



## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Study group members should:

- **assist in determining a focus and action plan.**
- **join and regularly attend the study group.**
- **seek resources and materials for the study group.**
- **assist in establishing and carrying out norms.**
- **take turns serving in group leadership roles**
- **monitor the progress of the study group, providing input for revisions and changes.**
- **monitor own progress and learning.**
- **evaluate the impact of the study group on student learning.**



## **GROUP NORMS**

Study groups should establish a set of group norms from which they will:

- **take responsibility for one's own learning.**
- **be an active participant.**
- **let what is said in the group stay in the group.**
- **respect other's opinions; not judge opinions.**
- **complete assignments.**
- **be open to changing the status quo.**
- **practice active listening skills.**
- **begin and end on time.**



## **ACTION PLAN**

- 1. Who will be in your study group?**
- 2. What topic will you be studying?**
- 3. What have you observed or considered that concerns or interests you about this topic?**
- 4. What data do you have related to this? What does it tell you?**
- 5. What do you already understand or what skills do you already have in this area?**
- 6. What materials and/or resources do you need to complete your study?**
- 7. What is your action plan?**



## **ACTION PLAN (cont'd)**

- 8. What do you think will be the results of your study and why?**
- 9. What effect did carrying out your action plan have on student learning? Did it have the effect or results you expected? How do you know?**
- 10. What did you learn as a result of doing this? What would you change if you had it to do over again?**
- 11. What would you recommend to other study groups focused on this topic?**

# GROUP STUDY LOG

## STUDY GROUPS

**This study group session focused on.....**

**We are learning.....**

**Questions we still have and/or revisions or additions to our action plan.....**

**Next we will.....**

**Support needed from administration.....**

**Date, time, and location of next scheduled study group session.....**

**Assignments for next study group session.....**

