

Professional Development Proposal: Enhancing Collaboration and Advocacy for Students with ASD

Tri-County School Corporation
Professional Development Proposal
Date: 4/23/25

Introduction and Justification

After reviewing the results of the Leadership Development and Implementation Survey made available to the entire corporation, it is determined that there are multiple areas of overall leadership that could be improved upon or require more training for stakeholders. This training is recommended to be provided through the school corporation for the benefit of all staff and students.

The need for this training is based on the following observations and survey data:

- Teachers, especially within the general education classrooms, do not feel that they are adequately trained and informed on the needs of individuals with ASD. While observing, there were schedules and routines present, but the amount of individualized support for specific needs was lacking. There was also a lack of time for 1 on 1 support and specific social skills instruction.
- Per the survey provided to the school corporation, there was an overall feeling of lack of communication, accountability, and timeliness when dealing with situations. Teachers did not feel that data was being shared with them in a timely manner when addressing concerns for students with ASD. If there is a better understanding on how the staff as a whole can collaborate and advocate for students with ASD, the teamwork and shared knowledge of staff can help improve the overall understanding of how to work with students with ASD.

These findings highlight a need for increased awareness, practical strategies, and an integrated approach to meeting the diverse needs of students with ASD, benefiting not only these students but the school environment as a whole.

Modality and Training Methods

The proposed training will utilize a hybrid learning model, combining in-person and online components:

- In-person Sessions: These sessions will include the opportunity to participate in role-playing activities, break-out sessions, peer mentorship, group discussions, and team building activities
- Online Components: Per the survey, many staff want to be provided with websites and handouts to have for when they need a quick reference. The online platform will provide links with video walk throughs of how the sites can be best utilized and accessed. It will also provide printable handouts that pertain best practices for working with students with ASD.

This modality is designed to cater to diverse learning styles and schedules, ensuring that all participants can engage with the material in a flexible, meaningful way.

Justification:

This approach is grounded in current research that highlights the effectiveness of blended learning in professional development. Active learning strategies, including group discussions and practical activities, enhance participants' ability to apply concepts in real-world settings. The online components provide ongoing support and allow for self-paced learning, improving retention and long-term application.

Key Topics and Talking Points

1. The Role of Communication in Supporting Students with ASD
 - What information needs shared?
 - Who shares what information?
 - Student involvement in communications
 - Involving Stakeholders
2. Timeliness
 - How to get information out quickly
 - Legal timelines for making decisions
 - Follow-through with action items
 - Importance of routine

3. Implementing Research-Based Practices for ASD
 - What are common best practices for teaching students with ASD?
 - How to implement best practices in the classroom
4. Accountability Across the Board
 - How do we hold the following stakeholders accountable
 1. Administrators
 2. Teachers
 3. Students
 4. Support Staff
 5. Parents
 - Importance of accountability in the classroom

Conclusion

This professional development training is designed to strengthen the knowledge and understanding for our staff when working with and providing services for students with ASD. When staff are able to confidently apply strategies and modifications for all individuals, it strengthens our corporation and community as a whole.