

Teachers And Principals Make a Difference

The time teachers and principals spend with students daily has a tremendous impact not only on our children, but on the future of our nation. Teacher quality and principals' leadership abilities are the two factors that have greatest impact on student learning in our schools. When professional development for educators is expected and supported, student achievement increases.

Everyone knows the importance of high-quality teachers—teachers who know their content and how to teach it have the greatest potential for improving student achievement. But did you know that leadership is next in importance? School leadership matters. According to recent research, improving principals' leadership abilities has a direct affect on student learning, just like improving teacher quality does.

An investment in educators' professional skills and knowledge is an investment in our children, our communities, and our common future. We must make sure the adults who help our students learn and grow every day have access to professional learning and support.

Professional learning for educators in Colville takes several forms. Classes, workshops, conferences, professional reading, degree programs, and Professional Learning Communities are part of teacher and principal/administrator learning. Workshops, classes, and advanced degree programs occur in Colville and at other locations, most often outside of the usual workday.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are smaller groups of teachers/administrators who focus on adult learning in order to increase student achievement within the district, building, grade level, or subject area department. The major questions to be answered by PLC work are:

If we believe ALL kids can learn,

- **What is it we expect students to learn in every course?**
- **How will we know when and how well students have learned?**
 - **What evidence of learning will be required?**
 - **How will we respond when students don't learn?**
- **How will we extend the learning for students who have already mastered essential skills and knowledge?**

Teaching staff meet weekly in PLCs to focus on these essential questions, study best instructional strategies or practices, develop assessments, review student work to determine how well individual students and groups of students are progressing, and develop materials that best fit the learning needs of students.

Administrators also meet weekly before the school day to ensure leadership that promotes high levels of learning for the teaching staff and students.

One role for principals is walking through all classrooms in their building at least three-to five times weekly to monitor and support student learning.

Colville School District is inviting community members to participate in a “guided tour” of schools/learning processes on February 13, 9-11:30 AM. Please call Trudy at the district office, 684-7850 to reserve your spot on the tour.