

Action Research

Definition of Option

This is a specific process for conducting inquiry involving problem posing, planning, systematic data collection, and interpretation of the data. The goal of action research is to improve teaching by asking well-defined questions about the teacher practice, followed by systematically gathering and interpreting data to answer those questions. The final step in the process would be to take action to improve teaching practice. This can be done by teachers individually, in pairs, in triads, or in groups. Teachers develop and submit a plan to increase knowledge, skills, or teaching performance (could be any combination of the three). This mode goes far beyond in-class supervision by an administrator in that it offers teachers the opportunity to work independently, in pairs, or in small groups to set meaningful goals, to devise a concrete action plan for meeting those goals, and to assess progress reflectively. This mode is an ideal form of job-embedded learning because it intrinsically motivates competent professionals through ownership in and a personal commitment to professional growth.

Requirements

Staff members may choose this option if the following conditions are met:

1. They hold Instructional II certification in their field.
2. At their request and with the approval of the building principal/assistant principal/supervisor, the staff member applies through the Professional Growth Plan.
3. They have received satisfactory ratings for the previous three (3) years.
4. They understand that they might be requested to share knowledge gained through this process.
5. They must be able to document progress made on the investigation of the topic.
6. The Professional Growth Plan must address the essential elements of the Action Research Process:
 - Identify the focus and/or goals
 - Identify data collection/strategies to accomplish the focus and/or goals
 - Identify literature to be read
 - Identify experts to be consulted (if any)
 - Identify data collection process(es)
 - Identify method of documentation
 - Provide a brief timeline of activities
 - Document conclusions and implications for practice
7. The supervising administrator will provide leadership and support from the inception through the completion of the action research. This will include a meeting with the teacher(s) at the beginning of the research, at least once during, and at the completion of the research to discuss the process and provide support

for conducting research and assisting with data interpretation as needed. At the final meeting, the required documentation will be provided to the administrator.

Action Research Focus Options

Action Research may focus upon one of the following:

Student Focus

- Identification and investigation of concerns in the Cognitive, Behavioral, Social/Emotional, Psychomotor domains of the student. These concerns are issues which arise from daily interaction with student(s).

Teaching Practice Focus

- Research projects driven by questions or concerns with a specific aspect of teaching practice This could include the questioning of existing practice or situations then exploring new ways to address the concern.

Curriculum, Instruction, or Assessment Focus

- May focus on a specific aspect of the existing curriculum or implementation of a new curriculum, classroom instruction, or assessment as approved by the Supervisor of curriculum & Instruction.

School Organization Focus

- This is usually collaborative in nature and examines structures, policies, traditions, and procedures in existence. This focus breaks the shackles of tradition and leads to re-thinking and change within the school.