Timely and Effective New Staff Orientation

Program Puzzler

As the administrator, it seems like you are always in the process of hiring and training new staff. Specifically, you are acquainting staff members with how your agency functions and orienting them to Aspire. You rely on the New Teacher Orientation requirement to help out somewhat with bringing the staff up to speed. But, with increased expectations and a changing system, you find it hard to remain up to date and to keep your staff informed. How can you ensure that new staff members acquire critical information about program processes and procedures as soon as possible?

Peer Perspective

Professional Development

> – Have existing staff train new hires.
> – Conduct staff meeting regularly to discuss new and ongoing issues.
>   - o Include time for AspireLink discussions.
> – Develop procedures so that staff members can indicate their awareness of policies.
>   - o Create a document highlighting important policies, and have staff members mark that they have read and are aware of the policies.

Timely Tips
Develop a program-specific staff handbook, including policies related to Aspire and the program's agency.
Update staff monthly with a program bulletin.
Create and maintain a program blog.

> ◊ Set aside time at staff meeting to explain the organization of Aspire and the specialty areas of each agency (e.g., Ohio Board of Regents [OBR], Resource Center Network [RCN]) to staff.
> ◊ Cross train staff members so that they better understand each role in the program and can assist when needed.
> ◊ Include staff in completing the program's quality checklist and other program evaluations.
> ◊ Create a network across programs so that practitioners know who to call among their peers when a question arises.
>   - o Take advantage of coaches sponsored through Central/Southeast Resource Center or develop your own list of mentors to utilize.

Communication

> – Make staff members aware of information disseminated from OBR and RCN.
>   - o Provide condensed communications from OBR with pieces highlighted.
>   - o Pass on OBR communications (e.g., Friday Facts) in total.
>   - o Encourage staff to sign up for e-mails and newsletters from the RCN.
> – Use Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs) as a mechanism to communicate needs to RCN.

Added Insights

Literature suggests that professional development (PD) should be multi-faceted. In particular, it should include expectations for participation and learning activities (e.g., local, regional, online). PD should also allow staff to participate in more decision making and increase opportunities for interaction and sharing with one another.

In addition, a wealth of technology resources are available as PD for teachers as well as samples to be used in the classroom. For example, teachers can access web-delivered curriculum products, interactive online reading materials, and online interactive lessons with an immediate online answer-check features. Examples of technology resources and project are available at http://www.ncsall.net/?id=309.

The *Program Administrator's Sourcebook* (National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, 2005) offers each of the following suggestions:

– Support joint planning time so that teachers can talk about which instructional activities work.
– Offer professional development within the program by organizing in-house professional development run by the teachers themselves.
– Assign teachers a mentor who is a more experienced teacher, and ensure that every new teacher is observed (with feedback) within three months of teaching.
– Provide teacher opportunities to visit other area programs.

AspireLink Accompaniments

🖥 AnnualProgram Demographic Information
🖥 Program Overview - Enrollment by Site, Teacher, Class
🖥 Program Overview - Primary Reasons and Goals Met
🖥 Program Overview - Secondary Reasons and Goals Met
🖥 Program Overview - Student Demographics
🖥 Site Overview Page 1
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