Site-Based Professional Development
Branciforte Small Schools Campus

The professional development model for the Branciforte Small Schools is meaningful, collaborative, and based on research, continuous improvement, and the identified needs of students, families, and staff members in our school community. All four schools at BSSC have a history of site-based professional development. Professional development is embedded in our cycle of making a plan, setting goals, evaluating progress, and creating a new set of goals, based on that progress. Professional development effectively takes place within a culture and climate of trust and high expectations. The staff members of the four small schools participate in such professional development activities several times each month after school. When we have the opportunity for a full day of professional development, the agenda for that needs to coincide with all of the ongoing professional development activities, Single Plans, and WASC action plans taking place at BSSC.

Guidelines
- Formal professional development activities should take place at least monthly and is built into the schools' schedules
- Cross school participation is encouraged
- Teachers as practitioners should take charge of their professional development
- Accountability increases as teachers work in collaborative groups to keep each other on track with agreed-upon objectives
- Professional Development plans use student achievement data, such as portfolios, rubrics, or exit exam data
- Systematically aligns School Site Plans with District Strategic Plan
- Addresses site-specific compliance issues
- Differentiates professional development for adult learners – teachers are at different stages in career paths and work in vastly different situations
- Incorporates "just in time" learning when it's most relevant to a teacher's practice
- Provides opportunities to form mentor teams or study groups, and can include online learning components if compatible with teacher's learning styles
- "Observation for Instructional Coaching" – teachers observing and coaching other teachers

Questions used in the cycle of planning professional development (Speck & Knipe, 2001)
- What types of data will be collected? (Both for front-end analysis, as well as for evaluation).
- What does the data tell us?
- What are the desired outcomes? Use a backward design process, beginning with the end in mind
- What are the professional development activities for reaching the outcomes?
- Who will be responsible for the evaluation?
- How will the evaluation be conducted?
- Who is responsible for reporting and distributing the results?
- How can this evaluation contribute to the continuous improvement process for teachers and increase student achievement?