

Case Study

Building Professional Development Focus Groups for Teachers of Multilingual Students in a Suburban Texas School District

Client Background:

The suburban school district in Texas recognized the increasing diversity of its student population, including a growing number of multilingual and emergent bilingual students. To support these students effectively, the district aimed to provide targeted professional development (PD) to teachers. The focus was on cross-curricular collaboration, where teachers from different subjects (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies) would work together to develop strategies to support multilingual students. The objective was to enhance teachers' abilities to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, leading to improved academic outcomes for multilingual students.

Project Scope:

- **Identifying Participants:** The school district identified 13 passionate and committed teachers who demonstrated an interest in working with multilingual students. These teachers represented different grade levels and subjects, ensuring a diverse group to facilitate cross-curricular collaboration.
- **Planning the Sessions:** The PD sessions were designed to be held once a month throughout the school year, with each session focusing on specific aspects of supporting multilingual students. Experts in bilingual education and language acquisition were invited to lead the sessions and provide evidence-based strategies.
- **Developing a Supportive Environment:** A facilitator was appointed to oversee the focus groups, encourage participation, and foster an atmosphere of open discussion and idea sharing. The teachers were encouraged to bring real-life challenges and experiences into the sessions.

Implementation and Cross-Curricular Collaboration:

- **Strategies for Multilingual Students:** In each PD session, the teachers learned research-based strategies to support multilingual students in their classrooms. These strategies included language scaffolding techniques, culturally responsive teaching, and leveraging students' native languages to enhance learning.

- **Collaborative Planning:** Throughout the school year, the teachers participated in cross-curricular collaboration sessions. They discussed ways to integrate language support and cultural sensitivity into their subject-specific lesson plans, ensuring a consistent approach across various subjects.
- **Monitoring Progress:** The facilitator regularly met with the teachers to assess their implementation of the learned strategies and discuss any challenges faced during cross-curricular collaboration. This ongoing support allowed the teachers to adjust their approaches and learn from each other's experiences.

Research and Publication:

TexTESOLV Peer Reviewed Journal: As part of the school district's commitment to evidence-based practices, the results of the professional development focus groups and the benefits of cross-curricular collaboration for multilingual students were documented in a research paper. The article, titled "Enhancing Multilingual Student Support through Cross-Curricular Collaboration," was published in the TexTESOLV Peer Reviewed Journal, serving as a valuable resource for educators across the state.

Key Findings:

The published research highlighted the positive impact of cross-curricular collaboration on supporting multilingual students. Teachers reported increased confidence in implementing language support strategies in their classrooms. Moreover, collaboration between subjects allowed teachers to align their efforts and create a more holistic learning experience for the students.

Conclusion:

By establishing professional development focus groups and promoting cross-curricular collaboration, the suburban school district in Texas successfully enhanced its teachers' capacity to support multilingual and emergent bilingual students. The published research in the TEXELT Journal, VOL. 10, ISSUE 1 served as an essential resource for educators, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and inclusivity within the district. As a result, the district witnessed improved academic outcomes and increased engagement among its diverse student population.

You can find the article on PAGE 26: [LINK](#) to Peer-Reviewed Publication

