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Networking Protocol

Developed by a team of teachers and administrators participating in Disney sponsored, NSRF facilitated, CFG training. Team members included: Pamela Atkins, Pauline Jacroux, Rosanne Pettignano-Kirchmann, John Pieper, Bernie Gurule, Ruth Ann Parham, Doris Golthwaite and Jeff Pollum

This protocol is designed to provide a framework for building level, district level, or multi-district consultancy work. A structured format based on interactive processes will maximize the efficiency of groups facing common dilemmas. It will also encourage development of common language across various settings.

Time
60-90 minutes Designed for larger groups (10-15 people)

Targeted Uses
Curriculum work, Building/District committees, Collaborative projects

Roles
Facilitator (Person who both moderates and participates in the process)
Recorder/Timekeeper (Person who records ideas and keeps group on time)
Participants (People contributing ideas)

Steps
- A common dilemma or question is framed by the group. After clarification, the group is broken down into smaller teams (3-4 people per group). The teams brainstorm ideas associated with the question. Ideas are written on chart paper or post-it notes and displayed. 15 minutes

- Each team shares their ideas with the entire group. There is no discussion of the ideas at this time. 5 minutes/team

- The entire group identifies commonalities and then prioritizes the main issues. The key issue is discussed and possible solutions are proposed. An action plan may be developed if consensus can be reached by the group. 20 minutes

- Remaining issues would become the focus questions for future meetings.

- Debrief the process and its facilitation. 5-10 minutes

- Personal reflection 5-10 minutes

The Networking Protocol can be adapted to be used on-line. If distance and time are factors, the steps could be done at multiple locations, and the information e-mailed to the various participants. The protocol could be completed in one cycle, or it could be broken down into a number of shorter correspondences. Although you would not have the personal interaction you would with a face-to-face meeting, you might generate more collaboration among like minded groups.

Examples
Smaller joint school districts where you might only have a few trained CFG coaches in each community, could address issues without having to assemble everyone in one location.

A K-12 pod made up of eight schools with representatives from each school, would be able to maintain a better understanding of the continuum, curriculum and exchange of ideas.

Students might learn to use the networking protocol as a tool for interactive learning.

Charter schools could reduce the sense of isolation by using the protocol to create a network of support.