



Pat Roy is co-author of *Moving NSDC's Staff Development Standards Into Practice: Innovation Configurations* (NSDC, 2003)

## Incentive: Encouraging or stirring up

One of the desired outcomes within the Resources standard for central office staff is the need to **provide incentives for participation in results-driven staff development** (Roy & Hord, 2003, p. 125). When some central office staff read this statement, they exclaim that they don't have slush funds to provide monetary rewards to teachers in order to change their practice! Yet, Webster defines incentive as inciting, encouraging, or stirring up. Educators can be encouraged in many ways that do not include financial rewards.

Celebration, recognition, and acknowledgement are low-cost ways to encourage staff (Richardson, 1998). At one school I worked with, the principal bought lunch for staff and provided each with a rose arranged in inexpensive vase. She eloquently praised the staff for their energy and commitment to students while working under severe circumstances. She frequently invited central office staff members to compliment staff for their efforts on behalf of children.

You can also encourage or celebrate staff in these ways:

- Establish a staff weekly award that recognizes the use of new instructional behaviors.
- Make a weekly announcement that recognizes progress as well as accomplishment.
- Provide ways for staff to acknowledge each other's hard work on behalf of children.
- Provide resources for faculty members to attend a special conference or training.
- Write a short note of acknowledgement that is added to the personnel file.

Central office staff can also **provide incentives based on documented gains in student**

**learning.** Use results from interim assessments to recognize the work of grade-level teams or departments and demonstrate that someone is reviewing results. Central office staff can **provide incentives based on evidence of improved practice as a result of formal or informal staff development.** Using data collected from walk-throughs can positively acknowledge teacher behaviors and dispel a common teacher feeling about the "gotcha" nature of walk-throughs (David, 2008).

Central office staff can also **provide incentives for mentoring, presenting a workshop, classroom demonstrations, curriculum development, serving on school improvement committee, formal leadership roles, etc.** Even though some of these roles receive small stipends, there is still a need to encourage and celebrate the commitment and time dedicated to school improvement and building leadership capacity.

Tom Peters has reminded us to "celebrate what you want to see more of." Celebration and recognition can be powerful strategies that change the culture of a school and district by acknowledging both great and small improvements on behalf of students.

### REFERENCES

**David, J. (Dec. 2007/Jan.2008).** What research says about classroom walk-throughs. *Educational Leadership*, 65(4), 81-82.

**Richardson, J. (April/May, 1998).** Applause! Applause! Recognize behaviors you want to see more often. *Tools for Schools*.

**Roy, P. & Hord, S. (2003).** *Moving NSDC's staff development standards into practice: Innovation configurations, Volume I.* Oxford, OH: NSDC.

**Resources:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

**Read more about NSDC's standards at [www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm).**