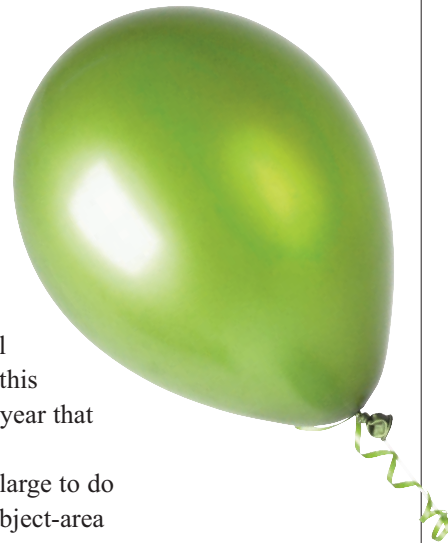


CELEBRATE A YEAR OF LEARNING

No matter what has happened at your school this year, the teachers in your building have learned something that will impact their work next year. Use some time at the end of this school year to reflect on the work and the learning of the year that is ending and to prepare teachers for the coming school year.

Set aside about an hour for this activity. If the school staff is too large to do this comfortably in an hour, then organize a similar celebration for subject-area groups or for groups of grade-level teams.



Begin by asking teachers to pair up with another teacher who is not on their grade-level team.

- **Invite each of them to share** with the other teacher one success or one challenge of the school year. The teacher who is listening should not comment but listen silently while the other teacher speaks. The facilitator should keep time and advise the group when the second teacher should begin speaking. *Time: 3 minutes per speaker*
- Still working with the same partner, **ask each teacher to reflect** on what they learned from the success or the challenge that they described. The teacher who is listening should not comment but listen silently while the other teacher speaks. The facilitator should keep time and advise the group when the second teacher should begin speaking. *Time: 3 minutes per speaker*
- Still working with the same partner, **ask each teacher to propose** what they will do differently during the next school year as a result of what they learned from the success or challenge they described. The teacher who is listening should not comment but listen silently while the other teacher speaks. The facilitator should keep time and advise the group when the second teacher should begin speaking. *Time: 3 minutes per speaker*
- Bring the entire group together. **Facilitate a group sharing** built out of these exchanges. The facilitator could either invite each teacher to describe his or her own success/challenge, learning, and anticipated change or invite each teacher to describe the success/challenge, learning, and anticipated change of his or her partner teacher. *Time: 3 minutes per speaker*

On a chart paper, the facilitator should note any themes that emerge from the teachers in preparation for a closing discussion. Were there any surprises in the successes or the challenges? Is there anything common among the successes or the challenges? Do those commonalities suggest actions for the upcoming school year?

Need more ideas for end-of-the-year celebrations? See the May 2008 issue of *The Learning Principal* in the members-only area of the NSDC web site, www.nsd.org.