



INSTRUCTIONS: Please write your responses in the boxes below.

SCHOOL NAME: Lake Windward Elementary

CONCEPT NAME: Professional Development Days

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: Provide professional learning opportunities to increase teachers' implementation of rigor in the classroom and incorporate professional development on use of transformational technology in the classroom.

Concept Summary	
1) Describe the need/challenge that your school seeks to address.	To better prepare Lake Windward Students for the future, it is imperative that we promote Project/Inquiry Based Learning skills which will help prepare students for solving future real world issues. Introducing students to inquiry based learning and how to use the latest technologies will promote critical thinking and give them tools needed to be successful. In order to achieve this priority, we will need to provide teachers with the necessary training to implement an appropriately academically challenging classroom environment. Professional development on how to implement effective higher level thinking strategies in the classroom is necessary. The amount of training needed for staff cannot be accomplished during the weekly PLC meeting times due to the fact that this time is needed to review class/grade level data, plan units of instruction and create assessments.
2) Describe the proposed concept, and explain how it addresses the need/challenge identified above.	<p>Our teachers need quality, uninterrupted professional development time to learn best practices in instruction so that we may provide the highest quality curricular offerings to our students. We are requesting the support of our community to utilize four full student release days for professional development.</p> <p>Our solution provides professional development for teachers to plan and implement strategies promoting critical thinking and the effective use of transformational technology for all students as a vehicle for creating and applying knowledge, resulting in students who are technically savvy critical thinkers. For our staff who support our self-contained special needs student population, there will be differentiated professional development to meet their unique needs. Some of the professional development for these staff members will include training on how to maximize instructional time through creating effective zone schedules, training on maximizing students' access to the curriculum and giving opportunities for teachers to observe model special needs classrooms outside of the local school.</p>

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	<p>Students would not attend school on four Mondays or Fridays during the school year to provide time for strategically aligned professional learning. We are confident that protected professional development time will help to ensure that our teachers achieve maximum understanding and opportunities to plan for applications of new strategies and that, ultimately, our students will receive maximum benefits.</p> <p>In an effort to align with some of the schools in which our students' siblings feed into we are requesting the same Full Release Dates as their schools. These dates that have been agreed upon with the other school principals are as follows: September 2, 2016, November 7, 2016, February 16, 2017, and March 31, 2017.</p>
<p>3) Include any research or evidence that the concept will positively affect your school's student population. If no research exists, please articulate the rationale for the likelihood of success of the concept, and describe your plans for risk mitigation.</p>	<p>Students at Lake Windward Elementary have consistently excelled in state and national assessments which measure basic skills. We have derived from teacher, parent and student surveys that we should focus on increasing students' critical thinking and problem solving skills and rigor in the classroom.</p> <p>When compared with their peers taught using traditional methods, students taught via project-based learning show increases in the long-term retention of content, better results on high-stakes tests, improvements in collaboration and problem solving, and more positive attitudes towards learning (Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009; Walker & Leary, 2009).</p> <p>Research suggests that effective use of problem-based learning methods can prepare students to be flexible thinkers who can work productively with others to solve problems (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Kain, 2003).</p> <p>The success of project-based learning (PBL) depends on motivating and supporting teachers in new roles of facilitating inquiry. This support is best offered through a collaborative model of professional learning that includes ongoing support and opportunities to reflect on experiences (Krajcik, Blumenfeld, Marx & Soloway, 1994).</p> <p>In order to increase their chances for success, PBL teachers need support from a wide variety of sources that will enable them to address the diverse challenges they are likely to encounter as they plan, implement, and evaluate the PBL process (Ertmer & Simons, 2005).</p>

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	<p>“The meaning of ‘knowing’ has shifted from being able to remember and repeat information to being able to find and use it.” (National Research Council, 2007)</p> <p>The power of an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning is its potential to increase intellectual engagement and foster deep understanding through the development of a hands-on, minds-on and ‘research-based disposition’ towards teaching and learning. Inquiry honors the complex, interconnected nature of knowledge construction, striving to provide opportunities for both teachers and students to collaboratively build, test and reflect on their learning. (Neil Stepheon, Teach Inquiry, 2012)</p> <p>Popular discussion on education as well as recent findings in the learning sciences tell a similar story. The model of education typical of 20th century classrooms was effective for that era of human history, but the ‘knowledge society’ we now live in requires new thinking about what constitutes effective and engaging teaching and learning. Teachers are now faced with the challenge that “former conceptions of knowledge, minds and learning no longer serve a world where what we know is less important than what we are able to do with knowledge in different contexts.” (Dr. Sharon Friesen, The Galileo Educational Network, 2013)</p> <p>Every educator has struggled with the challenge of keeping their students engaged and interested in their learning material. One way to overcome this hurdle is to embrace inquiry-based learning — a teaching method that places students’ questions, ideas and observations at the center of the education experience. (Oxford Learning, 2015)</p> <p>Digital technologies can support inquiry in rich and complex ways due to the wide array of possible hardware, software, peripherals and web tools available to teachers. Technology allows both teachers and students access to current, multimedia forms of information, powerful collaboration tools, the ability to model and simulate ideas, and the potential to communicate learning in a wide variety of ways to a global audience. When thoughtfully designed into an inquiry-based study, technology can help immerse students in engaging and rigorous knowledge-building environments and allow them to create compelling representatives of their understanding. (Neil Stepheon, Teach Inquiry, 2015)</p>		
4) Outline the expected results in the columns to the right. Add additional rows as necessary.	Project Outcomes	Short-Term Goals	Long-Term Outcomes
	Teachers will have an increased understanding of the essential elements of effective instructional	We will have the time to train teachers on important strategic plan initiative topics such as	There will be an increased use of critical and creative thinking skills by LWE

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	strategies which promote students' critical thinking skills There will be an increase of inquiry and problem based learning opportunities for students.	inquiry based learning and transformational technology.	students across all content areas.
Waiver(s) Requested			
5) List any waivers from state law, regulation, and/or rule required to implement the concept. (Facilitators will identify the specific laws, regulations, and/or rules requiring exemption.)	<p>State Laws/Policies: Fulton County has already waived the number of instructional days and minutes required by the state of Georgia. However, should Fulton County cease its waiver, Lake Windward Elementary School is requesting the following waiver from the State. SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02 SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL YEAR FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES. GA State Law – Code sections: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151(b) which sets the number of hours of instructional time for educational programs. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c) which sets the number of instructional days per year.</p>		
6) List any flexibility from Fulton County Schools' policy required to implement the concept. (Facilitators will identify the specific Fulton County Schools policies requiring exemptions.)	<p>District Policy: Lake Windward Elementary School is seeking a waiver from Fulton County School Board Policy AE (2015-16) which says "The school year shall consist of 180 teaching days or the equivalent, except in the event of emergency school closures."</p>		
Impact on Students and Families, Personnel, Departments, Processes, and Schools			
7) List any impact of the concept on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students and families; ▪ Personnel; ▪ The school schedule; ▪ Transportation; ▪ School nutrition; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students and families – Full days off of school will require families to make child care accommodations ▪ Personnel – will attend scheduled training on PD days ▪ School Schedule – no school on PD days ▪ Transportation – not needed on PD days ▪ School nutrition – not needed on PD days. FCS will directly handle nutrition staffing for these days 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching, learning, and assessment; ▪ Other schools; and ▪ Any other area not addressed above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching, learning, assessment – teachers will attend PD sessions and implement in classroom
Budget	
<p>8) Please use the budget template on the next page to provide the estimated costs of the proposed concept. In the space to the right, please identify, to the extent possible, how you plan to modify your school budget to cover additional costs. If applicable, identify external funding sources.</p>	

INSTRUCTIONS: Please enter the expected costs of your concept for the applicable school year(s). To calculate the totals for the Amount Budgeted columns, highlight the entire table, and press F9. You may customize the budget items.

SCHOOL NAME:

Budget Item	Item Description (Include quantities if applicable)	<Insert School Year>		<Insert School Year>		<Insert School Year>		Notes
		Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	
Teacher(s)		0		0		0		
Paraprofessional(s)				0		0		
Support Staff				0		0		
Additional Pay (certified)/Overtime (non-certified)		0		0		0		
Equipment		0		0		0		

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Supplies/Materials		0		0		0	
Professional Development	Effective Critical Thinking Strategies	\$5520	Seed Fund	0		0	
Independent Contractor(s)		0		0		0	
Transportation		0		0		0	
Supplements		0		0		0	
Other Professional Services		0		0		0	
Other		0		0		0	
Other		0		0		0	
GRAND TOTALS		\$5520.00		\$ 0.00		\$ 0.00	

*When determining the *Amount Budgeted* for personnel costs, the principal should consult with the Learning Community Human Resources Director.

**For the *Proposed Funding Source(s)*, please indicate which of the following funding sources you intend to use: General Fund, Student Activities Fund, School Foundation/PTA, FCS Seed Fund, Grants, or Other (please specify the source).

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