



Marlborough Teachers in Leadership Association

February 2008

A Memo for all Marlborough Teachers in Leadership Positions



Think Tank Team Update

At the end of last year a 'Think Tank' team was established and formed a steering committee to decide on the future direction of this group and plan professional development and social networking opportunities for middle managers in Marlborough schools. The following information is an update of what was decided from that meeting. From this group of 15 there were 12 schools represented (both primary and secondary) and their enthusiasm will ensure that this will be a successful professional support group for you. If you are keen to be part of our 'Think Tank' team just send me an email and I will let you know when we next plan to meet. nicky@reapmarlborough.co.nz .

It was felt it was important to establish ourselves as an association (although we are not yet legally an official association) as we are then seen as a professional group and it is easier to access funding for future professional development initiatives. However it was stressed that we should still keep our meetings informal!

Social Networking Sessions

We hope to get 100% turnout to these important meetings! It is a chance for you to meet with colleagues, build support networks and relax. These are planned for week 2 each term on a Thursday afternoon at Chequers. We are a very friendly group so if you are new to Marlborough you will be made very welcome. I have booked the area by the bar from 4:30 onwards and **our first meeting is next Thursday 14 February so look forward to seeing you there.**

Below I have given you advance notice of the MTLA professional development and social meeting dates for your diary for 2008. More information and registration details for each session will be sent out nearer the time.

Professional Development Focus for 2008

During the first three terms there will be professional development opportunities which we hope you will be able to support. It was agreed to target all PD for 2008 around the theme 'Raising achievement and managing change'. The importance of linking in with the MPA was also expressed and having the opportunity to be involved in PD sessions together when possible was to be encouraged. **All PD sessions organized for the MTLA are open to all staff so please encourage other interested colleagues to attend if at all possible.** Our first workshop 'Cracking Tough Achievement Problems' with Brian Annan is planned for Tuesday 18 March and fits perfectly with our raising achievement theme. Registration details will be sent out next week.

Teachers in Leadership Conference in 2010

The concept of hosting a conference in Marlborough was positively received but it was felt there needed to be time for advance planning to ensure it was an outstanding success! So the group decided on 2010 for our first conference and it was stressed that a separate committee would need to be set up to help with the planning of the conference and it would not just be left to the 'Think Tank' team.

Don't forget to scroll down for the 2008 MTLA meeting dates and I look forward to working with you. Enjoy the year!

Nicky Halligan



Marlborough Teachers in Leadership Association



2008 Professional Development Dates

***Please note the following dates in your diary.
More information and registration details will be sent out nearer the time.***

Term 1 Week 2: Social Network Meeting *Thursday 14 February: 4:30-6pm @ Chequers*
Week 7: PD Meeting *Tuesday 18 March: Scenic Circle Hotel - 9:00-3:00 Brian Annan-MOE
Schooling Improvement Team-Change Manager*

Cracking Tough Achievement Problems

Preparation – Part of the day will be to talk through an achievement problem that you are struggling to solve with your students. In order to participate in that discussion, participants will need to identify an achievement problem currently causing concern. You will need to bring with you some evidence of the achievement problem, such as test scores, a transcript of a feedback session between teacher and student, a writing sample etc.

- *Introduction to Learning Talk – Brian will provide an overview of what Learning Talk is, where it came from and how it can be used.*
- *The use of Learning Talk to solve a current achievement problem. You will get the chance to share your achievement problem with a small group of colleagues and they will critique the way you are going about trying to solve it. You will also judge the quality of the talk used in your small groups.*
- *Learning Talk nested in Learning Systems – Brian will outline typical systemic ways we try to learn how to solve difficult achievement problems. He will argue that we tend to play it safe within learning systems that we are comfortable with and he will challenge you to use uncomfortable alternatives when the need arises. Some reflective thoughts on the day by Brian and the participants will conclude this session and the day.*

Term 2 Week 2: Social Network Meeting *Thursday 15 May: 4:30-6pm @ Chequers*
Week 7: PD Meeting *Thursday 19 June: 1:45-3:15 (lunch 12:45-1:45) Cheryl Doig Workshop*

Soft is hard! How to give feedback to bring about change.

Developing relationships and working with people are sometimes referred to as 'soft skills'. Yet we know that these skills can be difficult to build. How do you move people forward in ways that support and challenge them?

This session will explore the change management process and the importance of understanding people in order to move forward, using an appreciative inquiry approach. It will discuss the difference between discussion and dialogue and the importance of giving and receiving feedback in order to change. Ways of giving feedback will be explored, especially in relation to 'difficult conversations'. A simple model for such conversations will be presented and leaders given a chance to practice these skills.

Term 3 Week 2: Social Network Meeting *Thursday 31 July: 4:30-6pm @ Chequers*
Week 7: PD Meeting *Wednesday 27 August: 1:30-3:00 (lunch 12:30-1:30)*

Presenter yet to be decided! This will be a similar format to last year with lunch followed by an afternoon PD session with a keynote speaker from the MPA Portage conference.

Term 4 Week 2: Social Network Meeting *Thursday 23 October 4:30ish-6pm @ Chequers*
Week 7: PD Meeting *No PD this term-too busy!
Thursday 4 December: MTLA – end of year dinner.*

Nicky Halligan