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Geneseo Community Unit School District 228: Teaming for Improved Leadership

By: Ariana Rawls Fine

District Administration, March 2015

Geneseo Community USD 228 revamped its leadership model in 2011. It replaced the traditional structure of department chairs, grade-level leaders and curriculum directors with five teams representing the district and its individual buildings.

The teams set out to improve instruction, communication and collaboration.

Each team is co-led by a teacher and an administrator. Teacher leaders have a role in developing curriculum, assessments and evaluations, and also can provide a clear, unified message to the staff about any changes. Teachers from all grade levels serve on district teams.

One of the programs the teams launched was an online curriculum-mapping project. They trained content-area and grade-level leaders to ensure consistency in a revised set of standards and assessments.

Another team focused on effective professional practice by studying the Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. The district brought in the Danielson Group for professional development and teacher evaluation systems. Teacher leaders continue to provide ongoing activities to familiarize teachers with the framework's planning, classroom environment, instruction and professional responsibilities components.

"The Geneseo School District Board of Education, the superintendent, and the Geneseo Education Association bargaining team saw a unique opportunity to expand leadership possibilities and put more ownership in the hands of teachers," says Jill DePauw, president of Geneseo Education Association. "We greatly expanded the number of stakeholders, and involved them in a venue to address struggles and successes."

In recognition of the innovation and success of this initiative, Geneseo Community USD 228 has been named a District of Distinction by District Administration. Geneseo was among 62 districts that were honored in the March 2015 round of Districts of Distinction, the magazine's national recognition program for K12 school districts.

"We are pleased to honor Geneseo as a District of Distinction," says JD Solomon, editorial director at District Administration magazine. "Like all our honorees, Geneseo Community USD 228 serves as a model for school leaders across the country."

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District:

Geneseo Community Unit School District 228

Superintendent: Scott Kuffel

Program category:

[Innovative staff leadership model](#)

State: Illinois

Award Cycle: [March 2015](#)