

Opportunities for Professional Growth & Leadership at ANCS

As a school that takes seriously the idea of being a “learning community” for both students and adults alike, ANCS wishes to support meaningful and sustained professional growth for every teacher and staff member. To that end, there are multiple opportunities for teachers and staff members to develop new skills and knowledge at whatever stage of their careers they may be.

Opportunities for *all* teachers and staff members

1) Campus/school wide learning opportunities

Applying the concepts of “less is more” and “depth over breadth”, the bulk of our school’s professional development resources are devoted each year to a few core areas that are essential to our mission and strategic plan. Examples of these opportunities from recent years include:

- Faculty/staff summer reading
- Critical friends groups and critical friendship institutes
- Sending small teams of teachers/staff to national conferences/institutes, such as:
 - CES Fall Forum
 - Conscious Discipline
 - Learning & the Brain
 - SRI Winter Meeting
 - National Coalition on School Diversity

Members of the K-8 leadership team will determine who is involved in each of these opportunities and how learning from them is shared with others in the school community.

2) Individual professional development opportunities

An individual teacher or staff member may wish to engage in a professional learning opportunity that is specific and relevant to her/his role or professional goals, including leadership development. Teachers or staff members who seek school support for such opportunities should keep these guidelines in mind:

- An employee may request funds for an individual professional development opportunity by submitting a short proposal to his/her supervisor that outlines what the learning opportunity is, how it will benefit the employee’s work at ANCS, and in what ways the learning might be shared with others. The supervisor will review proposals, keeping in mind school and individual professional goals and may approve the use of funds within a budgeted amount.
- Funds can be used towards attending a conference or workshop, purchasing books, or to visit another school or organization (Please note: funds can be used to cover registration fees, materials, the cost of a substitute teacher, mileage reimbursement for local travel, but will not typically be used to cover out-of-state travel.)

3) Campus or schoolwide task force

From time to time, a task force may be formed to complete a focused task, and the work of the task force will require specific perspectives/expertise and will likely demand a substantial commitment of time outside of regular school hours (during the school year and/or over the summer). Serving on a task force provides an opportunity for professional growth by honing new skills, such as working with a team of individuals from across the school community, project management, and/or presenting a proposal to a range of audiences. Examples of recent task forces have included:

- K-8 grading and assessment practices task force
- International Baccalaureate exploratory task force

Depending upon the scope of a task force's work, a stipend may be offered to those who serve on the task force

Opportunities for veteran ANCS teachers and staff members

Once a teacher/staff member has demonstrated continued skill in his/her role at ANCS, she/he may be ready to pursue the one or more of the following opportunities for professional growth and leadership with the support of a supervisor.

1) Serving on a campus leadership team

2) Center for Collaborative Learning

ANCS's Center for Collaborative Learning (CCL) brings together individuals, schools, and organizations to build capacity for creating student-centered learning environments in a number of different ways:

- Overseeing the CREATE Teacher Residency Program in collaboration with Georgia State University.
- Facilitating school improvement initiatives regionally
- Hosting visitors to ANCS to observe teaching and learning
- Hosting workshops for educators, organizations, and others to deepen knowledge of ANCS practices for possible use in their own contexts
- Institutes and lectures by outside experts on teaching and learning topics
- Growing partnerships to establish longer-term formal relationships between ANCS and other schools

Examples of professional growth opportunities through the CCL could include taking on a veteran educator role within CREATE (such as a mentor or critical friendship coach), facilitating a workshop, serving as a coach for a school change effort at another school. When opportunities exist, the CCL Director will publish instructions for how to apply along with a description of the opportunity, scope of work, qualifications, and any compensation connected with the opportunity

3) Oversight of a program or special project

On occasion, there may be a program or special project that requires the leadership of a single program, initiative, or project, such as the athletics program, diversity/equity initiative, or chairing a task force. In such instances, the description of the opportunity, scope of work, qualifications, and any compensation connected with the opportunity will be published along with instructions for how to apply.

4) *Faculty/staff study grants* - **NEW for 2016-17 school year**

These grants are designed both to encourage professional growth and to acknowledge the contributions veteran teachers and staff members have made to ANCS and its students. Each year, ANCS may award faculty/staff study grants of up to \$2,500 each within budgeted professional development funds. These grants may be used to undertake/continue studies, travel, and/or engage in other scholarship which would further their own learning and the learning of students at ANCS.

To be eligible to apply for a study grant, a teacher/staff member must:

- Have *completed* her/his 5th year of employment at ANCS
- Be committed to returning to ANCS for at least three more school years

To apply, an eligible teacher/staff member would submit by the deadline a completed application form which would include:

- A description of how the grant funds would be used, goals, and a preliminary budget
- Brief essay which addresses the questions *How will this grant benefit you as a teacher/staff member at ANCS?* and *In what ways will this grant benefit the ANCS community, specifically students?*

A small committee selected by the Executive Director would review applications and make a decision about grant awards. A teacher/staff member grantee would not be eligible to apply for another study grant for one year after the grant award. If a grantee leaves ANCS within three school years of receiving a study grant, she/he would be responsible for repaying a prorated portion of grant funds back to ANCS.