

Small group discussion worksheet
Project Direction Track
August 2, 2010

The two facilitators will ask two PD's in the audience to complete the role play of the PD/Superintendent scenario.

The group will break out into pairs and discuss the role play with facilitators going around the room, coaching.

Three pairs will be asked to role play in front of the group.

The group will discuss the role playing, noting what did and didn't work.

The process will be repeated for the PD/Sheriff scenario.

Role Play with Superintendent and PD:

Supt: So tell me about how this SSHS grant is going? I hear a lot of principals are concerned that it is going to create more work for their staff? How is this going to help our students?

PD: As you know, we have a core management team made up of the county mental health department, the County Sheriff and County Probation that are working together to ensure that services to our students are integrated. I think that this kind of systemic change will actually create better services for our students and I believe that principals will appreciate the coordination.

Supt: So you mean that these other agencies are going to make decisions about how these funds are going to be spent?

PD: We believe that shared leadership and decision-making will ensure that mental health, substance abuse, social services and juvenile justice services will be integrated among all the agencies and we will be able to appropriately share information about students in need. Although the school district was given the money, you remember we signed a memorandum of understanding that this is a community initiative.

Supt: Well, I don't know if I like the Sheriff having any control over this money. We have such different ways of looking at students and their issues. They always seem to have a punitive attitude towards our kids.

PD: That's why it is so important that we work together. You are welcome to attend any of the meetings, if you would like to chair the first one coming up in October; I think the group would welcome your input.

Supt: Well, I am very busy at that time of the year, so I don't know whether I will have the time to do it or not. Ask me again when school starts.

PD: Well, I hope you can. The other agency heads really like the kind of programs you have instituted in the district. I think you can be a real leader around these issues in the community.

Role Play with Sheriff and PD

PD: Morning, Sheriff. I just wanted to talk to you about this SSHS grant the community just received and listen to how you think the Sheriff's office will get more involved.

Sheriff: Well, I am little concerned. You and those mental health folks seem to want to baby these kids. It seems like we should punish them for skipping school, bullying and getting in fights. What are we going to do about all gang violence I hear is going on when I talk to my officers?

PD: That's why we need to work together. Yes, students found to be violating any kind of limits need to have consequences but many also seem to have diagnosed mental health needs and family problems. We need to figure out some kind of restorative practices.

Sheriff: What in "tarnation" are restorative practices? My officers do not know how to talk with those mental health people. We are worlds apart. I certainly don't what to give you any of my good officers for the gang unit or SROs.

PD: Sir, it is really important that students develop positive relationships with the police officers working in the school or with juvenile. And I think that the mental health workers needs to understand what your officers are dealing with, so I wonder if joint training would be a good idea.

Sheriff: I don't know. My guys don't want to do all this touchy, feely stuff. We just want to make sure these kids are not breaking the law and hurting people.

PD: Well, all the agency heads are going to be meeting next week to talk about the formation of this gang prevention. Would you be interested in chairing that meeting?

Sheriff: Well, maybe but I am not sure if I can work with these mental health people.