Transcript

Any discussion about professional learning for teachers needs to begin with the brain. We need to really be thinking about that. I just had a question posed by a friend of mine yesterday. And he had asked me, he said, have you ever been in a training that was so boring that your brain hurt. And yeah, I have all the time. My entire teaching career has been filled with them and way more than anybody should be subject to. We, we all can relate to this. We really want training, we want to learn new things, but at the end of it, all we've done is lost an hour of our life. And it's just because we're not doing things the way that we say. We should be doing with our students. We're not practicing what we preach. I was in a training in my very first training session and a new district. The very first thing the entire district, everybody in the whole district was there. And one of our district administrators got up. And for an hour and a half, read, line by line, from a PowerPoint. Word for word about how we shouldn't read, word for word, line by line from a PowerPoint. It was mind numbing. It was just absolutely painful and dreadful. And the irony was completely lost on everyone. It was just it was amazing. And it really should not be what we're doing. We need to rethink training and professional learning for our educators. We need to do things different and we need to be thinking about the brain. We need to be thinking about what is best for our teachers. We want them to walk away feeling inspired to implement what they've learned and confident that they can do that. And really the only way that this is going to happen If they can picture themselves being successful doing that, they have to imagine that for themselves and put themselves in that position, but we don't give them those opportunities. But there are ways that we can do that. And we can learn from that and we can work towards it. And the very first thing that we need to be thinking about is time. Currently, we measure professional development in minutes or hours. And it's just wrong. We can't do that. My school will give teachers 18 hours of flex time. What usually ends up happening by the end of the year is typical teacher will have tried 18 different things over the course of the year and mastered none of them because it's just been a shotgun approach. We need to look at time differently. We need to think on a different scale when it comes to professional learning. The Center for Public Education released a report that outlines the five principles for PD, and it shows that up to 50 hours is needed for learning to be mastered and implemented.

But we don't do that. We don't give teachers that time to master what they do. We throw it out in one session and then get going. And then when they we tell them to get going, what they're usually standing there by themself, trying to put it in all along, there has to be support for the teachers during the implementation stage to address those very specific things are going to happen in a room. every classroom

is different, every child is different every year is different, and you need time to master that. But you can't do it by yourself because your frame of reference is so limited, we really need to be bringing in more people to that when if schools want their teachers to change the instruction, then when they're implementing it, they have to be supported more with very explicit professional development offerings. And this is really critical. Thinking things like the PLC or coaching models to support those implementations are really what we need to be looking at which brings in more people, more viewpoints and more support for our teachers during that up to 50 hours that they're working on mastering the content but you know We do the sage on the stage thing. And we tell teachers don't be the sage on the stage in your classroom. But I'm going to do that here in front of you. I'm not going to model it, I'm not going to do it at sit set we say you should be doing. And we're going to spend up to $18,000 a year per teacher for professional development, and then wonder why the results aren't following in the classroom. Really, what needs to be happening is that teachers constant exposure to these concepts should be engaging and it should be varied. And they need to practice participate in it actively to make sense of what's going on. They need to discuss it with other teachers and toss ideas out and try things out and roleplay it and test it out at the moment that they're getting started in it. But again, we just want to bore them to death. So what are we really modeling? We know that there's just the evidence is there this type of environment for training doesn't help get teachers where they need to be. We need to be doing things with smaller groups one on one, instructional coaching type ideas that bring in the modeling that's highly effective and helps teachers understand those practices so that they can talk with someone, they can work with someone, they can see somebody else doing it, and watch and then try it out with someone helping them and pointing out along the way, how they can be better at it. But we go with this one size fits all approach, we throw everybody in the room together, maybe the whole campus, maybe the whole department, and just assume that everybody's going to take nuggets away from it, we're going to assume that that can CTE teacher can gain just as much information as a world history teacher in the same room together, or that algebra one and calculus are going to be using the same models and the same processes to teach our students at the same time. And we just what we find is that there's no correlation to those that they just don't, it just doesn't work. We really have to be changing that. We have to present the content in a non generic way in very specific for those disciplines. middle and high school teachers are very different than elementary school teachers, because the students they're working with are very different. The environments are very different. The learning process at that moment is very different. And we have to take that into account, we have to be very specific in the way we're training if we want to see those results, transfer to the classroom. So doing these things that I was just outlining here from giving the teachers enough time to work on their material and their content and to really learn and master them, learn master those think those processes, and really being

very specific and how we're training them and modeling those approaches for them. And really just doing all of the things that are required to help teachers master the things they're learning so that they can have an impact on our classroom. If we do those things. We will see those impacts and we won't, we'll see much better results.