

“Back to the Future” Protocol

A good time to use this protocol is in the early stages of creating a plan or project. Ideas should be formulated, but not completely finalized.

Purpose of protocol:

To vision into the future and tell what it would look like in the best-case scenario. Also to initiate discussion into the steps, players, actions and timelines it will take to be successful.

Goals:

- To expand and clarify the vision of what a group is trying to accomplish
- To identify opportunities and avenues for focused improvement
- To guide purposeful actions and reduce wasted efforts

Considerations:

- Members of groups should have similar investment in and context to that which is presented
- Uses ability to tell stories as a way to imagine the best-case scenario
- Does not focus on the obstacles, but rather the opportunities...stays very positive

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Instructions:

Work in geographic groups (4-5 participants per group):

1. Group chooses a recorder to chart ideas in stages 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of protocol.
2. Individuals brainstorm goals for their site plan (What would you like to accomplish?).
(3 minutes)
3. Each member of the group shares their goals with the group.
(7 minutes)
4. Probing Questions (see attached sheet for examples of Probing Questions):
Each member brainstorms a minimum of 2 probing questions.
(3 minutes)

Taking turns, each participant raises a probing question to the group. There is no real expectation of answering them in this step. The idea is to extend the thinking about what they want to accomplish.

(7 minutes)

5. Project into the future (the end of the school year, 2012) and thoroughly describe what it looks like, sounds like and feels like having accomplished this endeavor.

- **Must talk in present tense** Describe *what is* the best-case scenario. Do **NOT** describe *how*.
- Focus on the sights, sounds, behaviors and feelings surrounding this accomplishment.

(10 minutes)

6. Look “back” from your projected present and create a timeline to describe how your endeavor looked when it started (What happened first and how did it happen? What happened next?).

- **Must talk in past tense.**
- Think about issues that may arise
- Try to remain as tangible as possible.
- Chart this conversation as a timeline with specific months and dates, if possible.

(10 minutes)

7. Continue looking back from the “projected present” and focus on the starting point. What were the first steps? Who did what and when?

- **Must talk in past tense.**
- Create another timeline specific to how the endeavor started.
- Discuss such issues as *how, when, with what resources and by whom.*

(10 minutes)

8. On chart paper write the following (should be short and easy to read)

- Site plan goals
- Timeline for implementation
- Information delivery plan (after school, inservice days, preps, etc)

(5 minutes)

9. Gallery Walk *(10 minutes)*

10. Whole group debriefs the process