“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