

THE IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTE DAY

Every academic year, there are four days known as institute days. For students, this is simply a day where there is no school, but for District 211 teachers it's the complete opposite. What is the reason for an institute day if teachers are at school, but students aren't?

These workdays are designed to help teachers collaborate with colleagues various topics in order to improve classroom experience for students, such as curriculum discussions, sharing teaching methods, and viewing guest speakers.

Although institute days are typically held at each District 211 school, the most recent institute day on April 9, is a district-wide institute. What this means for staff is that each department has an opportunity to meet with other teachers from all District schools.

"This is a chance for our teachers to collaborate and communicate best practices and improve instruction for our students," said Danielle Hauser, District 211 director of instructional improvement. "It's curriculum focused, and having a district-wide institute day allows for teams of teachers to share with a larger teacher pool outside of the school they work at, which is always good."

Although there are certain tasks the District asks teachers to complete, each department will focus on goals and challenges they need to improve student success. For example, if a department is having trouble teaching a particular part of the curriculum at one school, teachers in the same department at another might have an instructional technique they have found successful. Without a district-wide institute day meeting, they might not have found a solution as quickly.

However, the main goal of each institute day, regardless if it takes place at each school or is district-wide, is to better each District 211 student's learning experience.

"It's a global collaboration at a macro view," Hauser said. "It all comes back to improving learning for all of our students."