Making the Case

- How to get information to rest of staff within the district
- How to get "buy in" from staff and administrators
- Comparison of inquiry to traditional approach—evidence that these programs are successful
- Bring in teachers who use the materials to discuss pros and cons of materials presented
- Proving importance of science instruction
- How to educate school boards and administrators
- Community support
- Increasing teacher interest
- Model ways schools could adopt a science program

Parents

The parents in your district include three major groups: active, engaged parents who participate in the PTO and school-based leadership teams; active parents who are involved in conservative coalitions; and a larger group of parents who the district has traditionally failed to engage. At an upcoming districtwide forum (one month away), you will have an opportunity to reach parents through a 20-minute presentation on your plans for science reform. The forum will be taped for the local access cable channel, and the board has invited reporters from two major newspapers to attend.

School Board

Science reform will require substantial funding over the next five years. The board needs to know that change is a long process, requires a phased-in approach, and demands a budget that will cover professional development, new instructional materials, community forums, etc. You want the board to be knowledgeable about your goals and define realistic levels for financial support in the short and long term. At the next board meeting, you and the assistant superintendent will have 25 minutes to share district plans for science reform.

Central Office

As the curriculum coordinator, you are planning your strategy for science reform and need to think about ensuring the support of the central office, including the superintendent, the area superintendents, and assistant superintendents for human resources, operations, and curriculum instruction. Many of the curriculum instruction staff are curriculum specialists whose responsibilities span K-12 and focus on the development of curriculum content standards and inservice education for teachers. You want to make sure that your plans for science connect with what is happening in other subject areas and other initiatives in the district. You see the opportunity to create a more cohesive reform program in the district as a whole. How will you communicate this idea to the assistant and area superintendents?

Teachers

The small group of teachers who have been working with the curriculum coordinator are excited about science reform. They believe a core of teachers at each building also want to learn about new approaches to science instruction and assessment. However, a significant number of teachers seem reluctant to change their practice or move away from reliance on the textbook. You see an increasing schism between the two groups of teachers. You need to design a communications strategy that will help build acceptance and involve all teachers in new forms of instruction.

Principals/School Leadership Teams

The districtwide elementary principal group is meeting next week to discuss the school site leadership team and their involvement in reform. Over the last year, the teams have devoted a great deal of energy to mathematics reform, and some are beginning to recognize that they need to address science. You have been invited to talk with the principal group about how they and their school-based leadership team might support your plans for science reform.

Site-Based Decision-Making Team

You are taking the lead on science for your Site-Based Decision-Making Team. You need to plan your strategy for science reform and think about ensuring the support of the team, including the principal, the parents, and the other teacher representatives. Science doesn't seem to be a big priority for the team; other subjects get more attention. You want to make sure that your plans for science connect with what is happening in other subject areas and other initiatives in the school and district. You see the opportunity to create a more cohesive approach that addresses changes in the science curriculum that will support planning in other subjects as well. You know literacy is the big concern. How will you communicate this idea to the other members of the team?