

**ACTIVITY**

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**alpaca**

# **THE PD CAFÉ: CHOICE-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

**Self-Paced, Staff-Led PD That Sparks Curiosity and  
Builds School Culture**

Explore a menu of ready-to-go PD sessions designed to meet educators where they are—offering voice, choice, and meaningful growth at every table.

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# A MENU OF MEANINGFUL LEARNING

The PD Café is all about voice, choice, and meaningful growth. Staff explore topics that spark curiosity, reflect on their learning, and take ownership of their development—at their own pace.

Learning doesn't stop at the table, either. When educators share their takeaways with colleagues, it creates a ripple effect of inspiration and collective growth across your school. It's perfect for PD days—meeting your staff where they are, with what they need.

**A space where professional learning feels energizing—not overwhelming. Because when educators feel empowered, everyone benefits.**



## WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Key Benefits
- Ways to Serve the PD
- Templates & Printables



# WHY TRY IT?



**Builds a culture of ownership:** Empowers educators to take charge of their own learning.



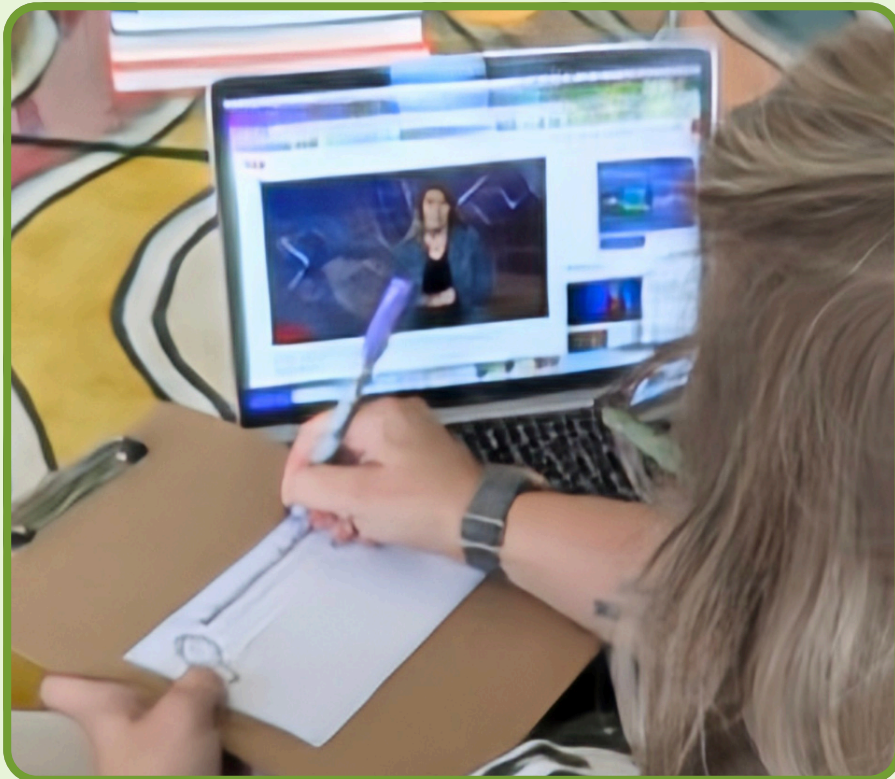
**Strengthens professional trust:** Respects staff as capable, self-directed learners.



**Fosters collaboration:** Encourages staff to share insights and ideas with one another.



**Lightens the lift for leaders:** Offers ready-to-go options that support meaningful, self-guided learning.



**ACTIVITY  
EXAMPLE**





# Serving Up the PD Menu: A Leader's Recipe for Rollout

Kick off this delicious spread of learning with flavor, heart, and zero overwhelm.



## **Step 1: Stir in the Why**

Start by sharing the purpose. Let staff know this menu is designed to support their growth in ways that feel doable, personalized, and energizing.



## **Step 2: Plate the Menu**

Serve the PD menu in a format that's easy to access—whether it's a Google Doc, shared folder, or printed copy in mailboxes. Pick what fits your staff's style best.



## **Step 3: Taste Test It Yourself**

Model what it looks like to dig in. Try an item, share your reflection, and invite others to do the same. Let your team see that you're learning too.



## **Step 4: Add a Dash of Structure**

Offer light guidance without pressure. Encourage one menu pick per month or quarter, and build in time for reflection or discussion during staff check-ins or PLCs.



## **Step 5: Celebrate the Flavors**

Highlight what's working. Share shout-outs, "menu moments," and mini-reflections. Keep it joyful—think stickers, snack-sized surprises, or simple notes of encouragement.



# RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

**Introduce to Staff:** Invite staff to choose one activity that fits their time, energy, and interests.

**Looking for a quick spark?**

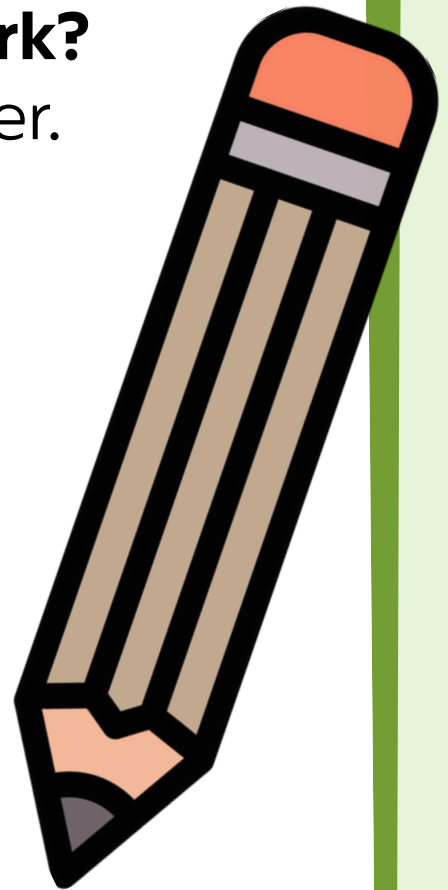
→ Start with an Appetizer.

**Ready to dig in?**

→ Go for an Entrée.

**Want to keep the reflection going?**

→ Don't skip Dessert.





# POSSIBLE PD THEMES





# INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

For when you want to spice up your teaching toolkit.

## **Appetizers (10–20 min):**

- Watch a quick video of a teacher nailing cold calls —steal one move.
- Read a blog post on exit tickets and try one tomorrow.
- Test a new turn-and-talk structure during class today.

## **Entrées (1–2 hrs):**

- Join a mini-workshop on student engagement—walk away with 3 ready-to-use ideas.
- Design a full lesson using high-leverage practices and try it out.
- Meet with your coach or a colleague to co-plan and try something new together.

## **Dessert (Ongoing):**

- Start a "strategy wins" journal. One great moment a week = momentum.
- Host a monthly "teaching tip potluck" with snacks and ideas.





# EQUITY AND INCLUSION

For building a classroom where every student belongs.

## **Appetizers (10–20 min):**

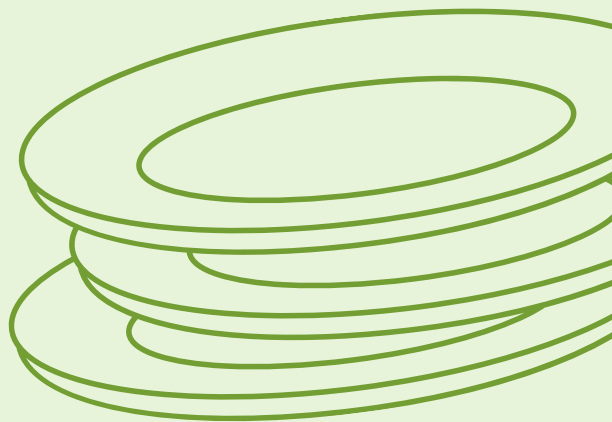
- Watch a TED Talk on culturally responsive teaching.
- Do a 10-minute audit of your classroom visuals or anchor charts.
- Skim a short article on identity-affirming practices—and try one.

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- Design a full lesson using high-leverage practices and try it out.
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# TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

When you're ready to refresh your tech toolkit.

## **Appetizers (10–20 min):**

- Watch a TikTok or reel from a teacher sharing a clever tech trick.
- Try [Canva](#) or [Padlet](#) in class—just for fun.
- Listen to a short podcast on tech that sparks real learning.

## **Entrées (1–2 hrs):**

- Join a session on student content creation (podcasts, blogs, green screen videos!).
- Redesign a lesson with tech that empowers—not just digitizes.
- Make a “low lift, high joy” tech choice board for your students.

## **Dessert (Ongoing):**

- Create a “what worked/what flopped” tech tracker.
- Ask students for feedback: “Which tools actually helped you learn?”





# WELLNESS & GROWTH

When you need a moment for you.

## **Appetizers (10–20 min):**

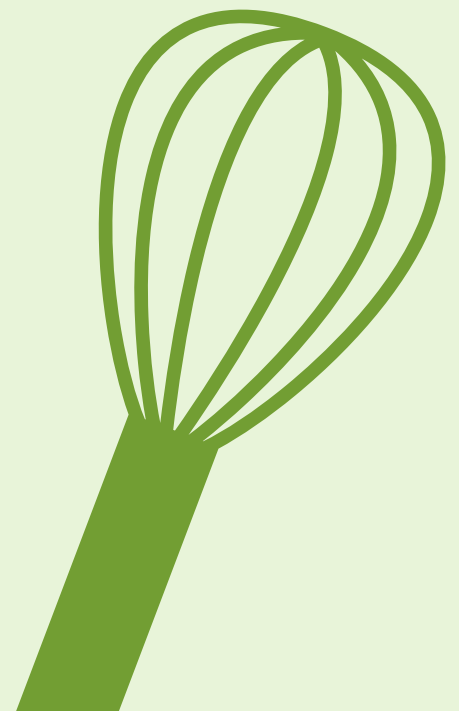
- Take a 10-minute walk—outside, if you can.
- Write down three things that made you smile today.
- Try a mindfulness app or teacher wellness playlist.

## **Entrées (1–2 hrs):**

- Join a session on burnout, boundaries, or joy in teaching.
- Set two personal growth goals—check in monthly with an accountability buddy.
- Read a chapter of a book that inspires you (it doesn't have to be about teaching).

## **Dessert (Ongoing):**

- Reflect weekly: "How did I care for myself this week?"
- Join or start a "staff joy club"—no agenda, just connection.





# Activity Printables

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## Reflect and Refill

**Wrap up your learning with these reflection questions:**

- What did I try—and what did I learn from the resource or from myself?
- What learning are you still savoring?
- What would you come back for seconds on?
- What's something you're still chewing on?

**You don't have to do it all—just take one small bite at a time. See the printables for a “My Reflection” card.**



## Make Your Own Plate

**Leave space for whatever you're craving—curiosity, collaboration, or creativity.**

My Appetizer Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

My Entrée Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

My Dessert Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

**See the printables for a “My PD Plate” card.**









# Learning Menu

## **Appetizer**

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## **Entree**

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## **Dessert**

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**Name** \_\_\_\_\_





# Learning Menu

## **Appetizer**

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## **Entree**

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## **Dessert**

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**Name** \_\_\_\_\_



# Learning Menu

## **Appetizer**

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## **Entree**

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## **Dessert**

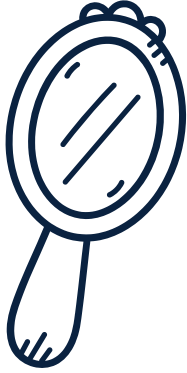
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**Name** \_\_\_\_\_





# Reflections & Refills

What did I learn? What will I try?

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# Reflections & Refills

What did I learn? What will I try?

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## Learning Bites

What learning are you still savoring?

What is something you are still chewing on?

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## Learning Bites

What learning are you still savoring?

What is something you are still chewing on?

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# Thoughts & Takeaways

What would you come back for seconds on?



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# Thoughts & Takeaways

What would you come back for seconds on?



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## COLLABORATION

# BUILT BY EDUCATORS, FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This resource was created in collaboration with dedicated educators and school leaders who brought their experience, ideas, and insight to every step of the process. We're grateful for their partnership in building tools that truly make a difference in schools.



**Megan Rogers**

2nd & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher  
Omaha, NE



**Jen Coenen**

Instructional Coach  
Rochester, Minnesota



# WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



## Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



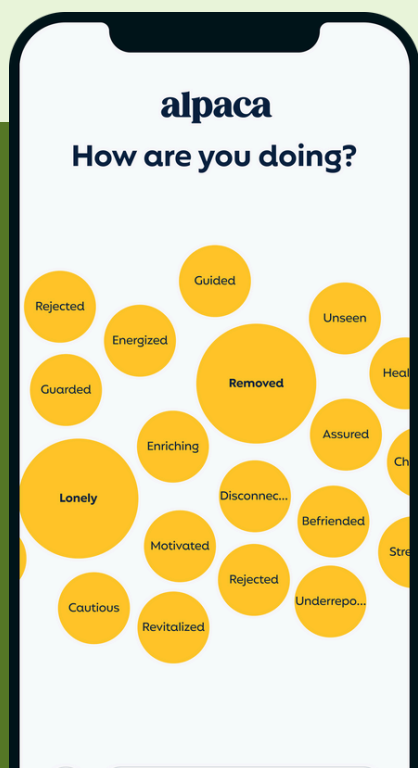
## Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



## Explore more!

Check out our [full resource library](#) for creative, ready-to-use tools to support you and your team.



## SEE HOW ALPACA WORKS

Beautiful surveys, delightful care packages, and real insights on teacher wellbeing—everything you need to lead with confidence, all in one simple solution. [Book a quick demo!](#)