5 Essential Things Administrators Need to Know about eLearning

There are 5 Questions New Jersey School Administrators must use when choosing an online training system provider to meet the requirements of the Anti-Bully Bill of Rights Act.

New Jersey schools are now beginning to implement the changes necessary to meet the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. The Act requires numerous plans, processes and personnel changes, including the education of faculty and staff members. The use of online professional development training can help schools and districts quickly and inexpensively meet these requirements. This article provides advice on selection criteria if you are considering online training.

There are many advantages of using an online system, including flexibility and convenience, cost savings, and reduced administrative time. School administrators should consider these benefits when building their plans. Once the decision has been made to utilize an online training system, how do you select the most appropriate provider? While schools and their Administrators may be experienced and comfortable in selecting traditional on-site group training for their faculty and staff, they may not be knowledgeable of the criteria for selecting online training systems.

Here are 5 questions that School Administrators should consider when selecting an online system provider;

1. *Does the training meet the requirements of the State?* The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act contains requirements for faculty and staff training. The content of the system should specifically address those requirements including the monitoring and reporting. The training provider should be able to define how their training system meets these requirements and how the school or district can produce the reports necessary for compliance.

2. *Has the training been proven to be effective?* The provider should be able to provide evidence of the effectiveness of their training system. This would include enrollee completion percentages, test score averages, and comments from those that have used the system.

3. *How experienced is the training provider and do they have experience working with organizations similar to ours?* The provider should have a proven track record of providing on-line training and have a solid administration system. The experience should include working with organizations with hundreds of enrollees, which will indicate that their processes (enrollment, monitoring, reporting) have been volume tested. Ask for references that will verify the implementation of the system and its ease of use.

4. *What type of support does the vendor provide to the students and administrators?* The provider should have defined and comprehensive support procedures for both the administrative and student roles. This

would include tutorials for administrators and detailed help functions for students.   These should be available for review.

5. *What is the per enrollee cost of the training and how does that compare to other options?*
Understanding the total cost of providing faculty and staff training may not be as simple as you think. Traditional group training cost might include travel time, out of classroom time, and facilities usage cost, in addition to the fees of instructors. Many online professional development training systems include multiple course like suicide prevention, drug and alcohol awareness and cyber-bullying. Understanding the total cost and benefit should take into account all of these elements.

Several online systems are available today and school districts and individual schools can began meeting the training requirements of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act almost immediately. One system, The MindCross Professional Development Training for NJ Educators System, was developed in partnership with National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) of Middlesex County, Inc., displaying how commercial and non-profit organizations have come together to give New Jersey school administrators an alternative to traditional in-service training.