

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Governing Board believes that a systematic and comprehensive professional development plan and program for instructional staff is the key to success in teacher instructional excellence and outstanding student achievement.

In order to maximize student learning and achievement, certificated instructional staff shall continuously learn the methodologies for improving instructional practices. The Superintendent or designee, such as the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, shall develop and implement a systemic plan of ongoing professional development which includes opportunities for instructional personnel such as teachers and instructional classified staff, to enhance their instructional and classroom management skills and become informed about changes in pedagogy, standards aligned curriculum, subject matter, and instructional best practices.

To support this vision, the Board will commit resources, as are available, on an annual basis to promote professional development.

The term 'professional development' means a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in increasing student achievement and fostering rigorous student learning.

- (A) Professional development encourages collective responsibility for improved student performance and is comprised of professional learning that:
 1. Is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards as well as district and school improvement goals;
 2. Serves the academic as well as social emotional needs of students.
 3. Is conducted among learning teams of educators, including teachers, paraprofessionals/classified staff, and other instructional staff at the school;
 4. Is facilitated by knowledgeable school principals or vice principals, and/or, school-based professional development coaches, mentors, master teachers, other teacher leaders, or outside experts;
 5. Occurs primarily multiple times per week or the equivalent of several hours per week embedded in just-in-time learning, presentations, professional learning community dialogue, or other staff discussion.
 6. Engages established learning teams of educators in a continuous cycle of improvement that :
 - a. Analyzes student, teacher, and school learning needs through a thorough review of data about instructional and student performance;
 - b. Defines a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of the data;
 - c. Achieves educator learning goals by implementing coherent, sustained, and evidenced-based learning strategies that improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement, such as lesson study and the examining of student work;
 - d. Provides classroom-based coaching or other forms of just-in-time assistance to support the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the classroom;
 - e. Regularly assesses the effectiveness of the professional development in achieving identified learning goals, improving teaching, and assisting all students in meeting challenging state academic achievement standards;
 - f. Informs ongoing improvements in teaching and student learning; and
 - g. May be facilitated and strengthened by Educational Services, District staff, or other external or internal consultants,.

- (B) The process of implementing systemic professional development may be supported and strengthened by implementing courses, workshops, institutes, networks, dialogue and reflection groups, professional learning community study and conferences that:
1. Address the learning goals and objectives established for professional development through the District vision and school site goals;
 2. Advance the ongoing school-based professional development;
 3. Can be provided by internal or external educational professionals outside the school such as local education agencies, universities, , technical assistance providers, networks of content-area specialists, and other education organizations and associations; or is
 4. Offered by District or school professional development personnel.

The district's professional development program shall assist certificated and other instructional staff in developing knowledge and skills, including, but not limited to:

1. Content aligned with best instructional practices in classrooms;
2. Mastery of discipline-based knowledge, including academic content in the core curriculum and academic standards;
3. Use of effective, subject-specific teaching methods, strategies, and skills;
4. Use of technologies integrated to enhance instruction and offer digital mediums for student presentation skills and enhancing student information literacies;
5. Use of instructional techniques to maximize student engagement, essential questions, rigor, and higher level learning;
6. Sensitivity to and ability to meet the needs of diverse student populations, including, but not limited to, students of various racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities or special abilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, gifted and talented students, and at-risk students;
7. Knowledge of strategies that enable parents/guardians to participate fully and effectively in their children's education;
8. Effective classroom management skills and strategies for establishing a climate that promotes respect, fairness, and discipline, including conflict resolution and anti-bullying climates.
9. Ability to relate to students, understand their various stages of growth and development, and motivate them to learn, and
10. Ability to interpret and use data and assessment results to guide instruction and produce desired achievement results.

Reference:

- National Staff Development Council: Definition of Professional Development