

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Professional staff growth and effectiveness are important to LEARN. LEARN shall provide professional growth opportunities for its certified staff.

A Professional Development and Evaluation Committee, established in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a(b), consisting of certified employees, including their union representatives, and other school personnel deemed appropriate, will be established and meet regularly. The members chosen by the Executive Director to be on the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director. The committee will be responsible for the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive professional development plan for certified staff. The plan will be directly related to the educational goals proposed by the LEARN Board of Directors pursuant to C.G.S. 10-220(b), and will be developed in full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student social-emotional learning and student academic outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education.

Each Early Learning Center employee shall annually participate in a program of professional development, of not fewer than 21 hours in length, as prescribed by applicable state laws and regulations.

Each certified employee shall annually participate in a program of professional development, of not fewer than 18 hours in length, of which a preponderance is in a small group or individual instructional setting. The professional development program shall:

1. be a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in increasing student knowledge achievement;
2. focus on refining and improving various effective teaching methods that are shared between and among educators;
3. foster collective responsibility for improved student performance, and
4. be comprised of professional learning that is
 - i. aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards;
 - ii. is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors and distinguished educators or other appropriate teachers;
 - iii. occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement;
 - iv. and includes a repository or best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and updating.
5. include training in culturally responsive pedagogy and practice.

The principles and practices of social-emotional learning and restorative practices shall be integrated throughout the components of the professional development program.

Staff development activities shall:

- be consistent with any goals identified by certified employees and the LEARN Board of Directors;
- improve teacher and administrator practice based on general results and findings from teacher evaluations reported by the Executive Director or designee;
- be comprehensive, sustained, and intensive enough to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness in raising student performance;
- be aligned with state student academic achievement standards;
- foster collective responsibility for improved student performance; and
- comply with all laws and regulations regarding minimum hours, subject matter, and documentation.

The time and location of professional development activities will be determined by the Executive Director or designee.

School administrators will communicate to individual educators their responsibility to participate in professional development activities agreed upon in the annual evaluation process. It is the responsibility of each teacher, in collaboration with his/her administrator, to identify and participate in appropriate professional development activities to address the needs identified in his/her annual evaluation.

The effectiveness of the professional development program will be assessed on an annual basis. Such assessment must indicate that the professional development activities: were planned in response to identified needs; were provided by qualified instructional personnel, as appropriate; met the requirements for participation in the activity shared with participants before the commencement of the activity; and were evaluated in terms of effectiveness and contribution to the attainment of school and/or LEARN goals.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10 220a In Service training as amended by P.A. 24-45, An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief, School Discipline, and Disconnected Youth; P.A. 24-93, An Act Concerning Various and Assorted Revisions to the Education Statutes.

10-148a Professional development for certified employees.

10-148c Subject matter to be made available to boards of education for in-service training programs

10 226g Intergroup relations training for teachers.

46a-170 Trafficking in Persons Council

P.A. 23-167, An Act Concerning Transparency in Education.

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APPENDIX

Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a - In-service Training

A. Required In-service Topics for Certified Personnel

1. Nature and the relationships of drugs and alcohol to health and personality development and procedures for discouraging their abuse.
2. Health and mental health risk reduction education including, but not limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence, and child abuse.
3. School violence prevention, in a manner prescribed by the school security and safety plan; conflict resolution; prevention of and response to youth suicide; and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying.
4. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life-saving procedures.
5. The requirements and obligations of mandated reporters.
6. The detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.
7. Training pertaining to human trafficking, as required by state law and developed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), for staff members who have contact with students.
8. Culturally responsive pedagogy and practice.
9. The principles and practices of social-emotional learning and restorative practices.
10. The laws governing the implementation of planning and placement team meetings and concerning Section 504 plans.
11. An annual update of the new state and federal policies concerning special education, recommendations and best practices.
12. Emergency response to students who experience a seizure at school, including, but not limited to, the recognition of the signs and symptoms of seizures, the appropriate steps for seizure first aid, information about seizure action plans for students; and, for staff authorized to administer medications, the administration of seizure rescue medication or prescribed electrical stimulation using a Vagus Nerve Stimulator magnet.

B. Optional In-Service Topics for Certified Personnel

- Holocaust and genocide education and awareness
- African-American History
- Puerto-Rican history
- Native American history
- Personal financial management
- The historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland
- Mental health first aid training
- Trauma-informed practices for the school setting to enable teachers, administrators and pupil personnel to more adequately respond to students with mental, emotional or behavioral health needs
- Second language acquisition, including, but not limited to, language development and culturally responsive pedagogy