Union County Educational Services Commission
District Professional Development Plan (PDP) 2025-2026

District Name	Superintendent Name	Plan Begin/End Dates
Union County Educational Services Commission	Carrie M. Dattilo	July 1, 2025 -June 30, 2026

1: Professional Learning (PL) Goals

Goal	Goals	Identified Group	Rationale/Sources of Evidence
1	Maintain safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environments for students and staff by implementing a comprehensive training and consultation model that effectively guides staff in using the reflective cycle to create and deliver Tier 1 and 2 interventions, which are designed and delivered to target individual student needs and increase student engagement.	Certified Staff, Non-Certified Staff, & Administrators	• Analysis of data pertaining to student discipline, behavior intervention, suspension, HIB incidents, and substance abuse referrals reflects a need to provide additional training and support that will enable staff to address the evolving needs of the population served in the district. • Implementing a comprehensive training and consultation model ensures that expertise is developed and sustained within the district • Annual surveys administered to students, staff, and parents/guardians assessing perceptions of safety, emotional support, engagement, and overall school environment indicate areas for growth and continued evaluations
2	Increase the capacity of all staff to ensure a safe and secure school environment by identifying and utilizing best practices in behavioral interventions, including proficient use of data tracking and analysis, and restorative practices.	Certified Staff, Non-Certified Staff, & Administrators	• A need to emphasize and promote students' mental health and well-being has been confirmed by district- and school-level survey data via UCESC strategic planning and NJ SCI initiatives. • By focusing on both Tier 1 (universal) and Tier 2 (targeted) behavior supports, the district adopts a proactive and preventative approach. Tier 1 establishes clear expectations and positive reinforcement for all, reducing the likelihood of challenging behaviors. Tier 2 provides early, targeted interventions for students who need more support, preventing issues from escalating to more intensive and disruptive levels. This multi-tiered system ensures that all students receive appropriate support tailored to their needs. • Annual surveys (students, staff, parents) assessing perceptions of safety, orderliness, positive relationships, and overall school environment indicate areas for growth and continued evaluations

3	UCESC staff will acquire foundational knowledge and practical skills for the ethical and effective integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in educational settings, and will be proficient in accessing and utilizing a comprehensive library of AI resources to enhance both student learning and professional practice.	Certified Staff & Administrators	- AI is transforming industries, including education. Equipping staff with foundational knowledge and practical skills in AI ensures UCESC remains current and responsive to technological advancements, preparing both educators and students for the future. - The emphasis on "ethical and effective integration" is vital. As AI tools become more prevalent, it's imperative that staff understand the ethical considerations, biases, and potential pitfalls associated with their use. This proactive learning ensures AI is applied responsibly, safeguarding student data, promoting fairness, and maintaining academic integrity. - Providing access to a "comprehensive library of AI resources" coupled with training on how to "access and utilize" them fosters continuous learning and self-directed professional development. This ensures that the initial training is not a one-time event, but the beginning of an ongoing journey of exploration and application as AI tools continue to evolve.
4	UCESC related service providers and their evaluators will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively understand, navigate, and utilize the revised annual evaluation system, ensuring it reflects current best practices, aligning with district priorities and expectations, and actively supporting their professional growth and development.	Related Service Providers & Administrators	- Related service providers (e.g., physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, social workers) deliver specialized, often direct, services that are integral to a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). An evaluation system that accurately reflects their current best practices ensures that the highest quality, evidence-based services are consistently delivered across the district, directly impacting student outcomes. - The evaluation forms within Frontline currently do not contain specific indicators, and language that directly reflects current best practices for each discipline
4	UCESC school and program staff, will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to develop, implement, and utilize standards-based and data-driven professional learning plans that effectively inform and optimize their respective operational and instructional processes	Certified Staff, Non-Certified Staff, & Administrators	- There is a need to revise professional learning beyond generic training to a targeted, data-driven approach. Staff will acquire the skills to develop and utilize these plans, staff will ensure that professional learning directly addresses the most pressing operational challenges and instructional needs unique to their students and programs, leading to relevant and impactful growth. - Effective professional learning directly translates into more efficient and effective day-to-day operations and higher quality instruction. By systematically using data and adhering to established standards (like the 2022 Standards for Professional Learning implicitly), staff will learn to refine processes, implement evidence-based practices, and adapt strategies, ultimately leading to improved service delivery for students and a more effective work environment for staff.

5	Promote the continuous growth of district staff and ensure compliance with state-mandated professional development requirements through job-embedded, collaborative PLCs.	Certified Staff, Non-Certified Staff, & Administrators	● All administrators and teaching staff members are required to participate in initial and annual refresher training in AchieveNJ regulations and in the board-approved teacher evaluation instrument (Danielson Framework). ● The district is responsible for implementing the state-mandated requirements for professional development for groups of educators as specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C (Refer to attached chart).

2: Professional Learning Activities

		Initial Activities	Follow-up Activities (as appropriate)
1		● Conduct district-wide professional development sessions for all relevant staff on the reflective cycle and newly developed Tier 2 interventions. ● Establish professional learning communities (PLCs) or ongoing study groups focused on applying the reflective cycle to complex student needs and sharing successful intervention strategies.	● Behavior Analysts and Registered Behavioral Technicians will support the safe and effective implementation of crisis intervention strategies in all classrooms. ● Registered Behavioral Technicians will provide training and support to school staff to ensure the successful implementation of student BIPs. ● Administrators, Student Assistance Coordinator, and staff will identify, implement, and review the efficacy of research-based school-wide programs and strategies to decrease discipline, HIB, and substance abuse incidents. ● The Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Administrators, Student Assistance Coordinator, and Health teachers will identify, implement, and review the efficacy of research-based substance abuse programs and strategies that can be integrated into the health curriculum. ● Administrators and staff will identify, implement, and review the efficacy of research-based programs and strategies to increase attendance, decrease cases of HIB, and promote positive behaviors in the classroom. ● Director of Curriculum and selected high school Administrators, Student Assistance Coordinator, and high school social workers will participate in Rutgers University's School of Health Professions' "Enhancing School Mental Health Services Project" and identify best practices and resources useful for expanding the school of Threat Assessment Teams. ● Director of Curriculum and in collaboration with Social Workers and Student Assistance Coordinator, will identify, implement and review the efficacy of research-based strategies that can be integrated into existing curriculum and programs, as well as secondary-level mental health groups.

			● High School Principals, Social Workers, Student Assistance Coordinator will convene regular meetings on students' mental health and substance abuse concerns, as well identify professional development opportunities for Administration and Faculty on these topics.
2		● Analyze existing behavioral data (e.g., Office Discipline Referrals, suspension data, major incident reports) to identify baseline trends and specific areas of need across programs. ● Based on needs assessment and best practices, review and revise existing (or develop new) district-wide standardized frameworks for Tier 1 (universal positive behavior supports, clear expectations, classroom management strategies) and Tier 2 (common evidence-based interventions, referral processes, progress monitoring protocols). ● Conduct an audit of all current behavior data tracking systems in use across programs. Identify inefficiencies, inconsistencies, and gaps in data collection.	● Supervisor of Behavioral Services in collaboration with administrators will develop clear protocols and definitions for data entry to ensure accuracy and consistency across all staff and programs. ● Begin the process of designating or identifying existing staff members for these roles, or initiate recruitment for new hires if internal capacity is insufficient. ● Behavior teams will provide ongoing coaching and modeling of Tier 1 strategies in classrooms and programs. ● Behavior teams will provide targeted professional development for relevant staff (e.g., special education teachers, behavior specialists, related service providers) on specific Tier 2 intervention protocols, functional behavior assessment (FBA) basics, and data-driven decision-making for individualized Tier 2 supports. ● Develop and implement tools (e.g., observation checklists, fidelity rubrics) to regularly monitor the consistent and accurate implementation of Tier 1 and Tier 2 strategies across all programs.
3		● Administer a survey to all staff to gauge their current understanding of AI, their comfort level with technology, and their perceived needs/interests regarding AI tools in education. This helps tailor subsequent training. ● Share established guidelines and board approved AI Policy widely with all staff ● Curate and organize a comprehensive, easily accessible digital library of AI resources (e.g., tutorials, articles, research, vetted tool recommendations, case studies, privacy statements for tools).	● Provide explicit instructions and demonstrations on how to access, navigate, and effectively utilize AI resource libraries. ● Regularly update the comprehensive AI resource library with new research, emerging ethical considerations, and newly vetted tools. ● Periodically reconvene the AI Committee to review and update district AI policies based on technological advancements, usage patterns, and feedback from staff. ● Provide professional learning opportunities on how to teach students about AI, its ethical implications, digital citizenship in an AI-driven world, and responsible AI tool usage. ● Support curriculum development that incorporates age-appropriate AI literacy components.

	- Establish a dedicated committee of Related Service Providers from various disciplines, their evaluators, and district representatives to review all existing evaluation documents, rubrics, form, and instructions currently utilized. This ensures diverse perspectives and expertise. - Collect structured feedback from participants on the clarity, accuracy, supportiveness, and usability of the revised areas of evaluation and language. Identify any ambiguities or areas for further refinement.	- Begin drafting proposed new language for specific sections of the evaluation system (e.g., performance indicators, areas of focus, feedback prompts, professional growth plan sections). - Make necessary adjustments and final edits to the language to ensure it is precise, unambiguous, and fully aligns with best practices and the needs of RSPs and evaluators. - Present the finalized, revised language to relevant district leadership, human resources, and the school board for official approval.
4	- Superintendent will provide initial and annual refresher training on AchieveNJ and the Danielson Framework for Teaching to all newly hired and returning administrators. - School Improvement Panels (SclPs) will be given training and an outline in order to conduct refresher training on Achieve NJ and the Danielson Framework for Teaching for all certified staff. - Director of Curriculum and Instruction will oversee the continued implementation of the online professional development platform. - District will maintain a log of all PD activities to ensure annual compliance with "Professional Development Requirements in Statute and Regulations" published by the NJDOE.	- Administrators will ensure compliance with the district calendar of State-mandated professional development and submit agendas and attendance rosters for all other PD activities throughout the year. - School Improvement Panels (SclPs) will distribute surveys to certified and non-certified staff to determine additional professional development needs and interests and share results with the Superintendent at DEAC Meetings. - School Safety Officer will provide initial and annual refresher training on District Emergency Management policies and regulations for staff, including school custodians and maintenance personnel. - Director of Curriculum and Instruction will evaluate and refine existing practices for providing State-mandated PD to newly-hired and substitute staff.

3: PD Required by Statute or Regulation

State-Mandated PD Activities
Refer to the attached "New Jersey Professional Development Requirements" published by the New Jersey Department of Education in March 2020.

4: Resources and Justification

Resources
A portion of the budget for the 2025-2026 school year has been allocated to address the district, school, and individual goals outlined in this plan. Funds will cover costs of external consultants, training materials, online webinars, technology resources, workshop and tuition reimbursements, travel expenses, staff stipends, and online subscriptions. The Superintendent will control professional development expenses by relying on in-district expertise to provide many of the specified activities. The Board-approved district calendar for the 2025-2026 school year includes five full days of professional development. The collective bargaining agreement between the Commission and the Westlake Education Association allocates 90-minutes per week outside of the school day for certificated staff to engage in sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative professional development activities. UCESC Strategic plan goals and implementation are evaluated and revised as needed.

Justification
Analysis of data gathered from multiple sources during the 2025-2026 school year - including staff observation scores, statewide assessment results, administrative team meetings, staff surveys, the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC), and building-level School Improvement Panels (SclPs) — identified the continued need to provide high-quality professional learning experiences to improve educators' practices in instruction planning and implementation. Emphasis will be placed on a meaningful strategic planning process; the implementation of strategies to proactively prevent and address challenging student behaviors; and mental health concerns of students.

Signature: Date