

The Ecology of Professional Learning

Evanston Township High School 2026-2027





The Ecology of Professional Learning is intended to connect our district priorities with intentional opportunities to co-construct the school we aspire to become.

BEARD

The Ecology of Professional Learning

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Evanston Township High School
District 202
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Instructional Vision

*A Vision for Student and Teacher Learning
Rooted in Equitable Outcomes*

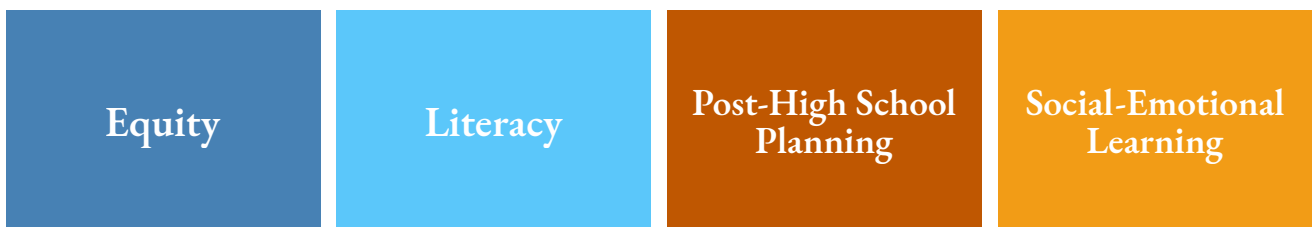
Our Core Belief

At Evanston Township High School, we believe every student can learn at high levels when they experience affirming relationships, rigorous learning opportunities, and meaningful support. Equity is not an initiative, equity is the expectation that each student receives what they need to thrive, and that adult actions and systems produce strong outcomes for every learner.

Our Instructional Vision

In our classrooms, the learning experience is joyful, intellectually stimulating, and centered around students. Every student participates in grade-level learning, feels a sense of belonging, and strives to reach their fullest potential. This is made possible by teachers who consistently enhance their instruction through collaboration, evidence-based practices, and a shared sense of responsibility.

Strategic Priorities



Our Strategic Priorities are our key areas of focus to achieve our long-term goals and mission, serving as a foundation for our decisions, resource allocation, and performance measurement. They are a roadmap—helping us stay focused on what matters most to support student learning and success.



Instructional Framework

The **Instructional Framework** is a research-based set of instructional practices rooted in the district's four Strategic Priorities. This framework provides us with common language and aligned instructional practices, and it will grow and evolve over time along with our collective capacity and input.

At ETHS, our instructional vision is grounded in the belief that every student deserves access to high-quality learning experiences that lead to equitable outcomes academically, socially, and emotionally. To make this vision actionable in every classroom, ETHS uses Marzano's Context, Content, and Feedback framework as our shared instructional language and common set of expectations. Together, Context, Content, and Feedback help us create consistent, supportive learning environments and continuously improve instruction so that every student at ETHS thrives.

Context

Context reflects our commitment to learning spaces where students experience belonging, identity affirmation, and psychological safety so they are ready to engage and take risks in learning.

Content

Content ensures all students engage in rigorous, standards-aligned learning with clear learning targets and success criteria, without lowering expectations.

Feedback

Feedback strengthens equity by helping students understand where they are in their learning, what quality looks like, and what they can do next to improve.



Vision for Learning

Students learn best when they:

- Belong and feel valued in their classroom.
- Have access to effective teaching every day.
- Engage in meaningful, grade-level learning.
- Experience classrooms where their identities are affirmed.
- Feel challenged and supported at the same time.
- Know what they are learning, why it matters, and what quality looks like.
- Encounter high expectations paired with scaffolds, feedback, and multiple pathways to success.
- Consistently experience instruction that is aligned to standards, worthy of their effort, and intellectually rich.
- Receive clear success criteria and feedback.
- Experience a quality of instruction that is consistent across ETHS, regardless of the classroom they are assigned.

Adults learn best when they:

- Learn collaboratively, not in isolation.
- Use evidence of student learning to guide decisions.
- Have clarity, support, and shared responsibility.
- Experience professional learning that is relevant and sustainable.
- Engage in cycles of inquiry and continuous improvement.
- Build their practice by trying small changes, measuring impact, and refining instruction over time.
- Engage in PD that honors their expertise, is grounded in classroom practice, and improves student experiences.
- Analyze student work and learning data to determine what students know, what they need next, and how to respond instructionally.
- Are provided opportunities to apply their learning to their current work with job-embedded practice.
- Participate in coherent, school-wide efforts supported by leadership and focused on outcomes.



Professional Learning Goals

Goal 1

Evidence-Based Implementation of the Framework

Teachers will apply strategies from the Context, Content, and Feedback framework to their practice and use student learning evidence to refine instruction to meet student needs.

Goal 2

Modeling Exemplary Instruction

Our professional learning sessions will serve as a “living lab” where facilitators demonstrate effective teaching strategies, enabling teachers to experience high-quality instruction as learners first.

Goal 3

Collaborative Inquiry for Equitable Outcomes

Staff work collectively to create supports that remove obstacles and open access to grade-level learning for all students.

Goal 4

Sustainable Growth through Classroom Integration

We will focus on “small-change” cycles of inquiry to improve the student experience. This includes implementing instructional strategies, gathering feedback, and sharing results with colleagues for relevant, classroom-based development.



Guiding Principles for Professional Learning

Collaborative & Unified	We engage in shared experiences toward a common goal, fostering a culture where we learn with and from one another.
Student-Centered & Impactful	Every session is rooted in student needs, ensuring that our growth translates into quantifiable improvements in student outcomes.
Honoring Expertise	We recognize and leverage the deep professional knowledge within our building, treating every educator as a valued expert and a lifelong learner.
Inclusive & Multi-Perspective	Our learning environments honor diverse viewpoints and integrate multiple perspectives to enrich our collective practice.
Responsive & Evolution-Focused	We are committed to an agile professional learning model that ensures common foundational experiences for all staff while remaining strictly responsive to feedback to evolve what PD looks like throughout the year.



Session Learning Cycle

Our professional learning is designed to be coherent, relevant, and grounded in practice. Sessions are structured to build on prior learning and support meaningful application. Professional learning at ETHS is also aligned with Learning Forward Standards, ensuring a focus on equity, coherence, and continuous improvement.

Each session follows a consistent cycle:

Review Previous Learning	Connect to prior sessions and learning
Session Objectives	Clarify the focus and goals for the session
Content Delivery	Engage with meaningful, relevant content
Practice/Apply Learning	Provide time to practice and implement new learning
Reflect on Learning	Consider impact, including who the learning supports and where adjustments may be needed
Commit to Action	Commit to action steps based on learning



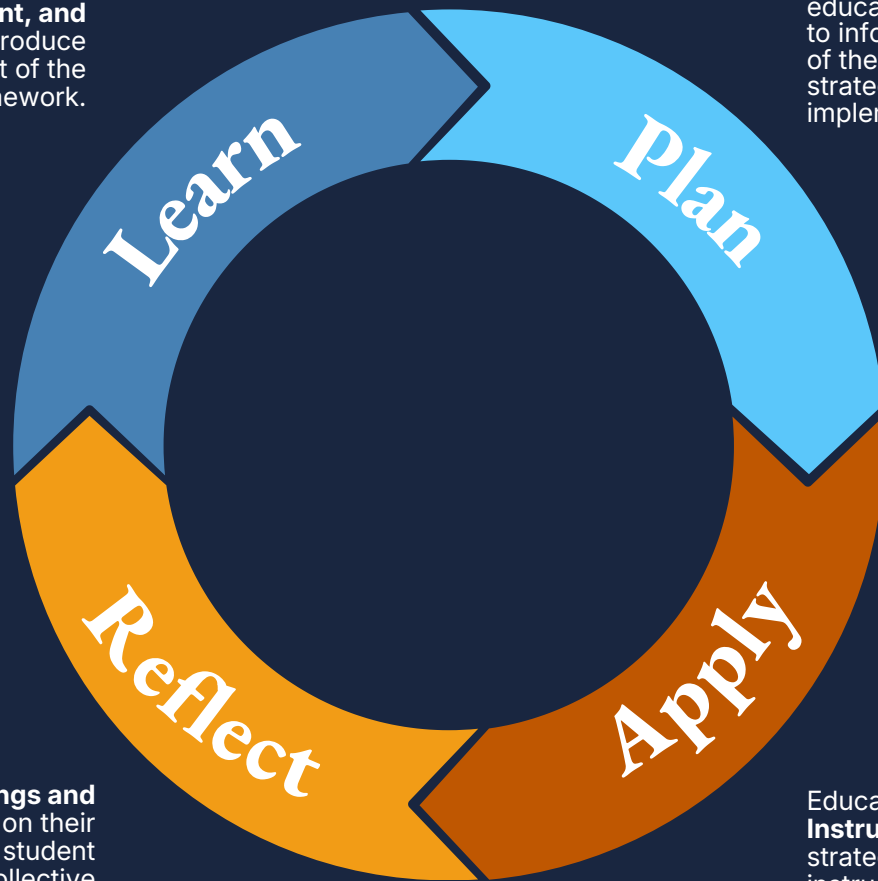
Common Learning Formats

The following formats have explicit and direct connections to Instructional Framework.

All-Staff Meetings	All-staff meetings are designed to foster community, advance district goals, and celebrate successes. These meetings provide timely updates and engage staff with guest speakers to inspire and inform.
Department Meetings	Department meetings focus on understanding and applying the Instructional Framework, addressing initiatives tied to the district priorities, and analyzing data. They also support cross-departmental collaboration, establish common expectations, and promote problem-solving.
Equity Learning Team (ELT)	ELTs are interdisciplinary spaces for collaboration, consultation, and problem-solving.
ELT Action Groups (ELT-AG)	ELT-AGs are small, course-based teams that develop and publish a structured framework for teacher team collaboration.
Action Groups (AG)	Designed for non-licensed staff, AGs are collaborative, job-alike teams that engage in action-planning in alignment with district priorities.
Evanston Educator Academy 1-3 (EEA)	EEA is a three-year induction program designed by teachers for teachers to support newly hired licensed staff with the tools and resources necessary to effectively engage with and contribute to ETHS's commitment to equity, racial justice, and educational excellence.
Self-Directed Learning Time (SDLT)	SDLT is designated for licensed staff to explore topics, collaborate with families, and develop strategies that align with their individual and collaborative goals and instructional needs.

How Our Learning Connects

All-staff, department, and ELT meetings will introduce a common element of the Instructional Framework.



During **ELT Action Groups** educators will explore data to inform their application of the learned instructional strategies and plan for implementation.

Department meetings and ELT-AGs will reflect on their experiences, monitor student impact, learn from collective expertise, and provide feedback as the cycle continues.

Educators will apply the **Instructional Framework** strategies in their instruction, while being mindful of focal students' needs, engagement and success.

Professional Development

PD Calendar At-A-Glance

Quarter 1

August	August 13-14: Institute Days August 24: Dept Meetings August 31: Dept Meetings
September	September 14: ELT September 28: ELT-AG
October	October 5: SDLT

Quarter 3

January	January 4: Institute Day January 11: Dept Meetings January 25: ELT-AG
February	February 1: Dept Meetings February 8: SDLT February 22: ELT-AG
March	March 1: SDLT

Quarter 2

October	October 12: All-Staff October 19: Dept Meetings October 26: ELT-AG
November	November 2: Dept Meetings November 9: SDLT November 16: ELT-AG November 30: SDLT
December	December 7: ELT December 14: SDLT

Quarter 4

March	March 8: Dept Meetings March 15: ELT-AG March 29: SDLT
April	April 5: Dept Meetings April 12: SDLT April 26: ELT-AG
May	May 3: Dept Meetings May 10: SDLT May 17: ELT May 24: All-Staff

Professional Development Calendar Summary

Common Learning Format	Dates	Total
All-Staff Meetings	10/12, 5/24	2
Department Meetings	8/24, 8/31, 10/19, 11/2, 1/11, 2/1, 3/8, 4/5, 4/26, 5/3	9
Evanston Educators Academy	9/28, 10/26, 11/16, 1/25, 2/22, 3/15, 4/26, 5/17	8
Equity Learning Teams	9/14, 12/7, 5/17	3
ELT-Action Groups	9/28, 10/26, 11/16, 1/25, 2/22, 3/15, 4/26, 5/17	8
Institute Days	8/13, 8/14, 1/4	3
Self-Directed Learning Time	8/17, 10/5, 11/9, 11/30, 12/14, 2/8, 3/1, 3/29, 4/12, 5/10	9



Areas of Learning

Licensed Staff

This year's professional learning builds on and extends our previous focus areas, deepening staff understanding and practice over time. Rather than introducing entirely new initiatives, these sessions are designed to strengthen and refine the work already underway, ensuring greater consistency and impact across classrooms.

Focus areas include:

- Conducting, practicing, and deepening lessons
- Using assessments to inform instruction
- Reflecting on learning
- Strengthening co-teaching practices
- Supporting emergent multilingual students
- Implementing realistic, effective differentiation strategies

Non-Instructional Staff

This year's professional learning focuses on practical skills, collaboration, and overall well-being. These sessions are designed to strengthen day-to-day efficiency, enhance communication and teamwork, and support staff in maintaining a balanced and sustainable work environment.

Focus areas include:

- Building technical proficiency with tools such as Google Workspace, AI-supported workflows, and district software
- Strengthening communication through feedback, conflict, management, and cross-department collaboration
- Supporting personal well-being through mental health practices, ergonomics, and stress management.
- Peer learning, mentorship, and community-building.

Additional Professional Learning Opportunities



Instructional Coaching

Overview

Instructional coaching at ETHS is designed to strengthen equity, student learning, and excellence by empowering educators to explore a variety of pedagogical approaches, reflect, and grow in their practice and strengthen relationships with students.

Coaching is grounded in partnership—honoring teacher expertise while providing space for reflection, feedback, and growth. Through cycles of goal-setting, observation, and collaboration, instructional coaching helps ensure that high-quality, equitable instruction is consistent across classrooms. The focus is not on compliance, but on continuous improvement: aligning practices to shared priorities, deepening instructional coherence, and expanding the strategies teachers use to meet the diverse needs of ETHS students.

To achieve this mission, our instructional coaches collaborate with educators to get a clear picture of current reality, identify goals, pick teaching strategies to meet the goals, monitor progress and problem-solve until goals are met. While coaching is required for all licensed teaching staff in their first year at ETHS, coaching is open to all.

Our instructional coaches also lead workshops on social-emotional learning (SEL) and Grading for Equity, partnering with teachers to make grading more accurate, bias-resistant, and motivating.

How to Get Started

- Schedule a session through the [Instructional Coaching Google Site](#).
- Open to all staff (licensed and non-licensed) and required for new licensed staff year one.

Evanston Educators Academy

Overview

The **Evanston Educators Academy** (EEA) is a three-year induction program designed by ETHS teachers for teachers. It introduces, engages, and equips newly hired licensed staff with the tools and resources needed to contribute to ETHS's commitment to equity, racial justice, and educational excellence.

EEA supports district strategic priorities by focusing on instructional practices in literacy and grading, as well as the integration of social-emotional learning and postsecondary readiness. The program also helps staff reflect on how their practices impact students and how students' lived experiences should inform instruction.

Required for New Licensed Staff

- Classroom teachers participate in Years 1-3.
- Non-classroom staff participate in Years 1-2.

Crisis Prevention Intervention

Overview

Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) certification equips staff with the skills to safely and effectively respond to student behavior that may escalate to a crisis. Through this training, participants learn de-escalation strategies, communication techniques, and proactive approaches that prioritize safety, dignity, and respect for all students. CPI supports a consistent, schoolwide approach to managing challenging situations grounded in relationship-building and care.

Required for Select Departments

- Safety Department staff
- Special Education Department staff

Mental Health First Aid

Overview

Mental Health First Aid equips staff with the skills to recognize signs of mental health challenges and respond with appropriate, supportive interventions. Through this training, staff learn how to identify early warning signs, engage students in conversation, and connect them to school-based and community resources. Emphasizing early intervention helps prevent concerns from escalating and ensures students receive timely support.

This training is an important part of creating a safe and responsive school environment. By building staff confidence and awareness, we strengthen our collective ability to support students' mental health, reduce stigma, and promote overall well-being across the school community.

Required for All Staff

- Staff will be scheduled for training.
- Training facilitated by MHFA trainers.

Beyond Diversity

Overview

Beyond Diversity is a powerful, transformative two-day seminar designed to help teachers, administrators, and other educational staff understand the impact of race on our lives, our work, and our learning. Interactive and stirring exercises strengthen participants' critical consciousness of race and lead them to examine the role that racism plays in institutionalizing achievement disparities. Further, Beyond Diversity models and teaches a protocol for discussing race in ways that are productive, insightful, and generative—imparting a method for having a Courageous Conversation.

At Beyond Diversity training you will:

- Engage in a thoughtful exploration of race and racism, and grapple with how each influences the culture and climate of our schools.
- Practice using strategies for identifying and addressing the policies, programs, and practices that negatively impact students of color achievement and serve as barriers to all students.
- Develop the knowledge and requisite skills for engaging, sustaining, and deepening Courageous Conversations about the impact of race and racism on schooling.

Required for All New Staff

- Held annually during the fall semester.
- New staff will receive an invitation.

Restorative Practices

Overview

ETHS is committed to **Restorative Practices** to further the necessary shift from punishment to growth, prevention, healing, repairing harm, and community building. The goal is to create a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all members of the school community. Restorative practices offer an alternative to traditional punitive disciplinary measures by focusing on repairing relationships, addressing the root causes of harm, and promoting accountability while fostering a sense of belonging and well-being through preventative actions.

To support this work, ETHS offers a one-day restorative practices training for staff. This training provides a shared foundation and practical strategies for building relationships, facilitating restorative conversations, and responding to conflict in ways that center repair and accountability. Investing in this training ensures greater consistency across classrooms and strengthens our collective ability to create supportive, inclusive spaces where all students can learn and grow.

Required for All Staff

- Staff will be scheduled for training.
- Training facilitated by restorative practices trainers

Educational Technology

Overview

The **ETHS EdTech Team** provides ongoing professional learning to support the meaningful integration of technology in teaching and learning. Technology Integration Specialists partner with teachers to plan, co-teach, and implement lessons that expand student learning beyond traditional approaches.

The team also works with support staff to strengthen efficiency and scalability through technology-driven systems. Through collaboration, coaching, and responsive support, the EdTech Team helps staff build confidence and capacity in using technology to enhance instruction and operations.

EdTech Resources

- [Educational Technology Website](#)
- [ETHS EdTech PD PowerUP](#)
- [EdTech Newsletter](#)





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