



ST. JOSEPH  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



# Professional Learning Plan

- SJSD Mission Statement: Preparing students for a successful future
- SJSD Vision Statement: Empowering every learner, every day
- Core Values: Communication, Courage, Engaged Citizen, Problem-Solving, & Respect

## SJSD Learning Focus

The Saint Joseph School District believes that effective professional development involves structured learning that transforms teacher practices and improves student learning outcomes. By examining and analyzing student data, the district will provide targeted, sustained, and content-specific professional development to enhance educator effectiveness and positively impact student learning.

## Instructional Coherence

Instructional coherence captures the alignment between what we expect students to learn, how we teach it, and how we know learning is occurring.

It brings together four pillars that will provide the framework for professional learning in the St. Joseph School District:

- Shared understanding of standards
- Strong content knowledge
- Intentional use of district resources
- High-leverage instructional practices

## Professional Learning Academic Calendar:

August 11 – 13: [New Teacher Institute](#)

August 18: Building Professional Learning

August 19 – 20: District Professional Learning

September 18: District Professional Learning

November 2: District Professional Learning

January 4: Building Professional Learning

February 12: District Professional Learning

## Professional Learning Opportunities & Partnerships:

- June 9 – 10: Assessment for Learning & Proficiency Scales in partnership with Northwest Regional Professional Development Center (NWRPDC)
- July 20 – 24: [Kagan Cooperative Learning](#)
- August 5 – 6: [University of Florida Literacy Institute](#)
- [LETRS](#) in partnership with NWRPDC

- [Clarity to Competency Cohorts](#) in partnership with Kara Vandas and NWRPDC
- Benchmark Advance and Amplify Science Implementation Support
- National Board Certification Cohort

## Instructional Coaches

Fine Arts & PE: Janell Becerra

Early Learning Center & Elementary: Angie Chavez

Elementary Support: Shannon Bush, Amy Cardwell, Tiffani Teschner, and Heather Wiedmer

K – 12 Mathematics: Vic Mueller and Colin Pettegrew

Secondary English Language Arts: Kelly Lock-McMillen

Secondary Science: Breanna Figg

Secondary Social Studies: James Hosler

Secondary Electives & Real-World Learning: Cori Elms

## SJSD Professional Development Committee

The Saint Joseph School District Professional Development Committee (PDC) believes that strong educators are the key to student success. Our mission is to support all educators through meaningful, high-quality professional learning that promotes growth and strengthens instructional practices. Rooted in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process, the PDC plan encourages collaboration and the use of research-based strategies to drive measurable improvements in student outcomes.

Professional learning in SJSD will be sustained, job-embedded, collaborative, data-informed, and student-centered. This approach guides both district- and building-level decisions and serves as a foundation for setting priorities, designing learning experiences, and evaluating impact with a clear focus on improving student achievement.

This plan is informed and supported by the [Missouri Professional Learning Guidelines](#) and [Learning Forward's](#) standards for professional learning.

### PDC Purpose

- Provide district- and building-level professional learning opportunities and resources to support both beginning and experienced educators.
- Assess the needs of students and educators, and design targeted, high-quality professional development opportunities for certified staff.
- Gather and present faculty input, ideas, and instructional recommendations to appropriate district or building leadership.
- Collaborate with district leadership to develop a focused, aligned professional development plan that supports instructional improvement for all SJSD certified staff.

- Oversee and manage the allocation and use of building-level 1% professional development funds in accordance with district policy and state guidelines.

## PDC Goals

The SJSJ PDC will work as a Professional Learning Community to provide a variety of learning opportunities and formats to teachers designed to improve instructional effectiveness and student achievement in alignment with the SJSJ Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

### Focus 1: Professional Development Philosophy

- Professional development means a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and administrators' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

### Focus 2: Professional Development as a Collective Responsibility for Improved Student Performance

- Aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards as well as related to the SJSJ and school improvement goals.
- Conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by well-prepared school administrators, mentors, master teachers, or other teacher leaders
- Primarily occurs several times a week among established teams of teachers, administrators, and other instructional staff members where the team of educators engage in a continuous cycle of improvement

### Focus 3: Professional Development Continuous Cycle of Improvement

- Data-driven
- Clear educator learning goals derived from accurate analysis of data
- Results-based approach that improves instructional effectiveness and student achievement

### Focus 4: Implementation and Reflection

- Educators intentionally apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their classrooms to enhance instructional practices.
- Structured reflection follows implementation to assess the impact on student learning and instructional effectiveness.

- Reflective practices guide instructional decisions and inform future professional learning.
- Supports the continuous improvement of teaching and learning through intentional application and evaluation.

## Committee Member Expectations

- Shall be certified staff with a minimum of two years' teaching experience.
- One year of teaching experience must be in the St. Joseph School District.
- Shall be elected for two-year terms and can be re-elected for consecutive terms.
- Shall be elected prior to/no later than April 30th from each building in the district
- Will attend the May meeting (currently or newly elected in May).
- Newly elected members do not have nominating/voting rights at the May meeting unless they solely represent their building attendance.
- If a PDC member resigns from their position, a new representative will be elected from the same building to complete the remainder of the term.

Each school will have one representative. Members will also include the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, who will serve as a non-voting advisory member of the PDC. The Director will attend each meeting in accordance with The Outstanding Schools Act, SB 287.

The PDC will nominate three members to serve on the PDC Leadership Committee, ensuring representation from both elementary and secondary levels. Each leader must have a minimum of one year of PDC experience, and the committee must represent both elementary and secondary levels. The PDC Leadership Committee will serve a term of two years and may be re-elected. After each term, the full committee will vote to either retain the current leadership or elect new members. Each school or program will have its own Professional Development Committee, composed of the building's PDC representative and a building administrator.

## PDC Representative Responsibilities

The SJSJ PDC shall plan, develop, coordinate, and oversee professional growth activities within a framework approved by the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education, with the purpose of supporting district leadership in achieving the goals outlined in the CSIP.

- Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional development.
- Provide support for new Professional Development Committee members, including budgeting and maintaining building-level professional development funds, sharing new learning opportunities with educators, and actively participating in committee meetings.

- Implement and maintain a system to gather and respond to staff feedback regarding professional development needs.
- Collaborate with appropriate administrators to develop each building's professional development proposal aligned with the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan and the Building School Improvement Plan.
- Work with administrators and teacher leaders to review building-level action steps that support the school improvement plan.

## PDC Committee Meeting Schedule for 2026-2027

August (Pre-Service): TBD

PDC Executive Board – New Teachers

September 3, 2026: 4:15 – 5:00 PM

October 8, 2026: 4:15 – 5:00 PM

February 18, 2027: 4:15 – 5:00 PM

April 8, 2027: 4:15 – 5:00 PM

May 13, 2027: 4:15 – 5:00 PM

## Professional Development Budgeting Process

The Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 (SB, 287) which takes precedence after House Bill 1543 sunset in 2013, indicates that each school district shall allocate one percent of its revenue from the foundation program, exclusive of categorical add-ons, to the Professional Development Committee (PDC) for professional development. Of the monies allocated to the PDC, 75 percent shall be spent in the same fiscal year for the purposes determined by the PDC after consultation with the administrators of the school district and approved by the local school board of education as meeting the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) of the district that has been developed by the local board.

## Policy: 1% Budget Rule for Saint Joseph School District

In accordance with the Missouri Professional Guidelines for Student Success (2013, pp. 66-71), the following rules govern the use of the 1% Professional Development funds in the Saint Joseph School District:

1. *PDC Fund Spending Deadline*: All Professional Development Committee (PDC) funds allocated to individual buildings must be fully expended by April 15th of each academic year.
2. *Ineligible Expenses*: PDC funds from the Saint Joseph School District will not be used to reimburse tuition or fees for selected programs, college, or university courses.
3. *National Board Certification Support*: The Saint Joseph School District will provide support for educators pursuing National Board Certification. This support will be coordinated at the district level and will not be funded through building-level PDC funds. The district will designate four dedicated days during which candidates will receive support for their National Board work. This initiative will be organized and managed solely at the district level.
4. *Off-Campus Professional Development Attendance*: Teachers attending professional development off-campus will not be compensated for their attendance time. However, funds may be available for registration, travel, lodging, and meals depending on the building's rotation cycle.
5. *Professional Development Participation and Delivery*: Educators who attend off-campus professional development are expected to share key learning with peers or other educators through appropriate means such as team meetings, PLCs, or staff development sessions. Educators who contribute to the design of Saint Joseph School District or building-level professional development, the planning and preparation completed outside of contract time, may be compensated for their work in accordance with the most recent additional pay rate documentation maintained by the SJSD Human Resources Department.
6. *Efficient Use of Funds*: Staff compensated through 1% PDC funds must be utilized in the most efficient and impactful manner possible. No more than 10% of a building's annual PDC budget may be allocated toward the purchase of professional books or texts. All book purchases must be part of an approved professional development plan and directly tied to instructional improvement efforts.
7. *Needs-Based Allocation*: PDC funds shall not be divided equally among educators within a building for the sole purpose of equal distribution. While equal distribution of funds

may appear fair, equitable use ensures that funding supports those with the greatest need or the most strategic impact on student learning and instructional improvement.

## Evaluation of District and Building Professional Development

The evaluation of the St. Joseph School District (SJSJ) Professional Development Plan is guided by a continuous improvement mindset and assessed through four key lenses. Effectiveness is measured using metrics aligned with the district's Academic Services Goals:

1. *Academic Achievement and Growth*

Increase student academic performance and growth in English Language Arts (ELA), science, mathematics, and social studies as measured by state assessments, aiming for an “on track” designation.

2. *Student Readiness*

Improve the Success-Ready Students indicator from “approaching” to “on track,” reflecting students’ preparedness for future academic and career success.

3. *Implementation Observations*

Utilize formal and informal walk-through observations conducted by building principals and district leaders to assess the implementation and impact of professional development practices in classrooms.

4. *Survey Data from Staff*

Gather & analyze feedback from educators on their professional growth needs and the relevance, quality, and impact of professional development offerings, to inform ongoing planning and support.

## Approval of 2026–2027 Educator Compensation and Professional Learning Supports as Recommended by the Professional Development Committee

### Item #1: Approval of Mentor Stipend for First and Second Year Teacher Support

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC Board approve the allocation of \$500 to be paid to each mentor for every first or second year teacher they support. These funds will be used to recognize the time, effort, and guidance mentors provide as part of our teacher induction and support efforts.

Rationale: Mentors play a critical role in the success and retention of new teachers by offering instructional support, classroom management strategies, and professional guidance. This

stipend acknowledges the valuable contributions of mentors in fostering a strong start for early-career educators.

Amount: \$500 per mentor per new teacher for a maximum total of \$80,000.

### Item #2: Approval of Allocation of Funds to Support National Board Certification Candidates

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC Board approve the allocation of funds to support individuals pursuing National Board Certification. This funding will support up to four candidates as they engage in the rigorous certification process.

Rationale: National Board Certification is a prestigious, research-based certification process that recognizes accomplished teaching. Supporting educators in this pursuit promotes professional growth, strengthens instructional practices, and contributes to overall student success. Providing financial assistance demonstrates the district's commitment to developing and retaining highly qualified teachers.

Amount: \$2,000 per candidate (up to 4) and \$1,000 for mentor compensation for a total of \$9,000.

### Item #3: Approval of Stipend for Building PDC Representative

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC Board approve a stipend of \$1,500 for each PDC (Professional Development Committee) building representative in recognition of their service and leadership throughout the school year.

Rationale: PDC representatives play an essential role in supporting professional development efforts within their buildings, serving as a liaison between staff and the district-level PDC. Their work includes gathering input, communicating opportunities, and helping align professional development with building and district goals.

Amount: \$1,500 per building PDC representative for a total of \$33,000 (22 buildings).

### Item #4: Approval of Compensation for Planning and Preparation of District Learning

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC Board approve compensation for teachers who contribute to the planning and preparation of district learning initiatives. Teachers will be paid at a rate of \$25 per hour, up to a maximum of 4 hours.

Rationale: To ensure high-quality, consistent instructional experiences for students, teachers are being asked to support the development of district-wide learning resources. Compensating them for their time acknowledges the expertise and effort required to create meaningful, standards-aligned content that benefits students across the district.

Amount: \$25 per hour, up to 4 hours per participating teacher (maximum of \$100 per teacher per learning day) - District maximum at \$5,000.

#### Item #5: Approval of Expansion of BTAP to On-site Support

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC board approve compensation for the expansion of BTAP from evening dates to on-site visits within their assigned buildings.

Rationale: To ensure high-quality support for our new teachers in alignment with the DESE BTAP guidelines and Teacher Standards.

Amount: \$375 per day (each building will receive a half day) - District maximum up to \$8000.

#### Item #6: Approval of Compensation for Curriculum Writing

Recommendation: It is recommended that the PDC board approve compensation for curriculum writing. Teachers will be paid at a rate of \$25 an hour, up to 15 hours per individual.

Rationale: Curriculum writing strengthens instructional coherence by aligning standards, assessments, and Tier 1 instructional practices, which reduces variability and improves student outcomes. Compensating teachers for this work builds internal capacity and ensures high-quality, data-informed materials that support consistent PLC processes and implementation fidelity across the district.

Amount: \$25 per hour, up to 15 hours per participating teacher - District maximum at \$10,000.

# 2026-2027 PDC Membership Roster

Tabitha Kieser, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

## High Schools

Benton High School  
Central High School

Shane Heard  
Jacob Lewis/Stacy Schubert

## Middle Schools

Bode Middle School  
Lafayette Middle School  
Spring Garden Middle School  
Truman Middle School

\*Elizabeth Hoskins  
\*Barbara Spencer  
Sara Fortune  
Denise Dibella

## Elementary Schools

Bessie Ellison Elementary School  
Carden Park Elementary School  
Coleman Elementary School  
Edison Elementary School  
Hosea Elementary School  
Hyde Elementary School  
Lindbergh Elementary School  
Oak Grove Elementary School  
Parkway Elementary School  
Pickett Elementary School  
Robidoux Elementary School  
Skaith Elementary School

Julie Salsberry  
\*Karri Chladek  
Amy Weiser  
Stephanie Simmons  
Regan Atkins  
Nicole Matthews  
Ryleigh Nurski  
Natasha Mayberry  
Tasha Hollingsworth  
Vanessa Boyer  
Madison Michalski  
Hannah Adams

## Early Learning Centers

Mark Twain Early Learning Center  
Lake Early Learning Center

Shauna Collier  
Karamaneh Tolbert

## Alternative/Technical Education

Hillyard Technical Center  
Webster Learning Center

Dana Smith  
Chrystal Vessar

\*Denotes Executive Board

Prepared by Tabitha Kieser – May 2026

