



Amherst Central School District Professional Learning Plan

2026-2031

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Introduction

The overriding goal of the district Professional Learning Plan (PLP) Committee was to design a PLP that is consistent with all State and Federal requirements and the district's continued commitment to optimize teaching and learning through quality professional learning opportunities that are culturally responsive and reflect the needs of the community.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this PLP is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that when teachers and leaders participate in sustained professional learning they have opportunities for professional growth, remain current with their profession and meet the learning needs of their students. Although this plan is a multi-year plan, the PLP will be updated and reviewed each year as state and federal requirements change. Whenever appropriate, instructional staff will be directly involved in the planning, delivery, application and/or evaluation of professional learning activities.

Annual Review Process

The PLP is reviewed and revised by the Professional Learning Committee as part of our annual review process. The committee includes all required stakeholders and representatives from all four district buildings. The revised document will be submitted to the Board of Education annually for approval at the first July Board meeting (reorganization meeting) and serve as our guide for professional learning for the 2026-2031 school years. The PLP supports high quality experiences for our instructional staff.

ACSD Professional Learning Plan Committee Membership

The pre-k-12 Curriculum Leaders worked in collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology to provide recommendations to the PLP Committee. Revisions and updates were achieved through a consensus process that encouraged input from all stakeholders. Stakeholders were selected by their respective groups, and included at least one member from every school building.

Representative	Title, Building
Anthony Panella	Superintendent
Lynn Shanahan	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Technology
Amy Steger	Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Julie Doyle	Assistant Principal, Amherst Middle School
Kimberly Hlavaty	Assistant Principal, Windermere Boulevard Elementary
Dr. David Wilson	Parent Representative and Higher Education Representative
Lynn Errington	Board of Education Member
Annessa Cotterman	First Grade Teacher, Smallwood Drive Elementary
Kimberly Ignatius	First Grade Teacher, Windermere Boulevard Elementary
Danielle Maciok	Kindergarten Teacher, Windermere Boulevard Elementary
Kimberly King	Math Department Chair, Amherst Central High School
Renee Marko	Math Interventionist, Amherst Middle School
Krystina Kagen	Teaching Assistant, Amherst Central High School
Donna Frymire	District Technology Integration Specialist

District Mission and Goals

District Mission

At Amherst Central School District, our mission is to prepare all students to excel in a dynamic world through the development of their abilities to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, communicate and collaborate effectively.

District Goals

In the Spring of 2016 the Amherst Central School District launched a partnership with the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester to begin a process to create a district strategic plan. In 2022, we renewed our partnership with Warner School of Education to assist with a plan “reset” after the Pandemic shifted the original strategic plan.

The District Strategic Plan can be found [here](#).

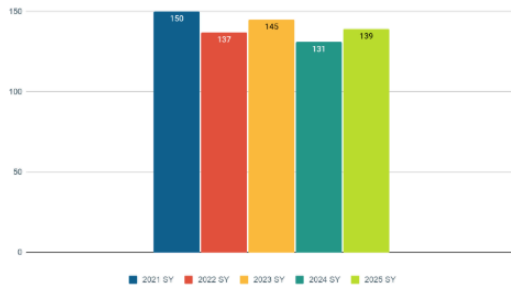
District Enrollment Data

BEDS Day Enrollment - by Ethnicity					
	2021 SY	2022 SY	2023 SY	2024 SY	2025 SY
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	9	12	10	8
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	264	272	284	321	340
Black or African American	427	454	425	441	445
Hispanic or Latino	160	181	186	189	200
White	1,961	1,914	1,881	1,875	1,842
Multiracial	155	161	172	192	195

Note - Students of Middle Eastern descent are categorized as "White" per NYSED reporting standards.

Common Subgroup Populations

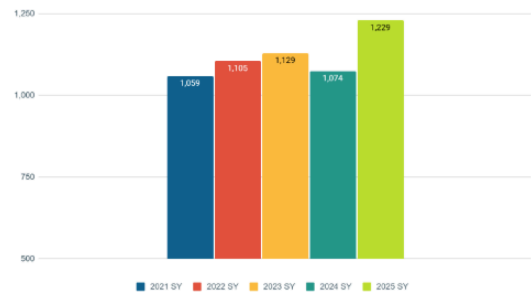
5-Year BEDS Day Enrollment - English Language Learner



	2021 SY	2022 SY	2023 SY	2024 SY	2025 SY
English Language Learner	150	137	145	131	139

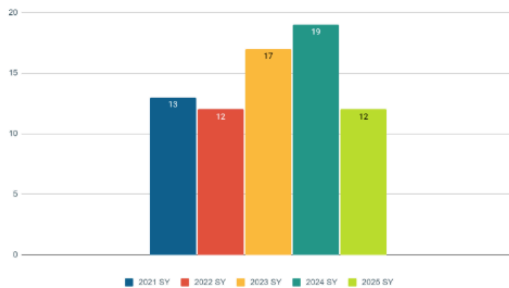
	2021 SY	2022 SY	2023 SY	2024 SY	2025 SY
Economically Disadvantaged	1,059	1,105	1,129	1,074	1,229

5-Year BEDS Day Enrollment - Economically Disadvantaged



Common Subgroup Populations

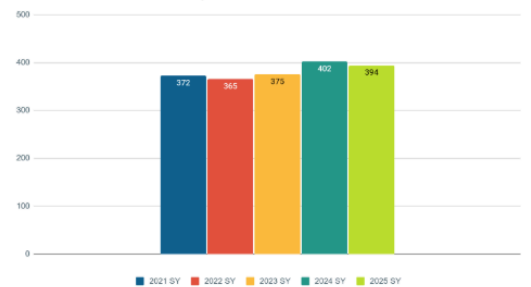
5-Year BEDS Day Enrollment - Homeless



	2021 SY	2022 SY	2023 SY	2024 SY	2025 SY
Homeless	13	12	17	19	12

	2021 SY	2022 SY	2023 SY	2024 SY	2025 SY
Students with Disabilities	372	365	375	402	394

5-Year BEDS Day Enrollment - Students with Disabilities



Standards Alignment

The Amherst Central School District recognizes the importance of aligning professional learning opportunities with the state standards to ensure its teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to teach their students effectively. The district's PLP focuses on providing opportunities for teachers to enhance their content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and use of technology in the classroom, all aligned with the teaching standards.

NYS Professional Learning Standards

The Ten Standards for High-Quality Professional Learning:

1. **Designing Professional Learning:** Professional learning design is based on data; is derived from the experience, expertise and needs of the recipients; reflects best practices in sustained job-embedded learning; and incorporates knowledge of how adults learn.
2. **Content Knowledge and Quality Teaching:** Professional learning expands educators' content knowledge and the knowledge and skills necessary to provide developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and assess student progress.
3. **Research-based Professional Learning:** Professional learning is research-based and provides educators with opportunities to analyze, apply and engage in research.
4. **Collaboration:** Professional learning ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment.
5. **Diverse Learning:** Professional learning ensures that educators have the knowledge and skill to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
6. **Student Learning Environments:** Professional learning ensures that educators are able to create safe, secure, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students.
7. **Parent, Family and Community Engagement:** Professional learning ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill, and opportunity to engage and collaborate with parents, families, and other community members as active partners in children's education.
8. **Data-driven Professional Practice:** Professional learning uses disaggregated student data and other evidence of student learning to determine professional learning needs and priorities, to monitor student progress, and to help sustain continuous professional growth.
9. **Technology:** Professional learning promotes technological literacy and facilitates the effective use of all appropriate technology.
10. **Evaluation:** Professional learning is evaluated using multiple sources of information to assess its effectiveness in improving professional practice and student learning.

NYS Teaching Standards

The New York State Board of Regents has endorsed the following seven (7) teaching standards:

Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning Teachers acquire knowledge of each student, and demonstrate knowledge of student development and learning to promote student achievement.

Standard II: Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning Teachers know the content they are responsible for teaching and plan instruction that ensures growth and achievement for all students.

Standard III: Instructional Practice Teachers implement instruction that engages and challenges all students to meet or exceed the learning standards.

Standard IV: Learning Environment Teachers work with all students to create a dynamic learning environment that supports achievement and growth.

Standard V: Assessment and Student Learning Teachers use multiple measures to assess and document student growth, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and modify instruction.

Standard VI: Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility and engage relevant stakeholders to maximize student growth, development, and learning.

Standard VII: Professional Growth Teachers set informed goals and strive for continuous professional growth.

NYS Next Generation Learning Standards

This PLP is aligned with the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards and assessment program.

Access the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards [here](#)

NYS Educational Leadership Standards

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) 2008 standards organizes the functions that help define strong school leadership under six standards. These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that education leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for Educational Leaders were developed by a group of educators, policymakers, and practitioners to provide a framework for effective school leadership. There are six standards in total:

Standard I: Visionary Leadership: Educational leaders should have a clear and compelling vision for their school or district, and they should be able to communicate that vision to others.

Standard II: Instructional Improvement: Leaders should promote a culture of continuous improvement and be able to use data to inform decision-making and improve instruction.

Standard III: Effective Management: Leaders should be skilled at managing people, resources, and processes to create a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard IV: Inclusive Practice: Leaders should be committed to creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed.

Standard V: Ethical Leadership: Leaders should model ethical behavior and ensure that all members of the school community uphold high standards of integrity and accountability.

Standard VI: Contextual Leadership: Leaders should be able to understand and respond to the unique needs of their school or district, and they should be able to adapt their leadership style accordingly.

These standards are intended to guide the preparation, evaluation, and professional learning of educational leaders at all levels, from aspiring principals to district superintendents.

The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders communicate expectations to practitioners, supporting institutions, professional associations, policymakers, and the public about the work, qualities, and values of effective educational leaders. These standards are organized around the

domains, qualities, and values of leadership work that research and practice indicate contribute to students' academic success and well-being.

Identifying PLP Needs and Sustaining an Effective Plan

Professional Learning Planning Needs:

Every component of the Amherst Central School District's PLP is aligned with New York State learning standards, assessments, PLP Guiding Principles and is based on student needs identified through the sources listed in Needs Assessment Sources Used. Data related to increasing student achievement will continue to drive the district's professional learning opportunities. The plan is a continuous, developmental, incremental multi-year approach to improving student performance.

Current district initiatives and future initiatives will be data driven to provide information useful in strategically enhancing student achievement and performance. Each building will develop additional professional learning opportunities for instructional staff. Local standards and assessments will continue to be developed and refined based on state standards and local student performance results as indicated by the data.

Curriculum maps P-12 continue to be reviewed and updated periodically in order to maximize instructional time and integrate and align the curriculum vertically and horizontally across disciplines and grade levels.

A cadre of peer teacher and leadership mentors, trained in the Essential Elements of Instruction and Clinical Supervision, will serve as a pool of trained mentors to teachers/administrators new to the district. These mentors will also assist in providing training as part of the week-long new teacher/new administrator orientation programs and follow-up training provided after school.

Needs Analysis Process

A needs analysis is a crucial step in developing an effective PLP. It helps to identify areas where teachers and staff need additional support or training so that professional learning can be tailored to meet those needs. Amherst CSD uses the following steps to conduct a needs analysis:

- 1. Define the Purpose of the Needs Analysis:** The analysis is based on data sources collected, the District Strategic Plan with a focus on improving student outcomes.
- 2. Gather Data:** ACSD gathers data throughout the year to identify areas where teachers and staff need additional support or training. This is done through a variety of methods, such as stakeholder surveys, student input, classroom observations, and assessment results - local and state - as well as building-based strategic planning committees and the district Professional Learning Committee.
- 3. Analyze the Data:** The building, District and administrative groups, review data to identify patterns and trends, focused on areas such as teacher knowledge and skills,

student performance, and school culture and climate, and to identify any gaps or areas where additional support is needed. They then discuss these needs and make decisions on professional learning opportunities that address those needs.

4. Prioritize Needs: The identified needs are prioritized based on the impact that addressing each need will have on student outcomes and based on available resources.

5. Develop Professional Learning Goals: The District develops professional learning goals based on the prioritized needs. These goals are specific, measurable, and aligned with the district's strategic plan and goals. They also address the identified needs and are focused on improving student outcomes.

6. Identify Professional Learning Opportunities: With the professional learning goals in place, the District has identified professional learning opportunities that will address the identified needs, including workshops, conferences, webinars, and online courses, offered locally, through BOCES or other organizations.

7. Develop a Professional Learning Plan: Finally, the Professional Learning Committee district develops and revises its PLP that outlines the specific activities, timelines, and resources needed to achieve the professional learning goals. This plan also identifies the measures that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning.

Needs Analysis Sources To Be Used For Planning

The following sources are used in order to develop goals, objectives, activities and evaluation instruments for professional learning:

1. Comprehensive District Education Plan including benchmark assessments (Fastbridge Screening and Diagnostic Assessments)
2. School report card comparative data (previous 5 years)
3. Disaggregated Student NYS Assessment Performance results (Amherst, regional and NYS)
4. BEDS data
5. Demographic &/or cohort data
6. Student attendance data
7. Free and reduced lunch statistics
8. Discipline data (offenses and consequences)
9. Social Emotional Learning Rating Scales (Grades 2-12)
10. Department and Curriculum Leader Input

Sustainability:

Our district has a sustainable District Strategic Plan with established priorities and initiatives that are to be acted upon each year. We have aligned the professional development opportunities with the Strategic Plan Initiatives.

New York State Department of Education PLP Guiding Principles

- Subject matter content of professional learning activities/experiences is clearly connected to student achievement of the NYS Learning Standards.
- Professional learning activities/experiences are planned with the NYS Teacher Standards as underpinning.
- Professional learning activities/experiences should respond to student achievement data including State and local assessments and School District Report Cards.
- Professional learning is shaped by teaching staff needs, as evidenced by such data as aggregate results of annual professional performance reviews.
- The professional learning planning process is dynamic, reflecting teaching staff and student performance benchmarks of increasing rigor as skill levels are attained.
- Professional learning results in a demonstrated increase in teaching staff knowledge and understanding, teaching staff skillfulness, and teaching staff professional values.
- Professional learning activities/experiences are assessed on an on-going and continuous basis for intended impact. Defensible evaluation tools/methods must be used to determine modifications to planned activities/experiences.
- Professional learning is, to the greatest extent possible, site-based and connected to daily school experiences.
- Professional learning enables the teaching staff to deepen their knowledge base and remain current in their content area and instructional strategies.
- Teaching staff learning opportunities are clearly constructed, based on effective teaching research, and involves educators in the design and implementation of such opportunities.

Content of courses, workshops, and other professional learning experiences for teachers/teaching assistants/leadership should be directly related to:

- enhancing their subject matter knowledge, · and knowledge, use and application of appropriate teaching techniques
- broadening and enhancing their abilities to apply more accurate and appropriate assessment methodologies
- enhancing their skills in effectively managing individual students and classroom in both heterogeneous and homogeneous classes

Required Trainings

The District is committed to ensuring that all employees complete required state, federal, and district-mandated professional learning activities in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and Board of Education policies. Required training will be provided annually and/or within prescribed timelines for all applicable staff members. Such training may include, but is not limited to, Child Abuse Identification and Reporting, Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), Sexual Harassment Prevention, School Violence Prevention and Intervention, Bloodborne Pathogens, Right-to-Know/Hazard Communication, Emergency Response Procedures, Cybersecurity and Data Privacy, Mandated Reporter Training, and any other training required by the New York State Education Department, New York State agencies, or federal regulations. The District will maintain records of completion and monitor compliance to ensure all staff members meet required training expectations.

Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE)

On July 1, 2016, NYSED began implementation of the NYS Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) regulations. These regulations require that teachers, administrators with professional certificates successfully complete 100 clock hours of acceptable CTLE every five years if they practice in a NYS school district or BOCES. All District professional learning activities for which CTLE credit is given address at least one of the following three CTLE focus areas: content area knowledge, pedagogy, and language acquisition (including cultural competency). The district will provide opportunities for all instructional staff and leaders to meet New York State professional learning requirements for teachers (100 hours every 5-year period), including 15% of the PD hours being focused on English Language Learners, and substitute teachers who work on a long term basis, (i.e., 80-5.4). Staff development opportunities may include, but are not limited to: required district staff development days, required building level staff development, a variety of appropriate professional learning activities provided externally (e.g. BOCES, professional organizations) and pre-approved staff development opportunities generated by teachers and teaching assistants. Please see the list of service providers.

The district recognizes the 2025 transition from the Teaching Assistant Level I, II, and III certification structure to the Initial Teaching Assistant and Professional Teaching Assistant certification framework. Throughout the implementation period, the district will provide information, guidance, and professional learning opportunities to support Teaching Assistants in understanding and meeting certification requirements. Professional development activities will be aligned to ensure Teaching Assistants continue to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to support student achievement and district instructional priorities. For

example, Initial and Professional Teaching Assistants hold their certificate for a 5 year period, during that 5 year period the Teaching Assistant must complete 100 hours of professional development with 15% being focused on English Language Learners.

Language Acquisition Requirement

Teachers who have the ESOL certificate, English to Speakers of Other Languages, must complete a minimum of 50% of their required CTLE in language acquisition. All other professional certificates must complete a minimum of 15% of the required CTLE clock hours in language acquisition.

Record of Professional Learning

The District uses a web-based system for teachers and staff to maintain their record of professional learning activities. It is the responsibility of the staff member to enter such activities, obtain necessary approvals, and verify attendance. Such records may be helpful for teachers as evidence of their required professional learning for CTLE credit.

In 2026-2031, teachers and teaching assistants (Level III) will record all approved PLP activities and hours within our standardized district-wide tracking system (Vector). Approval and verification of attendance is completed by administrators. The district will maintain the records of the CTLE activities for 8 years.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology to:

- Collaborate with the Assistant Superintendent of Staff Services to assure that we understand and follow through on the new CTLE requirements with fidelity
- Ensure that PLP activities are congruent with District Goals and Objectives
- Maintain the PLP Database
- Maintain a list of pre-approved PLP activities with corresponding PLP hours where appropriate
- Solicit and manage funds dedicated to professional learning
- Oversee implementation

Each year, a subcommittee from the PLP Committee is selected to provide oversight in the following areas:

- Discrepancies over disapproval of professional learning opportunities generated by the instructional staff
- Discrepancies over the assignment of PLP hours

The subcommittee for '26-'31 will consist of an administrator, Teacher and Teaching Assistant

2026-2031 Instructional Staff Professional Learning Plan Goals

As a result of the needs analysis, the following results-driven goals were identified as priorities for the next five academic years. District PLP Goals were updated by the planning committee, and all district professional learning activities must align with the revised goals and objectives. All district and building-level staff development, as well as individual, pre-approved staff development opportunities consistent with the Professional Learning Goals and Objectives will count towards PLP hours. Continual monitoring of student achievement through data analysis, at district and building levels will provide information that will serve as the basis for refining and/or modifying the PLP for successive years.

I. To enhance student academic and social, emotional, behavioral achievement by cultivating an asset-based approach to the district's shifting demographics. An asset-based approach to learning builds on students' existing strengths, cultural backgrounds, and lived experiences. Amherst Central School District will design and deliver differentiated, tiered professional learning rooted in the NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework. This systemic training will equip all faculty and staff with actionable strategies to support English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, and students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, ensuring equitable access to high-quality instruction.

II. To advance faculty data literacy and continue to strengthen the district's data infrastructure. Amherst Central School District will provide sustained professional learning on data-informed decision-making, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), student management systems comprehensive assessment shifts (including universal screeners, diagnostics, common formatives, and progress monitoring), and evidence-based interventions.

III. To foster student agency, voice, and autonomy across all grade levels. Amherst Central School District will engage instructional staff in professional learning centered on Performance-Based Learning and Assessment (PBLA) and the NY Inspires Initiative. This professional development will empower educators to design learning experiences that actively cultivate, measure, and embed the core attributes of the district's Portrait of a Graduate into daily classroom instruction.

IV. Develop a sustainable culture of innovation by building staff knowledge, confidence, and instructional practices related to emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to improve student outcomes, operational efficiency, and future-ready learning experiences.

Outside PL Providers & Potential Approvable PL Credit

The table below describes the types of Professional Learning that we will offer by outside providers in the Amherst Central School District. It is a comprehensive list of any Professional Learning CTLE provider that we may use in the 2026-2031 school year or thereafter.

PL Provider	Company/Educational Institution	Brief Description of CTLE Activities Aligned with Plan	Goals
Melissa Duquette, BOCES	Erie I BOCES, Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network Technical	Provide professional learning opportunities focused on co teaching, scaffolding materials for English Language Learners, and diagnostic literacy assessments with ENL students	I, II
Responsive Classroom Consulting Team	Private, Responsive Classroom	Focused on setting up the elementary classroom first six weeks of school (e.g., using positive teacher language to establish high academic and behavior expectations, offering engaging academics, establishing routines for collaborative learning Also Responding to Behaviors professional development.	I, III
David Meichenbaum, Ph.D.	Private, Summit Educational Resources (Behavioral Specialist)	Classroom management. Focus on the needs of student cultural groups within our district.	I, II
Jessica Kauffman (Science)	Erie 1 BOCES, prek-12 science	PL focused on prek-12 science standards, NYSED cluster-based assessments and Computer Based Testing	I,II,III, IV
Dr. Erin Kearney	Higher Education, University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education	Provide professional	I,II,III, IV

		development in the new World Languages Standards and realign curriculum.	
Jessica Karnes	Erie I BOCES	Provide professional development on the Seal of Civic Readiness, and project-based learning and curriculum mapping.	I,II,III, IV
Stephanie Fabiny	Erie I BOCES	Provide professional development, specifically coaching on integrated co teaching models and specially designed instruction, and restorative practices.	I,II,III
Tricia Husul	Erie 1 BOCES	Provide professional development focused on increasing active participation in Computer Based Testing, and aligned units with the Next Generation Math Standards, and Building Thinking Classrooms..	I,II,III
Staff	Higher Education, Cornell University	Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS) Training	I
Dr. Marcus Thomeer	Higher Education, Canisius College	Provide professional development on strategies to support social and behavioral needs of students with Autism.	I, II
Edward Suk	Executive Director for National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.	Provide professional development on issues of Child Sexual Abuse and Molestations.	I, II
Tonia Weichmann	Parent Network	Provide professional development for special education teachers on vocational programs, college special education services, and career zone.	I, II

Dr. James Cercone	Higher Education, Buffalo State College	Provide professional development on increasing student voice in the English curriculum.	I,II,III, IV
Lori DiCarlo	Private, Consultant	Restorative Practices	I
Dr. David Wilson	Higher Education, Buffalo State University	Mathematics Instruction	I,II,III, IV
Dr. John Strong	Higher Education, University at Buffalo	Provide Professional Development in Literacy	I,II
Dr. Blythe Anderson	Higher Education, University at Buffalo	Provide Professional Development in Literacy	I,II
Dr. Sharon Walpole	Private Bookworms	Provide Professional Development in Literacy	I,II
Dr. Tamara Alsace	CUNY-IIE	Provide support in creating equitable tiered systems of support for our English Language Learners	I, II
Dr. Michael Nicholson	Learning InspireED	Provide professional development in student agency	I, II, III, IV
Staff	Higher Education, Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care	To build the capacity of teachers and administrators in the foundation and common language around trauma, adversity, re-traumatization, and how to consider trauma-informed educational practices as an administrator—considering not only student/family needs, but being trauma-informed with staff and thinking about their building and the district as a whole.	I, II
Staff	Khan Academy	Provide professional development on the use of Khan Academy and Khanmigo	IV

Staff	Safe & Civil Schools	Provide professional development on tiered behavioral interventions	I, III
Staff	PowerSchool	Provide professional development on new Student Management System	II

Professional Learning Plan: Partial List of Activities

The following is a partial list of PLP activities for instructional staff. PLP credit hour information is included in parenthesis where appropriate.

Please note – this is not intended to be an exhaustive list and there is a process for requesting PLP credit for additional activities.

ALL PLP ACTIVITIES MUST HAVE PRIOR APPROVAL IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR PLP CREDIT

District sponsored professional learning (Superintendent's Conference Days, New Teacher Orientation, Opening Day Professional Learning Sessions, After school follow-up training, etc.)	Building-level staff development opportunities (faculty meetings that meet PLP Goals and Objectives, training sessions, orientations, etc.)
Participating in courses and other learning opportunities delivered from institutions of higher education (1 credit hour = 15 PLP hours), teacher centers, BOCES, school districts and independent professional development service providers.	Coursework is linked to improvement of instructional technique or content knowledge, which may or may not be in pursuit of a teaching or advanced teaching degree (1 credit hour = 15 PLP hours).
Completing coursework for more advanced certification or certificates in additional areas or in accordance with teaching assignment requirements for extension to certification (1 credit hour = 15 PLP hours).	Sabbaticals (related to content specialty or enhancement of teaching strategies) · Developing or collaborating on new programs and instructional methods
Curriculum planning and development	Creating teacher portfolios
Providing Mentoring Service (up to 25 PLP hours)	Receiving Mentoring Service (8 PLP hours)
Acting as a mentor for a teacher candidate (up to 15 PLP hours)	Engaging in research projects (includes online and action research)
Participation in structured study groups complete with guided reflection activities focused on student learning	Participating in regional scoring of State assessments, assessing student portfolios

Pursuing National Board certification or recertification (either as candidate or provider of support)	Collaborating with other teachers and teaching assistants to examine case studies of student work and development
Professional Recognition requiring preparation &/or presentation(s)	NYSTCE "assessor" or test development committee member
Delivering professional learning workshops (e.g. conducting workshops)	Development of Statewide curriculum
Service as a cooperating teacher for a student teacher or field internships; including meetings and processes.	Participating in Professional Learning School activities or other school-college teacher development partnerships
Service on the State Professional Standards and Practices Board	Service as an elected officer in professional organizations
Publishing in educational journals	Serving on District or School Leadership committees (ex. CDEP, PLP, LTs, etc.)
Master Teacher Program	

District Resources

Professional development in the Amherst Central Schools will utilize the following internal and external resources in implementing the 2026-2031 Professional Development Plan:

FISCAL resources:

- ☒ Consolidated Grant (Parts I, IIA, IID, III & IV)
- ☒ District & Building-level Staff Development Lines
- ☒ Additional Grant & Funding Sources

STAFF resources:

- ☒ Curriculum developers
- ☒ Content specialists
- ☒ Exemplary teachers & teaching assistants
- ☒ Administrative team

PROVIDERS:

- ☒ Institutions of Higher Education
- ☒ BOCES
- ☒ Partnerships with neighboring districts

COMMUNITY:

- ☒ Major employers
- ☒ Community-based organizations
- ☒ Vendors

ACSD Teacher Mentor Program

Teachers and leaders new to the Amherst District will continue to be required to participate in the district's New Teacher Orientation (NTO). The orientation is aligned with New York State and local standards and assessments, and focuses on instructional strategies consistent with best practices. Similarly, Amherst will also include mentoring of new school leaders to improve the retention and effectiveness of early career leaders. Mentoring of both teachers/leaders provides invaluable professional growth opportunities for the mentor and the mentee/intern, and as such it will continue to be a major component of our PLP.

Program Goal

The goal of the mentoring program is to enhance teacher effectiveness and retain highly qualified teachers by implementing an induction and support program for non-tenured teachers new to the district.

Definitions

Induction – An organized process designed to train, support and retain new teachers. Mentoring is a fundamental element of the process.

Cadre' – The cadres are the groups of trained mentors.

Mentor – Is a tenured teacher with at least three (3) years of teaching experience who has completed the mentor training.

Mentee – Is a teacher who is new to the district.

Mentor Coordinators – Two people, one appointed by the District and one by the AEA, who will work in conjunction with one another to oversee the Mentor Program. The Mentor Coordinators will adhere to the rules of confidentiality.

Release Time – Mentors will be provided with the option of release time during the school day to perform mentor related responsibilities, Tuesday through Thursday.

Evaluation – At the conclusion of each year, a confidential survey will be distributed to each mentor and mentee for the purpose of evaluating the Mentoring Program. The results will be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee(s).

Recommendations – The committee shall forward its evaluation of the program and any recommendations for changes to the Superintendent.

Concerns – Concerns relative to a mentor/mentee relationship or mentor/mentee performance shall be addressed with the Mentor Coordinators and the Superintendent, if necessary.

Mentoring Committee – The Mentoring Committee will be convened as necessary and will consist of a building and district-level designee of the Superintendent. The AEA President will designate an officer and a teacher-representative from each of the four district buildings to serve on the committee. The committee will be responsible for communicating Mentor-related information to the appropriate people, developing selection criteria and selecting prospective candidates for the Mentor Training Program. The mentoring committee members will adhere to the rules of confidentiality.

Performance Criteria – For the purpose of this program the mentee shall work with a mentor towards demonstrating pedagogical proficiency, utilizing best practices research in instructional and related practices, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Planning and Preparation
2. Classroom Environment
3. Instructional Practices and Professional Responsibilities
4. Clinical Observation
5. Best Practices research (ex. Brain-based learning)

Mentor-Mentee Assignments – All teachers new to the district will be paired with a mentor. The goal will be to assign pairs within the first month of the school year. Adjustments to the pairs can be made as needed upon consensual recommendation of the Mentor Coordinators.

Confidentiality – The relationship between the mentor and the mentee shall be one of guidance and support. The process ensures the confidentiality of the participants' interactions, fostering collegiality, inviting honesty, and self-reflection by the mentee about the practice of teaching and learning. Feedback from the relationship is not to be requested by administrators, nor provided by the mentors to the administrators and is not part of the administrative review process.

Stipends – The stipend will be in accordance with the AEA contract.

Mentor Program Coordination – The Superintendent's designee and the AEA's Second Vice-President will assist and support the mentorship program by:

1. Matching mentees with mentors utilizing NYS guidelines.
2. Solving relationship issues.
3. Holding meetings each year to discuss year end results and issues.
4. Adhering to a selection process for mentors.
5. Adhering to a program evaluation device.
6. Collecting and housing mentor/mentee evaluations.
7. Tabulating and reporting year-end program results.
8. Abiding by the rule of confidentiality.
9. Ensuring alignment with NYS Mentorship Program mandates.
10. Ensuring alignment with the AEA contractual agreement.
11. Reporting program problems.
12. Making recommendations for program modifications.

Mentor Responsibilities – The Mentor will support and guide the Mentee by:

1. Completing a Mentor Training Program as prescribed by the District. The primary focus is to prepare mentors for the clinical observation process. The training utilizes best practices research and instruction in the areas of planning and preparation, classroom management techniques, classroom environment, instructional practices and professional responsibilities.
2. Providing a minimum of three (3) formative clinical observations including the pre-observation meeting, the observation and the post-observation meeting.
3. Supplementing the three (3) clinical observations with additional classroom visits as deemed necessary by the mentor.
4. Completing the appropriate paperwork in a timely fashion. All paperwork shall be submitted to one of the mentor coordinators.
5. Mentors who fail to fulfill the responsibilities listed above, or who engage in actions which are clearly detrimental to the spirit of the Mentor Program may be removed from the mentor pool by the joint decision of the mentor coordinators. The removed mentor may appeal the decision to the superintendent, whose decision will be final.

Mentor Selection Process –The mentor pool will be composed of those individuals who have successfully completed the District’s Mentor Training Program. When the district decides to offer a Mentor Training Program, they will notify all professional staff members, who may nominate themselves for the program. The nominations will be reviewed by the Mentoring Committee. The Superintendent may choose to appoint an additional representative to the committee for this process, or the Superintendent may choose to be on the committee personally. Recommendations for inclusion in the Mentor Training Program will be made by the consensus of the Committee. The selection criteria follows:

1. Successful candidates shall demonstrate outstanding teaching and instructional abilities, effective written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, content area mastery, and knowledge of a variety of instructional and classroom management techniques.
2. The committee will be cognizant of the number of potential mentors required to sustain the program.
3. Normally only teachers with tenure in the Amherst system will be considered for the training program.

Additional criteria or alterations to the criteria can be generated by the Mentoring Committee and must be mutually agreed upon by the Superintendent and the AEA President.

Matching Mentors with Mentees –The following criteria will be used for Mentor Mentee match-ups:

1. Mentors and mentees will be paired according to subject area or grade level to the greatest degree possible.
2. A waiting list of available mentors will be maintained. Mentors will move to the end of the list upon receiving a mentee.
3. Every effort will be made to match mentors and mentees within the same building.

4. Retirees will be eligible to mentor only when the active mentor list has been exhausted (in accordance with NYS regulations). Retirees will be eligible for a maximum of two years after their retirement.

Documenting Mentor-Mentee Meetings –Pre-observation, observation, and post observation meetings that take place between Mentors and Mentees will be documented using a form designed by the Mentor Committee Members. The form will be completed and signed by both the Mentor and Mentee within two weeks of completion of the post-observation according to a prescribed schedule, then submitted to a Mentor Coordinator. An additional form will be submitted before the end of the school year that lists additional meetings beyond the three required summative observations that take place between the Mentor and Mentee.

Mentee Responsibilities – The mentee will participate in the program by:

1. Receiving 5 days of training in August during the New Teacher Orientation Program. Teachers hired after the start of the New Teacher Orientation Program shall receive training as necessary during the school year and be assigned to the next New Teacher Orientation Program.
2. Being provided with the opportunity to participate, with other non-tenured teaching staff, in monthly meetings as a follow up to training and instruction received during the New Teacher Orientation Program.
3. Participating in a minimum of three (3) formative clinical observations to be conducted by the mentor, including the pre-observation meeting, the observation and the post-observation meeting.
4. Participating in any supplemental clinical observations with the mentor, as deemed necessary by the Mentor.
5. Completing the appropriate paperwork in a timely fashion. All paperwork shall be submitted to the District's Mentor Coordinator for the purpose of complying with NYS Mentoring requirements.

Program Evaluations – The program coordinators will hold a minimum of two confidential meetings each year, one for the Mentors and one for the Mentees, as part of the program evaluation. Attendance will be voluntary. Input will be solicited from Mentors and Mentees as part of an overall evaluation of the Mentoring Program. Individual and collective input will be solicited and the information will be compiled anonymously. This anonymous information will be shared with the Superintendent and the Mentoring Committee.

Mentoring Meeting Log
School Year _____ - _____

Mentor _____ Building(s) _____ Certification(s) _____

Mentee _____ Building(s) _____ Certification(s) _____

Mentors & Mentees should complete a minimum of 3 Formative Observations (pre-observation, scripting, labeling & post-observation with a primary reinforcement and remedial). Scheduling guidelines for the observations are included below. All meetings and observations are to be kept confidential. The purpose of this log is to be able to document the state mandated meetings if called upon to do so. Any questions or concerns can be addressed to Lynn Shanahan, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction.

Observation #1 Complete by October 15 Date:	Mentor Signature	Mentee Signature
Observation #2 Complete by January 15 Date:	Mentor Signature	Mentee Signature
Observation #3 Complete by March 15 Date:	Mentor Signature	Mentee Signature

Please use the bottom and back of this form to document any additional meetings, observations, or information that you would like to share.

**It is the responsibility of the MENTOR to return this completed form
to the Curriculum Office, Room 243, District Office, by March 30.**

Instructional Leadership Mentor Program

Program Goal

The goal of the Instructional Leadership Mentoring Program is to develop the professional capacity and practice of school and district leaders to promote each student's academic, social, emotional, and behavioral success.

Definitions

Induction - An organized process designed to train, support and retain new Instructional Leaders. We consider mentoring to be a fundamental part of the induction process.

Leadership Mentor Coordinator - Will be the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology. The Leadership Mentor Coordinator will oversee the Instructional Leadership Mentor Program and adhere to the rules of confidentiality.

Mentee - Is an Instructional Leader (administrator) who is new to the district.

Mentor - Is a tenured administrator who is highly committed to supporting the professional growth of the Mentee. Mentors are selected and appointed by the Superintendent with consideration given to position, years of experience (as an administrator and in District), accessibility, demonstrated competence in Clinical Supervision and a deep understanding of the Essential Elements of Instruction.

Collaboration Time - Regularly scheduled time for the Mentor and Mentee(s) to meet to focus on the Mentee(s) professional growth (e.g., Clinical Supervision, Essential Elements of Instruction)

Evaluation - At the conclusion of each year, a survey will be distributed by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology to each Mentee for the purpose of evaluating the Leadership Mentor Program.

Recommendations - The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology along with input from the Mentor shall forward their evaluation of the program and any recommended changes to the Superintendent.

Concerns - Concerns relative to the Leadership Mentor Coordinator/Mentee relationship or Mentor/Mentee relationship shall be addressed with the Superintendent, if necessary.

Performance Criteria - For the purposes of this program the Mentee shall work with the Mentor towards demonstrating:

- a developing expertise in Instructional Leadership
- a common understanding and use of the Essential Elements of Instruction
- a uniform approach to Clinical Supervision

Our new Instructional Leaders will demonstrate competence in the following areas based on the Southern Regional Education Board's Learning Centered Leadership Program.

Amherst Central School District's Instructional Leadership Competencies

<i>Competency I: Effective Instructional Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of school and classroom practices that contribute to student achievement.</i>	
Focusing on Student Achievement	Contributing to the development and supporting a Strategic Plan that aligns with the District Plan leading to high levels of student achievement.
Developing a Culture of High Expectations	Setting high yet reasonable expectations for students, faculty, staff and self.
Developing a Standards-based Instructional System	Recognizing and encouraging sound instructional practices that motivate students and increase their achievement.
<i>Competency II: Effective Instructional Leaders have the ability to work with faculty and staff to design and implement continuous student improvement.</i>	
Creating a Caring Environment	Developing a school culture where staff feel connected and are supportive of each other and where students feel that they are important and cared for.
Implementing Data based Improvement	Using data as part of a cycle of continuous improvement and to inform instruction resulting in increased student achievement.
Communicating	Keeping all stakeholders informed and focused on high quality instruction leading to increased student achievement.
Involving Parents	Developing partnerships with parents and actively engaging them in the education of their child.
<i>Competency III: Effective Instructional Leaders have the ability to provide the necessary support for staff to carry out sound school, curriculum and instructional practices.</i>	
Initiating and Managing Change	Understanding the change process and using leadership and strong facilitation skills to manage it effectively.
Providing High Quality Professional Development	Understanding how adults learn and advancing meaningful change through quality sustained professional development that leads to professional growth, improved teaching practices and increased student performance.
Innovating	Using and organizing time and resources in new and creative ways to meet the goals and objectives of school improvement.
Maximizing Resources	Evaluating and utilizing resources (materials, budgetary, personnel, plant) wisely.

Building External Support	Developing relationships and eliciting support from District administrators, community leaders and parents to support the mission of the school.
Staying Abreast of Effective Practices	Continuously learning and growing by staying abreast of research and best practices and working collaboratively with colleagues.

Confidentiality The relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee shall be one of guidance and support and remains highly confidential. It is designed to develop trust and foster collegiality, inviting honesty and self-reflection by the Mentee about the practice of conducting high quality evaluations and providing relevant and formative feedback to our teachers. Feedback from this relationship is not part of the annual evaluation process for any non-tenured administrator.

Components of Instructional Leadership Induction - The professional learning of the following components will be coordinated by the Leadership Mentor Coordinator and the Mentor:

- Attendance at New Teacher Orientation so that our new Instructional Leaders develop an understanding of the expectations and common language of instruction used throughout our District
- Additional orientation will include:
 - Organizational structure
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Instructional expectations
 - The importance of the Essential Elements of Instruction and having a common language of instruction throughout our District at all levels
 - Classroom visits - how to maximize time in classrooms, what to look for and how to provide feedback
 - The importance of providing high quality feedback to all teachers within and beyond the formal evaluation process (including our responsibility to develop veteran faculty)
 - Overview of the Clinical Supervision Model used in Amherst, including process, relevant forms and the use of e-doctrina
 - Overview of the ACSD Instructional Leadership Mentor Program Model (below) and distribution and review of process and relevant form.

Before Mentee's 1st Observation		During First Semester	During Second Semester
Mentee shadows Mentor two times (w/Teacher Mentors or veteran faculty)		Mentor Shadows Mentee (w/Teacher Mentors or veteran faculty)	Mentor Shadows Mentee (w/Teacher Mentors or veteran faculty)
Components			
1. Conduct Pre-Observation and Debrief	2. Conduct Announced Observation	3. Separate meeting to prepare for Post-Observation Conference*	4. Conduct Post-Observation and Debrief

*to include:

- Labeling script
- How to ensure the teacher is climbing Bloom's Taxonomy
- How to ask probing questions to better understand the teacher's thinking in planning and executing the lesson
- How to redirect the conversation to stay focused on teaching and learning
- Regularly scheduled Mentor sessions (quarterly, half-day) with all Mentees to develop a Collegial Circle facilitated by the Mentor. Each session will incorporate the following components:
 - Clinical Supervision
 - Book Study - debrief reading assignment, reflection and connection to roles
 - Open Forum - to provide opportunities to develop relationships, build trust and to network with the Mentor and other leaders to exchange ideas, evaluate the demands of their job, and discuss how to implement positive change
 - Attendance and participation in District-wide initiatives (e.g. Culturally Responsive Teaching)

Documenting Mentor/Mentee Meetings and Quarterly Mentor Sessions - Each Mentee will maintain a Mentoring Log to be utilized during each meeting with the Mentor. The Mentoring Log will include dates, times, topics and a self-reflection component which makes connections to each Mentees' role within the District.

Potential Year 2 Professional Development Topics:

- Parent communication, legal issues, time management, school/district leadership, facilitating teacher leadership, HR (hiring, forms), School Safety, Business Office (budgeting, processes), Curriculum - overview by content area experts, Data Analysis, PPS - CSE, IST, BST, IEPs, 504, AIS, MDSS



Instructional Leadership Mentor Program Log

Name of Administrator: _____ School Year: _____
(Mentee)

Please document all meetings with your Mentor (including observations and quarterly meetings).

Goal for First Year: To develop your understanding and use of the Essential Elements of Instruction and your skills as a Clinical Supervisor.

Date:	Times:	Topic / Activity:	Reflection and connection to your role:

Goal for Second Year:

(To be developed with your Mentor based on your progress this year and should focus on supervision and evaluation)

Please submit this completed log to your Mentor by June 30th.

Mentee's Signature

Date

Mentor's Signature

Date

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum,
Instruction and Technology

Date

Note: To be kept on file with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

PLP Evaluation Plan

Goal #	Evaluation Plan	Performance Measure	Data Source	Timeline
I.	- Development and implementation of differentiated professional development sessions - Clinical supervision observations - Satisfaction evaluation of internal and external workshops	- Improved student performance on assessments - Reduced disproportionality in discipline and academic data - Walkthrough tool demonstrating evidence of CR-SE Framework in action - Frequency count of Professional Development offerings	- Test scores - Student artifacts - Benchmark assessments (screening and progress monitoring) - Student Management System Data	Ongoing
II.	- Development and implementation of differentiated professional development sessions - MTSS data - Clinical supervision observations - Satisfaction evaluation of internal and external workshops	- MTSS Tiers (Decrease in 2 and 3) - Progress Monitoring Data - Administrative clinical supervision & reports - Frequency count of Professional Development offerings	- Test scores - Benchmark assessments (screening and progress monitoring) - MTSS Meetings - Written lesson plans - Clinical supervision reports - EduClimber	Ongoing
III.	- Student Agency Data - Implementation of Project Based Learning and Assessment - Satisfaction evaluation of internal and external workshops	- Survey Data - Project Implementation - Frequency count of Professional Development offerings	- Student Artifacts - Student Survey - Clinical supervision reports - Alternative assessments/Performance Based Assessments	Ongoing
IV	- Development and implementation of professional development sessions - Satisfaction evaluation of internal and external workshops	- Lesson plans - Administrative clinical supervision - Usage Data - Frequency count of Professional Development offerings	- Test scores (CBT) - Clinical supervision reports - Alternative assessments/Performance Based Assessments	Ongoing

SCHOOL DISTRICT: Amherst Central Schools
BEDS Code: 14-02-01-06-000

School District Professional Learning Plan: Statement of Assurances

The superintendent certifies that:

- Planning, implementation and evaluation of the PLP were conducted by a professional learning team that included instructional staff (teachers and teaching assistants), administrators, a higher education representative, and a parent.
- The plan focuses on improving student performance and teacher practice as identified through data analysis.
- The plan describes professional learning that:
 - Is aligned with state content and student performance standards;
 - Is articulated within and across grade levels;
 - Is continuous and sustained;
 - Indicates how classroom instruction and teacher practice will be improved and assessed;
 - Indicates how each teacher in the district will participate; and
 - Reflects congruence between student and teacher needs and district goals and objectives.
- The plan indicates an evaluation of the effectiveness of the professional learning and a mechanism to adjust activities based on the evaluation.
- The plan or the annual update to the plan was adopted at a public meeting by the Board of Education.

Signature (Superintendent of Schools)

(Date)