

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District

Professional Learning Plan 2026-2027



Board of Education Approval: August _____

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District

Professional Learning Plan

Empowering Educators, Elevating Achievement

The Croton-Harmon Union Free School District is dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous learning for all educators. This commitment cultivates a supportive learning community for teachers, administrators, and staff, all united by a dedication to student success. This plan outlines our comprehensive approach to professional development, ensuring new teachers receive essential guidance and all educators can strengthen their instructional practices.

We recognize that effective professional learning is a multifaceted process. This plan leverages the New York State Professional Learning Standards as a framework to ensure our programs are:

- **Needs-Based:** We address the specific needs of educators at all career stages, tailoring professional development to enhance classroom practice.
- **Standards-Aligned:** Our offerings directly connect to state standards, student needs, and the district's strategic plan, ensuring a cohesive learning experience.
- **Collaborative:** We foster professional learning communities that encourage shared learning, reflection, and problem-solving among educators.
- **Job-Embedded:** Professional development is directly relevant to daily classroom challenges, providing opportunities to practice new strategies and integrate them into existing practices.
- **Well-Resourced:** We allocate adequate resources, including time and support, to ensure the successful implementation of new knowledge and skills.

By prioritizing these principles, the Croton-Harmon Schools empower educators to become lifelong learners, ultimately elevating student achievement. This guide, in conjunction with the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), equips teachers with the resources and support to excel in their careers through targeted professional learning that includes:

- **Strategic Development:** Professional learning opportunities are carefully designed to align with district goals and identified needs from the APPR and other data sources. This ensures targeted development that directly impacts student learning.
- **Accessibility and Choice:** Our online platform, "Frontline Professional Growth," makes professional development accessible and convenient. This platform allows teachers to:
 - Explore a variety of CTLE (Continuing Teacher and Leader Education) opportunities.
 - Track their CTLE progress and access records.
 - Propose new learning experiences that align with their interests, professional

- goals, and district priorities.
 - Share their expertise by leading workshops and collaborating with colleagues.
- **Year-Round Support:** We provide professional learning year-round, including summers, to accommodate diverse schedules and enhance learning experiences. We have recently introduced teacher or administrator-led study groups, a new benefit secured through negotiations for the most-recent CTA Bargaining Agreement.
- **Focus on Classified Students:** We provide ongoing support for educators working with classified students. Through regular needs assessments, we ensure they have the skills and resources to effectively support the learning and growth of all students.

A Collaborative Approach to Fulfilling Our Vision

The 2026-2027 academic year will be the fourth year of implementing our comprehensive Vision Map. This strategic roadmap outlines a flexible professional learning program designed to foster the professional development of our educators, thereby empowering them to achieve the ambitious goals established for our district.

Guiding Questions for a Future-Focused Approach

The Guiding Questions from previous years laid the groundwork for our Vision Map, focusing on:

- Fostering a future-driven learning environment.
- Encouraging thoughtful risk-taking for students and educators.
- Building a supportive and equitable learning community for all.
- Strengthening engagement with families whose primary language is other than English.

Our Vision Map in Action

The Vision Map establishes three core district goals:

- **Pursuit of Passion and Exploration:** Empowering educators and students to explore their interests and passions, fostering deeper learning and stronger connections within the school community.
- **Reimagine Schooling:** Transforming the learning experience by dismantling barriers to curiosity, innovation, and growth.
- **Culture of Well-Being:** Cultivating a nurturing environment that prioritizes the emotional, intellectual, and social well-being of every member of our school district.

Cultivating Collaboration

The Croton-Harmon Schools Community believes professional learning thrives within a collaborative environment. This network includes teachers, administrators, mentors, staff developers, and instructional coaches, who work together to facilitate ongoing exploration, reflection, and professional growth.

Drawing on data from various sources, including information regarding the NY Inspires Plan, we have identified additional targeted areas for professional growth in 2026-2027:

- **Collaborative Professional Learning:** We will foster collaboration within the Croton-Harmon community and support building-level professional learning initiatives. This ensures job-embedded, collaborative, and sustainable learning that addresses critical needs identified through data.
- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** We will analyze past practices and explore innovative approaches to deliver interdisciplinary learning experiences in the future.
- **Building Active Learning Spaces:** We will strengthen our commitment to creating classrooms built upon Building Thinking Classrooms research, in line with our Vision Map.
- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS):** We will implement and refine MTSS to enhance student growth monitoring and ultimately boost achievement in K-12.

Fostering a Culture of Continuous Learning

The Croton-Harmon Schools are committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning for educators. We provide a robust professional learning infrastructure with dedicated resources and diverse learning opportunities:

- **Dedicated Time:** Educators engage in ongoing professional learning on extended Wednesdays.
- **Leadership Support:** Superintendent's conference days are dedicated to professional development initiatives.
- **Financial Investment:** The district allocates budget resources to support continued professional growth.

Diverse Learning Approaches

Professional learning takes various forms, catering to individual and collaborative learning styles:

- **Training in Particular Curriculum Resources:** AP Summer Institutes, Content-Specific Curriculum Training (i.e. literacy, math, and science curriculum), Project Lead the Way, etc.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Critical Friends Groups, Peer Review, and Study Groups provide opportunities for feedback and shared exploration.
- **Individual Growth:** Professional journals, self-analyses, and recorded lessons offer avenues for personal reflection and improvement.
- **Structured Learning:** Staff Learning Workshops offer focused learning experiences on specific topics.
- **Innovation and Exploration:** Piloting programs and portfolio learning allow educators to experiment with new methods and document their growth.

The New York Inspires Plan

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has presented a robust timeline and implementation plan aimed at transforming education in New York, aligning with the recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures, called the [New York Inspires Plan](#). According to NYSED, this initiative, designed to promote greater equity within the education system, is informed by extensive stakeholder engagement, including parents, educators, administrators, school support staff, representatives of higher education, and the business community. Certain aspects of the plan have already been approved by the Board of Regents, including the Portrait of a Graduate, and there is a timeline that will follow over the next few years, including the recent details of a plan to move to a competency-based system.

The Croton-Harmon Schools are actively engaging in and providing opportunities for our staff to participate in training and learning related to the rollout of the NY Inspires Plan. This includes opportunities to engage in local, regional, and statewide conversations and training as they arise so that Croton can continue to be a leader in implementation towards the NY Inspires plan.

Valuable Partnerships

In addition to internal structures, the district collaborates with external partners to provide research-based professional learning opportunities aligned with our goals. These partnerships provide educators with access to a wider range of expertise and perspectives:

- Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES
- Lower Hudson Regional Information Services
- Hudson River Teacher Center
- NYSCATE
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Orton-Gillingham Multisensory Reading Training
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy
- Google Training Sources
- Altaris Safety Consultants
- Project Lead the Way
- SUNY Albany and WCC High School Partnerships

Our external partnerships not only offer a wealth of professional learning opportunities but also support educators in achieving their personal and professional goals. These partnerships contribute to a comprehensive professional development program that empowers educators to excel and ultimately benefits our students.

Meeting CTLE Requirements

Teachers and educational leaders can fulfill the mandatory 100 hours of Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) through a variety of approved professional learning experiences offered by the district and our partners. This ensures educators maintain their professional certifications

in New York State. While this plan does not currently encompass Level III Teaching Assistants, as none are employed at present, the program can be readily expanded in the future if needed.

Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs)

The Croton-Harmon Schools are committed to providing effective instruction for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs). We support educators in developing their expertise in this area:

- **Dedicated CTLE Hours:** All educators working with ELLs are encouraged to complete at least 15% of their required CTLE hours in language acquisition. This focuses on best practices for co-teaching strategies and integrating language and content instruction.
- **Specialized Requirements:** Educators with a Professional English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certificate or Bilingual Education extension must dedicate a minimum of 50% of their CTLE hours to language acquisition. This ensures alignment with their core content area and emphasizes effective co-teaching and integrated instruction for ELLs.

Detailed information regarding the Language Acquisition Requirement Chart can be found in Appendix B.

Empowering Teachers, Strengthening Instruction: A Job-Embedded Coaching Initiative

The Croton-Harmon Schools are excited to continue their job-embedded professional learning program for the 2026-2027 school year. This initiative leverages the expertise of two instructional coaches to provide ongoing, individualized support to our faculty at CET, PVC, and CHHS. Our instructional coaches will dedicate 0.5 FTE of their time at CET and PVC and 0.6 FTE of their time at CHHS to coaching and professional development activities. This investment reflects our commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning among our educators and allows our coaches to coach while simultaneously improving their own instructional practices because they are still teaching versus exclusively coaching. The program offers a two-pronged approach:

- **Individualized Coaching:** Instructional coaches will work directly with faculty members to address their specific needs and goals, promoting personalized growth and development.
- **Departmental and School-Wide Support:** Coaches will also facilitate professional development sessions tailored to the specific needs of departments and the school as a whole. This ensures our professional learning opportunities are directly relevant to our faculty's practice.

The program is designed to capitalize on the wealth of knowledge and experience within our existing staff. Instructional coaches will collaborate with teachers to develop and deliver professional learning experiences, fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

Ongoing Support

The district provides training and support to assist educators with the APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review) requirements, goal setting, and the evaluation model. This ensures that all educators have the resources they need to succeed. Additionally, our APPR variance, approved by New York State in 2023, allows our teachers to support each other as part of the formal evaluation process through opportunities in intervisitation, lesson study, and action research. We will continue to operate our APPR plan and variance for 2026-2027.

Empowering New Educators

The Croton-Harmon District recognizes that learning is a lifelong journey. We are dedicated to supporting new teachers as they enter the profession and our district. The Professional Development Plan provides opportunities to develop, reflect, and grow as effective educators.

Mentorship: A Pillar of Support

The cornerstone of our program is a robust mentoring program. Experienced, tenured teachers share their knowledge and expertise with new teachers in a collaborative, supportive, and confidential environment. Mentors help new teachers in several key areas:

- **Develop Effective Teaching Skills:** Mentors guide new teachers in refining their instructional practice and exploring a variety of teaching strategies.
- **Promote Well-Being and Growth:** Mentors provide a supportive space for new teachers to discuss challenges and celebrate successes.
- **Navigate the School Community:** Mentors help new teachers acclimate to the school culture and build strong relationships with colleagues.

The mentoring program offers a structured approach with flexibility:

- **Collaborative Observations:** New teachers observe mentors in action and vice versa. These observations are followed by reflective discussions to analyze teaching practices and identify areas for growth.
- **Regular Meetings:** Weekly meetings provide opportunities to review goals, reflect on the week's experiences, and address any questions or concerns. Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed.
- **Mentorship Planning:** Mentors and new teachers collaboratively develop a monthly calendar that incorporates goal setting, event preparation, and navigating the school's routines and culture.
- **Connecting Learning Experiences:** Mentors help new teachers connect their mentoring experience with professional development opportunities offered by the district.

The Multi-Year New Tiger Academy (formerly New Teacher Academy)

Building on the success of our existing program, the Croton-Harmon New Teacher Academy transitioned to a multi-year sequence in the 2023-24 school year and continues into the 2026-2027 school year. This expanded program offers ongoing support and professional

development tailored to the evolving needs of new educators. The Croton-Harmon New Teacher Academy fosters a supportive and collaborative environment where new teachers can thrive.

Over the course of the school year, all first and second-year teachers engage in hands-on professional learning experiences, including student shadowing, cross-department/ grade/school intervisitations, and collaborative lesson design. Participants will learn how these activities foster a deep understanding of the district's values and promote professional growth.

Facilitated by Master Teachers who facilitate experiences, provide guidance and opportunities for reflective engagement

By participating in the New Tiger Academy, new educators will gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become exceptional classroom leaders.

A Framework for the Growth of Educational Leaders

The Croton-Harmon School District acknowledges the paramount importance of effective leadership in fostering student success. To this end, we are firmly committed to providing our educational leaders with a comprehensive professional learning program. This program is meticulously designed to cultivate their leadership capabilities, ultimately driving improved student achievement throughout the district.

Our professional learning plan is grounded in the following core principles:

- **Impact on Student Achievement:** We focus on professional development opportunities that directly translate to improved student learning outcomes.
- **Authentic and Reflective:** Professional learning experiences are relevant to the real work of leaders, fostering self-reflection and continuous improvement of leadership practices.
- **Collaborative and Trusting:** The program promotes an environment of collaboration and professional trust among leaders.
- **Multifaceted Assessment:** We utilize various assessment methods to measure growth and document leadership competency.

Domains of Principal Leadership

The program is guided by the six Croton-Harmon Domains of Principal Leadership, which encompass the key areas of responsibility for school leaders, based on the Multi-Dimensional Principal Performance Rubric.

- **Shared Vision of Learning:** Leading the development and implementation of a shared vision for student success.
- **School Culture and Instructional Program:** Cultivating a positive school culture and fostering a strong instructional program.
- **Safe, Efficient, Effective Learning Environment:** Ensuring efficient management and

allocation of resources to create a safe and effective learning environment.

- **Community Collaboration:** Building strong relationships with faculty, families, and community members.
- **Integrity, Fairness, Ethics:** Leading with integrity, fairness, and ethical principles.
- **Understanding the External Context:** Navigating the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context to positively impact student learning.

Through this comprehensive and impactful professional learning program, Croton-Harmon School District empowers its leaders to become the driving force behind student success.

The Tri-State Consortium: A Framework for Peer Review and Continuous Improvement

The Croton-Harmon School District is dedicated to providing a quality learning experience for all students. To measure our effectiveness, we utilize a comprehensive assessment system based on the Tri-State Consortium standards. The Tri-State Consortium is a network of school districts committed to using data-driven decision-making for continuous improvement. Their eight performance indicators encompass three key areas:

- **Student Performance:** Measuring student learning outcomes to identify areas of strength and areas for growth.
- **Internal Supports:** Evaluating the effectiveness of our instructional programs, professional learning opportunities, and resources.
- **External Supports:** Assessing how well we collaborate with parents, families, and the community to support student success.

These standards guide our ongoing efforts to ensure a strong academic foundation for all students. For more information on the Tri-State Consortium and its standards, please visit <https://www.tristateconsortium.org>

APPENDIX A:

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
 Office of Teaching Initiatives
www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert

Completion of Approved Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) Hour(s) Certificate

All CTLE must be completed with Approved Sponsors and be reported using this form, or an alternative form/format that captures the same information that is requested on this form, in addition to any electronic reporting requirements.

Instructions for the Trainee:

Please complete Section I and retain your copy for at least three years from the end of the registration period in which you completed the CTLE. It is not necessary to send a copy of this form to the Office of Teaching Initiatives unless it is requested by the State Education Department or for use in obtaining an Initial Reissuance. **A separate form must be completed for each training.**

Instructions for the Approved CTLE Sponsor:

Please complete Sections II and III. These sections must be completed by the Approved CTLE Sponsor authorized individual. Sponsors must verify that the trainee completed the activity, the title, date(s) and number of hours awarded. Records must be retained for a period of eight years. You may use an alternative form or format, however that alternative must capture the same information that is requested on this form.

Section I				
First Name:		Last Name:		Middle Initial:
Date of Birth:		Last 4 Digits of the Social Security Number:		
Section II				
Name of Venue:				
Street Address:		City:	State:	Zip Code:
CTLE Activity Title: _____ (Indicate title/subject/grade level, etc.)				
Select One or More Areas of Activity: _____ Pedagogy _____ Content _____ English Language Learning				
CTLE Date(s):		from: _____ to: _____		Number of hours awarded _____
	(mm)	(dd)	(yyyy)	(mm) (dd) (yyyy)
Section III				
I certify that the individual listed in Section I completed the CTLE cited above pursuant to Subpart 80-6 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.				
Approved Sponsor Name:				
Print Name of Authorized Certifying Officer :				
Signature of Authorized Certifying Officer:				
Approved Sponsor Identification Number:			Date:	
Email:			Phone Number:	

(Rev. 06/2020)

APPENDIX B:

Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) Language Acquisition Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners Requirements

Certificate Type	% of 100 Clock Hour CTLE Requirement Devoted to Language Acquisition	Can Exemption* from the Language Acquisition Requirement Apply?
Professional Classroom Teacher other than English to Speakers of Other Languages	15%	Exemption may apply. Exemption does not reduce the 100-clock hour CTLE requirement.
Professional School Leader	15%	Exemption may apply. Exemption does not reduce the 100-clock hour CTLE requirement.
Level III Teaching Assistant	15%	Exemption may apply. Exemption does not reduce the 100-clock hour CTLE requirement.
Professional English to Speakers of Other Languages	50%	Exemption may apply. Exemption does not reduce the 100-clock hour CTLE requirement.
Professional Bilingual Extension Annotation	50%	Exemption may apply. Exemption does not reduce the 100-clock hour CTLE requirement.
Permanent Classroom Teacher other than English to Speakers of Other Languages	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A
Permanent School Leader	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A
Permanent English to Speakers of Other Languages	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A
Permanent Bilingual Extension Annotation	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A
Permanent Pupil Services (PPS) such as School Attendance Teachers, School Counselors, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, School Dental Hygiene Teachers and School Nurse Teachers	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A
Permanent Bilingual Education (PPS/Admin) Extension	Permanent certificate holders are NOT subject to CTLE requirements.	N/A

***Exemption:** A NYS school district or BOCES may be granted a waiver from providing Bilingual Education Programs in languages other than Spanish and Chinese. For additional information, please see the [English Language Learner and Multilingual Learner Regulations & Compliance webpage](#).