DUNKIRK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Learning for all... whatever it takes!

Dunkirk City School District

Professional Learning Plan

2026-2027

Dunkirk City School District

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Professional Learning: Definition

Professional learning is a continuous and systematic process by which professionals increase and refine their knowledge, skills, and practices to remain current and effective within the field of education and as such, must meet the needs of the district, the building and the individual professional. Professional learning has the purpose and goal of helping all students achieve at high levels and should work in support of various district plans such as the District Strategic Plan, the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP), the Student Support Plan, the Mentor Plan and the Technology Plan. Additionally, as each building has specific goals, professional learning should also support building goals developed through the School Comprehensive Education Plans (SCEP).

Professional Learning: Mission Statement

Professional learning is an ongoing, data driven and research-based process, strategically planned to provide both individual and systemic change to support continuous growth of teacher instructional practice and student performance.

Professional Learning: Process

Professional learning coordinates the collective and collaborative efforts of such stakeholders as the Board of Education, administration, Site-Based Teams, Curriculum Councils, Student Support Council, Technology Committee, Mentor Steering Committee, individual teachers, and support personnel.

The district will maintain a Professional Learning Committee made up of representatives from various stakeholder groups as outlined below. The Professional Learning Committee's charge includes:

- The committee will meet a maximum of five times which includes an annual review of effectiveness of the Professional Learning Plan.
- Assist in the development of a calendar of professional learning opportunities that will be available to all teaching staff during the summer.
- The Committee will recommend topics for each school year, including adjustments in response to feedback.
- Recommend attendance at out of district professional learning activities that meet the district professional learning goals and support district or school goals

Faculty and staff requests for out of district professional learning must be based on student achievement data, classroom needs, observation feedback, and must align to the District's definition and mission statement. The Professional Learning Committee will develop a form for submission of requests to attend professional learning which will be evaluated by a sub-committee for alignment to district and building goals. Final approval of attendance at professional learning activities outside of the district will depend upon funding for the activity.

New York State Department Regulations and Requirements

This professional learning plan is in compliance with Commissioner Regulations 100.2 (dd) that requires each district and BOCES to collaboratively create professional learning plans that are reviewed annually. Additionally, professional learning activities outlined in this plan provide teachers with the opportunities needed to meet and maintain the Continuing Teacher Leader Education (CTLE) requirements as defined by The Board of Regents in Subpart 80-6 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education to implement Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2015 relating to the registration process for any holder of a classroom teaching, school leader and teaching assistant certificate that is valid for life (Permanent, Professional and Level III Teaching Assistant) and the establishment of Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) requirements for Professional and Level III Teaching Assistant certificate holders.

Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) Requirement

There is one CTLE requirement per educator, regardless of the number of certificates held that are subject to CTLE. Educators who are subject to CTLE and practice in an applicable school throughout their five-year registration period must complete 100 clock hours of acceptable CTLE.

Educators who hold one or more of the following certificates are subject to the CTLE requirement:	**Educators who do not need to complete CTLE include, but are not limited to:**
● Professional certificate in the classroom teaching service ● Professional certificate in the educational leadership service (i.e., School Building Leader, School District Leader, and School District Business Leader) ● Teaching Assistant Level III Certificate	● Hold <u>only</u> Permanent certificate(s) ● Hold a Statement of Continued Eligibility (SOCE) and Permanent Certificate, and does not also hold a Professional or TA Level III Certificate ● Have "Registered - Inactive" status (not practicing in an applicable school)

**Registration and CTLE requirements <u>do not</u> apply to educators who hold a certificate in the pupil personnel services (such as School Attendance Teacher, School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker) or hold a Teaching Assistant Level I or Level II Certificate.

The following table describes the number of clock hours of CTLE required for educators, depending on their situation (adapted from NYSED):

	No inactive periods during the registration period	**Inactive during part of the registration period**
Holds a Professional teacher or education leader or Teaching Assistant Level III certificate for the entire registration period	Complete 100 clock hours	Complete 20 clock hours for every year in which you were practicing in an applicable school
Originally held only Permanent certificate(s) and then obtains a subsequent Professional certificate during the	Complete 20 clock hours for every year in which you were practicing in an applicable school while holding a Professional or Teaching	Complete 20 clock hours for every year in which you were practicing in an applicable school while holding a Professional or Teaching

registration period	Assistant Level III certificate	Assistant Level III certificate
Hold only Permanent certificate(s) or the entire registration period	Not subject to CTLE	Not subject to CTLE

When can educators complete CTLE hours?

Educators can complete CTLE clock hours any time during their registration period. CTLE clock hours completed prior to the registration period may not be carried over to the current registration period. Professional development or professional learning not designated as CTLE by an approved sponsor does not count towards the required CTLE clock hours.

Acceptable CTLE Activities

- Content Area(s) of the certificates held
    - CTLE in the content area can be in the content area of any certificate held, including certificates not subject to CTLE (such as Initial or Permanent certificates)
- Pedagogy
    - General pedagogy or pedagogy specific to the content area of the certificate(s)
- Language Acquisition addressing the needs of English language learners
    - **ESOL/Bilingual Education Teachers** - 50% of their required CTLE clock hours in language acquisition aligned with the core content area of instruction taught, including a focus on best practices for co-teaching strategies, and integrating language and content instruction for ELLs.
    - **Other Teachers, School Building Leaders, and school district leaders -** 15% of the required CTLE clock hours dedicated to language acquisition addressing the needs of ELLs, including a focus on best practices for co-teaching strategies and integrating language and content instruction for ELLs.
    - **School District Business Leaders** - 15% of the required CTLE clock hours dedicated to the needs of ELLs and Federal, State and local mandates for ELLs.
    - **Teaching Assistants - Level III** - 15% of the required CTLE clock hours dedicated to language acquisition, addressing the needs of ELLs and integrating language and content instruction for such ELLs.

Examples of Activities to Meet the CTLE Language Acquisition Requirement:

- Best Practices
    - Best Practices for Bilingual Education (Dual Language and Transitional Programs)
    - Best Practices for English as a New Language (ENL)
    - Academic language and English Language Learners (ELLs) and Multilingual Learners (MLLs)
    - Co-Teaching Strategies, structures and supports
    - Effective literacy strategies for ELLs/MLLs
    - Scaffolds that support ELLs/MLLs in mastering core content
    - Home language and literacy development
    - Aligning instructional resources to meet the needs of ELLs/MLLs
    - Lesson Planning using Targets of Measurement (TOMs), Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), and the Bilingual Common Core Progressions

- Identification, Placement, Assessment
    - Identification procedures of ELLs/MLLs
    - Response to Intervention (RtI) for ELLs/MLLs
    - Identification and placement procedures for ELLs/MLLs
    - Assigning credits and reviewing international transcripts
    - Appropriate assessment procedures/approaches to ELL/MLL assessment
    - Language Learning vs. Disability
- IEPs, Instruction, Students with Disabilities
    - Integrating language and content instruction of ELLs/MLLs
    - Meeting the needs of subpopulations of ELLs/MLLs (e.g., Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education, ELLs/Students with Disabilities, Newcomers, Developing ELLs, Long Term ELLs, Former ELLs)
    - Bridges training for Low Literacy SIFE
    - Bilingual Common Core Progressions
    - Best practices for working with ELLs/MLLs with an IEP
    - Gifted and Talented ELLs/MLLs
- Home, Family, Community, Culture, and Social
    - Home language and literacy development in Bilingual Education programs
    - Strengthening home/school communication
    - Cultural responsiveness or cultural competency training for teachers and administrators
    - Best practices on how to support and sustain ELLs'/MLLs' social and emotional development needs, including creating a safe and supportive environment that is conducive to learning
    - Supporting and strengthening family and community engagement
    - Cultivating a multilingual school environment
    - Using the home language to accelerate English Language Development

CTLE Recordkeeping and Documentation

Sponsors are required to issue certificates of completion and maintain records of all completed CTLE activities for at least eight years from dates of completion. Educators will not need to send documentation of their CTLE clock hours to NYSED for the re-registration process. However, such records must be retained by the educator for at least three years from the end of the registration period in which the CTLE was completed and be available for review by NYSED upon request.

The District will make available CTLE certificates acknowledging completion of professional learning opportunities qualifying for CTLE credits to holders of Professional Certificate holders. Such certificates will include: participant's name, date and location of the activity, number of hours completed in content, pedagogy and language acquisition addressing the needs of English Language Learners, title of activity, approved CTLE sponsor's name and number and attendance verification (Dunkirk CSD will utilize NYSED's CTLE completion form).

Records of each educator's CTLE certificates that are issued by the district will be maintained in the Professional Development Planner (PDP Premier). Teachers will use PDP Premier to request professional learning opportunities, which is approved by their direct supervisor. The Professional Development Coordinator will review attendance for each session offered and award CTLE credit and certificates in PDP

Premier following the session. Original sign in sheets are maintained for eight years in the business office. CTLE certificates are maintained in the PDP Premier system for eight years.

The Ten Standards for High Quality Professional Learning

- 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.
- 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.
- Research-based Professional Learning: Professional learning is research-based and provides educators with opportunities to analyze, apply and engage in research.
- Collaboration: Professional learning ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment.
- Diverse Learning: Professional learning ensures that educators have the knowledge and skill to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
- Student Learning Environments: Professional learning ensures that educators are able to create safe, secure, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students.
- 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.
- 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.
- Technology: Professional learning promotes technological literacy and facilitates the effective use of all appropriate technology.
- Evaluation: Professional learning is evaluated using multiple sources of information to assess its effectiveness in improving professional practice and student learning.

Composition of Professional Learning Committee

Administrators/Staff

- 1 Elementary Administrator
- 1 Secondary Administrator
- 1 District-wide Administrator
- 1 Curriculum Coordinator

Teachers

- 5 Elementary representatives
    - One from each Primary School
    - Two from the Intermediate School
- 7 Secondary School Representatives
    - One Special Education or ENL Teacher
    - One non-core content teacher (Music, Art, Business, Technology, FACS, PE/Health)
    - Five teachers of different content areas (math, ELA, science, social studies)
- 1 multi-building Elementary teacher representative
- 1 Nurse representative

Other Members (specified below)

- 1 DTA President
- 2 CSEA representatives
- 1 Higher Education representative
- 1 Parent representative not employed by Dunkirk City School District

Number of school buildings in district:	5
Total Team Memberships:	23

In the event that a specific representative position is unable to be filled, the Professional Learning Committee will approve another individual in order to ensure that the building has appropriate representation.

Terms for Committee Members

For Secondary School teachers, two out of four representatives are appointed on school years that are even and two begin on odd years. School 3 and Intermediate representatives are appointed on school years that are even and Schools 5 and 7 representatives are appointed on school years that begin on odd years.

Teachers interested in being on PLC will submit a letter of interest to the PLC Chairperson and the Professional Learning Committee will make all final appointments.

Professional Learning Chairperson

A Professional Learning Chairperson will be appointed by the district in accordance with the DTA contract. The Chairperson will be a representative of the building from which they are a member. Responsibilities for the

Chairperson will include (but are not limited to) scheduling meetings, maintaining notes and records from the meetings and sharing with PLC members, working with the Professional Learning Coordinator to contact professional learning providers and schedule them for workshops, communicating professional learning opportunities to all staff, handling the recommendation process for requests for professional learning outside the district and assisting with the professional learning workshops as needed.

Responsibilities of PLC Members

The duties of the PLC members are to contact those that they represent one week prior to a meeting to obtain input to communicate the collective PLC needs. PLC members will report back the outcome of the meetings to those that they represent.

Needs Assessment Sources Used:

1. School Report Card
2. Student Attendance rates
3. Graduation and drop-out rates
4. New York State Assessment Data from Data Warehouse:
    a. NYSESLAT Assessments (Grade K-12)
    b. NYS ELA & Math Assessments (Grades 3-8)
    c. NYS Science Assessments (Grades 4, 8)
    d. NYS Regents Examinations
5. Staff, student, and parent surveys (Dr. Stevenson - Fall 2022 & Spring 2023)
6. Student/Teacher ratios
7. Teacher turnover rate
8. Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR)
    a. Announced and unannounced observation data
    b. Teacher HEDI ratings from the NYSUT rubric
9. District Led School Review Findings and Recommendations Report - Fall 2024
10. District Strategic Plan
11. District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP)
12. School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP)
13. Other:
    a. Walk-through feedback cycle data (Google Doc)
    b. PD Needs Assessment Survey (Google Doc)
14. District Benchmark Assessments
    a. Renaissance Place - STAR Reading & STAR Math (Grades K-12)
    b. Renaissance Place - STAR Early Literacy
    c. Dunkirk Benchmark Assessments ELA & Math (Grades K-5)
    d. District Created CCLS Benchmark Assessments (Grades 6-8)
    e. IRLA (K-8 AIS and ENL)
15. Findings and Action Plan recommendations data
16. Professional Development Planner (PDP Premier)

District Resources

Federal/State Grant Funds

- Title I (Meeting NCLB requirements for student achievement)
- Title I Basic School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003.g
- Title IIA (Teacher and Principal Recruitment in Professional Learning)
- Title III (ENL)
- Title IV (Student Support and Academic Enrichment)
- Title V (Rural Low Income Students)
- Empire State Grant
- My Brothers Keeper Community Engagement Grant
- School Improvement Grant (SIG)
- Universal Pre-K Grant

Professional Learning Providers

- State University of New York College at Fredonia
- Erie 1 BOCES
- Erie 2-Chautauqua Cattaraugus BOCES
- Regional Bilingual Education-Resource Network West
- Renaissance Learning, Inc.

Professional Learning Opportunities

The District will offer CTLE to educators in the following ways:

- District Inservice Days: September, October, February
- Ongoing instructional coaching
- Ongoing before and after school professional learning opportunities
- Summer professional learning opportunities
- Out of District workshops

Educators will engage in professional learning opportunities and earn CTLE clock hours during the district inservice days only when it is an acceptable CTLE activity. Educators will have the opportunity to request professional learning activities leading to CTLE clock hours when offered before or after school hours, or during the summer. Educators may request out of district workshops leading to CTLE clock hours utilizing the *Conference/Professional Activity Request Form*.

District Needs

District needs as outlined in the District Review:

- Individual learning needs (SWD/ELL)
    - **Performance Gaps:** Economically disadvantaged students lag behind non-low-income peers across all tested grade levels and subjects (e.g., Grade 5 Math: 18% proficient vs. 80% non-low-income)
    - **3–8 Math:** ELL proficiency ranges between **0% and 8%** across grades 4–8. Grade 6 Math ELL proficiency was **0%** (100% scored Level 1).
    - **3–8 ELA:** ELL proficiency is **0%** in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8.
    - **Regents:** On the Algebra 1 Regents, only **3%** of ELL students achieved proficiency (compared to 42% of non-ELL peers).
    - **Special Education**

- Attendance rate
    - **Survey Baseline: Q29** (*Students seldom slip through the cracks*) was the lowest-rated item in the faculty survey at **2.68** (**Priority Area for Growth**).
    - **Attendance Baseline: Q42** (*Others review my students' attendance and reach out*) scored **3.26** (**Area for Growth**),
    - District attendance rate - 91.14%

- Graduation and dropout rates
    - **Graduation Baseline:** graduation rate was 85% **(**2025- 2026)
        - Special ed and ENL, former and current, graduated at almost 80%. (2025-2026)
        - Special ed subgroups range between 50% - 58%.
    - **Dropout Baseline:** dropout rate was 6% (2025-2026)

- Parent, Community and Student engagement
- Social and Emotional Support/MTTS
    - **Survey Baseline: Q35** (*Classroom and school routines are consistent across the building*) scored **3.27** (**Area for Growth**).
    - **School Performance:** Dunkirk Secondary School (DSS) scored lowest among all schools in *Every Child Thrives* (**2.92** - **Priority Area for Growth**) and *Attendance* (**3.18** - **Area for Growth**).
- College and Career readiness skills
- Literacy/Math Instruction
    - **Survey Baseline: Q23** (*Curriculum supports challenging thinking over rushing/coverage*) scored **3.45** (**Area for Growth**).
    - **Assessment Baseline:** Math proficiency drops sharply in middle grades—Grade 5 Math has **51% of students at Level 1** (23% overall proficiency), Grade 7 at **34% proficiency**, and Grade 8 at **38% proficiency**.
- Continue growth in Explicit Instruction Strategies (Explicit Instruction Leaders)
    - ➔ Individualized coaching
    - ➔ Mini PD sessions for faculty
    - ➔ Embedded PD within classrooms

    - ➔ New hire PD sessions
- Co-Teaching
    - **Survey Baseline: Q5** (*What I learn in PD is reinforced through coaching and collaborative team time*) scored **3.51** (**Emerging Strength**).
    - **Survey Baseline: Q24** (*District has processes to understand/respond to implementation challenges*) scored **3.11** (**Area for Growth**).

Ongoing surveys of teachers identified several content/practice needs to the Professional Learning Committee:

- Next Generation Science and Social Studies learning standards
- ENL and Special Education students (low graduation rates, not meeting AYP)
- Data Driven Instruction (DDI) and Explicit Instruction
- Social and Emotional development*: Second Step, SABRES*

Professional Learning Goals for 2026-2027

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Refinement:** Provide district-wide PD on systematic screening routines, academic/behavioral intervention tracking, and clear cross-grade data-review workflows.
    - Elementary - PAX Positive Behavior Game and Second Step
    - Secondary School - Second Step within PE
- **Attendance Communication Loops:** Conduct brief workshops clarifying roles for attendance tracking, data access, and closed-loop communication between support teams and teachers.
- **Increase graduation rate** for all students from 85% (2025 -2026) and decrease drop out rates 6 % (2025-2026).
- **Integrated Language & Content Instruction:** Provide job-embedded training on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and explicit academic language routines within Tier 1 ELA and Math instruction.
    - Literacy Leader with LETRS training and quarterly PLC meetings.
      (Turnkey for grades 3-6; High School Key to Literacy)
- **Co-Teaching Models:** Facilitate PD on collaborative co-teaching practices between ENL specialists and general education/math/ELA content teachers.
- **Shift from Coverage to Depth:** Deliver professional learning on adapting math curriculum to emphasize conceptual understanding, task rigor, and deep mathematical reasoning rather than skill coverage.
- **Analyzing Student Work:** Train grade-level teams on structured student work analysis protocols (Q22: 3.55) to calibrate expectations for grade-level rigor.
- **Coaching & Professional Learning Community (PLC) Alignment:** Ensure every Superintendent Conference Day and pull-out training session includes explicit, traceable PLC follow-up modules and aligned coaching cycles.
- **Structured Feedback Channels:** Continue to support team leaders and coaches on protocol-driven PLC agendas to collect feedback on implementation barriers and increase staff communication and collaboration in PLC to support the academic achievement of students.
- **Schoolwide Expectation Frameworks:** Facilitate building-level PD (specifically at Dunkirk Secondary) focused on unifying classroom management expectations, common language, transition routines, tardy protocols, and student belonging practices.

- **Embedded PD Opportunities:** Increase meaningful, turn-key and embedded professional development opportunities within schools and across the district while maintaining a strong focus on instruction and protecting valuable instructional time during the school day.
    - *PD opportunities that are supported by teacher goal surveys.*

Dunkirk City School District Teacher Mentor Plan

One year of mentoring is provided for all first year teachers in the district.
The role of the mentor is to guide, advocate, be a confidante and reflective partner. Mentors are not a part of the evaluative process, but do provide guidance and play a supportive role in the learning of the professional teacher. The guidance offered by a mentor may include, but not be limited to support, classroom management, curricular content, assessment tools, instructional strategies, and appropriate pacing. The guidance provided by a mentor is as varied as the numerous responsibilities of teachers.

The mentor teacher will meet with the intern once a day for the first two weeks of school and on a weekly basis for the rest of the school year. After the first year of teaching in Dunkirk or in the case of a significant change in level or content area, a half-time mentor may be provided on a case by case basis. Teachers acting as a mentor to a teacher candidate may credit up to a maximum of 5 hours per year of such time towards their CTLE hours for mentoring. Quarterly documentation of mentoring will be submitted by the mentor to the Mentor Coordinator, who will verify the mentoring. A report will be submitted to the Professional Development Coordinator at the end of each school year, who will award CTLE credit when appropriate.

Evaluation of Professional Learning

An evaluation of each professional learning activity supported by the District will be provided to the participants of the professional learning. Feedback will be shared with members of the Professional Learning Committee, building principals, directors, and the superintendent.

Surveys of staff may be conducted to gauge interests and needs for professional learning, to determine comfort level with implementation of new initiatives, and to inform the professional learning plan.

Annual Review Process

As per the NYS guidelines, the Professional Learning Plan (PLP) is to be reviewed each year by a designated committee for the purpose of long-range planning and subsequent revisions to the original plan.