

Take your practice to new
places with professional
learning



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GUIDEBOOK





Department of Teaching & Learning

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**For questions about professional learning in District 131,
please contact the Professional Learning Coordinator, Jen Dalrymple.**

THE PURPOSE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional Learning in the State of Illinois has changed with the transition from certification to licensure and with the adoption of specific criteria / standards at both the state and national levels. Professional learning is the most accessible tool that districts have, and it has the greatest potential to change instructional practices and improve student learning (Learning Forward Standards, 2011; Killion & Hirsh, 2013; Wormeli, 2015).

The Department of Teaching and Learning in District 131 recognizes the need for professional learning opportunities designed to meet grade-level, content-

area, and district-level needs as well as requirements by the State of Illinois for educator licensure.

Professional learning shall be understood to include activities that are aligned with the Learning Forward national standards, the Illinois State Board of Education criteria for professional development, Illinois School Code, and District Improvement Goals.

The primary purpose of professional learning is to improve educator practice and student results. Professional learning activities should be designed to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and

dispositions educators need to help students perform at higher levels (Learning Forward, 2011).

Vision

Effective professional learning that provides job-embedded, systemic, and ongoing opportunities tied directly to student achievement in a 21st century learning environment.

Mission

The Department of Teaching and Learning in District 131 provides professional learning opportunities that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students through differentiated offerings appropriate to the needs of diverse adult learners.

Commitments

- ▶ Explore innovative learning options
- ▶ Include all stakeholder voices
- ▶ Provide ongoing support for implementation of new learning
- ▶ Encourage teacher leadership through multiple pathways

Jennifer Dalrymple, Ed.D.

**Professional Learning
Coordinator**



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STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING			
<i>Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students ...</i>	LEARNING COMMUNITIES: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.	LEADERSHIP: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.	RESOURCES: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
	DATA: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.	LEARNING DESIGNS: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.	IMPLEMENTATION: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Just as student learning and teacher evaluations are standards-based, so is professional learning. Learning Forward, the national organization for professional learning (formerly the National Staff Development Council), released the seven Standards for Professional Learning in 2011. See the chart above from their [Quick Reference Guide](#).

The Standards for Professional Learning can be a powerful tool for the “consumer.” You can use them to:

1. Develop a foundational knowledge of effective professional learning.
2. Request improvements in the professional learning in which you participate.
3. Plan, design, facilitate, and evaluate the professional learning that you lead.

The standards are a great resource for designing and aligning professional learning activities, and they are premised on the following **prerequisites for effective professional learning**:

- ▶ Educators’ commitment to students, ***all students***, is the foundation of effective professional learning.
- ▶ Each educator involved in professional learning comes to the experience **ready to learn**.
- ▶ Because there are disparate experience levels and use of practice among educators, professional learning can foster **collaborative** inquiry and learning that enhances individual and collective performance.
- ▶ Like all learners, educators learn in different ways and at different rates (**differentiated**).

ISBE Requirements for Approved Providers

In July of 2014 public school districts in the state of Illinois became approved providers for professional learning. Some of the requirements for District 131 to fulfill this role include the following:

- Award credit on a 1:1 basis - 1 clock hour of attendance = 1 professional development hour
- Align activities with the Standards for Professional Learning (2011)
- Provide rationale for alignment with IL Learning Standards and ISBE PD Purposes
- Maintain attendance records for no less than 6 years, including:
 - the name, date, and time of the activity
 - educators names and IEINs (Illinois Educator Identification Numbers)
 - educator arrival and departure times
- Disseminate and collect an ISBE 77-21A Evaluation from each participant to be retained for no less than 6 years
- Complete and disseminate the ISBE 77-21B Evidence of Completion to each participant (with a completed evaluation form)

Professional Development

- In isolation
- Passive
- Episodic
- Disconnected

Professional Learning

- *Educators are active partners in their learning.*
- *Educators are advocates for Professional Learning.*
- *Educators are facilitators of their own professional learning and that of others.*
- *Educators learn collaboratively.*
- *Professional learning is system-wide, aligned with goals and standards, and ongoing.*

Excluded activities

Based on the ISBE guidelines, District 131 will not be able to offer PD hours for meetings whose primary purpose is anything other than improving professional practice of the attendees through structured learning activities. If you have any questions about the nature of an activity you plan to attend or provide to staff, please contact the Professional Learning Coordinator, Jen Dalrymple.

Expectations

In-District Professional Learning

Registration: Employees are expected to register for professional learning activities through My Learning Plan (MLP). Note: registration closes 48 hours prior to the start date to allow presenters time to prepare materials and plan for engaging activities based on their audience. Activities with fewer than 10 participants registered at the closing date will be canceled. Registrants will receive a cancellation notice from My Learning Plan.

- ▶ **Monitor:** If the activity is scheduled during contractual hours and you require substitute coverage, MLP will generate a request in Absence Management (formerly AESOP). Please monitor the status of your request to ensure coverage for your classes.

Attendance: Staff who register for a district professional learning activity are expected to attend on the date(s) and time(s) indicated in the catalog posting. Please plan to arrive 5-10 minutes early to sign in, receive materials, and find seating. Arriving late / leaving early will result in reduced PD hours.

Evaluation: Participants in district-sponsored professional learning activities must complete the ISBE Evaluation in MLP within 48 hours of the event. This will provide presenters with timely and meaningful feedback.

- ▶ Participants whose attendance is confirmed but have not completed the ISBE evaluation will be marked "Complete" with zero PD hours.

Out-of-District Professional Learning

Presentations: Contact the Professional Learning Coordinator at least 3 weeks prior to the proposal deadline for the conference. If approved, you will be required to complete the out-of-district request in MLP.

Attendance: If you are interested in attending an out-of-district professional learning activity, you must submit the out-of-district request in MLP at least 2 weeks prior to the registration deadline. You must thoroughly complete the form and show alignment with your daily responsibilities to be considered for approval and/or funding.

- ▶ **Monitor:** If the activity is scheduled during contractual hours and you require substitute coverage, MLP will generate a request in Absence Management (formerly AESOP). Please monitor the status of your request to ensure coverage for your classes.

Completion: Upon returning from the event, mark the activity complete in MLP and attach the following documentation:

- ▶ evidence of your attendance
- ▶ itemized receipts and/or a mileage map for reimbursement of pre-approved expenses (see p. 6 for details)

NOTE: District 131 does not provide PD hours for out-of-district activities.

COMPENSATION FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Compensation may be available for employees who choose to attend in-district professional learning directly related to their daily responsibilities that occurs outside of the contractual workday.

Certified staff is compensated at the rate of \$27/hour to the nearest 1/4 hour.

Classified staff is compensated at their hourly rate to the nearest 1/4 hour.

Administrators are not eligible for additional compensation.

PD Hours

Formerly known as CPDUs, PD hours are required to maintain educator licensure in the state of Illinois.

Visit ISBE's website for information on the following:

- ▶ Licensure renewal requirements
- ▶ Entering PD hours in ELIS
- ▶ PD Value Chart (for activities completed prior to December 2014)
- ▶ PD rollover

BUILDING FUNDS

Each building has the option to set aside funds for professional learning. Professional learning specific to a building or an individual educator may be covered by the building budget at the discretion of the administrator. Building funds must cover all related expenses for approved requests.

DISTRICT FUNDS

District 131 receives federal grant funding to support improvement of instructional practice. Requests for professional learning that include specialized groups may be considered for district funding. Participants approved for district-funded professional learning will be expected to bring information and implementation support back to the district.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

According to specific guidelines, the Special Education, Bilingual, and Grants Departments may fund professional learning activities for corresponding staff. If you believe you are eligible for funding from one of these departments, please contact them directly before submitting your out-of-district request in MLP.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

Following an approved out-of-district professional learning activity, the participant may request reimbursement for related expenses that were approved in the initial request when marking the activity complete in MLP.

- ▶ Itemized expenses with appropriate receipts must be submitted within 14 days of the event.
- ▶ Any items that are not supported by an itemized receipt will not be reimbursed.
- ▶ Please allow **2 check cycles** for disbursement of your payment before contacting Selina Sanchez (ssanchez@d131.org).

Lodging: Due to budgetary constraints, as of the 2014-2015 school year, the district is not able to fund lodging requests.

Mileage: Round-trip mileage will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate per mile, calculated from the nearest point of departure and return. Please include a (google) map indicating distance traveled.

Public Transportation, Tolls, Parking: Public transportation, toll fees, and parking directly related to attendance at the event are reimbursable with itemized receipts.

Meals: If meals are included in the conference registration fee, those expenses are not eligible for reimbursement. Upon submission of itemized receipts, reimbursement will be made for those meals reasonably and necessarily related to event attendance **up to** the following amounts:

Breakfast \$8.00 Lunch \$12.00 Dinner \$20.00 Total \$40.00 per day