

# A New Vision for Professional Learning Systems in Connecticut

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# Recommendations

The CSDE, in collaboration with numerous Connecticut stakeholder groups, is committed to providing support and guidance to local education agencies (LEAs) and Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) as they continue to develop and refine their educator evaluation and support systems that result in enhanced educator practice and positive outcomes for students.

The CSDE recommends that the State Board of Education adopt the:

- Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning
- Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning



# Background

- As outlined in P.A. 12-116, professional development and continuous improvement focuses on increasing educator effectiveness.
- The Performance Evaluation and Advisory Committee (PEAC) recommended guidelines for educator evaluation. The Connecticut *Guidelines for Educator Evaluation* were adopted by the State Board of Education on June 27, 2012.
- The CSDE recognizes that additional work is necessary to build out the most critical component of any local, regional, or statewide educator evaluation system – a system of and expectations for high-quality professional learning that supports educator growth and development.
- Beginning in 2012, the CSDE convened a broadly representative group of Connecticut stakeholders, as well as experts from Learning Forward, to assist us in developing guidance for designing, implementing and evaluating high-quality professional learning systems.



Professional Development	Professional Learning
Passive Process	Active Process
Removed from Daily Work	Embedded throughout Daily Work
Disconnected from Student and Educator Standards	Aligned to Student and Educator Standards
Large Group, Formal, One-size-fits-all to Build Awareness	Informal, Self-directed and Collaborative Learning to Develop, Refine and Enhance Practice
Irrelevant Offerings to Educators	Differentiated to Focus on Acquisition of Knowledge and Development of Skill
Not Sustainable Resources are not Allocated to Support Educators	Sustainable Resources – Funding, People, Time, Technology, and Resources – with Long-term Support for All Educators
Outside Individuals/Organizations Deliver Trainings/Sessions	Facilitated and Designed by Educators in School/District; <u>External Sources Used When Expertise Necessary</u>



## Evaluation Systems Connecticut General Statute 10-148a

- (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year thereafter, each certified employee shall participate in a program of professional development. Each local and regional board of education shall make available, **annually, at no cost** to its certified employees, a program of professional development that is **not fewer than eighteen hours in length**, of which a **preponderance is in a small group or individual instructional setting**. Such program of professional development shall:
- (1) be a **comprehensive, sustained and intensive** approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in increasing student knowledge achievement,
  - (2) focus on **refining and improving various effective teaching methods** that are shared between and among educators,
  - (3) foster **collective responsibility** for improved student performance



(4) be comprised of professional learning that:

(A) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards,

(B) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors, distinguished educators, as described in section 10-145s, or other appropriate teachers,

(C) occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job embedded process of continuous improvement,

(D) includes a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and updating. Each program of professional development shall include professional development activities in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section.

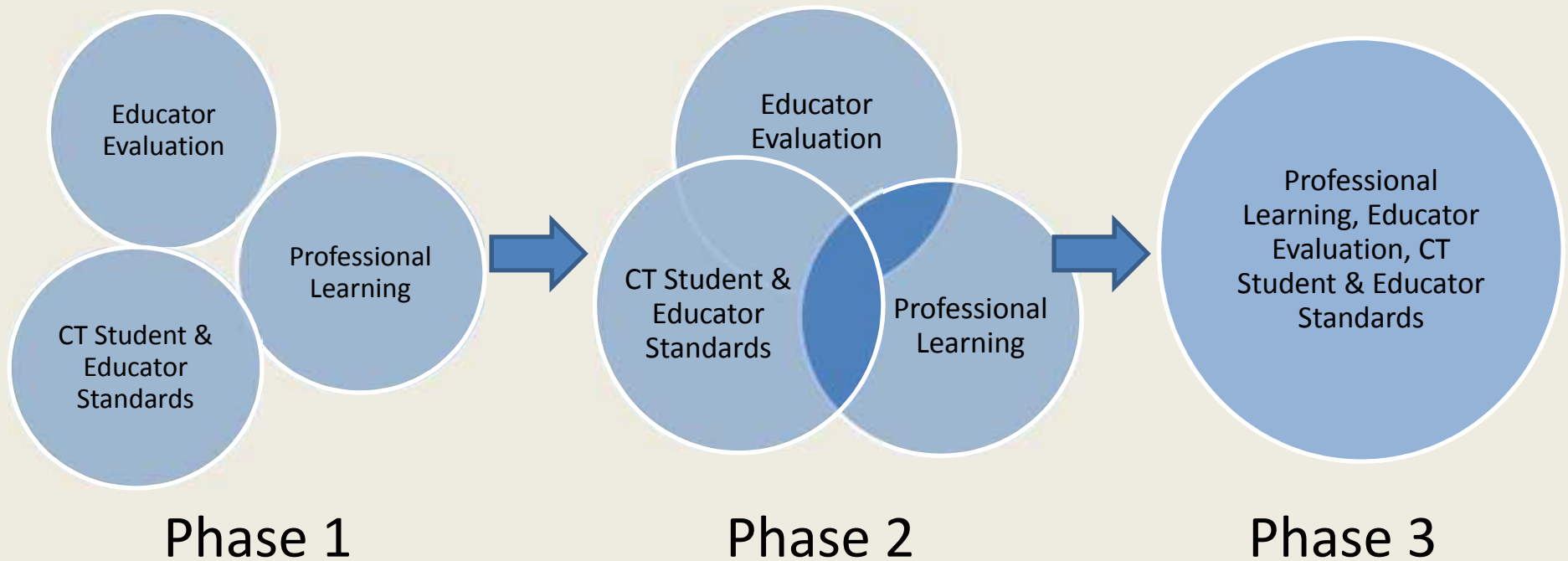


# High-quality Professional Learning

- The goal of professional learning is to **improve and enhance educator practice** in order to **promote and improve student growth and development**.
- All professionals, regardless of their field of work, **engage in continuous learning** as part of their professional practice.
- Educator professional learning requires **collaboration** with colleagues to meet the **diverse learning needs of all students**, a commitment to **continuously analyze and refine one's practice** and a **responsibility to take action to improve one's performance**.
- It is **sustained over time**, not the result of a single event or episode, **focused on deep learning and application of learning**, and incorporates effective adult learning practices.



# Transforming Professional Learning in Connecticut



Requires: Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDEC), and *CT Standards for Professional Learning* and high-quality professional learning plan



# Connecticut's Professional Learning System

## Key Elements



## Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDEC)

- District committee composed of certified teachers, administrators and other appropriate school personnel including representatives of the respective bargaining units.
- Responsible for the development, evaluation, and updating of a local comprehensive professional learning plan and participation in the development or adoption of the district educator evaluation and support program.

# Transforming Connecticut's System of Professional Learning

*Connecticut  
Academy for  
Professional  
Learning*

Participants:

- Create a common vision of professional learning in Connecticut.
- Focus on developing the capacity of participants to provide support to schools and districts.



# Connecticut Academy for Professional Learning

An intensive, six-day learning experience to:

develop the capacity of educators to participate in designing high-quality systems of professional learning;

examine successful models of professional learning that support educator growth;

explore how adult learning theories influence decisions and practices regarding professional learning;

examine how stakeholders support, facilitate and evaluate effective professional learning;

develop guidance to support PDECs as they develop and update Educator Evaluation and Support plans; and

explore potential policy implications at the state and local levels.





# Stakeholder Engagement

- American Federation of Teachers Connecticut (AFT-CT)
- Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES)
- Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
- Center for School Change
- Connecticut Council of Education Reform (CCER)
- Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
- Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)
- Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS)
- Connecticut Education Association (CEA)
- Connecticut Federation of School Administrations (CFSA)
- Connecticut Teacher of the Year (CT TOY)
- Cooperative Educational Services (CES)
- EASTCONN
- EDUCATION CONNECTION
- Institutions of Higher Education
- LEAD Connecticut
- LEARN
- State Education Resource Center (SERC)
- Connecticut Office of Early Childhood: Division of Early Care and Education
- CT State Department of Education: Academic Office
- CT State Department of Education: Office of Student Supports & Organizational Effectiveness
- CT State Department of Education: Talent Office



# Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC)

- 12 member subcommittee of the Academy
- Applied and integrated all feedback and ideas of the larger stakeholder group into draft iterations of a professional learning definition, standards for professional learning, and guidance for LEAs and PDECs
- Developed proposed *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning, Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning, and Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System.*



# Members of the PLAC

- **AFT-CT:** Carole Clifford, *Professional and Educational Issues Coordinator;*
- **CABE:** Patrice McCarthy, J.D., *Deputy Director and General Counsel;*
- **CAPSS:** Paula Talty, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Cromwell Public Schools;*
- **CAS:** Johnna Hunt, *Naugatuck Public Schools – Principal at Hillside Intermediate School;*
- **CEA:** Linette Branham, Ph.D., *Director, Policy, Research, and Reform;*
- **CFSA:** Gary Maynard, *President;*
- **CSDE:** Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D., *Chief Talent Officer;*
- **CSDE:** Shannon Marimón, *Division Director of the Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning;*
- **CSDE:** Anne T. McKernan, *Director of Leadership Development;*
- **CSDE:** Kimberly Audet, Ed.D., *Associate Education Consultant;*
- **Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) Alliance:** Esther Bobowick, *Director of Professional Development Services, Cooperative Educational Services;* and
- **SERC:** Kim Mearman, Ph.D., *Assistant Director for Program Development and Research/Program Evaluation.*



## **Proposed Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning**

High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators\* have equitable access, throughout their career continuum, to relevant, individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practices so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

\*Applies to all certified employees and can extend to all school and district staff.





## Proposed *CT Standards for Professional Learning*

**Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student...**

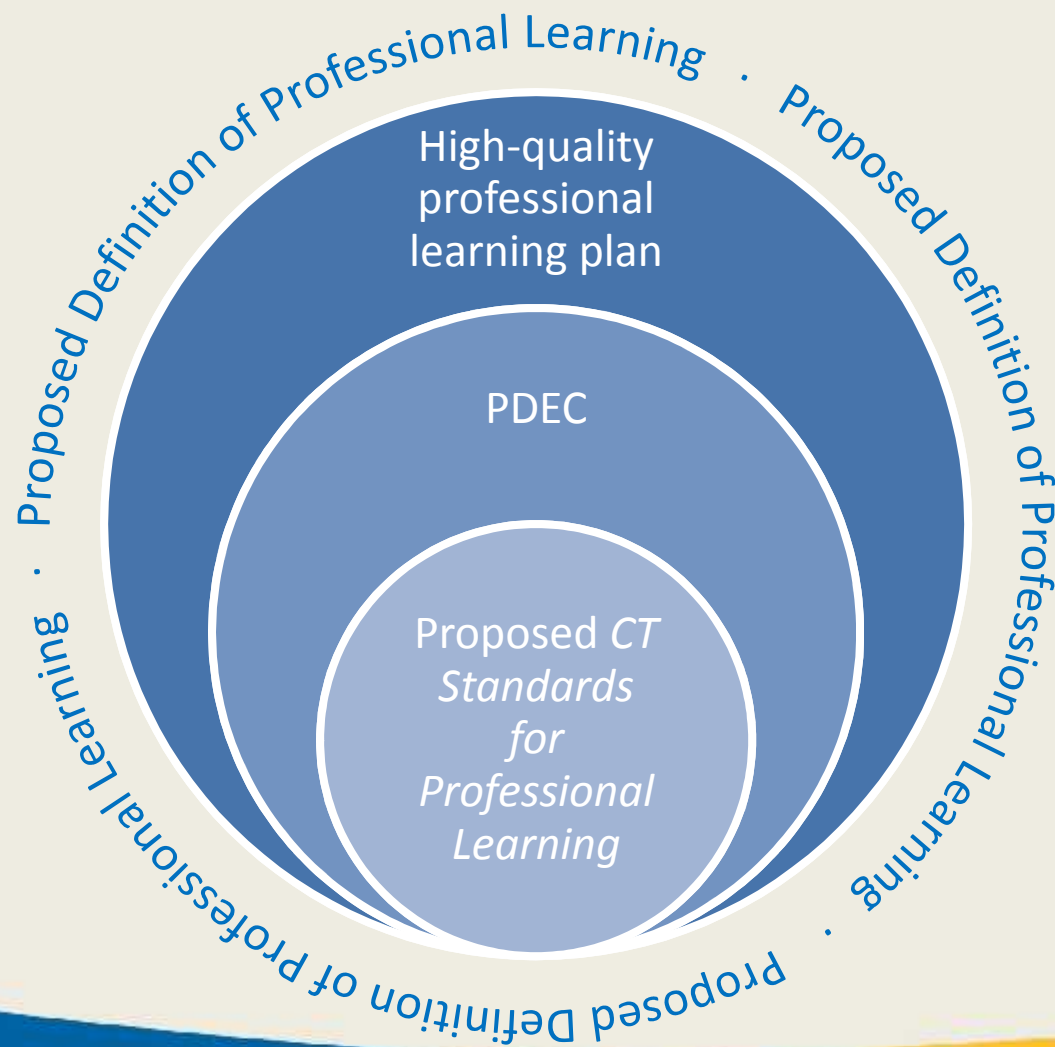
<b>Learning Communities</b>	occurs within learning communities committed to continuous growth, collective responsibility, family and community engagement and alignment of district and school vision and goals.
<b>Leadership</b>	requires and develops leadership capacity at all levels to advocate for and create systems for professional learning.
<b>Resources</b>	requires purposeful planning for the identification, use, allocation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of resources to support educator learning.
<b>Data</b>	requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative student, educator, and system data to plan, implement, monitor, and assess professional learning.
<b>Learning Designs</b>	integrates research on effective adult learning and uses flexible learning designs to achieve intended outcomes.
<b>Implementation</b>	applies change research and uses tools to identify and support the developmental stages of change and ensures the fidelity of implementation.
<b>Outcomes</b>	is aligned with district/school goals, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.
<b>Equity</b>	ensures that each member of the learning community has access to the resources and opportunities necessary for professional growth that result in meaningful contributions to its students, school(s) and district.

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# High-quality Professional Learning System



# Next Steps

- Model the new vision - Extended and sustained learning from the *Moving From Compliance to Coherence Conference*
- CT Academy for Professional Learning – Subcommittees
- Assessing, identifying, and sharing expertise at Connecticut schools and districts
- PLAC – policy and practice decisions

