

VI. G.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO BE PROPOSED:

May 6, 2015

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (a) of Section 10-148a of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____ this sixth day of May, Two Thousand Fifteen.

Signed: _____
Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner Designate
State Department of Education

DATE: May 6, 2015

SUBJECT: *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning and Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*

Executive Summary

Introduction

“The most powerful strategy school systems have at their disposal to improve teacher effectiveness is professional development... It is available to almost every educator, and – when planned and implemented correctly – it ensures that educators acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to help more students meet standards.¹”

Student success depends on effective teaching and leadership. Connecticut’s vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for each and every student. For Connecticut’s students to graduate ready for college and careers, educators must engage in strategically-planned, well-supported, standards-based ongoing professional learning that, in turn, results in student growth and development.

In 2012, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) put forward the recommended *Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation* which the State Board of Education subsequently adopted on June 27, 2012. As required by statute, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) developed a state model for educator evaluation and support known as the *System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED)*. When the *Guidelines* and *SEED* were developed in 2012, the CSDE fully recognized that additional work would be necessary to build out the most critical component of any local or regional educator evaluation system – a system of and expectations for high-quality professional learning. As stated in Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-148a, all local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to provide annual professional learning to educators that is comprehensive, sustained and intensive; improves practice; fosters collective responsibility for student performance; and is aligned with rigorous state student academic standards. Developing a comprehensive professional learning system that meets statutory

¹ Killion, J. (2012). *Meet the Promise of Content Standards: Professional Learning Required*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

requirements demands the need for additional support to LEAs on how to develop systems that not only meet requirements but, more importantly, impact educator practice and student growth. The CSDE is committed to providing guidance and resources to the educators of the school and/or district community who are charged with the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive professional development plan for certified employees of the district, as represented by the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) (Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151b). This guidance will support the PDEC's work of developing and sustaining high-quality systems of professional learning that enhance educator practice, improve student outcomes, and complement the educator evaluation and support system.

To advance this work, the CSDE Talent Office has partnered with Learning Forward to establish a shared vision of a statewide system for professional learning. Learning Forward is a nationally and internationally recognized professional learning association. One of Learning Forward's significant contributions to the field of professional learning is the Standards for Professional Learning as designed by the Standards Revision Task Force, which included 22 stakeholder groups. In addition to development of these standards, Learning Forward provides a significant amount of ongoing, current resources to support high-quality professional learning. Beginning in 2012, the CSDE convened a broadly representative group of Connecticut stakeholders, as well as experts from Learning Forward, to develop guidance for designing, implementing and evaluating high-quality professional learning systems.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* (Appendix A). The definition and standards provide a common vision of professional learning and are embedded in a guidance document (Appendix B) that is designed to provide support to educators, PDECs and LEAs in the design and enhancement of effective professional learning systems.

History/Background

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-148a requires, in part, that:

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, and
- (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, and
- (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.

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.

Beginning in fall 2014, the CSDE convened the Connecticut Academy for Professional Learning, facilitated by Learning Forward's senior advisor, Joellen Killion, and senior consultant, Victoria Duff. The Academy supports the CSDE's goal of developing a statewide system of professional learning that enhances educator practice and student outcomes. The Academy provides an intensive, six-day learning experience designed 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.

The CSDE recognizes the expertise of stakeholders in developing the Connecticut System of Professional Learning; therefore, a broad stakeholder group comprises the membership of the Academy throughout the 2014-15 year. Participants in the Academy represent the largest group of stakeholders in Learning Forward's 24-year history facilitating such academies. The broad stakeholder group consists of 48 individuals from 22 different Connecticut educational organizations:

- American Federation of Teachers Connecticut (AFT-CT);
- Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES);
- Capitol Region Education Council (CREC);
- Connecticut Center for School Change;
- Connecticut Council for 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 Administrators (CFSA);
- Connecticut Office of Early Childhood: Division of Early Care and Education;
- Connecticut State Department of Education: Academic Office;
- Connecticut State Department of Education: Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness;
- Connecticut State Department of Education: Talent Office;
- Connecticut Teacher of the Year (CT TOY);
- Cooperative Educational Services (CES);
- EASTCONN;
- EDUCATION CONNECTION;
- Institutions of Higher Education;
- LEAD Connecticut;
- LEARN; and
- State Education Resource Center (SERC).

A subcommittee of the Academy, the Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC), was convened between Academy sessions to develop drafts of the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*, as well as additional guidance and resources. The PLAC meets after each Academy session to apply and integrate 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. The PLAC is facilitated by the vice president of Leadership Greater Hartford, Doe Hentschel, Ph.D., and the subcommittee representatives include:

- **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**: 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*.

A summary of the PLAC’s primary work around developing a proposed definition of professional learning and the eight proposed standards for professional learning are as follows (also referenced in Appendix A):

- 1) ***Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning*** – The proposed *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* is: “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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.”
- 2) ***Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*** – Based to a significant degree on the Learning Forward Standards, these eight standards were designed to support the definition as provided above. The eight proposed *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* are:
 - Cultural Competence;
 - Learning Communities;
 - Leadership;
 - Resources;
 - Data;
 - Learning Designs;
 - Implementation; and
 - Outcomes.

The proposed *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* were presented at the State Board of Education meeting on March 4, 2015. The recommendation for adoption of the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* was tabled until the following State Board of Education meeting on May 6, 2015, when the changes would be reviewed. The Board recommended the following change to *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*:

- Revise the “Equity” standard to reflect cultural competence

As per recommendations provided by the State Board of Education on March 4, 2015, the following changes were made to the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*:

Recommendation: Revise the *Connecticut Standard for Professional Learning* “Equity” to more directly address the importance of cultural competency for all educators.

1. Revised “Equity” Standard

March 4, 2015, Board Report VI.F., pp. 5, A-1, B-4:

Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (Appendix A & Appendix B)

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

Changed to:

May 6, 2015, Board Report VI.G., pp.5, A-1, B-4:

Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (Appendix A & Appendix B)

Cultural Competence: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student facilitates educators' self-examination of their awareness, knowledge, skills and actions that pertain to culture and how they can develop culturally-responsive strategies to enrich the educational experiences for all students.*

2. Revised "Resources" Standard

March 4, 2015, Board Report VI.F., pp. 5, A-1, B-4:

Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (Appendix A & Appendix B)

Resources: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student requires purposeful planning for the identification, use, allocation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of resources to support educator learning.*

Changed to:

May 6, 2015, Board Report VI.G., pp.5, A-1, B-4:

Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (Appendix A & Appendix B)

Resources: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student requires purposeful planning for the identification, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and equitable use and allocation of resources to support educator learning.*

Recommendations and Justifications

It is critical that LEAs and PDECs are provided adequate support and guidance to develop not only educator evaluation and support systems but high-quality professional learning systems that result in enhanced educator practice and positive outcomes for students.

We are proposing that the State Board of Education adopt the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* (referenced in Appendix A).

The adoption of the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* will advance the statewide vision of high-quality professional learning systems and, more specifically, provide support and guidance to PDECs and LEAs to successfully design and implement local and regional professional learning systems.

Policy Implications

Subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-148a requires that local and regional boards of education make available a program of professional development. Adoption of the *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* will provide further support and guidance to PDECs and LEAs in developing high-quality professional learning systems for all educators.

Follow-up Activity

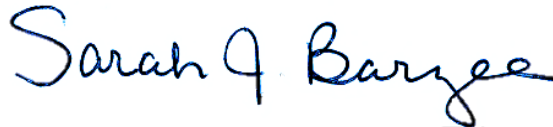
The PLAC is designing a communication strategy to present the proposed *Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning* and *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* to LEAs and PDECs across the state so that they may use these resources to inform the design and development of their professional learning plans. This support will include additional guidance (Appendix B) on designing systems that provide comprehensive, high-quality, meaningful professional learning opportunities for educators within those systems. The PLAC will gather feedback on the guidance document in order to continue to refine and expand upon it as a resource, with an emphasis on providing examples of best practice from the field. The PLAC is also creating a timeline of how the CSDE and stakeholder partners will provide comprehensive training to PDECs and LEAs throughout the state.



Prepared by: _____
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Reviewed by: _____
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Approved by: _____
Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D., Chief Talent Officer
Talent Office

Proposed Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning

High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators¹ have equitable access, throughout their career continuum, to relevant, individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Proposed Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning

Cultural Competence: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student facilitates educators' self-examination of their awareness, knowledge, skills, and actions that pertain to culture and how they can develop culturally responsive strategies to enrich the educational experiences for all students.

Learning Communities: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student occurs within learning communities committed to continuous growth, collective responsibility, family and community engagement, and alignment of district and school vision and goals.

Leadership: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student requires and develops leadership capacity at all levels to advocate for and create systems for professional learning.

Resources: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student requires purposeful planning for the identification, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and equitable use and allocation of resources to support educator learning.

Data: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative student, educator and system data to plan, implement, monitor and assess professional learning.

Learning Designs: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student integrates research on effective adult learning and uses flexible learning designs to achieve intended outcomes.

Implementation: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student applies change research and uses tools to identify and support the developmental stages of change and ensures the fidelity of implementation.

Outcomes: Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student is aligned with district/school goals, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.

¹ Must apply to all certified employees and can extend to all school and district staff.

Appendix B

Proposed Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System

DRAFT



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning

High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators¹ have equitable access, throughout their career continuum, to relevant individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Introduction

Background

A major Connecticut educational reform statute, passed in 2012, redefines professional learning as intensive and sustained continuous improvement for educators that is aligned to standards, is conducted among educators, occurs frequently, and includes a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators. The statute requires that professional learning programs reflect a comprehensive approach to increasing teacher and administrator effectiveness, focused on improving teaching methods and developing a shared collective responsibility for student growth (See Appendix A).

Student success depends on effective teaching and leadership. Connecticut's vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for each and every student. For Connecticut's students to graduate ready for college and careers, educators must engage in strategically-planned, well-supported, standards-based, continuous professional learning focused on student growth and development.

Values and Beliefs

The foundation of any effective system is built on core values and beliefs. Values and beliefs "endure over time. They supersede time, programs, strategies, and practice."² They drive the decisions designers make to develop and sustain an effective professional learning system. An effective professional learning system:

- is fundamental to both educator and student growth;
- supports the developmental process for educator growth in knowledge and skills, and addresses stages of change;
- provides each and every educator access to opportunities to engage in continuous, career-long learning to refine, improve and enhance practice;
- supports an ongoing process, not an event, that results in changes to individuals first, then institutions;
- includes relevant job-embedded learning that requires dedicated and sustained time;
- supports individual educator, team, school, district and state improvement goals aligned to a vision for teaching and learning;
- promotes educator collaboration around relevant, meaningful goals that align to and support an overall shared district vision for teaching and learning;
- encourages all members of the learning community to build and cultivate collective responsibility, continuous improvement, and shared leadership toward effective professional learning experiences; and
- uses knowledge and understanding of different cultures in the school community to promote effective interactions among students, educators, families and the larger community.

¹ Must apply to all certified employees and can extend to all school and district staff.

² Hirsh, S., & Killion, J. (2007). *The Learning Educator: A New Era in Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

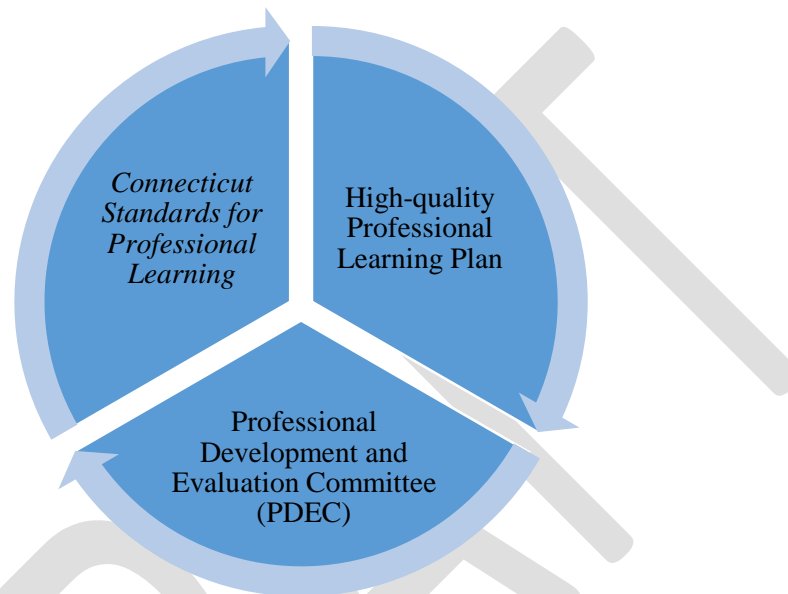


High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators have equitable access throughout their career continuum to relevant, individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Elements of a High-quality Professional Learning System

The three interdependent elements of Connecticut's high-quality professional learning system are: 1) the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*, 2) an effective Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC), and 3) a comprehensive professional learning plan (Figure 1). These elements must be continuously reviewed, refined and adapted to support educator and student growth and development.

Figure 1: Key Elements of Connecticut's Professional Learning System



In order to achieve results for educators and students, professional learning must shift from common historical practices, which were measured by documented hours spent in professional development or continuing education units (CEUs), to sustained, authentic, job-embedded professional learning measured by evidence of impact on practice and student growth. Figure 2 summarizes the major research-supported shifts (Killion, 2012).

Figure 2: Shifts in Professional Learning

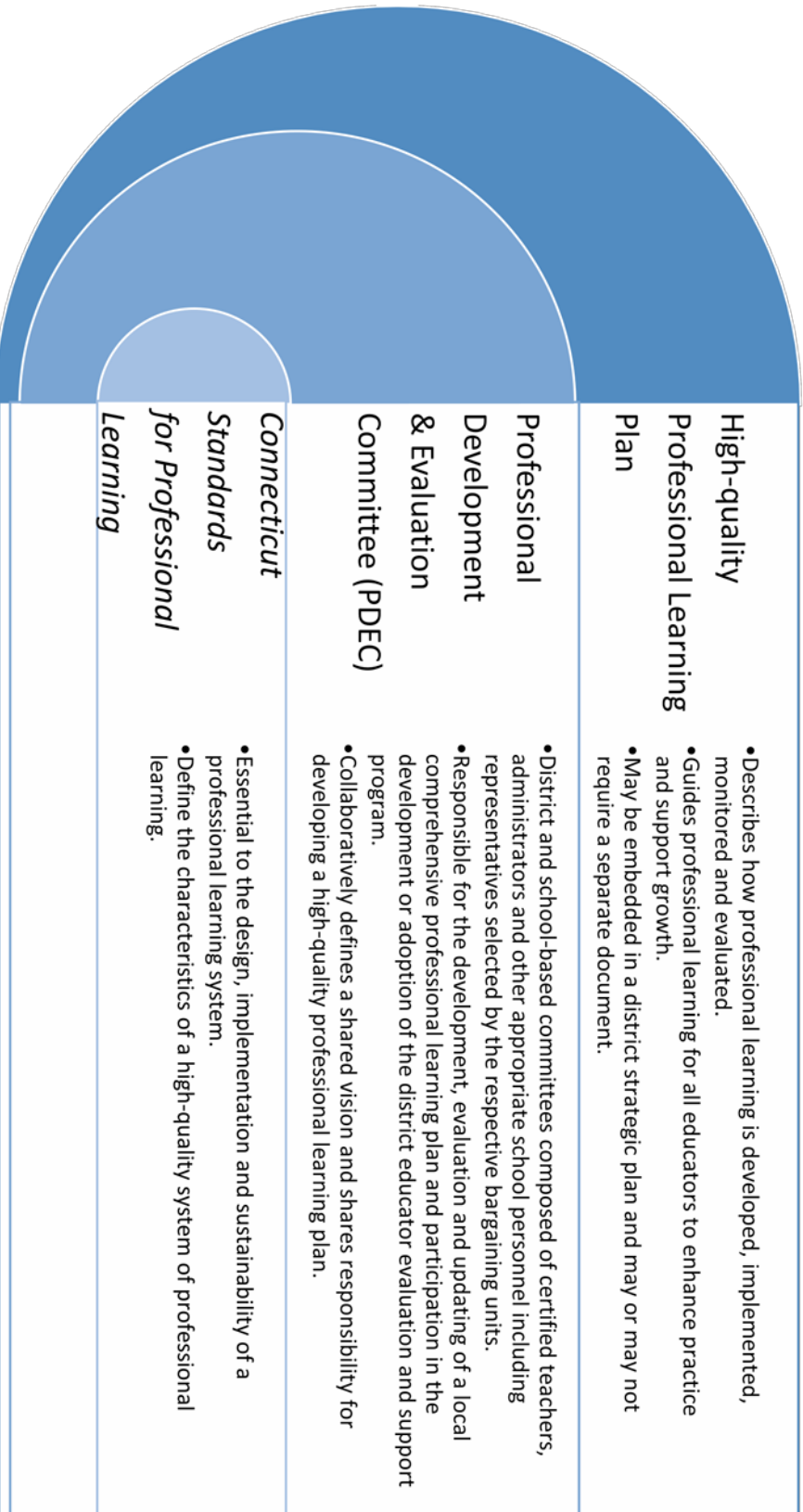
From	To
Driven by educator preference	Driven by student, educator and systems data
Focused on generic instruction	Focused on depth of knowledge, including cross-disciplinary and discipline-specific instruction and/or practice
Large group, formal, one-size-fits-all to build awareness	Informal, self-directed and collaborative learning to develop, refine and enhance practice
Occasional, episodic learning	Cycles of continuous improvement



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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Figure 3: Connecticut's Professional Learning System

This graphic demonstrates how a sustainable system for professional learning integrates three interdependent elements. High-quality professional learning systems are designed using a set of standards as the foundation, Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) use those standards to define and expand upon a shared vision and share the responsibility for designing a comprehensive professional learning plan and the high-quality professional learning plan describes the opportunities for educators to engage in meaningful learning that improves and/or enhances practice.



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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.



Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning

The *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* were designed to support excellence in teaching and learning through high-quality professional learning for educators. More than three decades of research in the professional learning field served as the foundation of the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*. The research-base includes the *Standards for Professional Learning*³ originally developed in 1995. Learning Forward convened a broadly representative stakeholder group to develop these standards to reflect successful practices and define high-quality professional learning.

The eight *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* are important to the design, implementation and sustainability of a professional learning system. They define the characteristics of a high-quality system of professional learning and can be used by Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs), district and/or school administrators, educators and stakeholders to ensure high-quality professional learning.

Cultural Competence: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* facilitates educators' self-examination of their awareness, knowledge, skills, and actions that pertain to culture and how they can develop culturally-responsive strategies to enrich the educational experiences for all students.

Learning Communities: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* occurs within learning communities committed to continuous growth, collective responsibility, family and community engagement and alignment of district and school vision and goals.

Leadership: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires and develops leadership capacity at all levels to advocate for and create systems for professional learning.

Resources: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires purposeful planning for the identification, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and equitable use and allocation of resources to support educator learning.

Data: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative student, educator and system data to plan, implement, monitor and assess professional learning.

Learning Designs: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* integrates research on effective adult learning and uses flexible learning designs to achieve intended outcomes.

Implementation: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* applies change research and uses tools to identify and support the developmental stages of change and ensures the fidelity of implementation.

Outcomes: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* is aligned with district/school goals, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.

³ Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: Author.



Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC)

An effective PDEC is composed of certified teachers, administrators and other appropriate school personnel including representatives selected by the respective bargaining units. Members of a PDEC collaboratively define a shared vision and share responsibility 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. The PDEC designs and regularly updates a comprehensive plan that clearly describes how professional learning is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated within a district.

A district-level PDEC is required by statute; however, school-based PDECs may also exist. Those educators who sit on the PDEC have and/or gain a fundamental knowledge base about good practice that helps develop and implement their professional learning plan as aligned with the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*. Members are expected to understand Connecticut's definition and standards for professional learning. Figure 4 describes what a district and school-based PDEC should know and be able to do when designing and implementing a professional learning plan.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of...	In developing the plan, the PDEC...	In implementing the plan, the PDEC...
the district's strategic plan and the key needs and issues in the areas of student and educator growth, curriculum and instruction, and leadership at the school level.	analyzes and synthesizes key needs and issues that contribute to professional learning, educator and student growth, and district and/or school development, inclusive of available resources (funding, people, time, technology and materials).	ensures that the comprehensive plan addresses needs and issues as identified at the district and school level.
how professional learning supports district and school level strategic planning in areas including, but not limited to, curricular change, new initiatives, instructional practices, content-specific knowledge and skills, and leadership growth for teachers and administrators.	aligns educator professional learning to student growth and development needs and district and school goals.	representatives, at the district and school level, facilitate discussion with educators focused on how the plan will support district and school goals.



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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC, continued

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of...	In developing the plan, the PDEC...	In implementing the plan, the PDEC...
<p>the areas in which, and the degree to which, the PDEC makes decisions regarding how resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are identified, accessed, used and evaluated for professional learning.</p>	<p>identifies the available and appropriate resources that support what is outlined in the plan.</p>	<p>makes decisions regarding how resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are used so that professional learning that is planned can be implemented.</p> <p>helps educators access available/appropriate resources and evaluates the effectiveness of resources and their use.</p>
<p>the <i>Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning</i> and how to align them with relevant Connecticut standards and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.</p>	<p>ensures alignment to the <i>Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning</i>, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.</p> <p>develops avenues through which district and school staff will become familiar with the <i>Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning</i> and how they align with educator standards and student growth standards.</p>	<p>representatives, at the district and school level, facilitate discussion with educators focused on how they will build their awareness of the <i>Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning</i>, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.</p>
<p>the principles and developmental stages of change and how professional learning leads to building district capacity and sustainable change.</p>	<p>plans implementation of professional learning so as to support sustainable change that leads to educator and student success.</p>	<p>identifies and uses tools to support the professional learning needed to implement change and to monitor change efforts.</p>
<p>professional learning is a series of varied learning experiences, not single events or a one-size-fits-all approach to learning.</p>	<p>models, advocates for, and supports relevant job-embedded learning that enhances practices, facilitates skill development and builds capacity of educators throughout the district.</p>	<p>ensures that the resources and learning designs educators can choose to use are flexible and appropriate for helping them meet their individual and/or collective learning goals.</p>



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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC, continued

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of...	In developing the plan, the PDEC...	In implementing the plan, the PDEC...
<p>how adults learn.</p>	<p>ensures that the plan has the flexibility to enable educators to self-direct their learning and connect it to practice, so the context in and methods by which they learn meet their learning styles and needs.</p>	<p>actively works with educators to learn how to develop, implement, and assess learning plans that connect district and school goals, student learning needs, and their individual and/or collective learning needs at the district and school level.</p>
<p>how to appropriately include all educators, individually and collectively, in planning professional learning that takes place on the district, school and individual level, and is highly self-directed, intensive, sustained and connected to their practice.</p>	<p>includes representative groups in the planning/development process, and collaborates with teachers and administrators at the district and school level throughout the planning process.</p> <p>discusses and determines what professional learning is planned at the district level as opposed to the school or individual level (e.g. general information awareness required by all, etc.), and how to help schools and individuals collaborate to appropriately plan professional learning.</p>	<p>ensures that district-wide professional learning that is planned for diverse groups of educators is appropriate for the learning and implementation objectives at the district and school level.</p> <p>ensures that planning includes/is done by participants, so as to best meet their learning needs at the school level.</p>
<p>what professional learning practices used in the district are successful, and why they are successful, based on qualitative and quantitative data.</p> <p>how monitoring and evaluation of professional learning are used to continuously review and refine practice.</p>	<p>uses needs assessments and qualitative and quantitative data throughout the stages of planning/designing, implementing, monitoring and assessing a high-quality professional learning plan.</p> <p>develops a simple method for monitoring professional learning processes and evaluating the impact of professional learning.</p>	<p>gathers data to monitor implementation and oversees the evaluation of the plan and shares that information with the appropriate audience.</p>



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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

A High-quality Professional Learning Plan

A comprehensive professional learning plan is the map that guides professional learning for all educators to enhance their practice and support student growth. It clearly describes how professional learning is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated within a district and school.

A high-quality professional learning plan reflects the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and describes...

- the district vision for linking student, educator, and organizational growth and improvement;
- how professional learning is used to support district and school goals, educator growth and evaluation, curriculum development and implementation, and student growth and development;
- clear and specific steps for plan implementation;
- flexible learning designs that provide for self-directed, collaborative and guided learning to address variability of grade configurations, educator experience(s), and the specific demands of the curriculum and instructional practice;
- how all educators are appropriately included in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating professional learning;
- how needs assessment and quantitative and qualitative data are used to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate professional learning activities that support individual educator, team, school and district goals and sustainable change;
- clear, simple methods for all educators to use to monitor and evaluate how professional learning is transferred to practice; and
- how decisions regarding resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are made to support 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 practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Appendix A
Connecticut General Statutes

C.G.S. 10-148a. Required Professional Development Programs

(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 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, and
 - (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, and
 - (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.
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C.G.S. 10-148a. Required Outcomes Planning for Professional Development

(b) Local and regional boards of education shall offer professional development activities to certified employees as part of the plan developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a or for any individual certified employee. Such professional development activities may be made available by a board of education directly, through a regional educational service center or cooperative arrangement with another board of education or through arrangements with any professional development provider approved by the Commissioner of Education. Such professional development activities shall (1) improve the integration of reading instruction, literacy and numeracy enhancement, and cultural awareness into instructional practice, (2) include strategies to improve English language learner instruction into instructional practice, (3) be determined by each board of education with the advice and assistance of the teachers employed by such board, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for such teachers pursuant to section 10-153b, and on and after July 1, 2012, in full consideration of priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education, (4) use the results and findings of teacher and administrator performance evaluations, conducted pursuant to section 10-151b, to improve teacher and administrator practice and provide professional growth, and (5) include training in the implementation of student individualized education programs and the



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communication of individualized education program procedures to parents or guardians of students who require special education and related services for certified employees with an endorsement in special education who hold a position requiring such an endorsement.

Training Required for Superintendents and Administrators

Professional development completed by superintendents of schools and administrators, as defined in section 10-144e, shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the evaluation and support of teachers under the teacher and administrator evaluation and support program, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 10-151b, during each five-year period.

Scheduling

The time and location for the provision of such activities shall be in accordance with either an agreement between the board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit pursuant to section 10-153b or, in the absence of such agreement or to the extent such agreement does not provide for the time and location of all such activities, in accordance with a determination by the board of education.

C.G.S. 10-148a. Attestation to the CSDE

(c) Each local and regional board of education or supervisory agent of a nonpublic school approved by the State Board of Education shall attest to the Department of Education, in such form and at such time as the commissioner shall prescribe, that professional development activities under this section:

- (1) are planned in response to identified needs,
- (2) are provided by qualified instructional personnel, as appropriate,
- (3) have the requirements for participation in the activity shared with participants before the commencement of the activity,
- (4) are evaluated in terms of its effectiveness and its contribution to the attainment of school or district-wide goals, and
- (5) are documented in accordance with procedures established by the State Board of Education. In the event that the Department of Education notifies the local or regional board of education that the provisions of this subsection have not been met and that specific corrective action is necessary, the local or regional board of education shall take such corrective action immediately.

C.G.S. 10-148a. Audits by CSDE

(d) The Department of Education shall conduct audits of the professional development programs provided by local and regional boards of education. If the State Board of Education determines, based on such audit, that a local or regional board of education is not in compliance with any provision of this section, the State Board of Education may require the local or regional board of education to forfeit of the total sum which is paid to such board of education from the State Treasury an amount determined by the State Board of Education. The amount so forfeited shall be withheld from a grant payment, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, during the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which noncompliance is determined. The State Board of Education may waive such forfeiture if the State



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Board of Education determines that the failure of the local or regional board of education to comply with the provisions of this section was due to circumstances beyond its control.

C.G.S. 10-151b. Required District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee

(b) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, not later than September 1, 2013, each local and regional board of education shall adopt and implement a teacher evaluation and support program that is consistent with the guidelines for a model teacher evaluation and support program adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. Such teacher evaluation and support program shall be developed through mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the professional development and evaluation committee for the school district, established pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a, as amended by this act. If a local or regional board of education is unable to develop a teacher evaluation and support program through mutual agreement with such professional development and evaluation committee, then such board of education and such professional development and evaluation committee shall consider the model teacher evaluation and support program adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such board of education may adopt, through mutual agreement with such professional development and evaluation committee, such model teacher evaluation and support program. If a local or regional board of education and the professional development and evaluation committee are unable to mutually agree on the adoption of such model teacher evaluation and support program, then such board of education shall adopt and implement a teacher evaluation and support program developed by such board of education, provided such teacher evaluation and support program is consistent with the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. Each local and regional board of education may commence implementation of the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to this subsection in accordance with a teacher evaluation and support program implementation plan adopted pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

C.G.S. 10-220a. Required District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee

(b) Not later than a date prescribed by the commissioner, each local and regional board of education shall establish a professional development and evaluation committee consisting of certified employees, and such other school personnel as the board deems appropriate, including representatives selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for such employees chosen pursuant to subsection (b) of [section 10-153](#). The duties of such committees shall include, but not be limited to, participation in the development or adoption of a teacher evaluation and support program for the district, pursuant to [section 10-151b](#), and the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional development plan for certified employees of the district. Such plan shall: (1) Be directly related to the educational goals prepared by the local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of [section 10-220](#), (2) on and after July 1, 2011, be developed with full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education, and (3) provide for the ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher evaluation and professional development of the professional staff members of each such board, including personnel management and evaluation training or experience for administrators, shall be related to regular and special student needs



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and may include provisions concerning career incentives and parent involvement. The State Board of Education shall develop guidelines to assist local and regional boards of education in determining the objectives of the plans and in coordinating staff development activities with student needs and school programs.

C.G.S. 10-220a. In-Service training

(a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1) the nature and the relationship of drugs, as defined in subdivision (17) of [section 21a-240](#), and alcohol to health and personality development, and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk reduction education which includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in [section 19a-581](#), violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence, child abuse and youth suicide, (3) the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, including, but not limited to, children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special needs children in a regular classroom, including, but not limited to, implementation of student individualized education programs, (4) school violence prevention, conflict resolution, the prevention of and response to youth suicide and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, as defined in subsection (a) of [section 10-222d](#), except that those boards of education that implement any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the Department of Education and is consistent with subsection (d) of [section 10-145a](#), [sections 10-222d](#), [10-222g](#) and [10-222h](#), subsection (g) of [section 10-233c](#) and sections 1 and 3 of public act 08-160, [FN1] shall not be required to provide in-service training on the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, (5) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency lifesaving procedures, (6) computer and other information technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction, communications and data management, (7) the teaching of the language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, (8) second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education pursuant to [section 10-17f](#), (9) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter, and (10) the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of [section 10-151b](#). Each local and regional board of education may allow any paraprofessional or noncertified employee to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided pursuant to this section. The State Board of Education, within available appropriations and utilizing available materials, shall assist and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (A) Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; (B) the historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (C) African-American history; (D) Puerto Rican history; (E) Native American history; (F) personal financial management; (G) domestic violence and teen dating violence; (H) mental health first aid training; and (I) topics approved by the state board upon the request of local or regional boards of education as part of in-service training programs pursuant to this subsection.



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