

MONTVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Montville's System for Educator Evaluation and Support



Fall 2024

Updated Fall 2025

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## **Educator Evaluation & Support**

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## **I. Montville's System for Educator Evaluation and Development**

**Purpose and Rationale of the Professional Learning and Evaluation System** When teachers succeed, students succeed. Research has proven that no school-level factor matters

more to students' success than high-quality teachers. To support our teachers, we need to clearly define excellent practice and results; provide opportunities (time and support) for continuous learning to increase skills and knowledge that enhance practice, give accurate, useful information about teachers' strengths and development areas; and provide recognition. The purpose of Montville's evaluation and professional learning model is to help each teacher strengthen their practice to improve student learning and ensure positive outcomes for every student and to fairly and accurately evaluate teacher performance.

## **Guiding Principles**

The transformational design of the educator evaluation and support model is grounded in six guiding principles that use high quality professional learning to advance educator practice and student learning, growth, and achievement.

- **Allow for differentiation of roles** (for example, teacher, counselor, student support staff)
- **Simplify and reduce the burden** (eliminates technical challenges, paperwork, steps)
- **Focus on things that matter** (identify high leverage goal focus areas) • **Connect to best practices aimed at the development of the whole child**  
(including, but not limited to, academic, social, emotional, and physical development)
- **Focus on educator growth and agency** (meaningfully engage professionals by focusing on growth and practice in partnership with others aligned to a strategic focus).
- **Meaningful connections to professional learning** (Provide multiple pathways for participants to improve their own practice in a way that is meaningful and impactful).

*Feedback should be specific, timely, accurate, actionable and reciprocal.*

**The Role of the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC)** The PDEC serves as the collaborative decision maker to create, revise, and monitor the evaluation and support model, as well as the professional learning plan.

Pursuant to [Connecticut General Statute 10-220a](#) and [Public Act 23-159 Section 11\(b\) \(3\)](#), each local and regional board of education must establish a professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC) to include at least one teacher and one administrator, selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees, at least one paraeducator selected by their exclusive bargaining representative, and other personnel as the local board deems appropriate. It is vital that individuals selected as delegates for administrators, teachers, and other school personnel are representative of the various classifications within the group.

**Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation and Support Components** The design of the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation and Support 2023 (CT Guidelines 2023) are representative of research-based effective practice and include six elements.

- Standards and criteria
- Goal setting process
- Professional practice and educator growth
- Evaluator/observer/stakeholder feedback and engagement
- Process elements
- Dispute resolution

The combined purpose and rationale, guiding principles, and overall framework for educators' evaluation and support describe a systematic process of continuous improvement and professional learning leading to high quality professional practice and improved learning, growth, and achievement for students.

### **Standards and Criteria for Educators**

One of the primary goals of the educator evaluation and support system is to ensure the growth and development of our staff so they in turn may develop and enhance personal and professional strengths to meet the needs of all the students they serve. Educator practice discussions are based on Kim Marshall's leadership rubrics and mutually agreed upon by the PDEC.

### **Professional Learning Standards and Structures**

[Learning Forward Professional Learning Standards 2022](#), serve as a tool for how professional learning happens to deepen one's knowledge of their practice to impact student learning, growth, and achievement. As a tool, the professional learning standards help educators and leaders intentionally design learning, address content and consider how to accomplish the expected learning transformation desired. Together the professional standards for educators, leaders and professional learning serve as the three visions that work together to lay the foundation for meaningful feedback in a continuous learning process.

### **The Continuous Learning Process: Goal Setting, Professional Practice and Evaluator/Observer/Stakeholder Feedback and Engagement.**

The evaluation and support model is designed as a continuous learning process. The goal of the continuous learning process is to provide educators with continuous learning opportunities for professional growth through self-directed analysis and reflection, planning, implementation, and collaboration. Regular dialogue and feedback, coupled with the opportunity to reflect on and advance practice, drive the continuous learning process. In this process, the educator serves as the learner who actively engages in and directs their learning and feedback. The evaluator serves as a learning partner who supports the educator through the learning and growth process.

During each school year, a minimum of three check-ins provide an opportunity for a reciprocal discussion of what is happening in the classroom or school, a sharing of evidence of professional learning and impact on growth, and identification of needs and mutually agreed upon next steps. The meetings are approached in a spirit of continuous improvement, reflection, and collaboration. Dialogue is important, however, there must be a balance of written and verbal feedback provided between check-ins based on observations and reviews of practice as required by the district plan.

## **Teacher Evaluation Process**

The annual evaluation process between a teacher and an evaluator (principal or designee) is anchored by three performance conversations at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. The purpose of these conversations is to clarify expectations for the evaluation process, provide comprehensive feedback to each teacher on their performance, set goals and identify professional learning opportunities. These conversations are collaborative and require reflection and preparation by both the evaluator and the teacher in order to be productive and meaningful.

### **Teachers and Service Providers Rubrics**

These rubrics were shared with us by Kim Marshall and adapted to meet the specific service provider's work. They are aligned to Kim Marshall's framework and "aim to provide a shared definition of the work teachers (... and service providers) do with students and colleagues".

[Teacher Evaluation Summative Rubrics School Counselor Summative Rubrics School](#)

[Psychologist Summative Rubrics Speech & Language Summative Rubrics School Social](#)

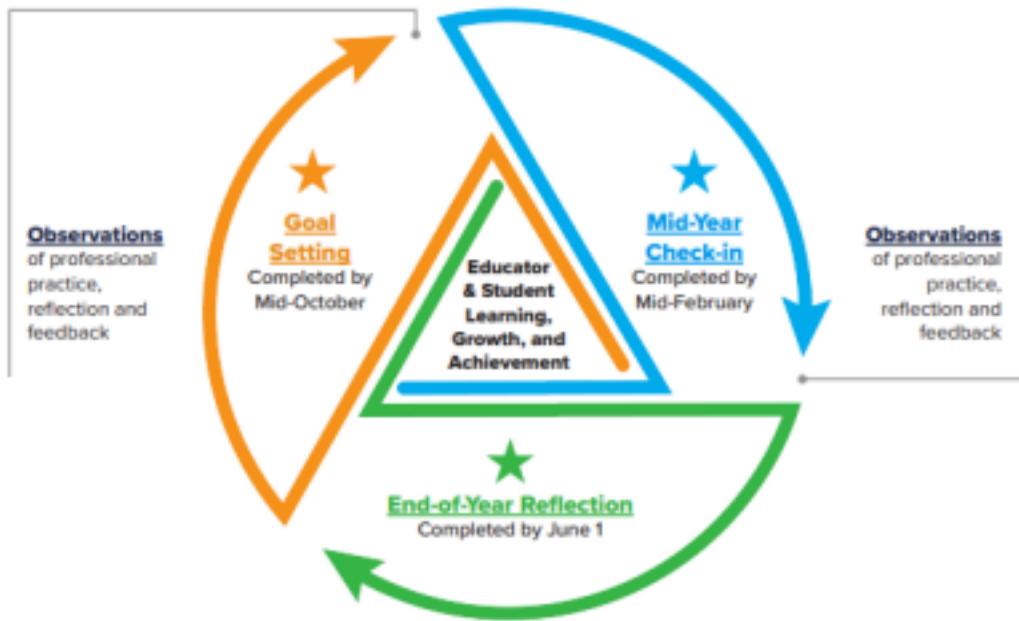
[Worker Summative Rubrics](#)

Below is a graphic with the associated steps, reflections, and linked resources associated with each step of the process to assist educators and evaluators through the process. All educators are assigned a primary evaluator (092) who has completed comprehensive orientation on this model and relevant rubrics.

### **EDUCATOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING PROCESS**

#### **Evaluation Orientation**

Completed prior to the start of the Continuous Learning Process



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<p><b>Goal Setting</b> Completed by October 15</p> <p><b>Beginning of the Year Goal(s) and Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self reflect</li> <li>• Review evidence</li> <li>• <i>Beginning teachers align to TEAM</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Goal(s), Rationale, Alignment and Professional Learning Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft goal(s), rationale, alignment, professional learning plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Setting Conference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutually agree on 1-, 2-, or 3-year goal(s)</li> <li>• Determine individual or group goal(s)</li> <li>• Mutually agree on professional learning needs and support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mid-year Check-In</b> Completed by February 15</p> <p><b>Mid-Year Check -In: Reflection, Adjustments, and Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and discuss currently collected evidence towards goal(s) and of practice</li> <li>• Review professional learning, evidence, and impact on educator practice, student learning, growth, and achievement</li> </ul> <p><b>Mid-Year Conference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss evidence, reflection, and feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>End-of-Year Reflection</b> Completed by June 1</p> <p><b>End-of-Year Reflection and Feedback Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reflection; Review and discuss professional learning, evidence of impact on practice, student learning, growth and achievement</li> </ul> <p><b>End-of-Year Conference/Summative Feedback and Growth Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluator provides written summative feedback and guides</li> </ul>
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	<p>from evaluator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust and revise as needed</li> </ul>	<p>next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Summary sign-off</li> </ul>
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Orientation on the educator evaluation and support process shall take place prior to the start of the process, no later than October 15. The orientation shall include:

- High leverage goal setting and professional learning plans
- Use of rubrics and standards
- Observation of practice/Review of practice
- Tiered supports
- Dispute resolution

Annual training for evaluators as required by [C.G.S. 10-151b](#) will include engaging in and providing reciprocal feedback tied to standards and evidence of professional practice.

All three meetings (goal setting, midyear check-in and end-of-year reflection/summative review) are documented on the [Tenure Educator Evaluation Goal and Feedback Form](#) or [Non-Tenure Educator Evaluation Goal and Feedback Form](#)

### **Goal(s) Setting (Completed by October 15)**

The initial goal setting meeting includes a dialogue between the educator and their evaluator around the educator's initial self-reflection, which is based on a review of evidence and an analysis of their own practice to identify and support an area for educator practice and growth, and student learning, growth, and achievement. The educator and evaluator come to mutual agreement on high leverage professional practice one-, two-, or three-year goal(s), multiple measures of evidence (at least two measures), professional learning plan, and support that is consistent with their professional status and goals to drive progress toward goal attainment

### **Midyear check-in (Completed by February 15)**

The midyear check-in consists of reciprocal dialogue between the educator and evaluator and includes an educator self-reflection on their progress toward their goal(s) so far. The reflection shall include an analysis of the impact of their learning on their practice, student learning, growth and achievement and the school community.

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- Educators self-reflect and review multiple and varied qualitative and quantitative indicators of evidence of impact on educator's growth, professional practice, and impact on student learning, growth, and achievement with their evaluator.
- The evaluator provides specific, standards-based feedback related to the educator's goal. Observation/Review of Practice feedback and evidence aligned to the educator/service provider rubric.
- The midyear conversation is a crucial progress check-in. The midyear check-in provides an opportunity to discuss evidence, learning, and next steps. It is at this point that revisions to the educator's goal(s) may be considered based on multiple measures of evidence.

### **End-of-Year Reflection/Summative Review (Completed by June 1)**

End-of-year reflection provides an opportunity for the educator and evaluator to engage in

reciprocal dialogue, similar to the midyear check-in, to discuss progress toward the educator's goal(s); professional learning as it relates to the educator's professional growth and professional practice; and impact on student learning, growth, and achievement as evidenced by multiple and varied qualitative and quantitative indicators of evidence. A written end-of-year summary includes the impact of new learning on educator practice and growth, impact on student learning, growth and achievement, school community, strengths and concerns, and possible next steps for the upcoming year. Analysis of evidence from the end-of-year summary is important for the educator's subsequent self-assessment and goal setting revisions or new goal.

The evaluator provides a concise summary based upon evidence related to the mutually agreed upon educator goal(s) and identified standards and will make a distinction regarding the educator's successful completion of the professional learning process.

### **Primary and Complementary Evaluators**

The primary evaluator for most teachers will be the school principal, assistant principal, or special education supervisor who will be responsible for the overall evaluation process. Complementary evaluators may be used to assist the primary evaluator. Complementary evaluators are certified teachers who also have administrative certification. They may have specific content knowledge, such as department heads or curriculum coordinators. Complementary evaluators must be fully trained in the observation process. A complementary evaluator should share their feedback with the primary evaluator as it is collected and shared with teachers.

**Ensuring Fairness and Accuracy: Evaluator Training, Monitoring and Auditing** The district will provide comprehensive training and support to administrators and other evaluators to ensure proficiency and calibration in conducting teacher evaluations.

### **Professional Practice and Educator Growth**

The implementation of the continuous learning process is shared between the educator and evaluator. For the duration of the learning process, educators pursue learning and attainment of their goal(s), collecting evidence of practice related to their high leverage professional learning goal. Evaluators will provide educators with feedback from observation and dialogue, ensure timely access to supports, and collect evidence of educator performance and practice toward goal(s) through multiple sources, which include observation and may include student, staff or daily feedback.

### **Observation of Professional Practice and Feedback**

Observations occur throughout the continuous learning process. Mini observations will be unannounced or announced when inviting an administrator to observe a particular lesson. The identified high leverage goal(s) provides a focus for strategic evidence collection and feedback. Evaluators provide educators with specific feedback based on evidence, standards, and the educator's goal; ensure timely access to planned support(s); and continue to collect evidence of

educator practice and progress toward goal(s) through multiple sources of evidence, including observation. Feedback, written or verbal is provided within three school days. Observations and feedback vary based on tenure status

COHORT 1	COHORT 2
<p><b>Who:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New to profession (first four years)</li> <li>• New to Montville (first two years)</li> </ul> <p><b>What:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two formal observations of professional practice (minimum 20 minutes in length) with pre and post meetings</li> <li>• Three mini observations of professional practice (minimum 10 minutes in length) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ One observation of professional practice may be substituted for a review of practice.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Peer Collaboration/Observations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Beginning teachers (Yrs. 1 &amp; 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>TEAM embedded</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>◦ All other Cohort 1 teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2 peer observations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Verbal and written feedback within three school days</li> <li>• Additional observations of professional practice as deemed necessary</li> </ul>	<p><b>Who:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators who have successfully completed Cohort 1 in their current LEA</li> </ul> <p><b>What:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two mini observations of professional practice (minimum 10 minutes in length) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ One observation of professional practice may be substituted for a review of practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Verbal and written feedback within three school days</li> <li>• Additional observations of professional practice as deemed necessary</li> </ul>

### Observation forms:

[Formal Observation Teachers Forms for Cohort 1](#) (non-tenure/new to Montville)

[Formal Observation Service Provider Forms for Cohort 1](#) (non-tenure/new to Montville)

[Formal Observation Forms for Cohort 2 as needed](#) (tenure teachers)

[Mini Observation Teacher Forms for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2](#) (tenure teachers) [Mini](#)

[Observation Service Provider Forms for Cohort 1 and 2](#) (service providers) [Review of](#)

[Practice forms for Cohort 1 and Cohort 2](#) (all teachers and service providers)

### Pre-Conferences and Post-Conferences for Non-Tenure Teachers

Pre-conferences are valuable for giving context for the lesson and information about the students

to be observed and for setting expectations for the observation process. Pre-conferences are optional for observations except where noted in the requirements described above. A pre-conference can be held with a group of teachers, where appropriate.

Post-conferences provide a forum for reflecting on the observation and for generating action steps that will lead to the teacher's improvement. A good post-conference:

- begins with an opportunity for the teacher to share their written self-assessment of the lesson observed and student work samples

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- cites objective evidence to paint a clear picture for both the teacher and the evaluator about the teacher's successes, improvements which need to be made, and the focus of future observations
- involves written and verbal feedback from the evaluator
- occurs within three school days of the observation

### **Non-Classroom Reviews of Practice**

Because the evaluation plan aims to provide teachers with comprehensive feedback on their practice, all interactions with teachers that are relevant to their instructional practice and professional conduct may contribute to their performance evaluations. These interactions may include, but are not limited to, reviews of lesson/unit plans and assessments, planning meetings, data team meetings, professional learning community meetings, call-logs or notes from parent-teacher meetings, and observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers. Reviews of practice for educators and service providers are documented on the [Review of Practice form](#).

### **Feedback**

The goal of feedback is to help teachers grow as educators and become more effective with each of their students. With this in mind, evaluators should be clear and direct, presenting their comments in a way that is supportive and constructive, in a variety of written and verbal formats. The timeline for feedback should not exceed three school days. Feedback should include:

- specific evidence aligned to the educator/service provider rubric
- prioritized commendations and recommendations for development actions (which may include attendance at specific professional learning activities)
- must include a positive from the observation (glow) and one area of improvement from the observation (grow)
- next steps and supports the teacher can pursue to improve their practice
- a timeframe for follow-up

### **Peer Collaboration for Non-Tenure Teachers**

Beginning teachers (Years 1 and 2) involved in TEAM will conduct at least two 10 minute observations related to their TEAM module. Non-Tenured Teachers (new to Montville for first two years) will conduct at least two observations/conversations around their high-level professional practice goals identified at the goal setting conference. These observations or conversations can be with their PLC group, district coaches, or other colleagues. One observation/conversation must be completed by the mid-year evaluation and the second before final evaluation and documented on the [Non-Tenure Educator Evaluation Goal and Feedback Form](#).

### **Growth Criteria**

An educator is determined to have successfully completed the learning process by demonstrating:

- Reflection supported with evidence of the impact of the educators' new learning on their practice/goal.
- The impact the educators' new learning and practice had on student learning, growth, and/or achievement, supported by evidence.
- Next steps.

### **Tiered Support**

All educators require access to high-quality, targeted professional learning support to improve practice over time. Educators and their evaluators thoughtfully consider and apply three tiers of support, as appropriate, within an evaluation process. All three tiers of support must be implemented prior to the development of a corrective plan. [Tiered Support Form](#)

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A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to advancing levels of support with a defined process for placing an educator on a Corrective Support Plan with indicators of success for transitioning out of it. Evaluators must utilize and document all three tiers of support prior to the development of a Corrective Support Plan. The Corrective Support Plan shall be developed in consultations with the evaluator, educator, and their exclusive bargaining representative and be responsive to educator needs.

#### **Tier 1**

It is the expectation that all educators consistently access opportunities for professional growth within their district. Tier 1 supports are broadly accessible professional learning opportunities for all, inclusive of, but not limited to, collegial professional conversations, classroom visits, available district resources, formal professional learning opportunities developed and designed by district PDEC, and other general support for all educators (e.g. instructional coaching). These resources should be identified through a goal setting process by mutual agreement.

#### **Tier 2**

In addition to Tier 1, Tier 2 supports are more intensive in duration, frequency, and focus (e.g., engaging in a professional learning opportunity, observation of specific classroom practices, etc.) that can be either suggested by the educator and/or recommended by an evaluator.

#### **Tier 3**

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2, Tier 3 supports are responsive to unresolved, previously discussed concerns and are developed in collaboration with the educator and may be assigned by the evaluator. Tier 3 supports have clearly articulated areas of focus, duration of time, and criteria for success, and may include a decision to move to a Corrective Support Plan. Tier 3 supports shall be developed in consultation with the evaluator, educator, and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified educators chosen pursuant to C.G.S.10-153b. The start date and duration of time an educator is receiving this level of support should be clearly documented.

### **Corrective Support Plan**

A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to advancing levels of support with a defined process for placing an educator on a corrective support plan with indicators of success for transitioning out of it. Evaluators must utilize and document all three tiers of support prior to the development of a corrective support plan. The [Corrective Support Plan](#) shall be developed in consultation with the teacher and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to state statute.

The Corrective Support Plan is separate from the normal educator growth model and must contain:

- Clear objectives, specific to the well documented area of concern
- Resources, support, and interventions to address the area of concern
- Timeframes for implementing the resources, support, and interventions, and
- Supportive actions from the evaluator

At the conclusion of the Corrective Support Plan period, a number of outcomes are possible as determined in consultation with the evaluator, educator, and bargaining unit representative.

### **Dispute Resolution**

A panel, composed of the superintendent, the teacher union president or teacher selected union representation and a neutral third person, shall resolve disputes where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on the evaluation period, feedback on performance and practice, or final summative rubric. Resolutions must be topic specific and timely. Should the process established not result in resolution of a given issue, the determination regarding that issue will be made by the superintendent.

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Claims that the district has failed to follow the established procedures of the evaluation and support program shall be subject to the grievance procedure set forth by the current collective.

## **III. Professional Learning and Support Systems Overview**

As a stand-alone, evaluation cannot hope to improve teaching practice and student learning. However, when paired with professional learning opportunities and effective, relevant and timely feedback and support, the evaluation process has the potential to help move teachers along the path to exemplary practice.

### **Effective Professional Learning**

An effective professional learning system is fundamental to educator and student growth. 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. It provides each and every educator access to job-embedded opportunities to engage in continuous, career long learning to refine, improve and enhance practice. All district educators should be engaged as members of a learning community to build and cultivate collective responsibility, continuous improvement, and shared leadership for effective professional learning experiences.

### **Evaluation-Based Professional Learning**

In any sector, people learn and grow by honestly co-assessing current performance, setting clear goals for future performance, and outlining the support they need to close the gap. In this plan, every teacher will have a goal and professional learning plan that is co-created by the teacher and their evaluator and serves as the foundation for ongoing professional learning and conversations about the teacher's practice and impact on student outcomes. The professional learning opportunities identified for each teacher should be based on the individual strengths and needs that are identified through the evaluation process. In addition, professional learning should be aligned to relevant and meaningful team, school, district, and state goals. The process may also reveal areas of common need among teachers, which can then be targeted with school and district-wide professional learning opportunities.

learning provides the means for linking student, educator, and organizational growth and improvement. Professional learning is used to support district and school goals for educator growth, curriculum development and implementation, cultural competency, family and community engagement, and student growth and development.

Annually district and building leadership teams and individual educators review the district's student learning goals and teacher and student performance data. This information is used to revise the district's multi-year student outcome goal and related instructional strategies and formulate annual building and educator goals and identify related professional learning needs.

The plan recognizes the expertise of its educators and empowers them to promote the professional growth of their peers. It is the goal of the plan to utilize peer collaboration feedback, group sharing at PLC and faculty meetings, and teacher-led or facilitated professional learning sessions to foster educator growth and development whenever possible.

The following structures are used to provide time for professional learning:

1. Professional Learning Community meetings
2. Team meetings, Department meetings
3. Faculty meetings
4. Six full days for professional development\*
5. Three half days for professional development\*
6. Participation in regional professional development opportunities
7. Opportunities to attend workshops related to district initiatives when possible

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*\*Based on current district annual school calendar*

School-based leadership teams identify topics for formal site-based professional learning sessions related to annual school- and district-wide goals. The district administrative team works with the school leadership teams and the Teacher Evaluation and Professional Learning Committee, to determine the needs for district-wide formal professional learning sessions to support district initiatives, curriculum development, and program implementation.

Topics for individualized professional learning are developed by teachers as part of their annual goal statements. Building administrators and the district administration actively support this professional learning through the use of designated PLC and professional learning time, release time, and attendance at conferences (within budgetary constraints).

### **Role of Professional Learning Communities**

*“A team is a group of people working interdependently for a common goal for which they are mutually accountable.” (DuFour, 2006)*

Professional learning communities provide for flexible learning designs that foster self-directed, collaborative learning to address variability in grade and subject configurations, educator experience, and the specific demands of the curriculum and instructional practice and student learning needs.

### **Goals of Teacher Collaboration Groups**

- Raise student achievement

- Improve instruction by building shared knowledge regarding best practice ▪ Make a commitment to continuous improvement
- Align intended, implemented, and attained curriculum
- Develop shared goals for student learning and collective responsibility to achieve it

### **Role of the Collaboration Groups**

- Work together to utilize one another's strengths and accommodate weaknesses ▪ Enable teachers to test their ideas about teaching and expand their level of expertise by allowing them to hear the ideas of others
- Provide encouragement and moral support
- Foster better decisions and increase the likelihood of ownership in the decisions ▪ Focus only on issues that directly impact student learning
- Focus on goals that contribute to results (goals are: strategic and specific, measurable, results-oriented, time-bound)
- Define essential student outcomes (clarify what students must know and be able to do) ▪ Develop formative assessments to measure student learning on essential outcomes ▪ Monitor student learning through frequent, team-developed, common formative assessments that are aligned to state and local standards
- Establish proficiency targets
- Analyze results
- Identify and implement improvement strategies
- Create systems to ensure students receive additional time and support if they are not learning