

HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Professional learning in the Hopkinton Public Schools occurs within a range of job-embedded activities that develop knowledge and understanding, sustain growth, and lead to refinements in practice. It is a collective and interactive process that expands capacity in order to produce improved student learning. A vibrant professional learning culture requires trust, mutual interdependence, an active role by all educators, and a shared belief that improved student learning must remain the ongoing goal of all professional learning.

The best professional learning requires:

- Activity that is ongoing and situated within the educator's practice, rather than "one-shot" or "one and done" presentations that may or may not connect to practice (except in limited circumstances);
- Continuous cycles of doing, reflecting/discussing, and refinement;
- Feedback loops from colleagues, coaches, and/or supervisors to assist the educator in reflecting on practice and determining any changes that may be necessary;
- A balance of knowledge gained from looking inward at data and analysis of practice with what can be learned by looking outward at research or information from those acknowledged as experts (who frequently are educators within the district);
- Learning about content balanced with learning about pedagogy; and
- The benefits of technology to access knowledge through websites, webinars, "professional learning networks," etc., and to plan collaboratively.

The individual educator, the school, and district share responsibility for sustaining professional learning by planning and implementing a coherent system that attends to the accomplishment of individual, school, and district goals. This collective approach requires an active role for all educators in ongoing inquiry in order to:

- Study present outcomes and practices at the individual, content area, school-wide and/or district-wide level (including administrative and collegial observation of practice)
- Determine strengths and challenges
- Study and apply research to the problem
- Select and implement solutions
- Reflect on outcomes
- Determine success
- Refine as necessary

Per Massachusetts General Law, an annual plan for professional learning of all instructional staff shall be created and filed with the Commissioner of Education that includes, to the extent that is necessary in any year, aligning the Hopkinton curriculum to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, participatory decision making, collaboration to ensure the inclusion of all students, pre-referral process, and teaching for second language acquisition.

To comply with state regulations for recertification, educators will create a plan for their professional learning “that includes [their] goals for strengthening content area knowledge and professional skills and for remaining current in other professional issues, and resulting in improvements in teaching” and will maintain their own records of professional learning activities undertaken to achieve their goals.

First Reading	November 3, 2011
Second Reading	December 1, 2011
Third Reading	
Adopted	December 1, 2011
Policy Amended	
Legal References	M.G.L. c. 71, §38G M.G.L. 71 §38Q 603 CMR 44.00
Policy Cross Reference	AD Philosophy
Procedure Reference	