

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN 2021 - 2026

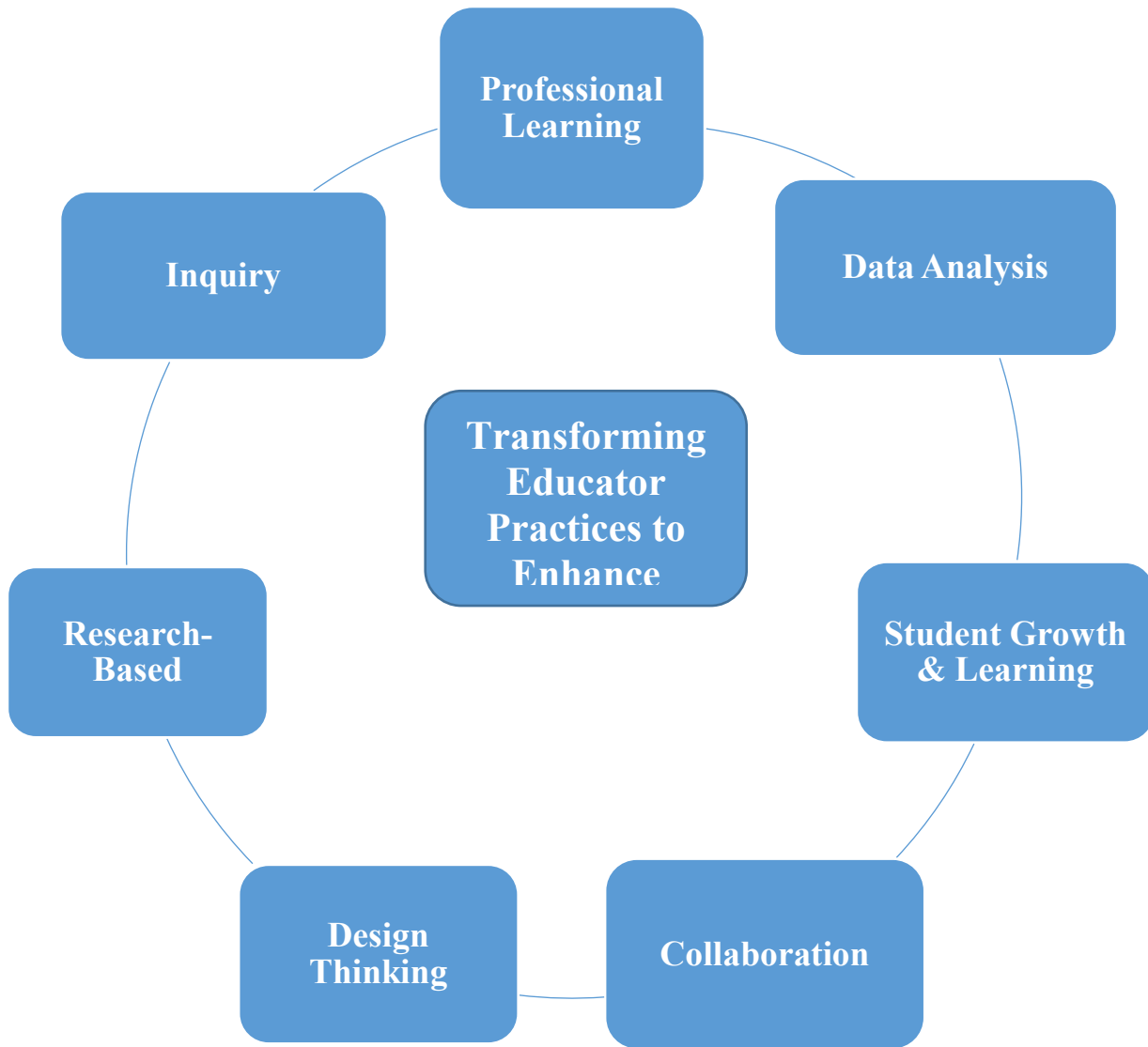


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SECTION I

**PURPOSE,
MEMBERSHIP,
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Committee Members

Professional Development Committee Members – 2020-2021

Carmen Arcudi	Speech Language Assistant, Thortons Ferry Elementary School
Shannon Barnes	School Board Representative
Annie Boghigian	First Grade Teacher, Mastricola Elementary School
Sara D’Anjou	Paraeducator, Reeds Ferry Elementary
Molly DeLuca	Paraeducator, Thortons Ferry Elementary School
* John Fabrizio	Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment
Densie Fronzaglia	Paraeducator, Merrimack Middle School
Laura Gardner	Paraeducator, Mastricola Upper Elementary School
Elizabeth Goad	Paraeducator, Merrimack Middle School
* Marsha Kelly	Paraeducator, James Mastricola Elementary School
Melissa Lloyd	First Grade Teacher, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
* Louis Mailloux	Fifth Grade Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, Co-Chair of Committee
Margaret Mills	First Grade Teacher, Mastricola Elementary School
Kimberly Miranda	Paraeducator, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
* Lisa Perrault	Science Teacher, Merrimack High School, Chair of Committee
Jamie Philip	Special Educator, Merrimack Middle School
* Marcelle Pope	Art Teacher, Merrimack High School
Christopher Rheault	Fourth Grade Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
* Nancy Rose	Director of Technology and Library Media Services
Noel Rosenwaike	Fourth Grade Educator, Reeds Ferry Elementary School
Tracy Ruffelaert	Fifth Grade Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
Jenn Saucier	Physical Education Teacher, Thorntons Ferry Elementary School
* Becky Thompson	Behavior Specialist, Merrimack Middle School
Theresa Waller	Paraeducator, Merrimack High School
* Kimberly Yarlott	Principal, Reeds Ferry Elementary School

†Lynea Forand - Administrative Assistant to the Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum

*Master Plan Rewrite Committee

† Non-voting committee member

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Professional development shall be comprised of professional learning aligned with student growth, learning, and/or achievement and educator development needs. Professional development shall have as its primary focus the improvement of educators' effectiveness in advancing all students' growth, learning, and/or achievement in a digital integrated environment.

Professional learning is a continuous cycle of improvement focused on student growth, learning, and/or achievement needs through ongoing reviews of data on student performance; and defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of this data. Professional learning shall incorporate coherent, sustained, and evidenced-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and responsibility for improved student performance including job-embedded professional development activities.

Professional growth is the acquisition of information or skill related to educator effectiveness. The requirements for professional growth activities are intended to increase knowledge of content area(s), subject or field of specialization, improve pedagogy, engage digital integration and expand knowledge of learners and learning, meet professional educator standards, and improve effective instructional practices and techniques related to school and district goals that increase student learning and growth.

Mission

The purpose of the Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan is two-fold: (1) to increase student growth, learning, and/or achievement and (2) to support educators in attaining recertification through the design of Individual Professional Development Plans using the district approved professional digital portfolio platform as a supporting template.

New Learning for Educators is defined as:

New Learning for Professional Educators is defined as learning experiences that result in an educator's enhanced understanding of educational systems, trends, practices, and research that can be quantitatively and/or qualitatively measured, and results in enhanced impacts, influences, and pedagogies relative to transforming educator practices.

Merrimack School District embraces Universal Design for Learning as defined:

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles to develop learning environments that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. The UDL framework encourages creating flexible designs that have customizable options, which allow all learners to progress in the curriculum. The options for accomplishing this are varied and robust enough to provide effective instruction to all learners.

COMPONENTS OF MERRIMACK'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan takes into account several current trends and best practices, all of which impact improving student growth and learning:

Standards: Professional development seeks to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with local curricula, the NH College and Career Ready Standards adopted by the State Board of Education, and national standards.

Systemic Design: Professional development is intricately woven into the tapestry of sustained district initiatives. It correlates closely to the District objectives, curriculum revision, improved instruction, educator evaluation, assessment models, and all other functions of the district.

Data-Driven Decision Making: The process of gathering, analyzing and interpreting data is critical to informing the design of professional development activities.

Research-Based Methodology: In order to employ techniques and strategies that have yielded proven results in improving student learning, educators must keep abreast of recent studies citing current trends and proven best practices.

Individual Professional Development Plans: Educators, as instructional experts, must design individual professional development plans that seek to continuously improve their effectiveness and result in recertification. The Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan identifies a variety of activities and outlines the process by which recertification can be accomplished.

Job Embedded: Job-embedded professional development is the new learning that occurs as educators engage in their daily work activities and that results in a significant and impactful increase of skills and knowledge needed to enhance students' new learning and growth toward reaching high standards.

Collaboration: Educators' collaboration with colleagues, administrators, parents, the School Board and the greater community results in relevant and timely understanding of student needs which creates salient learning experiences for all students.

CORE BELIEFS

The Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan is designed with these core beliefs in mind:

Professional development is the focus; increased student performance, achievement of school goals, and educator growth are direct results.

Educators set goals for a 3-year cycle through the development of an Individual Professional Development Plan through the district approved professional digital portfolio platform that will enable them to simultaneously maintain their professional credentials while improving student growth, learning and/or achievement.

Educators will document their professional learning and the fulfillment of their professional development goals in their district approved professional digital portfolio platform. An educator will provide a body of evidence in their digital portfolio documenting job-embedded professional development addressing the school and/or district improvement goal(s) and content areas that showcases new learning that impacts student growth, learning and/or achievement. (NH DOE 512.02)

It is the educator's responsibility to demonstrate that selected professional development activities show evidence of new learning and how it will impact student growth, learning and/or achievement.

Individual Professional Development Plans are linked to and aligned with school and/or district goals, content area certification and embody both current and future planning initiatives. These plans build upon the structures currently in place while ensuring that all efforts toward educator recertification are grounded in the effort to improve student growth, learning and/or achievement.

Professional development is based on deliberate planning, reflection, self-assessment, collaboration with peers, student performance data, and supportive feedback with administrators/supervisors during each year of the three-year cycle.

The responsibility for goal setting, designing, and monitoring meaningful professional development ultimately lies with the individual educator.

Educators have numerous opportunities to engage in job-embedded professional development in the course of their daily work.

Implicit in this model is the advancement of the use of technology for student growth, learning and/or achievement in the twenty-first century.

The logic is simple: professional learning enables effective teaching; effective teaching enhances student growth, learning and/or achievement.

STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Standards for Professional Learning outline the characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results.

Learning Communities:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Leadership:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Resources:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

Data:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Learning Designs:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Implementation:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change.

Outcomes:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

(From: LearningForward.org: Standards for Professional Learning 2018)

DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FUNCTION, MEMBERSHIP, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Professional Development Master Plan is designed to provide guidance for professional and personal growth to all licensed and certified personnel who are nominated by the Superintendent and hired by the School Board.

Any person who is employed by the Merrimack School District and for whom certification is not a condition of employment may, at his/her own option, pursue and maintain certification.

THE DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

It is the mission of the District Professional Development Committee and its subcommittees to assist all certified educators in attaining recertification through the continual process of seeking to improve student growth, learning and/or achievement.

The responsibility of the Professional Development Committee is to endorse this mission by supporting participation in a variety of meaningful activities within and outside the district.

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the District Professional Development Committee are as follows:

- To review the Professional Development Master Plan every five years and submit it for approval to the Superintendent of Schools, the School Board, and the New Hampshire State Department of Education. The Master Plan may be amended or revised in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document.
- Ensure that all certified staff are familiar with the mission and processes outlined in the Master Plan.
- To review and approve in-district professional development forms requiring a professional development stipend.
- To encumber and expend professional development funds appropriated through the Merrimack Teachers' Association agreement and the Merrimack Educational Support Staff Association agreement in accordance with the guidelines and procedures established by the Professional Development Master Plan.
- To approve all in-district professional development opportunities and post them in District Catalog of the Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform when relevant.
- To formally approve CEUs for professional development activities.
- To hear appeals from staff members who feel aggrieved regarding the professional development process and to make determinations based upon the guidelines of the master plan.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Professional Development Master Plan.
- To periodically review current research related to professional development theories and practice and disseminating information to the field.
- To establish additional subcommittees when needed and act upon their recommendations.
- To guide educators through the process of recertification.
- To guide educators using the Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform and the district approved professional digital portfolio platform
- To review the educator's submitted IPDP documents.

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Every certified educator in the Merrimack School District is eligible for election to the Professional Development Committee. The term of office is two years. One half of the Committee shall be elected between March and May each year and will begin serving their term starting June. Should a mid-term vacancy occur, the Committee will request that the school represented by the resigning member will select another representative to fill the remaining term. If no educator volunteers, the principal can invite an educator to become the representative.

COMPOSITION AND ELECTION/SELECTION

The Professional Development Committee shall be composed of members in the following fashion:

- Twelve professional staff representatives (two per school)
 - One of which is a certified licensed service professional
 - The method of selection is by vote of the building professionals.
- Six paraeducators (one per school)
 - The method of selection is by vote of the building paraprofessionals.
- Three administrative representatives from the district:
 - One administrator from the Superintendent's office
 - Two Leadership Team administrators
 - The method of selection will be appointment by the Superintendent of Schools.
- One School Board representative
 - The method of selection will be appointment by the chairperson of the School Board.
- Administrative Assistant from the SAU26 (non-voting member)
 - The method of selection will be appointment by the Superintendent of Schools.

And may include two community representatives by invitation of the Superintendent of Schools:

Parent and/or community representatives (non-voting member(s))

Additional professional staff (non-voting member)

Election of Committee Chair & Co-Chair

The Staff Development Committee elects a Chair for a three-year term and Co-Chair. Upon completion of the Chair's three-year term, the Co-Chair automatically succeeds the Chair position. If the Co-Chair chooses not to succeed the Chair or is not reelected to the committee, then the Professional Development Committee will elect a Chair and Co-Chair from the committee members.

District Professional Development Committee roles and responsibilities include:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	
ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
<i>Chair</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presides at all monthly meetings • Communicates with Professional Development committee members • Serves as the spokesperson for the Professional Development Committee • Serves as liaison to District Leadership Team • Develops monthly meeting agenda(s)
<i>Co-Chair</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumes responsibilities of the Chair, when necessary
<i>Member</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends two meetings a month • Reports to constituents • Solicits input from constituents • Orients staff about the Professional Development Master Plan on an annual basis • Supports best practices and helps identify possible trainers in the district • Supports the district-wide Professional Development Plan in collaboration with other representatives and District Leadership Team • Serves as a site-based committee member • Support colleagues with the Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform and the district approved professional digital portfolio platform • Two-year term begins in June • Support Staff Only: Paraeducator Certification Coach (PCC) in the certification process. The PCC’s will meet in September and January for the purpose of updates. The September meeting will provide an opportunity to share new and/or pertinent information from the NHDOE regarding paraeducator certification. The January meeting will focus on information regarding submission protocols for certification.
<i>Notetaker</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A notetaker, rotated among the committee members, will record the actions of the committee during a monthly meeting • Record and submit monthly meeting minutes to administrative assistant
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates in-district professional development workshops • Updates the Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform information as needed • Creates ledger pages for current funding status for staff members • Upon approval by the committee, the administrative assistant will update the CEUs and funding for all staff • Disseminates information to members, such as CEU and funding reports, agendas, minutes, special projects and in-district PD proposals • Updates MTA President and PD Chair on funds encumbered and expended

MASTER PLAN REVISION SUBCOMMITTEE	
Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Master Plan Revision Subcommittee shall consist of at least seven members • Four professional staff from the Professional Development Committee • One certified paraeducator from the Professional Development Committee • One administrator from Central Office • One administrator from the Leadership Team from the Professional Development Committee • And may include one community representative, school board member and/or professional staff
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The functions of the Master Plan Revision Subcommittee are: • To review audits of the existing Master Plan • To prepare a proposed revision of the Master Plan that fulfills NH Department of Education requirements • To submit the proposed revision of the Master Plan to the Professional Development Committee • To collaborate with the Professional Development Committee in presenting the proposed revision of the Master Plan to certified staff, the Superintendent of Schools, Leadership Team, Curriculum, Instruction, Technology Integration, Technology Systems, Assessment and Data Committee (District CIT) and the School Board

EVALUATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan Revision subcommittee will evaluate the Master Plan with respect to its effect on:

- Increased student growth, learning and achievement
- Recertification of all eligible certified staff

In addition to reviewing progress made with respect to the Master Plan mission statement, the Master Plan Revision Subcommittee will analyze multiple assessment measures on a regular basis. Both summative and formative assessment instruments will be used. Evaluation will determine how effectively the Master Plan improves student learning by:

- promoting educators’ knowledge of field and knowledge of learner and learning
- assisting educators in meeting recertification requirements
- supporting the ability to retain highly qualified educators
- identifying instructional areas in need of improvement
- analyzing the effectiveness of the Individual Professional Development Planning process
- documentation compiled from Individual Professional Development Plans, including:
 - IPDP Plan Forms
 - IPDP Summary/Narrative Reflection
- investigating the correlation between IPDPs, and increased student learning
- assessing the results of professional development activities
- measuring changes in student achievement

- reports from the Professional Development Committee

In addition to its impact on student growth, learning and achievement, the effectiveness of the Master Plan will be evaluated from three perspectives: individual, school and district. The following table illustrates this differentiated evaluation process.

MASTER PLAN EVALUATION COMPONENTS	
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the Master Plan and is conversant in its philosophy and assumes responsibility for complying with New Hampshire recertification requirements. • Educator goals support school/district goals and are assessed to determine change in practice and resulting student performance. • The educator engages in both the needs assessment and data analysis processes in order to improve student learning. • Individual Professional Development Plan progress is evaluated by both the educator and supervising administrator to determine the effectiveness of activities in affecting positive change in practice.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School goals reflect the needs of the building as reflected in a thorough data analysis process. • Student learning goals are clear, and achievement is monitored through multiple assessments. • Site-based professional development activities are determined based on a comprehensive data analysis of learner needs.
District District Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Committee conducts a comprehensive district-wide evaluation of the effectiveness of the Master Plan on a regular basis and reports findings to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Board. • District-wide curriculum-based professional development activities, instructional strategies and initiatives are designed in response to student learning needs and are assessed for effectiveness. • The resources of time, funding, personnel and professional development activities have been adequately provided and effectively utilized in order to increase student achievement.

PROCESS FOR ADOPTING AND AMENDING THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan describes the process for identifying and meeting professional needs that lead to both educator recertification and improved student growth, learning and/or achievement.

The writing of the Master Plan is the responsibility of the Master Plan Revision Subcommittee. Amendments will be made as needed to keep the Master Plan consistent with such documents as master agreements, State Board of Education guidelines, and Merrimack School Board objectives.

The adoption/amendment procedures are as follows:

- The Professional Development Committee, representative of all constituents, will approve the Master Plan and make future amendments to set plan.
- The Master Plan will also be approved or amended by the Superintendent, the School Board, and the New Hampshire Department of Education.
- If the Master Plan is not approved or is amended at any level, it will be resubmitted to the Master Plan Revision Subcommittee for redevelopment.
- If an amendment to the Master Plan is not approved at any level, it will be resubmitted to the Professional Development Committee for reconsideration.
- The Master Plan states that a periodic review and evaluation of the professional development program will be conducted to ensure that it continues to meet the changing needs of certified professional personnel and paraeducators. In the last year of the Master Plan, a new plan will be submitted to the State Department of Education for the next five-year period.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPEALS SUBCOMMITTEE	
Composition	The Professional Development Appeals Subcommittee shall consist of at least five members, volunteering for a 1-year term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Assistant Superintendent • Vice Chair: Vice PD Chair • Principal Committee Member • One Professional Staff committee member • One Support Staff committee member • Any other member who might be pertinent to the appeal
Function	To review appeals submitted by Professional and Support Staff related to approvals of professional development activities, CEUs and/or reimbursement.

APPEAL PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENT/CEU’S AND IPDPS

The Professional Development Committee is charged with enforcing the Merrimack School District Professional Development Master Plan. In every case in which a dispute arises concerning the Professional Development Committee’s final decision with regard to (a) CEUs awarded; (b) activity approval; (c) reimbursement; or (d) the individual professional development plan, the educator is afforded an opportunity to appeal based upon the expectations outlined in the Master Plan.

The Merrimack’s Professional Development Committee makes every attempt to consider all appeals in a non-arbitrary and capricious manner. When considering appeals, we consider the staff’s attention to detail to the submission processes, including deadlines, understanding of the Frontline Professional Growth Platform and the district approved professional digital portfolio platform, and professional responsibilities. Appeals are the exception and not the rule. We ask that staff consider their responsibilities to understanding the reimbursement guidelines, including the above mentioned, before submitting an appeal. Our goal is to make all parties ‘whole’, however, we must also give due credence to the integrity of the Master Plan and role of the Professional Development Committee. We encourage all staff to seek assistance from their building representatives for assistance.

INITIAL APPEALS PERTAINING TO CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS, ACTIVITY APPROVAL, AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT:

The educator will submit the initial appeal by filling out the appeals form (see Appendix B) which can be found in the teacher toolbox and emailed or sent to the Professional Development Committee Chairperson in care of the Superintendent’s office within thirty (30) days of the Professional Development Committee’s decision.

Once the appeal has been received, the Professional Development Committee will review the request at the next scheduled meeting. The educator may provide further documentation or resources that s/he feels are necessary to support the appeal.

The educator will receive a written decision from the Professional Development Committee Chairperson within five (5) working days of the meeting.

The educator may appeal any unfavorable decision in writing to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools within fifteen (15) working days of the issuance of the Professional Development Committee’s decision. An appeal’s meeting with the Professional Development Appeals Committee will be held within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the appeal. No new evidence or documentation may be presented at this meeting.

The educator will receive a written decision from the Assistant Superintendent within five (5) working days of the meeting.

The educator may appeal the decision of the Professional Development Appeals Committee to the Superintendent of Schools within (5) working days of the decision. No new evidence or documentation may be presented at this meeting.

The educator will receive a written decision from the Superintendent within five (5) working days of the meeting. The decision of the Superintendent will be final and binding.

APPEALS PERTAINING TO INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

In the event that an IPDP is deemed incomplete or of unsatisfactory quality by the supervisor, and in the event that this is unable to be reconciled between supervisor and educator, the educator may submit an appeal in writing within 30 days of the decision to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

A meeting of parties germane to the appeal will be scheduled. The educator may bring to the meeting any information, documentation, or resources that s/he feels are necessary to support the appeal.

The Assistant Superintendent must inform the educator of a decision in writing within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting.

The educator may further appeal an unfavorable decision to the Superintendent of Schools by requesting an appeal’s meeting in writing. This request must be made within fifteen (15) working days of the Assistant Superintendent’s decision. No new evidence or information may be presented at this meeting. However, full discussion of the facts by all parties will precede final deliberations.

The staff member will receive a written decision from the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) working days of the meeting. The decision of the Superintendent will be final and binding.

AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES	
Composition	To be determined by the Professional Development Committee
Function	To be determined by the Professional Development Committee

SECTION II

DATA COLLECTION, INTERPRETATION AND USE

USING DATA TO IDENTIFY STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS

The essential function of professional development in the Merrimack School District is to create an environment that results in highly qualified educators and to assist them in improving student learning. Because increased achievement is the focus of this plan, it is critical to define a process for identifying student learning needs.

To improve student learning, educators are encouraged to use a minimum of three valid data sources to:

- identify an existing problem or challenge
- select a strategy designed to produce effective results
- implement the strategy
- evaluate its impact

All educators and administrators are expected to use this process in the development, implementation and evaluation of their three-year Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP).

TYPES OF DATA COLLECTED

Educators in Merrimack use a variety of data sources to inform instructional practice and respond effectively to student learning needs. They include, but are not limited to:

Research-based standardized assessments:

- New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System (NH SAS)
- K – 12 Assessment Suite – STAR 360 Reading & STAR 360 Math
- Group Reading Assessment & Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)
- Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Local assessments – both summative and formative:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| • school entrance assessment | • report cards |
| • curriculum based assessments | • progress reports |
| • content area placement tests | • pre & post tests |
| • beginning and end of unit tests | • parent conferences |
| • end of semester assessments | • skills checklists |
| • informal reading inventories | • writing samples |
| • running records | • research papers |
| • educator observations and anecdotal records | • exhibitions |

Non-academic data

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • attendance data | • socio-economic information |
| • student behavior data | • career placement inventory |
| • learning styles inventories | |

Technology driven data

Technology provides a powerful means of facilitating the data analysis process. The District has invested heavily in building a robust wide-area network that is accessible to every educator through an up-to-date computer. In addition, many software applications have been purchased or upgraded to assist in analyzing relevant data. These currently include but are not limited to:

- PowerSchool: Online student information system with reporting, attendance, grading, scheduling data which can be accessed by parents, students, and educators
- ClassLink - provides single sign-on into web and Windows applications, and instant access to files at school and in the cloud.
- NHSEIS: State-wide computerized IEP data system
- SWIS - Student behavior data system
- Performance Plus - NH DOE student performance data tracker system
- CANVAS: the districts learning management system
- NAVIANCE: is a comprehensive toolset that helps you assess and develop essential competencies students need to be successful after high school.
- Other Online tools used for Instruction & Assessment

PROCESS FOR GATHERING, ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING DATA

In the Merrimack School District, educators will analyze and interpret data on a varying basis dependent upon the data sources used.

The following two charts, entitled *Merrimack School District Standardized Assessment by Grade Level and Merrimack School District Data Matrix*, illustrate the process for gathering, analyzing and interpreting data with respect to the following criteria:

- Grade level
- Data Sources
- Data Collection
- Who collects the data?
- How often and/or when is it collected?
- Data Analysis
- Who analyzes the data?
- Data-driven Decision Making
- How is the information used?

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT BY GRADE LEVEL					
GRADE	LANGUAGE ARTS/ READING	WRITING	MATH	SOCIAL STUDIES	SCIENCE
11	NH SAS NH ALPs SAT	NH SAS NH ALPs SAT	NH SAS NH ALPs SAT		Science Assessment
8	GRADE STAR 360 NH SAS	NH SAS NH ALPs	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		NH SAS NH ALPs
7	GRADE STAR 360 NH SAS NHALPs		STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		
6	STAR 360 NH SAS NHALPs Fountas & Pinnell	NH SAS	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		
5	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs Fountas & Pinnell	NH SAS NHALPs	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		NH SAS
4	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs Fountas & Pinnell	NH SAS NHALPs	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		NH ALPs
3	STAR 360 NH SAS Fountas & Pinnell	NH SAS	STAR 360 NH SAS NH ALPs		
2	STAR 360 Otis Lennan Fountas & Pinnell				
1	STAR 360 Fountas & Pinnell				
K	Fountas & Pinnell				
Pre-K	Ages and Stages	Ages and Stages	Ages and Stages		

MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT DATA MATRIX				
DATA SOURCES	GRADES	COLLECTION Who collects it? When?	ANALYSIS Who analyzes it? What is the process?	DECISION-MAKING How is the information used?
NH SAS and NH ALPs	3-8, 11	Classroom educators, Guidance Counselors each October	Results reviewed by administrators, department heads, counselors, educators	To note relative strengths and weaknesses. To identify trends and determine test preparation methods and student learning needs. Used for curriculum alignment and instructional improvement in specific skill areas (e.g. open-ended responses).
STAR 360 Reading Assessment	1-8	Classroom educators three times a year	Classroom educators, grade level teams, Language Arts Coordinators and Guidance Counselors	To identify strengths and weaknesses of instructional program and individual students. Determine class placement or assignment to skill groups (reading) or Title I support and address individual student learning needs. Language arts coordinators build school profiles.
STAR 360 Mathematics Assessment	1-8	Classroom educators three times a year	Classroom educators, grade level teams, mathematics facilitators and Guidance Counselors	To identify strengths and weaknesses of instructional program and individual students. Determine class placement or assignment to skill groups (math) or Title I support and address individual student learning needs. Math facilitators/data team leaders build school profiles.
Fountas & Pinnell	K-6	Classroom educators, Special Education educators, Language Arts Coordinators	Classroom educators, Special Education educators, Language Arts Coordinators	To determine level of student reading fluency and comprehension. Used to adjust and differentiate instruction to meet student needs.
Formative Assessment Reading and Mathematics	K-8	Classroom educators, Special Education educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators, Special Education educators, Curriculum Coordinators; Ongoing	To determine student's levels to adjust and differentiate instruction in order to meet student needs.
AP Tests	10-12	High School Gifted & Talented Program Coordinator assesses students enrolled in AP course each May	Gifted & Talented Coordinator, Administrators, Department Heads, AP educators	To inform curriculum and course changes and track student performance.
Informal Reading Inventories	K-6	Classroom educators, Language Arts Coordinators; Ongoing	Classroom educators, Language Arts Coordinators	To determine level of student reading fluency and comprehension. Used to adjust and differentiate instruction to meet student needs.
Attendance Data	K-12	Classroom educators, Administrative Assistants; Ongoing	Classroom educators, Guidance Counselors, Nurses, Administrators	To identify absenteeism and tardiness trends in order to address problems as they arise.
Report Cards	K-12	Classroom educators, Special Education educators; quarterly	Classroom educators, administrators, educators in subsequent grades, Guidance Counselors	To identify actual and potential learning needs of individual students in order to adjust instruction; to report progress to students and parents
Progress Reports	7-12	Classroom educators, Special education educators; quarterly	Classroom educators, administrators, educators in subsequent grades, Guidance Counselors	To identify actual and potential learning needs of individual students in order to adjust instruction; to report progress to students and parents.

**MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
DATA MATRIX (CONT'D)**

DATA SOURCES	GRADES	COLLECTION Who collects it? When?	ANALYSIS Who analyzes it? What is the process?	DECISION-MAKING How is the information used?
Pre & Post Tests	K-12	Classroom educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators	To determine level of existing or acquired knowledge about a topic or process being studied
Unit Tests	5-12	Classroom educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators	To determine level of acquired knowledge pertaining to a unit of study
End of semester assessments	9 – 12	Educator-designed/ administered at end of semester. Results may be forwarded to department heads	Educators and department heads, and where appropriate, Guidance Counselors. Instructors evaluate and grade.	Grading for credit and enrollment in consecutive course. Possible schedule changes and/or remediation. Post-secondary plans.
Technology Portfolios	K-8, 9-12	Computer Technology Educators, classroom educators; Ongoing	Computer Technology Educators	To assess technology skill proficiencies; to determine placement in advanced courses
Writing Samples	K-6	Classroom educators: samples are collected formally three times per year; informal samples Ongoing	Classroom educators, Language Arts Coordinators	To assess writing proficiency in order to adjust instruction for whole class, groups, or individual students
Running records	K-6	Classroom educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators, Language Arts Coordinators	To track reading progress and assess proficiency in order to adjust instruction for whole class, groups, or individual students
Student Work; Exhibitions	K-12	Classroom educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators	To assess level of acquired knowledge; to determine placement; to adjust instruction for whole class, groups or individual students
Research paper (formal)	12	Level 2, 3, and 4 English educators during the year	English educators	Assess student proficiency in expository writing and research skills
Research paper (formal)	11	Level 2, 3, and 4 English educators during the year	English educators	Assess student proficiency in expository writing and research skills
Research paper (formal)	10	Level 3 & 4 English educators during the year	English educators	Assess student proficiency in expository writing and research skills
Writing sample (for students interested in level 4 classes)	8	Language Arts Coordinator and middle school Language Arts educators in spring of each year	Middle school educators and Language Arts coordinator, high school English educators and English department head	Placement into the high school leveled English classes
Algebra Final Exam	8	Middle school math educators in spring of each year	Math educators, high school math department head, Guidance Counselors	Determine math placement in high school

**MERRIMACK SCHOOL DISTRICT
DATA MATRIX (CONT'D)**

DATA SOURCES	GRADES	COLLECTION Who collects it? When?	ANALYSIS Who analyzes it? What is the process?	DECISION-MAKING How is the information used?
Math Placement Test	6	Math educators at the end of May	Math educators, Guidance Counselors	Determine placement in pre-Algebra
Math Assessments	K-6	Classroom educators; Ongoing	Classroom educators and math facilitators	To identify skills mastered or in need of re-teaching or reinforcing; used for grouping, skills instruction, and placement
Anecdotal Records	K-12	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators, para-educators; Ongoing	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators, para-educators	To identify and review student and classroom practices and determine indicated instructional, behavioral, or classroom management modifications.
Observations	K-12	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators, para-educators; Ongoing	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators, para-educators	To identify and review student and classroom practices and determine indicated instructional, behavioral, or classroom management modifications.
Parent Conferences	K-12	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators; Ongoing	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators	To gather parent/guardian input concerning their children.
Student Behavior Data	K-12	Classroom educator, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, administrators, para-educators, bus drivers, lunchroom supervisors; Ongoing	Classroom educators, specialists, Language Arts Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, School Psychologists, Behavioral Specialists, Special Education Coordinators, administrators, para-educators, bus drivers, lunchroom supervisors	To identify behavior management focus areas to be presented to the school community; to develop strategies to improve school climate
Parent Survey Special Education Students	PK - 21	Merrimack School District, NHDOE, yearly	Results reviewed by parents, administrators, department heads, educators, counselors	To note relative strengths and weaknesses of our District programs serving the needs of special education students

PROCESS FOR UTILIZING DATA

The Merrimack School District Master Plan promotes the use of data to inform instruction and set the direction for educators' Individual Professional Development Plans. Educators and administrators collaboratively analyze multiple types of assessment data in order to:

- determine student learning needs
- revise curricula to reflect high learner expectations
- develop individual, school, and district professional development goals
- design professional development opportunities
- improve school climate

Merrimack's professional staff examines and analyzes data from statewide and standardized assessments as well as local formative and summative assessment results to inform and adjust school-wide, grade-level, classroom, and individual student instruction. Educators are provided time to collaborate in grade level, team or department groups to discuss, implement and monitor effective instructional strategies indicated by assessment results. Merrimack schools also use behavior data to monitor individual student behavior and to address school-wide behavioral trends.

PROCESS FOR USING DATA TO MONITOR THE MASTER PLAN

Using informal focus group and/or surveys, data will be gathered about the success of the implementation process, the ways in which the process informed or changed their instructional practice, and how that change was reflected in a measured increase in student achievement. Feedback will be gathered annually by members of the Professional Development Committee from the cohort. This data will determine the effectiveness of the Master Plan in meeting the needs of educators who, in turn, meet the instructional needs of the students. Feedback could include, but not limited to, informal focus groups and/or surveys.

DATA DISSEMINATION

The results of the data from the information gathered by the Professional Development Committee will be shared with appropriate stakeholders. To effect positive change and keep constituents updated, each professional development member will report regularly during the school year to the educational community at large.

SECTION III

**PROCESS AND
REQUIREMENTS FOR
DEVELOPING,
IMPLEMENTING, AND
DOCUMENTING
COMPLETION OF
3-YEAR INDIVIDUAL
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Section III, Part I: Professional Development Activities

To sustain a culture of student-centered education, the district will continue its commitment to sponsor and support a variety of carefully designed professional development activities.

In developing their IPDP, educators should select professional development activities which are appropriate to their IPDP goal(s). Professional development activities assist in translating new learning into classroom practice and in refining their practice over time and should ultimately impact student growth, learning and achievement.

The professional development activities described on the following pages serve as building blocks leading to improved student learning. They provide educators with strategies to address identified needs and achieve the goals set forth in the Individual Professional Development Plan. This list is by no means exhaustive. It may be modified during the implementation phase of the plan to reflect new and/or innovative activities that arise in the future.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the U.S. federal education law, includes many provisions that influence how educators experience professional development. ESSA outlines professional development as activities that:

- are an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing educators (including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and, as applicable, early childhood educators) with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards; and
- are sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused, and may include activities that—
- improve and increase teachers'—
 - knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach;
 - understanding of how students learn; and
 - ability to analyze student work and achievement from multiple sources, including how to adjust instructional strategies, assessments, and materials based on such analysis;
- are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans;
- allow personalized plans for each educator to address the educator's specific needs identified in observation or other feedback;
- improve classroom management skills;
- support the recruitment, hiring, and training of effective teachers, including teachers who became certified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
- advance teacher understanding of—
 - effective instructional strategies that are evidence-based; and
 - strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;
- are aligned with, and directly related to, academic goals of the school or local educational agency;

- are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, representatives of Indian tribes (as applicable), and administrators of schools to be served under this Act.
- are designed to give teachers of English learners, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
- to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers, principals, and other school leaders in the use of technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
- as a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
- are designed to give teachers of children with disabilities or children with developmental delays, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and academic support services, to those children, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, multi-tier system of supports, and use of accommodations;
- include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice;
- include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents and families;
- involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education, including, as applicable, Tribal Colleges and Universities as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)), to establish school-based teacher, principal, and other prospective teachers, novice teachers, principals, and other school leaders with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers, principals, other school leaders, and faculty of such institutions;
- create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under part A of title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers;
- provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in this paragraph that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom; and
 - where practicable, provide jointly for school staff and other early childhood education program providers, to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness.

RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Time

Educators need more time to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to improve student learning. Because time is an inherently limited resource, effective professional development is characterized by creativity in the way it is used.

In Merrimack, some successful ways time has been reorganized to support professional growth include:

- providing an unspecified number of professional development days for educators based on their Individual Professional Development Plans to support improved student achievement
- providing stipends for educators to master software after hours and offer presentations to their colleagues
- reimbursing educators to present after-school workshops and summer institutes in an area of expertise
- hiring substitutes for targeted training in the use of new curriculum materials and instructional strategies

Budgetary Support

The budgetary line items have been designated for professional development in the Merrimack Educators' Collective Bargaining Agreement and Merrimack Educational Support Staff Association Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Professional Development Activities

The Merrimack School District supports individual professional development plans by sponsoring a variety of carefully designed in-district activities. Within this document there is a complete description of approved professional development activities. Currently registration for in-district professional development workshops can be accessed through Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform under the district catalog. The professional development activities described on the following pages serve as building blocks leading to improved student learning. They provide educators with strategies to address identified needs and achieve the goals set forth in the Individual Professional Development Plan. This list is by no means exhaustive. It may be modified to reflect new and/or innovative activities that arise in the future. Staff members participating in activities NOT outlined in this activity reference should petition their Principal and the Professional Development Committee for consideration of both relativity and funding. See appendix B for Form Example. The form can be found in the teacher toolbox under the Professional Development Folder.

Personnel

Human resources are the district's most valuable asset. The greater learning community joins forces with educators to find ways to improve student achievement. Administrators have subscribed to a philosophy of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators.

- The Merrimack School District greater learning community:
 - students
 - paraeducator
 - educators
 - administrators
 - school board members
 - parents
 - community members
- Collegial coaches and peer tutors share best practices in developing effective professional skills and strategies
- Professional Development Committee Members (district-wide and the site-based) assume ongoing oversight of the professional development process
- An established district mentor program will provide professional development support to both new educators and experienced educators new to the district as well
- NH DOE consultants assist in areas such as curriculum design, long-range planning, and project implementation
- Outside experts (including NH DOE consultants and higher education professors) offer technical assistance and expertise with respect to specific content-related programs

Professional Alliances

Below is a partial list of agencies and organizations to which educators in Merrimack belong and/or serve in a leadership capacity.

- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- Southern New Hampshire University Educational Partnership (SNHU)
- National Council of Mathematics Educators (NCTM)
- New England Association of Educators of English (NEATE)
- New England League of Middle Schools (NELMS)
- New England School Development Council (NESDEC)
- New Hampshire Affiliate of International Society for Technology in Education (NHSTE)
- New Hampshire Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NHASCD)
- New Hampshire Association of School Principals (NHASP)
- New Hampshire Department of Education Professional Standards Board
- New Hampshire Educational Media Association (NHEMA)
- New Hampshire School Administrators' Association (NHSAA)
- New Hampshire Science Educators Association (NHSTA)
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

DEFINED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Title	Definition
Action Research	Examining one’s own teaching and professional practice and its impact on students by identifying an issue, determine research procedures, gathering and analyzing data. Drawing upon their own professional experiences, educators reflect on that data to select action to be taken or solutions in the classroom or work setting. See Appendix E for Action Research Guidelines
Book Talks	Engaging in a single discussion or series of discussions about a book or other professional publication.
Case Studies	Examining written narratives or videotapes of classroom teaching and learning and discussing what is happening, the problems, issues, and outcomes that ensue. This context can also be used to discuss a case study of a particular student. In this instance, the student’s teacher would present the “case” and engage the group in discussion to determine ways to help the student.
Classroom or Professional Observation	Engaging in conversations about teaching and learning based upon one or more observations. The process may include a pre-conference, observation, and reflective post-conference.
Cooperating Teacher	Cooperating teachers can serve two different functions: First, they support a pre-service teacher’s class-based observations in support of pre-practicum requirements. Second, they support a student teacher in their practicum, which normally requires the gradual assumption of classroom teaching responsibilities.
*Coursework	Courses offered in affiliation with an accredited institution of learning may be taken for credit or audited and may be offered on or off a campus or online. The course should be related to present or anticipated job assignment or a specific or anticipated endorsement area. Examples: Graduate or undergraduate courses, audit, non-credit, online courses, or adult education classes.
Curriculum-based collaboration study group	A structured, collaborative, collegial approach to examining student work to improve instruction and generating solutions. Structure derives from the use of a discussion protocol and often led by a group facilitator. Content of discussions could include the following: professional readings, research, instructional techniques, or reflection.
Curriculum Development	Educators design, modify and enhance curriculum in response to changing educational needs. Throughout the process, curriculum designers are immersed in research, dialogue, and reflection regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject area content and how it relates to other disciplines • desired student learning outcomes • diverse needs of learners • national, state, and local standards • implementation strategies • multiple ongoing assessments
Externship	This activity involves learning in an authentic setting related to an educator’s subject area or curriculum. This type of professional development is best

	suited for summer work/activities, where teachers can become part of a team in business or in a research setting and subsequently bring the experience back to the classroom. An end product to be used with students is required.
*Independent Study	This activity is an individually designed course of in-depth study focused on a specific topic or subject. The activity must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include a written plan with specific objectives • show relevance to current or anticipated job description • demonstrate evidence of learning • provide evidence of collaboration with a qualified advisor such as department head, administrator, or colleague
*Job Related Cultural/Enrichment/Travel Activities	This activity includes visitations to exhibits, museums, concerts, historical landmarks, theatrical performances, cultural events, or architectural sites. The activity should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relate to Professional Development Educator Needs • represent an initial learning experience in which a teacher has never before participated or experienced. All job-embedded activities must represent new learning for the professional and be related to the position/certification s/he holds.
Mentorship	A mentorship is a sustained collaborative relationship provided to employees in which both partners learn from each other through discussion and reflection on classroom practice. Mentors are educators who counsel, support and guide either a novice or experienced teacher who is seeking to develop new skills and/or gain knowledge. A mentor has special or extensive knowledge or skills in planning lessons, developing instructional strategies, designing classroom environment and demonstrating professional responsibility. Each participant is eligible to receive CEUs.
New Class/Program/Club	This activity involves the planning and implementation of a new method or system of meeting an identified need that aligns within the District objectives. It might address, but is not limited to, one or more of the following and MUST include the approval from District CIT and/or Principal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student motivation • instructional methods • student assessment • reinforcement of skills or concepts • demonstration of student achievement or competencies • delivery of services to students, parents, and/or community members • development and/or implementation of a grant • interdisciplinary courses of study It might be an individual or a collaborative effort.
Peer Coaching	This activity is a partnership between professional colleagues to improve teaching practices through a variety of methods that may include, but not limited to teaching strategies, planning conferences, observations, and reflections. An administrator or an individual educator can initiate this partnership. Each participant is eligible to receive CEUs.

Professional Enrichment	Educators may choose to read literature, view videotapes and/or television programs, listen to audiotapes, CDs, podcasts, web-based activities, etc.... related to professional growth. The content should be related to present or anticipated job assignment or a specific endorsement area.
Professional Networking	Educators network by linking with one classroom to another and/or educator to educator through electronic means to explore and discuss topics of interest, issues of concern and experience in applying new methods in order to provide support in student learning.
Professional Responsibilities	These activities encompass professional educational roles that extend beyond the primary job requirements. Examples include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating on a district committee • Serving as a member of a professional organization or a state committee • Writing and publishing an article for professional journal publication(s) • Generating grant proposals • Workshop presentations – preparation time only • College course instruction – preparation time only
Visitation	This activity involves educators observing other educators utilizing a teaching strategy, program, a classroom management technique, a classroom environment design, or another facet of professional responsibility. The purpose of this activity is to gain new knowledge.
Wellness, Personal Growth, Community Service	This activity is individually determined as an optional means of promoting physical and mental well-being. Participation should promote balanced, enhanced professional performance. This activity could complement and supplement a professional growth plan. Examples include the following Stress management programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical exercise programs • Yoga • Conflict resolution programs • Athletic pursuits • Financial planning • Coaching a MYA team
*Workshops, Seminars, Conferences, Conventions, Institutes, Other Online Sources	These activities provide opportunities to learn from other professionals in order to gain information and expertise in targeted areas. They may be one day or multiple day events. The content must be relevant to present or anticipated job assignment or specific endorsement area.

* See Reimbursable Professional Development Activities chart for reimbursement possibilities. Activities will need proof of attendance (i.e. certificate of completion, class transcript, letter from the organization running them stating you were there, etc....) as a condition of reimbursement.

**If a staff member does not see an activity listed that they would like to attend, please fill out a Professional Development Activity Request Form before submitting anything in Frontline.
See Appendix B for a form example.**

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

Professional development experiences should meet one or more of the following criteria AND represent new learning in order to qualify for CEU awards:

- Pertain to an Individual Professional Development Plan goal or objective
- Relate directly to one or more of the component areas for New Hampshire recertification
- Relate directly to improved student achievement

A CEU assignment is defined as hour for hour to the nearest quarter hour during (with proper documentation: activity log, certificate of completion, proof of attendance, transcripts, etc....). CEUs may be received for both non-funded activities (e.g. serving on a committee) and for funded activities (e.g. attending courses and conferences). CEU credit for all approved activities, except for college courses, will be accumulated on an hour-for-hour basis to the nearest quarter hour. College courses (both graduate and undergraduate) will be awarded 15 CEUs for every course credit (ex: a 3-credit course will be awarded 45 CEUs with transcripts showing earned credit for the course).

The Professional Development Committee has final approval of CEUs and funding. In the absence of the Committee, approval falls to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

CEUs accrued by a staff member after his/her re-nomination and/or re-election in March (April 1 to June 30 inclusive) may be counted toward the next three-year recertification cycle, which will begin on July 1 of that same calendar year.

CEUs are transferable from other New Hampshire school districts or districts out-of-state. A verifiable record of the CEUs should be provided to the Superintendent's office upon employment in the District.

Staff members should maintain a personal record of the CEUs that they have been awarded. This record should also indicate how the CEUs were allocated.

REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Description	Tuition	Registration	Mileage*	Lodging	Travel	Meals	Material**	Max Reimbursement***
Graduate Coursework	X							\$3200
Independent Study							X	\$800
Job-Related Cultural Travel Enrichment							X	\$800
Undergraduate/ Audit/Non-Credit Coursework	X							\$800
Workshop, Seminars, Conferences, Conventions, Institutes, Online Learning		X	X	X	X	X	X	\$800

*Mileage is calculated from workplace to the professional development and based on the current IRS rate.
 **Materials become property of the district and will not be reimbursed until logged into the district library.
 ***See Reimbursement Caps page 45.

REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES

A specified amount of funding is allocated for educator reimbursement for professional growth activities in the Master Agreement. Funds are distributed on a first-come-first-serve basis and are not guaranteed.

- \$3,200 cap for approved graduate courses per fiscal year
- \$800 cap for approved workshops/conferences
- \$800 cap for undergraduate courses per fiscal year

Unexpended funds will be returned to the Professional Development general fund sixty-days (60) from the end date of activity. All encumbered monies must be expended by the end of the fiscal year (June 30). This means, activities must be marked complete in Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform with the proper documentation by June 30th. Activities that cross fiscal years will be reimbursed in the year the activity is completed.

If all the graduate funds in our budget have been encumbered prior to the end of the budget cycle, all submissions for the remaining submission days will be approved at \$0 (so CEUs will still be awarded), and the committee will review all PD budgeted accounts at our April meeting to explore re-allocation of usable funds. Submissions that have been completed but denied funding will be reconsidered if funds become available. Please continue to submit/request funding as per the master plan.

CONDITIONS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

No reimbursement will be made for materials that are developed during the activity unless they become District property. The materials purchased at conferences with District funds are retained by the District through the building library. Educators must bring material(s) to the librarian for proper cataloguing. No reimbursement will occur without appropriate receipts, verification, and prior approval. Receipts are specifically requested by the auditor at the end of the school year. All reimbursable items need to show proof of payment (itemized receipts, map with mileage calculated, etc....) along with proof of attendance.

PROCEDURES FOR SEEKING CEUs AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT

When an educator is seeking CEUs and/or funding for a Professional Development Activity, the educator prepares a PD Approval form in Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform and submits the form on the first Wednesday of the month for activities beginning that month or the following month. The form will be submitted to the building principal to approve or deny the activity prior to it being routed to the PD Recert. Committee. **All activities require prior approval from administration before the educator attends the activity to be considered for reimbursement. If a submission day has passed, the educator NEEDS to plan with their building principal BEFORE attending/completing the activity.**

1. Request prior approval and encumbering of funds up to sixty days before the activity begins by completing the applicable PD Approval Form in Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform.
2. The educator monitors their Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform as to whether the activity has been approved and funds have been encumbered.
3. If the request for funding has been approved by the building principal and the Professional Development Committee, following completion of the activity the educator should:
4. Upload related receipts, certificates of completion, mileage (map and calculations), required verification items that apply to the completed activity in Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform to your File Library.
5. Miles will be determined by starting from the workplace to the workshop with clarification on electronic verification (i.e. Map Quest).
6. Meal receipts need to be itemized, may not include alcohol, but can include a tip up to 20%.
7. Login to Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform and Click on the Activity Title and click on “Mark Complete” button.
8. Request the total number of CEUs minus non-working lunch, breaks, or any other non-instructional time. Specify how the units should be allocated by filling in the appropriate area(s) on the form.
9. Attach relevant files by checking the front box of the file within the File Attachment section.
10. Specify in a paragraph-length (or more) reflection how your participation in the activity will affect your instruction/program or relates to student growth, learning and/or achievement using the following questions to guide your reflection:
 - a. How has this activity changed your belief about issues related to teaching and student learning?
 - b. What new skills or knowledge have you gained because of this activity?
 - c. What changes to your teaching will/have result(ed) from this activity?
 - d. What impact will this activity have on student learning?
 - e. How might you measure or show evidence of this impact?
 - f. How will/have you share(d) what you learned with your colleagues?
 - g. How might this activity support district/school goals?
11. “Submit” the PD Form as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days after completion of activity through Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform.
12. The Professional Development Committee will review the completed form, the verification, and necessary receipts to determine the final CEUs awarded and amount of reimbursement.

Section III, Part II: Individual Development Plans Required of All Educators

Each certified educator is to develop and fulfill a 3-year individualized professional development plan for the purposes of continuous professional growth and recertification. The individual plan shall support the educators *current job assignment* plus any additional endorsements for which renewal is sought. When the credential expires, evidence of completing the plan, including educator reflection, shall be part of a summative evaluation. Successful completion of the plan leads to a recommendation for renewal. Professional development completed after the nomination or election pursuant to RSA 189: 14-a, shall be counted toward the next 3-year recertification cycle.

RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

1. New Hampshire educator certificates always expire at the end of June. They are issued for three-year periods by the Department of Education. Educators with multiple certificates will expire within the same year.
2. Educators who are approaching the end of their recertification cycle will submit their IPDP documentation online through the district approved professional digital portfolio platform (or via binder if applicable). After the Professional Development committee has reviewed and the educator has successfully completed the recertification requirements, the Superintendent will recommend educators online through the NH DOE. The educator will receive an email from central office instructing them to proceed to NH DOE website to renew/pay for their certification.

NH Department of Education
Bureau of Credentialing
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

If the educator has a change of name and or address, the educator is responsible to contact the NHDOE **prior** to submitting for recertification and update personal information.

3. Upon issuance of the new certificate, the educator must forward the email certificate to the Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent where it will be kept on file.
4. Educators who are certified but not employed by the District (i.e. on FMLA or contracted provider) must submit evidence of satisfactory professional growth to the Bureau of Credentialing for recertification. Professional growth may be evidenced by participation in a local staff development program, collegiate study, experience in non-public education, or in other state-specified activities.

MULTIPLE ENDORSEMENTS

Educators holding multiple endorsements must have goals, activities, and documentation relating to each endorsement area in their individualized plan.

LAPSED ENDORSEMENTS/CREDENTIALS

Endorsements may be allowed to lapse and be reinstated in the future after demonstrating three years of professional learning (30 CEU or equivalent evidence). If a staff member intends to let an endorsement lapse, s/he should indicate this in writing to the Bureau of Credentialing and the Superintendent. (e.g. "I do not wish to renew my art endorsement." signed and dated).

Educators who let their credentials lapse by failing to complete the requirements for renewal must consult with the Superintendent. Renewal of lapsed credentials will be possible only if a new plan to complete certification requirements is recommended by the Superintendent and filed with the Bureau of Credentialing.

REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATION

The policy of revocation of certification is established by the State Board of Education. This is the link for State Board of Education. https://www.education.nh.gov/state_board/index.htm

CODE OF ETHICS/CODE OF CONDUCT

The State of New Hampshire Department of Education has adopted a Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. This information is accessible at the New Hampshire Department of Education website under Certification/Credentialing. (<https://www.education.nh.gov/news/2018/educator-code-of-conduct-approved.htm>)

The NH Department of Education, Credentialing administers established [rules to evaluate the applications of candidates](#) for an educator credential. Recommended by the NH [Professional Standards Board](#) and approved by the [State Board of Education](#), these rules govern educator credentialing. All professionals employed in NH public schools must possess the appropriate credential for an assignment if required. Credentialing is responsible for the certification and recertification of all educators from Superintendents through paraeducators. Credentialing is also responsible for the investigation of educators involved in acts of misconduct.

This information is available at <https://www.education.nh.gov/certification/index.htm>

Section III, Part III: Establishing Individual Professional Development Goals

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is the process through which educators in the Merrimack School District maintain certification(s). The three parts of the process that an educator needs to consider when developing their educational goal or focus question are: identifying personal/professional areas of growth and development, areas of growth identified by the District, and identifiable needs of the students gained through formal and informal data assessments.

IDENTIFYING PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL AREAS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Through a process of self-reflection regarding strengths and weaknesses in competency areas, educators identify goals for professional development. In referencing the teacher competencies (ED. 512.02), subsequent collegial discussion with the supervisor results in the adoption of the IPDP. Once goals are established, submitted, and approved, the educator has a variety of professional development activities with which to increase knowledge and/or develop skills. Because student assessment data is utilized as a basis for designing the IPDP, future evaluation of professional growth may be measured in the context of improved student learning.

Educators will undertake the following steps to design and implement a three-year IPDP:

SELF-ASSESSMENT: Engage in a meaningful assessment process that includes data analysis to identify learner needs.

Self-assessment is a process through which educators examine important aspects of their instructional practice. Typically, this process involves analyzing data and reflecting upon:

- knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning
- instructional strategies and/or skill level
- professional roles and relationships
- impact of instructional practice on students and student achievement

Self-assessment occurs in four phases:

- focusing on a particular topic or practice
- collecting information about the identified topic or practice
- drawing conclusions from the information collected
- planning and/or selecting appropriate professional development activities

This process is critical in defining areas for professional growth. It is a means by which educators take responsibility for improving their practice. Through self-assessment, professional development is directly aligned with what takes place in classrooms. The IPDP Self-Assessment assists educators in the goal-setting process and sets the direction for the types of professional activities in which the educator engages.

TEACHER COMPETENCIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

According to New Hampshire Department of Education professional standards, educators must address the following areas in the process of seeking recertification:

Professional Education Requirements ED 610.02. To promote the learning of all students, each professional educator preparation program shall require each graduate of the program to demonstrate evidence of the following:

(a) In the area of the learner and learning:

(1) Learner development, as demonstrated by:

- a. An understanding of how learners develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the personal, physical, social, and academic dimensions; and
- b. The ability to facilitate developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences based on the unique needs of each learner;

(2) Learning differences, as demonstrated by:

- a. An understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities;
- b. Ensuring inclusive learning environments that allow each learner to reach his or her full potential; and
- c. The ability to employ universal design principles and assistive technology; and

(3) Learning environment, as demonstrated by:

- a. Working with learners to create and access learning environments that support self-directed individual and collaborative learning, based on each learner's interests and passions; and
- b. Use of learning environments not limited to the classroom, but extended into the larger community as well as virtual experiences;

(b) In the area of content:

(1) Content knowledge, as demonstrated by:

- a. An understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of his or her discipline(s); and
- b. An ability to create learning experiences that make the discipline(s) accessible and meaningful for learners; and

(2) Innovative applications of content, as demonstrated by an understanding of how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical and creative thinking and collaborative problem-solving related to authentic local and global issues;

- (c) In the area of learning facilitation practice:
- (1) Use of assessment, as demonstrated by an understanding and ability to use multiple methods of assessment to:
 - a. Engage learners in their own growth;
 - b. Document learner progress;
 - c. Provide learner feedback; and
 - d. Inform the educator’s ongoing planning and instructional practices;
 - (2) Planning for learning facilitation, as demonstrated by an ability, as an active member of a learning community, to draw upon knowledge of content area standards, cross-disciplinary skills, learners, the community, and pedagogy to plan learning experiences that support every learner in meeting rigorous learning goals; and
 - (3) Learning facilitation strategies, as demonstrated by:
 - a. An understanding and use of a variety of strategies and tools to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections to other disciplines; and
 - b. An ability to build skills in accessing, applying, and communicating information; and
- (d) In the area of professional responsibility:
- (1) Reflection and continuous growth, as demonstrated by:
 - a. Being a reflective practitioner and using evidence to continually evaluate his or her practice, particularly the effects of choices and actions on students, families, and other professionals in the learning community; and
 - b. Ability to adapt practice to meet the needs of each learner; and
 - (2) Collaboration, as demonstrated by:
 - a. Collaborating, as a member of the larger learning community, with learners, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members to leverage resources that contribute to student growth and development, learning, and well-being.

The Master Plan is designed to assist educators in satisfying New Hampshire Department of Education recertification requirements in the area of content knowledge as identified in ED 512.02 (c) (4) & (5) which states:

- (4) A description of the needs assessment process that includes a data collection system and how the school or district makes decisions regarding professional development priorities in order to:
 - a. Identify student learning needs;
 - b. Determine individual educator goals;
 - c. Determine school or district goals;
 - d. Evaluate student learning and educator growth;
 - e. Measure the effectiveness of an individual professional development plan; and
 - f. Evaluate the effectiveness of the master professional development plan on an ongoing basis;

- (5) Procedures for recommending individuals for recertification that provide evidence of each educator's growth in:
- a. Knowledge of content area(s), subject or field of specialization including requirements of individual certifications in Ed 506 and 507;
 - b. Pedagogy and knowledge of learners and learning as defined in Ed 610.02 and Ed 505.07;
 - c. Professional standards as referenced in the local evaluation system; and
 - d. Effective instructional practices related to school and district goals that increase student achievement as demonstrated by data such as but not limited to:
 1. The education improvement and assessment program, RSA 193C:3, III;
 2. Portfolios;
 3. Analysis of student work;
 4. Standardized and other local assessment instruments; and
 5. Performance evaluations and portfolios of professional work

The Master Plan is designed to assist educators in satisfying New Hampshire Department of Education IPDP requirements listed as ED 512.03 and found here at <https://www.education.nh.gov/certification/documents/ed512.pdf>

IDENTIFYING DISTRICT AND/OR BUILDING PRIORITIES

The Merrimack School District's objectives identifies the priorities of the District. An educator may refer to the objectives and/or building goals that are determined by the building leadership in consideration of the development of their IPDP goal and/or focus question.

IDENTIFYING NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS

Educators must consider the outcomes of student growth, achievement and learning. Multiple sources of information and data are available to assist the educator in developing their IPDP goal and/or focus question with outcomes in mind.

WRITING THE IPDP GOAL:

The Anatomy of a Goal

Each professional growth goal should...

- Begin with an action phrase (what you will DO)
 - To gain
 - To develop
 - To provide
 - To further
 - To engage
 - To participate
 - To explore
 - To create
 - To incorporate
 - To see
 - To establish
 - To use
 - To demonstrate
 - To construct
 - To blend
- Include a “content” area (the area of your intended growth)
 - Understanding of best practices in teaching math
 - Knowledge of teaching reading
 - Assessment practices
 - Positive learning environment for students
 - Integrating Technology into teaching and learning
- Have an application (WHY are you doing this?)
 - “that” promotes student involvement in classroom discussion
 - “that” will assist students in meeting curriculum goals
 - “in order to” provide differentiated instruction for all students

Sample Goal:

To demonstrate my understanding of EnVision Math as an instructional approach so that my students develop an understanding of math concepts through problem-based instruction, small-group interaction, and visual learning with a focus on reasoning and modeling. Differentiated instruction and ongoing assessment will be used to meet the needs of students at all ability levels.

Meet with the appropriate supervisor for discussion, mutual understanding and acceptance of the proposed IPDP Goal/Focus Question.

Then submit IPDP Goal Sheet through the district approved professional digital portfolio platform.

Section III, Part IV: DOCUMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Educators will document their professional learning and the fulfillment of their professional development goals in their District approved digital Platform portfolio. An educator will provide a body of evidence in their portfolio documenting job-embedded professional development. This must address the school or district improvement goal(s) and content areas that showcases new educator learning as well as evidence of effort to achieve student growth, learning and/or achievement. An educator's IPDP should demonstrate embedded new learning consistent with the Department of Education's 30 CEUs in each endorsement area and 45 CEUs aligned with the professional education requirements ED 505.07. Merrimack School District delineates 35 CEUs supportive of district goals and 10 CEUs in Technology. Technology CEUs can be shown embedded in the portfolios or on a separate log sheet.

New hires in their second year of certification should continue their previous IPDP's if it's relevant to their new position. If the IPDP is no longer relevant, staff should indicate they are in a new position in their year two summary and revamp their goal accordingly. New hires in their third year of certification should provide their CEUs as required by the state OR their former IPDP plan with their year 3 Professional Development as submitted through their digital portfolio.

DOCUMENTATION OF IPDP

- Complete Yearly Summary Forms through their digital portfolio referencing "IPDP Expectations".
- Provide annual evidence of effort* of progress towards IPDP goal and/or focus question by uploading documents through their digital portfolio yearly.
- Write a yearly reflection that describes what was done, learned and next steps.
- Meet annually with appropriate supervisor for collaborative discussion and updates to plan.
- At the end of year 3, complete IPDP Summary form on through their digital portfolio.

IPDP YEARLY SUMMARY EXPECTATIONS

Each yearly summary should reiterate the goal, list the activities and evidence completed towards that goal and have a reflection.

EVIDENCE EXPECTATIONS:

EVIDENCE OF EFFORT

In its optimum form, developing a body of evidence should be a natural, **integrated part of the educators' work and learning process rather than an excessive added demand**. The pieces of evidence to be collected should be those which are natural to the professional development activities thus requiring that the educators "collect" rather than "create" evidence. In collecting their evidence, educators need to include evidence of their activities but more particularly evidence of their own learning and the evidence that provides information regarding the impact of their activities on students' growth, learning, and/or achievement. Sometimes, brief written explanation accompanies each evidence piece in the collection.

POSSIBLE FORMS/SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

The following are some possible sources of evidence. These examples are offered as possible options only and do not represent all the possible sources that one might consider.

Evidence of Educator's New Learning

- Written reflection/journal logs/workshop summaries
- Action research
- Oral reflection/explanation with their supervisor
- Application of new methods and/or materials exhibited through lesson plans, instructional materials, or video/audio tapes of the lesson
- Samples of student work
- Analysis of student work
- Samples of educator's learning from courses and/or seminars.
- Surveys
- Study guide or book discussion review

Evidence to Examine Impact on Students' Growth, Learning, and/or Achievement

- Formative Assessment to include (but not limited to):
 - Quizzes
 - Observations
 - Surveys
 - Daily work
 - Skills assessments
- Summative Assessments to include (but not limited to):
 - Projects
 - Presentations
 - Unit tests
 - Standardized Tests
 - State Assessments

YEARLY SUMMARY REFLECTION EXPECTATIONS

1. Specify in a one-page (or more) reflection of your progress towards you goal. Consider the following questions when writing:
 - a. How has your progress toward your goal affected your instruction/program or relates to student growth, learning and/or achievement?
 - b. How has your belief about issues related to teaching and student learning evolved?
 - c. What new skills or knowledge have you gained as a result?
 - d. What changes to your teaching will/have result(ed) from this experience?
 - e. What impact has this had on student learning?
 - f. How did you measure or show evidence of this impact?
 - g. How did this activity support district/school goals?

IPDP SUMMARY FORM EXPECTATIONS

This summary allows you to tell the story of your learning and its impact on you as a professional.

You must include these bold headings labeled within your summary, but you do not need to address every question:

Purpose Statement – Why you did it – Highlight multiple endorsements if applicable

- What was the IPDP about?
- What need(s) did you identify?
- How was this to affect student learning?
- What was your goal?

Method – How did you do it – Highlight new technology if applicable

- What was your approach?
- What were the essential activities?
- How did you address the identified needs?
- What data collection methods did you use?
- Why did you use these methods?

Results - What you found

- What was your evidence?
- What did you find? (Generalize your data)
- What did your analysis show?
- Did your expectations and results agree?

Conclusion – What it means

- How has this work changed your belief about issues to teaching and student learning?
- What new skills or knowledge have you gained as a result of this work?
- What changes will/have result(ed) from this work?
- What impact will this work have on student learning?
- How might you measure or show evidence of this impact?
- How will/have you share(d) what you learned with your colleagues?
- How might this work support district/school goals?
- Where will you go from here?

Include the most important items that crystallize each part of your plan. Omit unimportant details.

Add new information; simply tell the story of your IPDP work.

This summary should be written to be understood by readers who may not possess expertise in your field.

See Appendix D for IPDP forms.

Section III, Part V: Review Plan Evidence and Approval of Plan Completion

Required Form	Submission Deadline	Who Reviews
IPDP Goal	October 31 st of Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Supervisor*
Year 1 Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection with evidence 	March 31 st of Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Supervisor*
Year 2 Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection with evidence 	March 31 st of Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Supervisor*
Year 3 Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection with evidence 	March 31 st of Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Supervisor*
IPDP Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Methods • Results • Conclusion 	March 31 st of Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Supervisor* • Principal • Superintendent

***Staff member and supervisor are expected to meet PRIOR to submission deadline to review plan progress and expectations.**

See Appendix C for a more detailed IPDP schedule.

Section III, Part VI: Certified Paraeducators

PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS

All certification forms should be compiled by the paraeducator, reviewed with a PCC and then submitted to Central Office. The Superintendent will review and sign the paperwork as needed and submit it to the NH Department of Education.

A paraeducator interested in becoming certified through the Merrimack School District and the State of NH Department of Education should complete these materials:

- Application form
- Current fee
- Appropriate ORIGINAL, sealed transcripts
- ED 504.5 Paraeducator Certification as a Paraeducator I or II
- Paraeducator I or II Competencies form
- Paraeducator I or II Signature form

A paraeducator must complete the following to recertify through the Merrimack School District and the State of NH Department of Education:

- Application form
- Current fee
- 50 continuing education units aligned with district goals (CEUs) over three years
- Documentary evidence from the superintendent's office regarding the CEUs.

All forms are available on the NH State Department of Education website.

(<http://www.education.nh.gov/certification/index.htm>) - Paraeducator Information

Each paraeducator's continuing education units (CEUs) are posted within Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform.

Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform:

Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform is the Merrimack School District's online professional development management system and can be accessed via home, school or any device with internet access by going to **www.mylearningplan.com**. Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform will be used to monitor and record activities and classes towards licensure status, to register for in-district workshops and to request CEUs and/or funding/reimbursement for professional development learning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR PARAEDUCATORS

“Professional growth is the acquisition of additional information or skill related to one's role as a Paraeducator. It consists of such activities as college courses, local in-service seminars or workshops, institutes, independent study and research. While we recognize the value of work experience and volunteer activities in one's personal growth, these experiences do not in themselves constitute professional growth for recertification purposes. However, if one receives training for such experiences, that training may constitute growth if it relates to improved performance as a paraprofessional.” (NHDOE)

The Merrimack School District has formed alliances with institutions for higher education to support the professional development needs of support staff. Paraeducators have the opportunity to complete courses toward recertification and certification as well as work toward a 2 or 4-year degree. The district is making it possible for every paraeducator to receive training through the Master Teacher Paraeducator Learning Network at <http://www.PDnow.net/>.

Paraeducators can sign on and receive a password through the Special Services Office. Paraeducators in years one, two and three are **REQUIRED** to take certain modules as part of their role responsibilities, but others are offered in a variety of useful areas. Many of them help paraeducators to achieve and/or maintain NH Paraeducator Certification. More information can be found at <http://www.education.nh.gov/certification/index.htm>.

Paraeducators who want to complete modules during the school day should decide with their supervisors and/or building Special Education Coordinators. Employees who want more information about other institutions that offer training should contact central office.

The district requires all paraeducators years one, two and three, regardless of certification, to complete 10 specific courses each school year on the Paraeducator Learning Network website, located at <http://www.pdnow.net/>. These courses are selected by the Special Education Administrator based on years of service, district goals and building assignment.

The Merrimack School District lists workshops through Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform. The Special Education Coordinator at each building may be able to suggest appropriate professional development opportunities, also.

PROCEDURES FOR PARAEducATOR SEEKING CEUS AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursement Caps

A specified amount of funding is allocated for paraeducator reimbursement for professional growth activities in the Master Agreement. Therefore, each paraeducator may be reimbursed on a first-come, first-served basis for a cap of \$2000 in each year of the contract for approved activities. **Professional day approval is contingent upon the availability of substitute funds.**

Professional development experiences should meet one or more of the following criteria in order to qualify for CEUs awards:

- **Relate directly to one or more of the component areas for New Hampshire recertification**
- **Course of study relevant to current position or relevant education**
- **Align with the district goals**
- **Relate directly to improved student achievement**

A continuing education unit assignment is defined as hour for hour to the nearest half-hour during which an approved activity is conducted. CEUs may be received for both non-funded activities (e.g.: serving on a committee) and for funded activities (e.g.: taking courses and attending conferences). College courses earn 15 CEUs for each semester credit.

The Professional Development Recertification Committee approves CEUs. Staff members should continue to apply for CEUs even after obtaining the minimum requirements. The formal approval of CEUs will serve as an official record of professional growth for the staff and the District. CEUs accrued by a staff member after April 1st of recertification year may be counted toward the next three-year recertification cycle. CEUs may be transferable from other New Hampshire school districts or districts out-of-state. A verifiable record of the CEUs should be provided to the Superintendent's office upon employment in the District.

Staff members should maintain a personal record of the CEUs that they have been awarded as well as submitting the approved CEUs to Central Office. This record should also indicate how the CEUs were allocated. Central Office will keep a record of each certified staff member's CEUs for recertification purposes. The staff member should check periodically on Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform. **This will allow the paraeducator to ensure that the personal records and Central Office's records agree.**

How to Access Your Records on Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform:

- Log into Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform
- Click on "My Portfolio"
- To check licensure expiration date, click on "My licensure"

SUPPORT STAFF APPROVAL & REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Whether a paraeducator is seeking continuing education units and/or funding for a Professional Development Activity, a Support Staff Approval & Reimbursement Form must be submitted to Central Office prior to the activity date. These forms can be obtained from the principal's office.

(NOTE: If the activity is an in-district workshop, the staff member needs only register through Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform and sign the Attendance Roster at the workshop. The activity must be marked complete in Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform within 60 calendar days. No form is required. The paraeducator should photocopy the form for their own records and submit the original to Central Office.

See Appendix F for form example.

It is essential for any paraeducator who decides not to participate in an activity for which he or she received approval for funding to call the administrative assistant at central office promptly so that the funds may be released for others to use.

APPROVAL FOR FUNDING

In order to qualify for reimbursement, the request must be pre-approved by a building administrator and Central Office. If a paraeducator's request for funding is denied because funds have been exhausted, his/her name will be placed on a "denied funds" list. If monies then become available, s/he may be eligible for reimbursement if a Support Staff Approval & Reimbursement Form has been submitted with payment, receipt(s), certificate, grade, etc.

CONDITIONS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

No reimbursement will be made for materials that are developed during the activity unless they become District property.

No reimbursement will occur *without appropriate receipts, verification*, signed mileage request from specific district building *and prior approval*. Receipts are specifically requested by the auditor at the end of the school year.

Central Office will review the completion form, the verification, the signed mileage request from specific district building with all and necessary receipts to determine the amount of reimbursement, if any. A member of the Recertification Committee will sign and date the document for CEUs. Central Office will retain the final copy. Certified staff members can view the outcome by signing onto the Merrimack School District Professional Development Improvement Recertification Status Site- Frontline Education Professional Growth Platform.

Section IV

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: APPEAL FORM

Merrimack School District
Professional Development
Appeal Form

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

School: Choose an item.

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Position: Click or tap here to enter text.

Name of WS/GC: Click or tap here to enter text.

Start Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

End Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Date PD Submission was completed: Click or tap to enter a date.

Reason for appeal. Please provide timeline/dates of events that lead to this appeal.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature: *Click or tap here to enter text.*

APPENDIX B: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY REQUEST FORM

Merrimack School District
Professional Development Activity Request Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Certification: _____

Professional Development Activity Title: _____

Description:

Value of the Activity as it relates to Professional Development:

Cost:

APPENDIX C: IPDP SCHEDULE

General IPDP Process:

1. September/October:
 - Supervisors meet with Year 1 Cohorts to discuss their IPDP and generate their IPDP Goal.
2. By October 31st:
 - Staff member will submit their completed IPDP Goal Sheet in Frontline.
3. November 1st – November 15th:
 - IPDP Committee audits the goals to ensure it meets the master plan guidelines/criteria.
 - The IPDP Committee will generate a report that is sent to building principals on which staff members have missed this deadline.
4. November 15th-November 30th:
 - IPDP Supervisors will log into Frontline and digitally sign-off on IPDP Goals.
5. March:
 - Supervisors meet with ALL staff to discuss progress made that year on their IPDP.
6. By March 31st:
 - Staff member will upload their evidence into their File Library, then complete and submit their IPDP Yearly summary form.
 - Staff in year 3 of their plan will also complete and submit their IPDP Summary Form that discusses their purpose, methods, results, and conclusion.
7. April 1st – April 15th:
 - IPDP Committee audits the summary forms to ensure it meets the master plan guidelines/criteria.
 - The IPDP Committee will generate a report that is sent to building principals on which staff members have missed this deadline.
8. April 15th – April 30th:
 - IPDP Supervisors will log into Frontline and digitally sign-off on IPDP Yearly summaries and IPDP Summaries.
9. May 1st – May 15th:
 - Building Principals log into Frontline and digitally sign-off on IPDP Yearly summaries
10. May 15th – June 1st:
 - Superintendent reviews IPDP Summaries and compiles a list of staff recommendations to be recertified.
11. June 1st – June 30th:
 - Staff logs into their DOE account to pay for their certification and submits updated certificate via email to Lynea Forand.

APPENDIX D: IPDP FORMS

IPDP GOAL SHEET:

Name	
Today's Date	
Supervisor	
School	
Certification	
Cohort Year	

Focus Question/Goal:	
Desired Results for Students:	
Evidence of Students' Results:	
Desired Results for Myself:	
Evidence of Personal Results	

On Going Learning Plan

Year One Activities	
Year One Timeline	
Year One Evidence of Activities	
Year Two Activities	
Year Two Timeline	
Year Two Evidence of Activities	
Year Three Activities	
Year Three Timeline	
Year Three Evidence of Activities	

IPDP YEARLY SUMMARY:

Name	
Today's Date	
Supervisor	
School	
Certification	
Cohort Year	

Focus Question/Goal:	
Desired Results for Students:	
Evidence of Students' Results:	
Desired Results for Myself:	
Evidence of Personal Results	

On Going Learning Plan

Year ____ Activities	
Year ____ Timeline	
Year ____ Evidence of Activities	
Year ____ Supervisor	
Date	
Educator's Reflection	
Supervisor Comments	

My File Library Attachment
(Check off the boxes of the files you wish to attach as evidence)

IPDP SUMMARY FORM:

Name	
Today's Date	
Supervisor	
School	
Certification	
Cohort Year	

Purpose Statement	
Methods Explained	
Results Presented	
Conclusion	
Additional Endorsements	
Educator's Reflection	
Supervisor's Comments	

My File Library Attachment

- Check off the boxes of the files you wish to attach as evidence; examples include additional endorsement hours/evidence, technology hours/evidence

APPENDIX E: ACTION RESEARCH GUIDELINES

<p>Action Research</p> <p>Action research is a means for systematically examining the impact of the district, school, and classroom practices on student learning and related student outcomes with the intention of solving the problem, resolving the issue, or making an informal decision. It involves a cyclical process of identifying a focus – Designing the study – Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data – Communicating the outcomes – Acting based upon the results.</p>	
<p>Step 1: Identify the problem, concern, idea, or decision to be made and frame it as a research question.</p>	
<p>A good question is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on student performance which is important to you • Related to school/district priorities or goals • Manageable and doable within the available time and resources • Measurable through quantitative and/or qualitative data <p>Example: Does a system of positive rewards improve student's behavior?</p>	
<p>What is the specific research problem I wish to investigate? What do I want to do about this problem? Why is this problem worthy of investigation? What assumptions am I making? What is the specific question I wish to pursue and answer? Do I have a hypothesis in mind? And if so, what is it?</p>	
<p>Step 2: Review relevant literature</p>	
<p>What have other educators and researchers found that relates to this problem, concern, issue or question? How can I use the work of others to inform my research effort?</p>	
<p>Step 3: Design your study</p>	
<p>Who will be the subjects of my study? How will I select the participants for my study? What data will I collect? What instruments will I use to collect my data? What procedures will I follow – what will I do, when, where, and how will I do it? How will I organize and display the data in my study? How will I analyze and interpret the data?</p>	
<p>*Examples of qualitative data gathering techniques</p> <p>Interviews Focus groups Surveys (open-ended questions) Observations Artifacts review</p>	<p>*Examples of quantitative data gathering techniques</p> <p>Surveys (closed response questions) Standardized assessments, inventories, etc. Scores from quizzes, tests, writing prompts (rubric scored) etc. Review of existing data (e.g.: discipline, attendance, student grades, etc.)</p>
<p>Step 4: Conduct your study and gather data</p>	
<p>Follow the steps you outlined in your plan and collect and organize your data</p>	
<p>Step 5: Analyze and interpret the data</p>	
<p>Use techniques appropriate to the data collected Quantitative (look for meaning in the numbers)/Qualitative look for patterns, themes, etc.</p>	
<p>Step 6: Share the results with appropriate audiences</p>	
<p>Share the data with others who can benefit from your findings and those whose approval you need to move forward with your solution/decision</p>	
<p>Step 7: Use what you have learned</p>	
<p>Use what you have learned to address the problem or concern, to inform your decision, to guide future action research.</p>	
<p>Resources</p> <p>Millis, Geoffrey E. 2003. Action research: A guide for the educator researcher. Merrill Prentice Hall: New Jersey Stringer, Ernie. 2004. Action research in education. Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall: New Jersey</p>	

APPENDIX F: PARAEducATOR REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Merrimack School District
School Administrative Unit #26

No. 17630

**SUPPORT STAFF APPROVAL
& REIMBURSEMENT FORM**

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL AND/OR FUNDING

TODAY'S DATE: _____

NAME: _____ SCHOOL: TFS MES RFS
 MUES MMS MHS Other

CURRENT POSITION: _____

CERTIFICATION YEAR: _____

ACTIVITY/TITLE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

ACTIVITY DATE(S): _____ LOCATION: _____

PAID LEAVE DAYS REQUIRED: _____ SUBSTITUTE REQUIRED? YES NO

TUITION/REGISTRATION: \$ _____

LODGING: \$ _____

MILEAGE (_____ Miles X IRS Rate): \$ _____

MEALS: \$ _____

TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED: \$ _____

Support Staff Member's Signature _____

REQUEST GRANTED REQUEST DENIED

Principal's Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED: \$ _____ SUBMIT RECEIPTS IN THE EVENT THAT FUNDS ARE RELEASED

FUNDING ADJUSTMENT: \$ _____ DENIED

Director of Human Resources Signature _____ Date _____

IDENTIFY ITEMS ATTACHED FOR VERIFICATION

PROOF OF ATTENDANCE: (One required)
 COPY OF CERTIFICATE
 TRANSCRIPTS / GRADE

PROOF OF PAYMENT: (One Required)
 PROOF OF PAYMENT (cancelled check, paid receipt, etc.)

IF TEACHER CERTIFIED:
 End Product or Detail Log (circle)

MILEAGE RECEIPT: (if requesting reimbursement)
 YOUR SIGNED NOTE STATING ACTUAL MILES TRAVELED.

REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT: \$ _____
 100-2213-45-8240-00

Financial Administrator's Signature _____ Date _____

REQUEST FOR CLOCK HOURS

Endorsement Code(s)	Hours	Hours	Hours
_____	_____	Technology: _____	Other: _____
_____	_____		

How will your participation affect your instruction/program?: _____

Recertification Committee member's Signature _____

Clock Hour Award: _____

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY

Action Research

Examining educators' own teaching and student learning by engaging in a research project in the classroom.

Appeal

A formal request to revisit a decision relating to one's Individual Professional Development Plan. Examples range from a funding or clock hour determination to a decision about the components of an educator's proposed Individual Professional Development Plan.

Benchmark

An indicator that serves as a measure of progress toward a specific goal and that enables interim monitoring to occur.

Best practices

The adoption of work practices which, when effectively linked together, can be expected to lead to sustainable outcomes in quality, flexibility, timeliness, innovation, and enhanced student performance.

Body of Evidence

See *Portfolio*

BSLI

Best School Leadership Institute was a professional development team that designed the Local Master Plan and oversees its implementation.

CEUs (continuing education units)

Unit of value attached to an educator's time spent in pursuit of a professional development goal.

Cohort

A group of people with some characteristics who maintain a relationship over a period or who are studied over a period of time for a particular purpose. Examples would be a group of students who took a norm- or criterion-referenced test at the same time or a group of educators who have all chosen to complete Option 2 activities that will come to completion at the same time.

Collaboration

Working together in an atmosphere of openness and mutual gain on a joint venture. Some examples are to dialogue about work, reading, plans and students; sharing planning and preparation activities; observing and conferencing about classes; facilitating one another's professional growth.

Collaborative Professional Development Plan (CPDP)

A two- or three-year improvement strategy developed by a team of educators in collaboration with the supervising administrator as part of an Option 2 program leading to recertification. The CPDP is responsive to data regarding student learning needs and results in additional skills and knowledge for the team of educators that serves to boost student achievement.

Collegiality

Professional relationships in the educational community characterized by mutual learning and discussion of classroom and student performance.

Continuing contract

A contract offered to an experienced educator after three years of successful teaching in the district.

Data

Elements of information that can be used to describe events or phenomenon and that can be classified as qualitative (provides information on attributes, values and dispositions) or quantitative (describes specific, concrete information).

Data analysis

The process of gathering, examining and interpreting data in order to inform the decision-making process.

Educator

A term applied to all certified personnel including educators, non-teaching specialists, paraeducators, and administrators.

Encumbered Funds

Funds that are reserved for a specific activity but are not yet expended.

End product

The result of curriculum development, travel, new course/program, study group or externship that documents educator growth (e.g.: a unit of study or examples of student work from the classroom).

Expensed Funds

Funds that have been released to pay for an activity that has been completed.

Experienced educator

An educator in the district who has been offered a contract for the fourth consecutive year; one who is on continuing contract in the district and is eligible to serve as a mentor.

Formal assessment

Standardized tools with established reliability and validity, designed to gauge progress and to facilitate comparisons among students, classes, schools, districts, states, and countries. Examples are NECAP and Gates-MacGinitie. These tools generally serve accountability and policy goals.

Formative Assessment

Continuous assessment of progress toward individual goals and performance over a three-year period. DIBELS is an example.

Immersion

The act of being actively engaged in a content area such as math or science, through participation in jobs in the private sector, internships, or specialized training to gain first-hand experience in the content area.

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

A three-year improvement strategy developed by an educator in collaboration with the supervising administrator. The IPDP is responsive to data regarding student learning needs and results in additional skills and knowledge which serve to boost student achievement.

Informal assessment

Used to monitor progress and provide feedback to guide instruction, placement, and planning. Some examples are educator-made tests, quizzes, worksheets, assignments, portfolios, anecdotal reports, and reflections.

Job-embedded learning

Learning that occurs as educators and administrators engage in their daily work activities and that results in increased skill and knowledge needed to assist students to reach high standards. It is the documented professional learning that occurs during the educator's work. It often includes sharing what educators have learned, reflecting on specific work experiences to uncover new understanding, and listening to colleagues share best practices while trying out new programs or planning or implementing a project.

Listserv

A group of people with a common interest who send messages to a central online address where they are received and distributed to each subscriber via email.

Mentee

A new educator who is mentored.

Mentor

An experienced educator on continuing contract who provides professional and personal guidance for a new educator (mentee) who may be new to the profession or new to a school.

Mentoring

Activities in which an experienced educator works with a new educator to enhance his/her job-related skill and knowledge. Examples include:

- Analyzing classroom activities (instruction)
- Analyzing skills/proficiencies
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses
- Providing support
- Providing guidance and feedback
- Providing problem-solving strategies
- Sharing resources, insights, practices, and materials

NH State Curriculum Frameworks

Curricular state standards upon which the New Hampshire Assessments are based.

New educator

An educator who has little or no previous professional experience.

Paraeducator

A school employee who, under the direction of a certified educator or specialist, assists students with the development of academic and social skills.

Paraeducator Certification Coach (PCC)

An experienced paraeducator who has an understanding of the certification process and who volunteered to be a Certification Coach to support other paraeducators in the process of gaining certification.

Peer coaching

Colleagues conduct mutual observations and conferences during which they give feedback for the purpose of improving effectiveness.

Portfolio (also known as Body of Evidence)

A collection of work, in draft and/or completed form, which represents one's efforts, progress and achievements. "A portfolio that is constructed and used thoughtfully can become the basis for rich conversations, reflections, and observations about work in schools." Types of portfolios commonly used by educators include:

- Employment – a collection that represents an individual's accomplishments, learning, strengths and expertise
- Assessment – a collection of assignments, artifacts, and evidence gathered to demonstrate attainment of prescribed competencies, standards, or outcomes
- Learning – an "envelope of the mind" that provides a framework and process for adult learners to collect artifacts and evidence, discuss them with colleagues, and describe learning outcomes.¹

Professional development

A process designed to improve specific professional competencies or the overall competence of an educator. Also known as staff development, this term refers to experiences, such as attending conferences and workshops, that help educators and administrators build knowledge and skills.

Professional Development Committee (PDC)

A committee that oversees in-district program activities and approves professional development activity funding and/or continuing educator unit (CEUs) toward certification.

Reflection

The process by which an educator reviews his/her past performance as a means of improving student performance.

Reflective Practice

A mode that integrates or links thought and action with reflection. It involves thinking about and critically analyzing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice. Engaging in reflective practice requires individuals to assume the perspective of an external observer in order to identify the assumptions and feelings underlying their practice and then to speculate about how these assumptions and feelings affect practice.

Rubric

A set of criteria, expressed as a scale, used to implement or assess levels of performance.

Self-assessment

An exercise that seeks to measure skills or knowledge in a specific field, discipline or area of study. In the context of mentoring, the assessment or evaluation of educators involves the collection of information about the educator in the context of the total school setting. Educator assessment serves two purposes:

- identifying the ways in which the educator can be helped to grow professionally,
- helping school administrators to make informed management decisions.

Conducting a needs assessment is the first step in the development of the Individual Professional Development Plan.

Site-based

Originating or residing in a specific school building.

Site-Based Committee

A school-based team whose purpose is to provide support to colleagues engaged in the IPDP process.

Study groups

Engaging in regular, structured or collaborative interactions regarding topics identified by the group, with opportunities to examine new information, reflect on practice, or assess and analyze outcome data.

Summative Assessment

Final or cumulative assessment or evaluation of one's performance and/or competence.

Supervisor

Person responsible for observation and evaluation of educator (and support staff) performance and progress toward stated goals.

Supervision

Process of evaluation of an employee's performance or competence as measured against the individual's job description and components of effective practice.

Tutor

Educator or guide.

Tutoring

Private instruction in a skill for an individual or small group.