

# How our teachers help your child excel

## For parents and caregivers

You want the best for your child, and so do we. Our school is committed to ensuring that every child gets what they need to succeed.

One of the ways we do that is through making sure teachers are up to date on best practices and latest research. That's why our teachers participate in professional learning.

Teachers get coaching, take courses, work in teams, and learn in lots of other ways throughout the school year so that they have the very best and latest knowledge and skills to meet your child's needs.

Teachers' professional learning may occasionally impact your child's schedule, so we know you may have questions. Here are answers to some common ones. If you have other questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

## Why do educators need professional learning? Didn't they learn what they need to know in college?

Even experienced teachers have new things to learn each year to stay up to date. Just as you expect your child's doctor to keep learning about new medical science, we expect your child's teachers to learn about improved teaching methods, new technology, school procedures, and more.

Student learning needs change, too. You've probably noticed that the pandemic created new social and academic challenges. Education experts

are developing improved methods for meeting those needs. Professional learning helps us make sure that educators learn about them and use them.

## What does professional learning look like?

Professional learning, also called professional development, can take several different forms.

Just like professional athletes have coaches, teachers sometimes work with coaches who observe their classrooms and provide helpful suggestions of how to do even better.

Math and reading experts work with teachers to learn how to use new and improved curriculum materials or how to adapt their practices for students with special needs.

Sometimes teachers take courses at local colleges or attend conferences and workshops.



Often, professional learning means teachers working together to plan and solve problems or share their best ideas for making sure every single student is learning important content. To make sure everyone is on the same page, all teachers in a grade have time to learn together. Occasionally, all teachers in our school learn together at the same time.



## Why do schools close, start late, or dismiss early for professional learning?

Professional learning may occur at different times. Sometimes teachers participate before classes begin or after they end, or sometimes during the summer. Sometimes they participate during the regular school day, so a substitute teacher may support students.

Most school districts have specific days or afternoons when students are released, and educators spend time learning. Learning during the school year makes it easier for educators to apply what they learn right away, so students benefit immediately. And when educators learn

together with their colleagues, they can also learn from each other, support one another, and hold each other accountable for applying what they learn.

## How does professional learning benefit students?

Professional learning is the best way to ensure that we have an excellent teacher in every classroom. Research shows that high-quality professional learning leads to students learning more and being more likely to be on grade level in math, reading, and other areas.

## How can I get more information about professional learning?

Free resources and information are available from Learning Forward, a nonprofit association that helps educators engage in great professional learning so every student achieves. You can find them at [learningforward.org](https://www.learningforward.org).

