

Michigan's Professional Learning Policy

January 2012



Approved by the State Board of Education in January 2012.

Professional Learning Policy Statement

The success of Michigan's students in achieving career and college readiness by the end of high school is dependent on the ability of the education community to build, support, and sustain a highly effective corps of educators. The education community must plan and implement high-quality professional learning strategically to support a systemic approach to ensure educator effectiveness and career and college readiness for all students. Professional learning is not an isolated event or a set of events; rather, it is an ongoing support to, and driver of, the many other components of this system, including the continuous school improvement process, professional certification, educator evaluation, and the implementation of rigorous student content standards.

Professional learning is a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving educators' effectiveness in raising student achievement. Professional learning provides opportunities for professional discourse, analysis, application, and reflection. It is relevant learning that is essential to ongoing improvements in professional practice and job effectiveness.

Systemic design, development, and implementation of effective professional learning must meet the following quality indicators:

- Build upon learning goals and objectives identified and developed throughout the educator's career, beginning in pre-service preparation, and aligned to the educator certification process;
- Align with Michigan's Standards for Professional Learning, rigorous student content standards, and educator performance standards and with local school improvement plans to improve job performance and student growth and proficiency;
- Engage personnel in a process of continuous improvement in which evidence and data are used to assess needs, define learning goals, design learning opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of the professional learning on job performance and student growth and proficiency;
- Facilitate sustained, collaborative, job embedded professional learning, including opportunities to participate in communities of practice;
- Provide continuous learning to support and sustain the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the work place;
- Provide increased opportunities among stakeholder organizations for collaboration and collective support for the learning of children, youth, and adults; and
- Utilize and leverage the necessary resources for continuous professional learning, ensuring that local, state, and federal funds are aligned and in compliance with professional learning policy.

The State Board of Education recommends that each Michigan school and district establish sustained, job embedded, relevant professional learning opportunities that meet the above criteria for all school and district staff based on this Professional Learning Policy.

