Professional Learning Experience (PLE) Guidelines

2022-2023

Office of Professional Learning

Rochester City School District

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Professional Learning is an ongoing, collaborative and student-centered process that supports the continued education and growth of all educators. The goal is for educators to understand how students learn best while providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and become well-rounded global citizens.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to provide the highest quality professional learning experiences and resources through collaborative, embedded, and sustained professional learning that impacts the development of each educator. Educators will then provide innovative learning experiences that meet the needs of every student.

Our Vision:

Our vision is for all educators to be empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to create an academic atmosphere that educates the whole child with equity and excellence.

Our Work:

Our work is to strive for continuous personal and professional growth of every educator. We support the use of evidence based strategies to promote effective practices that improve student achievement. Our role is to consult, collaborate, support and monitor school-based and district-based professional learning experiences.

Professional Learning Experience Guidelines

Professional Learning is…

A comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to enhancing and improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

Aligning with rigorous state standards for student academic achievement, as well as school improvement goals.

Focusing on student content standards and educator performance standards.

Providing sustained support for long term changes.

Participating in study groups among peers focused on a shared need or topic.

Applying and reflecting on new or enhanced strategies and knowledge.

Engaging in District wide approved professional learning courses or designs.

Learning a new skill from a workshop.

Professional Learning is not…

Supervising of students before or after school, during evening activities, or on trips unrelated to the PLE and/or District initiatives.

Planning for or attending school family activities.

Preparing of materials for parent/teacher nights, Open House, etc.

Planning for opening day activities or events. Attending Open House, school concerts, etc. Engaging with parents or community members at events.

Planning for meetings, expeditions, or facilitating professional learning experience opportunities.

Serving on a committee.

Attending staff/department/RTI meetings. Requesting PLI credit for vacation or travel. Yoga, Zumba, or similar activities. Attending a theater production.

Performing expected professional duties such as: data entry, report cards, attendance, parent/teacher conferences, or other duties as assigned.

Creating lesson plans or unpacking unit plans*
*Exceptions will be reviewed by the Joint PL Committee

Professional Learning Experience Timelines

2022-2023

Professional Learning starts
Monday, June 27, 2022

Important Deadlines	
*All TrueNorthLogic attendance must be completed by:	Tuesday, June 6, 2023
*All surveys must be completed by: *Credit for a course will not be issued without completing the survey(s).*	Friday, June 9, 2023 no later than 4:00PM

All courses must follow the complete Professional Learning Experience Approval Process

Office of Professional Learning

Professional Learning Experience Request Process

Before a request can be sent to the Office of Professional Learning (OPL)

1) A **2022-2023** Professional Learning Experience Request Form must be completed.

2) The request must be approved, with signatures, by one of the following:

   - If you work in a school - School-Based Planning Team

   - If you work in a program - Program-Based Planning Team

   - If you work in a department - Department Executive Director or Director

3) Your school, program, or department's Course Requester must email the approved request form **two-weeks** prior to the course start of the PLE, in PDF format, to the TrueNorthLogic mailbox at **TrueNorthLogic@rcsdk12.or**g.

After a request is submitted to OPL:

4) TrueNorthLogic Manager sends the request to the Joint Professional Learning Committee (JPLC) for further review.

5) JPLC reviews the request and notifies the TrueNorthLogic Manager if the course is approved, denied, or needs to be revised.

6) TrueNorthLogic Manager emails JPLC decision to Course Requester to let them know if the course can be built in TrueNorthLogic.

TrueNorthLogic Process

7) Course Requester builds the course in TrueNorthLogic.

8) The Level 1 Approver (Building level) reviews, approves, and submits the course for Level 2 review by the TrueNorthLogic Manager.

9) After Level 2 approval, the course is reviewed by the Director of Professional Learning. Once the course has Final Approval, it will be live in TrueNorthLogic.

After a course has been completed

10) Using the TNL roster sign-in sheet, the Instructor or Course Requester must enter the attendance in TNL no later than **five days** after the section meeting date. The Course Requester then sends proof of attendance via email to TrueNorthLogic@RCSDK12.org to be kept on file. Include the full course name, course number, section number and date in the email. If meetings are virtual, a Zoom attendance report is required that shows the minutes of attendance for each session.

11) Once the attendance is verified by the Office of Professional Learning, an email will be sent out notifying participants that attendance has been entered, and the survey is available to be completed for credit.

12) In order to be eligible for course credit, the TrueNorthLogic survey **must be completed.**

Stipulations for PLE Requests

1) You can not submit a request for one hour, unless it is part of a PLE with multiple sections/meeting times. Attendance for all sections of a series is expected.
2) Course instructors **do not qualify** for PLE credit. They may earn state certification credit only.
3) If a PLE session is longer than 5 hours, a 30 minute uncredited break must be included.
4) Instructors and/or departments can restrict the target audience based on the content of the course.

Stipulations for Summer Courses

1) The maximum number of credited hours for school-based PLE an individual may complete during the summer is 18 for non-tenured teachers and 22 for tenured teachers.
2) There is no maximum number of hours for district-based PLE that can be completed during the summer.

Stipulations for Conferences

1) The maximum number of credited hours for a conference is 20.
2) Every PLE request must follow the complete PLE approval process prior to attending. There must be a contact person and number listed on your PLE request form for verification purposes. *Without prior approval, your request may be denied.*
3) After the conference, email your agenda and certificate of completion to your school/program/ department's course requester to be submitted to the Office of Professional Learning.

Stipulations for Out-of-District and Online PLEs

1) The maximum number of credited hours for an out-of-district or online professional learning is 20.
2) Every PLE request must follow the complete PLE approval process prior to attending. There must be a contact person and number listed on your PLE request form for verification purposes. *Without prior approval, your request may be denied.*
3) After the learning experience, submit a certificate of completion to your school/program/department's course requester to be submitted to the Office of Professional Learning.
4) Any self-paced PLE courses will only be considered for PLI credit if taken over the summer, during school holiday breaks, or over the weekend (i.e. Schoology, RBERN, NYSUT, and ASCD). Evidence with dates of completion must be provided for verification. Final decision will be determined by the JPLC.

Stipulations for College Courses

1) 4 hours per credit hour may be earned, with a maximum of 24 hours per school year for current college courses. The masters or doctoral program must be related to your current tenure area.
2) Courses in a masters or doctoral program may NOT be used if working toward Administration Certification.
3) Once a course is completed, email a copy of an official college transcript to TrueNorthLogic@rcsdk12.org.

The maximum number of hours for any single PLE offering or Learning Design is 20.

Professional Learning Cycle

Utilizing this cycle helps educators intentionally plan effective professional learning experiences with activities that engage all participants in learning new content, apply new knowledge to practice, and then reflect on implementation and analyze impact. The goal is to create the best possible educational experiences in order to advance the academic and personal growth of all RCSD students.

Engagement Cycle

Professional Learning Experience

Professional learning begins with examining data, assessing the needs, selecting a learning focus, determining the learning and planning with the goal in mind. The ultimate goal is to have teacher learning impact classroom practice which improves student learning and achievement.

2 Active Engagement

Active engagement promotes change in educator practice and student learning. This occurs when learners interact during the learning process with the content and with one another. Active engagement includes: discussion and dialogue, writing, demonstrations, inquiry, reflection, meta-cognition, co-construction of knowledge, practice with feedback, coaching, modeling, and problem solving.

3 Application of Skill

Application of skill is taking acquired knowledge and applying it to daily practice. This phase emphasizes preparing, implementing and refining practice. The learner is beginning to determine when and how they will utilize the new learning to enhance student achievement.

4 Feedback

Frequently provide built-in time for educators to think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice by facilitating reflection and soliciting feedback. Reflective questions should be incorporated throughout the learning cycle.

5 Learning Design

Choose an effective learning design. Collegial groups engage in intensive discussion and activity on the focused learning topic/strategy. High quality professional learning creates space for educators to share ideas and collaborate in their learning. Adequate time must be provided to learn, practice and implement the new learning.

6 Evidence of Learning

Evidence of learning are statements that describe or list measurable and essential mastered content knowledge. Did the professional learning experience lead to the goals established at the beginning?

7 Self-Reflection

Participants clarify where they are now and where they want to go. This will allow participants to position themselves to achieve desired level of proficiency through establishing short-term and long-term goals. What is the plan for next steps?

Professional Learning Cycle

Assessment Cycle

Application Cycle

PLE Request Checklist

Use this document internally as you review PLEs

Target Audience

☐ specific to intended audience

Course Description

☐ represents true professional learning (refer to page 1 of Professional Learning Guidelines)

☐ includes the new knowledge

☐ has clear learning objectives/goals

☐ indicates how learning will happen

☐ indicates materials that will be used (texts, research, podcasts, data)

☐ all questions answered in full detail

☐ If multiple sessions in series, please include the following sentence: "In order to receive full credit, all sections must be attended."

Describe the evidence/data that will be collected to determine if Learning Outcomes/Goals are met?

☐ evidence/ data is measurable

☐ follow-up to this PLE is included

☐ all questions answered in full detail

Date and Logistics:

☐ Submit signed PLE to Truenorthlogic@rcsdk12.org **two-weeks** prior to the start of the PLE

☐ credit type correct of PLE (only outside of contractual workday) or CTLE Certification

☐ check dates/times- all sections add up to total number of hours

☐ if request is for one educator, name is indicated

How does this Professional Learning connect to student, teacher, school, program and/or district needs?

☐ specific to how this connects to improvement plans

☐ all questions answered in full detail

Describe the intended impact this Professional Learning Experience will have on instructional practices and student achievement?

☐ impact on student performance and achievement is defined

☐ impact on instructional practices is defined

☐ all questions answered in full detail

Important Reminders After OPL Receives PLE

If Denied by JPLC:

☐ you will receive an email with suggestions and questions to address in order to be able to re-submit request for a second review

If Approved by JPLC:

☐ approval is indicated in the SBPT/PBPT minutes

☐ OPL will inform course requester when the course is approved

☐ course requester will inform the course instructor that the course is approved

☐ course requester will build the course in TNL

☐ OPL does final review of PLE before course is live in TNL

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PLE Process FAQ

What resources should be referred to with questions about Professional Learning?

OPL website, Professional Learning Guidelines, PLE Request form, TNL Managers , Alyshia (Alyshia.Thomas@rcsdk12.org) , Stanley Ekiyor (Stanley.Ekiyor@rcsdk12.org) and Sean VanHatten (Sean.VanHatten@rcsdk12.org)

When should a PLE request be submitted to OPL?

Approved and signed request must be received at least **2 weeks** prior to the course start date to allow enough time for OPL/JPLC approval, and for the course to be built in TrueNorthLogic.

What should SBPT/PBPT/ Department members consider when reviewing professional learning activities?

In order to to endorse a professional learning activity, a SBPT/ PBPT/ Department member should:
- thoroughly understand the Professional Learning Guidelines
- determine what is professional learning and what does not qualify
- checks to see if PLE requests are aligned to the School's Mission and Vision Statements as well as the school's improvement plan and/or the District Strategic Plan/ District Mission and Vision
- review the narrative descriptions in the PLE Request for important points

You can request additional training from a TNL manager.

What is the role of a Course Requester and a Level 1 approver?

Course Requester is designated by the principal and is the liaison between OPL and your building. CR will gather approval signatures from the SBPT/PBPT, submit approved PLE requests to OPL, request additional information if revisions are required, build the course in TrueNorthLogic and then advise the building when the course is finally live in TrueNorthLogic. CR will send the Zoom attendance reports or the TNL sign in sheets to OPL within five days after the end of each meeting.

Level 1 approver is an administrator in the building who will complete the first line of approval once the course is built in TrueNorthLogic. Level 1 approver will review the course in TNL to ensure that each course is built as the SBPT/PBPT intended the course to be.

Can webinars count for PLI credit?

Any self-paced PLE courses will only be considered for PLI credit if taken over the summer, during school holiday breaks, or over the weekend (i.e. Schoology, RBERN, NYSUT, and ASCD). Evidence with dates of completion must be provided for verification. Final decision will be determined by the JPLC. Please refer to Page 4 of Professional Learning Guidelines for additional guidance.

Is there a required course length?

You cannot submit a request for **one hour**, unless it is part of a PLE series with multiple sections/meeting times. Attendance for all sections of a series is expected. If a PLE session is longer than 5 hours, a 30 minute uncredited break must be included. The **maximum number** of hours for any single learning offering or Learning Design is **20**. Please refer to Page 4 of Professional Learning Guidelines for additional guidance.

Can teachers create a PLE in a Google Classroom instead of meeting virtually through Zoom?

Teachers cannot use Google Classroom as a way of delivering professional learning, unless it is in conjunction with Zoom. *All final decisions are determined by the JPLC.

Can PLE outside of the District count toward PLI credit?

The maximum number of credited hours for an out-of-district learning is 20.Must follow PLE approval process prior to attending. There must be a contact person and number listed on your PLE request form for verification purposes. After the learning experience, submit a certificate of completion to your school/program/department's course requester to be submitted to the Office of Professional Learning.

Do State Certification credits count toward the PLE Incentive? What is the difference between State Certification and Professional Learning (PLI) credit?

Only Professional Learning Experience credits count toward the Professional Learning Incentive (PLI). The PLI Requirements can be found on page 8 of the Professional Learning Guidelines. Professional Learning credits may only be earned via approved courses that occur outside of the contractual workday (before and after school, evenings, weekends, school holiday breaks, summer). More information can be found regarding State Certification credit (also called CTLE) here.

How long must each participant be actively engaged in a session to receive credit?

In order to be actively engaged in all virtual PLEs, each participant's camera must be turned on during the entire meeting. Participants must be actively engaged/involved for a **minimum of 3/4** of the session time in order to receive course credit. Please refer to page 9 of Professional Learning Guidelines for guidance.

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Steps for Checking your TrueNorthLogic Transcript

#1 Accessing your Transcript:

- Log in to TrueNorthLogic and click on "My Transcript."
- Select the desired date range and click "Search."
- Credit totals are listed at the bottom of the last page.

#2 Check your transcript to see if your credits are showing.

- Complete all course surveys
- Credits will not be added to your transcript until surveys are completed.

#3 If credits are missing from your transcript, reach out to the Course Instructor or the Department that provided the PLE.

- Please give the instructor or department a two-week window after the course has ended before contacting them.
- They will have the course information and details.

#4 If you've followed both steps and haven't received a response or if you have any discrepancies, please send your inquiry to the TrueNorthLogic mailbox (TrueNorthLogic@rcsdk12.org) in the following format to help the Office of Professional Learning better assist you:

- Full course name, course and/or section number
- Course Provider (School, Program or Department)
- Date(s) attended
- Brief summary of your issue

Who Qualifies for the Professional Learning Incentive(PLI)?

The Professional Learning Incentive (PLI)
is discussed in Section 59.4 of the RTA contract.
Teachers are eligible based on the information below.

$1,200 Stipend Qualifications…

➡️ Permanent or Professional Certification

➡️ Must be tenured

➡️ Must have 36 hours of professional learning incentive credit

$800 Stipend Qualifications…

➡️ Resident Level

➡️ Must have 24 hours of professional learning incentive credit

Intern Level teachers are not eligible for the Professional Learning Incentive.

For information on CTLE credits, please go to NYSED
Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) Requirement

Professional Learning Experience
Frequently Asked Questions

What should SBPT members consider when endorsing individual professional learning experiences?
- connection to student need
- connection to the SIP/SCEP
- connection to the District and School Mission/Vision
- contains clear, observable outcomes for application of evidence
- the requested number of hours are in alignment with PLE Request

I am in graduate school. Can I use my credit bearing courses toward the PLI?

You may earn 4 PLI credits per college credit hour, with a maximum 24 hours per school year for current college courses. You may not use courses in a masters or doctoral program if you are working toward an Administrative Certification. The masters or doctoral program must be related to your current tenure area. Once you complete the course, you must email a copy of an official college transcript to TrueNorthLogic@rcsdk12.org.

If RTA pays my registration fee for a conference on a Saturday, are the hours automatically credited to my TrueNorthLogic transcript?

No, you will have to follow the established PLE process in order to earn PLI credit(s).

Is the stipend prorated if I do not complete all the hours toward the PLI credit?

No, the PLI stipend is not prorated. If you begin the process and do not complete the required hours, you will not receive the PLI stipend.

I job share. Do I qualify to take part in the incentive?

Yes, even if you job share, you may qualify for the Professional Learning Incentive.

What are the requirements for a Zoom or other virtual PLE session?

- Instructor must download Zoom attendance report and submit to TrueNorthLogic@RCSDK12.org within **5 days** of the session end date.
- In order to be actively engaged in all virtual PLEs, your camera must be turned on during the entire meeting.
- Participants must be actively engaged/involved for a minimum of 3/4 of the session time in order to receive course credit.

Professional Learning Designs

The total number of credit hours per course cannot exceed 20 hours.

Action Research

Action research is a "systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, administrators, counselors, or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how their students learn" (Mills, 2011; Mertler, p. 5, 2020). Action research allows teachers to study their classrooms, such as instructional methods, scholars, and assessments, to understand and improve their quality or effectiveness. It is essentially described as research that educators undertake for themselves. Action research addresses a particular characteristic of the population with whom the practice is employed or with whom some action must be taken, resulting in improved utility and effectiveness for the practitioner (Parsons & Brown, 2002). This professional experience is different from other forms of research as it is an ongoing process of assessment, recommendation, practice, reflection, and revisions. It is change-oriented and undertaken by individuals assuming that change is needed in a given context. **An Action Research course must be a minimum of 10 hours maximum of 20.**

Collegial Circle

A Collegial Circle is a professional learning community made up of educators who meet regularly to solve common problems, share opinions, research, strategize, discusses everyday needs, questions, and interests. A Collegial Circle provides educators with structured time for collegial support, study, and reflection on practices. It provides opportunities for sharing expertise for problem-solving through group processes, ultimately deepening the knowledge of teaching and learning. Collegial Circles are designed to encourage effective teacher planning and reflection on the process of student learning. The ultimate value of the collegial circle is to gain insight based on structured group experiences and shared commitment to the group.
A Collegial Circle course must be a minimum of 10 hours and a maximum of 20.

Critical Friends Group

The Critical Friends Group (CFG) process acknowledges the complexity of teaching and provides structures for teachers to improve their education by giving and receiving feedback (Bambino, 2002). Working together to improve the day-to-day learning of all students is crucial to the success of Critical Friends groups. The purpose of a CFG is to provide professional learning that translates into improved student learning and outcomes. This is accomplished by one member of the group serving as a facilitator of the CFG. A CFG can generate effective practices for educators to share materials, develop support systems, and promote and define holistic approaches to meet schools' teaching and learning needs around the nation (Cromwell, 1999). During the meetings, participants practice techniques for examining student work and activities. As colleagues, CFG members help each other make choices on how to introduce concepts and uncover evidence that students are demonstrating growth or have mastered a concept, rule, or strategy (Silva, 2003). A CFG promotes collegiality and allows educators to be reflective in their practice.
A maximum of 20 hours may be earned from a Critical Friends course.

Immersing Teachers in Practice

Immersing in teacher practice allows teachers to participate in the content they teach over time intensely. For teachers to develop a repertoire of strategies that work when teaching their content, they must first engage in how to learn that content. This design is based on the premise that teacher knowledge, both depth, and breadth, is key to success in the classroom. Additionally, this model focuses on building capacity within teachers. Gaining firsthand knowledge of a content area improves teaching and student learning practices. To be able to think and act as a reader, writer, mathematician, historian, or scientist is a crucial component of being able to teach the content. This approach to professional learning allows teachers to recognize the complexity of their content. While tasks may seem simple, engaging in the practice reveals the challenges and layered cognitive processes of learning (Easton, 2008). Critical elements of immersing in teacher practice include focusing on building capacity and a commitment to teacher leadership. Building the capacity of a school or a teacher to support student achievement takes responsibility of time and possibly a leap of faith. Immersing in teacher practice allows teachers to see what does work with students and what students might struggle with. Additionally, engaging teachers in a content area will enable teachers to take a role as a leader within their buildings.

An Immersing Teachers in Practice course must be a minimum of 10 hours and a maximum of 20.

Lesson Study

A Lesson Study is a structured process, a form of classroom inquiry, involving small groups of teachers that collaboratively plan, teach, observe, analyze, revise and refine basic classroom lessons. It is a form of extended professional learning as it involves a series of planned concrete steps that engage teachers for a year or more. Lesson Study grew out of the collective efforts of classroom teachers, most notably in Japan (Cerbin, 2006). During a Lesson Study, teachers prepare a lesson to demonstrate specific teaching and learning goals while their peers observe and document what they see. After the class, the teachers meet and discuss the lesson's strengths and make suggestions for improvement. Sometimes the task is revised and presented again. The lesson study focuses on the core of the teaching process; what happens between teachers and students in the classroom. *Any observations are informal and do not count towards PLI.

A Lesson Study course must be a minimum of 10 hours and a maximum of 20.

Workshop

A workshop provides a pathway for educators and administrators to build and enhance their professional learning experience. The instructor should *facilitate* the workshop, rather than teach the workshop, and provide opportunities for participants to learn from one another and to apply what they have learned to their own teaching situations. Think of your workshop as a shared enterprise among conveners and participants, with a *balance* of workshop participants learning what research teaches us and sharing their own expertise and experiences. Effective workshops actively engage participants using various protocols, tech tools, scenarios, and formative assessments to actively engage the participants. It is guided by specific goals and objectives to provide information around several topics i.e. like curriculum, best practices, strategies, and assessments. It is usually a hands-on interactive session that offers the opportunity to learn new information and skills or hone existing ones. Depending on the area of focus, a workshop can be a full day, half-day, or several hours in length. (SAGE 2YC, 2022).

A maximum of 20 hours may be earned from a Workshop course.

Office of Professional Learning
Useful Links

Office of Professional Learning Website

PLE Request Form

TrueNorthLogic

TNL Quick Guide

Link to CTLE

Link to Action Research

Link to Collegial Circle

Link to Critical Friends

Link to Immersing in Teacher Practice

Link to Lesson Study