

# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLAN



CHEEKTOWAGA  
CENTRAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
2022-2024

BOE Approved 09/13/2023

**Cheektowaga Central School District**  
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**BEDS Code: 140701060000**

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**Years Plan is Effective:** 2022-2024

The district expects that on an average each teacher will participate in twenty-five (25) hours of professional learning during each school year. Through participation in the BOCES consortium, RBERN, the Cheektowaga Teacher Center, and in-district professional learning opportunities, teachers will be offered to participate in a minimum of 20 CTLE hours annually. Through the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network [RBERN], teachers will be provided opportunities to complete CTLE hours in language acquisition aligned with the content area of instruction taught and integrating language and content instruction for English language learners.

**2022-2023 Professional Learning Committee:**

Steven Wright, Superintendent	Scott Zipp, Assistant Superintendent
Maureen George, Director of Learning	Michael Amici, Director of Technology
Laurie Widman, Business Administrator	Melissa Mitchell, Principal Union East Elementary
Karin Cyganovich, Principal Cheektowaga HS	Patrick Cullinan, Principal Cheektowaga MS
Amy Skierczynski, Instructional Literacy Coach & K-12 ELA Curriculum Leader	Rachael Burke, Instructional Math Coach
Dr. David Wilson, SUNY at Buffalo State	Dr. Jeanne Tribuzzi, Teacher's College Consultant
Angela Prince, Ed Life Consulting	Jeff Sun, Sun Associates Technology Consultant
Sofia Mado, Little Angels Day Care Center	Sherri Weinholtz, Parent

The goals of the 22-23 Professional Learning Plan represents the professional learning goals and action plans identified in the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan [DCIP], School Comprehensive Education Plans [SCEP] and the Instructional Technology Plan [ITP]. Multiple stakeholders participated in developing the plans.

**22-23 Plan Development Participants:**

Stephanie Anderson, Assistant Principal UE	Julia Hamels, Assistant Principal UE
Shannon Stroh, Teacher UE	Melissa Rogers, Teacher UE
Sarah Swiatek, Parent UE	Masuma Akther, Parent UE
Jill Orłowski, Teacher MS	Candice Schneegold, Teacher MS
Debbie Zimmerman, Teacher MS	Shawnta Woodard, Parent MS
Joel Malley, Technology Integrator HS	DeeAnne McDonough, Technology Integrator UE
Staci Sass, Parent UE/MS	Dave Milhem, Technology Integrator Erie 1 BOCES
25 students who participated in focus groups	Kathleen Kiblin, Child Care Resource Network

# **Cheektowaga Central School District**

## **Vision for Professional Learning**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Professional Learning Plan (PDP) is a requirement of New York State Education Commissioner's Regulations [<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/part100>]. Its purpose is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers participate in substantial professional learning to meet the learning needs of their students. An important feature of the PLP is that professional learning must be linked to improved outcomes for students and include a needs analysis, goals, objectives, implementation strategies, activities, and evaluation standards.

It is expected (and required by Regulation) that all teachers will participate in professional learning activities each year through one or more of the mechanisms specified in the implementation component. It is also expected that each professional learning activity – whether created at the district level, building level, or by individual teachers – will specify the goals and objectives that are being addressed and the manner by which the participants will know if the objective was achieved.

The Cheektowaga Central School District Professional Learning Plan reflects the regulations set forth by the Commissioner of the New York State Education Department and describes a vision for adult learning that is collaborative, continuous, embedded in daily practice, and focused on student achievement. The plan integrates the goals of the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan [DCIP], School Comprehensive Education Plans [SCEP], and the District Technology Plan [Appendix A]. It is a fluid document which will be informed by the needs that arise from data collected at all levels and in all corners of the organization. It is a multi-year plan that must be revised and modified yearly to address current diagnosed need.

### **GOALS**

The goals of the Cheektowaga Central School District [CCSD] Professional Learning Plan are:

- to provide CCSD staff professional learning opportunities from a variety of providers;
- to provide the professional staff with opportunities for substantial and ongoing professional learning;
- to offer a menu of professional learning activities to meet the needs of CCSD teachers;
- to provide a variety of formats that reflect current educational practice;
- to review the plan annually; and
- to provide mentoring and transitional support for teachers.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After identifying the needs of the Cheektowaga Central School District [CCSD] teaching staff through surveys and focus groups; needs analysis led by members of the School Improvement Teams in each building; and, reviewing multiple forms of data to include testing data, attendance and discipline referral data and receiving input from district administrators, the following objectives were identified for the CCSD Professional Learning Plan. These will be in alignment with the district's goals and New York State Department of Education Professional Standards for Teachers and New York State Learning Standards. The Committee recommends the following objectives:

- ❖ To provide professional learning opportunities to enable each child to develop positive social and emotional skills, to become contributing members of society and providing an environment that nurtures self-esteem.

- ❖ To provide professional learning opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills needed to use various types of assessment, rubrics and data analysis to meet the differentiated needs of individual students in order for effective instructional planning.
- ❖ To provide professional learning opportunities to increase the proficiency of instructional staff to implement various strategies needed to address reading and writing in the content areas.
- ❖ To provide professional learning opportunities to increase the proficiency of instructional staff in the uses of instructional technology and its integration into curriculum.
- ❖ To provide professional learning opportunities to increase the proficiency of staff to implement restorative practices.

### **Professional Learning Needs Analysis**

The Cheektowaga Central School District reviews multiple sources to develop the professional learning cycle. The following are analyzed annually to determine the focus and content of the professional learning plan:

#### **Student Achievement Data**

- School Report Card
- NYS and District Assessments (3-8 testing and Regents exams)
- Disaggregated Student Achievement Data
- Report Cards
- VADIR Reports
- Supervisor and Department Data Analysis and Recommendations
  - Counseling and Social Work Records
- Student Attendance and Discipline Reports
- Graduation rates
- Special Education Identifications and Annual Reviews
- Common Core Learning Standards
- AIS/RtI Reports

#### **Surveys**

- Needs assessment generated by faculty and staff [Technology and Curriculum]
- Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness [DTSDE]

#### **Additional Data Sources**

- Strategic Plan Roadmap
  - DTSDE Reviews
  - Action Plans for Title 1; Universal Pre-Kindergarten [Quality Assurance Protocol Monitoring Report]
  - BEDS Data
  - Longitudinal Student Performance Data
  - Teacher Retention and Turnover Rates
  - Annual Professional Performance Reviews
  - Program Reviews
  - SED Regulations and Mandates
  - Mentor Program
-

## Professional Learning Activities

Collaborative Planning	New Teacher Orientation
Cross District Articulation by content and grade level	Professional Conferences
Curriculum Writing	Instructional Coaching
District/School-Based Committees	Tenure Portfolio
Department Meetings	Teaching an In-Service Course
District Grade-Level Meetings	Self-Evaluation/Self-Reflection
Graduate Courses	Superintendent's Conference Day
IST Meetings	Health and Wellness Training
In-Service Courses (in-district or out-of-district)	Action Research
Mentoring and Transitional Support	Classroom observation by peers
Learning Walks	Lesson Study/Instructional Rounds
Cheektowaga Teacher Center Courses	BOCES Workshops
Outside Conferences	Assessment Scoring
Buffalo Math Collaborative	Master Teacher Program [SUNY Buffalo State]
WNYRIC Online Academy Courses	

### Models and Constructs for Professional Learning

**Professional learning opportunities exist in many forms at all instructional levels for staff to include Teachers and Level III Teaching Assistants.**

**General staff learning** opportunities include attendance at large group sessions spearheaded by district leadership, Board members, union leaders, and/or outside professionals representing organizations committed to big ideas. The best example of this professional learning opportunity is Superintendent's Conference Day(s).

**New Teacher Orientation** sessions are an example of required professional learning for new staff. Generally held over a series of days in late August, employees new to the district participate in various pedagogical trainings from coaches and content specialists. In addition, workshops that support understanding of district expectations and professional responsibilities are provided to instructional staff.

**Studio Classroom PD** is offered to groups of teachers around Math, ELA, Social Studies or Science. Studio sessions take place during the contractual school day. Additional opportunities for training that is connected to Studio can take place during the summer. Studio sessions are currently facilitated by an outside consultant from Erie 1 BOCES or in partnership with outside content specific consultants. These embedded sessions provide the opportunity for specific grade levels to come together as a learning community to enhance instructional practice. Focused around Next Generation Learning Standards and best practice instructional strategies, these sessions allow teachers to take a deeper dive into both content and pedagogy.

**Participation in online and traditional coursework** comprises another definition of professional learning for district staff on topics that contribute to professional growth in an area of choice or need. Participation in the National Board Certification process is an example of both types of professional learning.

**Workshops and follow-up workshops** provide opportunities for staff to increase knowledge and to gain insights into current research, effective teaching strategies and state initiatives, as well as to develop skills for supporting reflective practice. These can occur at the school, district, local or national level. These workshops are not limited to

instructional personnel.

**Building-based professional learning** is initiated by building leadership in response to specific school needs. Support is provided to staff by teacher leaders (Instructional coaches, AIS/RTI coordinator, ESOL Teachers), building administrators, outside presenters or consultants, members of school staff on matters such as the learning of character education programs, initiation of a child study team, targeted efforts to better utilize data in instructional planning, incorporation of Restorative Practices, and differentiated instruction, by way of example. Building-based staff learning encourages reflective practices through the empowerment of staff. Professional staff is able to identify a problem and/or respond to an issue and design a plan to address the concern with onsite support.

**Curriculum initiatives** drive systemic professional learning. The district believes that when those responsible for the delivery of the curriculum are directly engaged in the learning process, high quality curriculum results. Support is provided for any one of the three phases of curriculum learning (writing, implementing, and evaluating). Attention is given to grade level alignment as well as K-12 vertical alignment in curriculum learning and discussions about the ease and roadblocks to successful implementation and integration become the content of professional exchange.

**Data Driven Instruction** is a critical area of professional learning for staff. Information from both state and local assessments give the district and schools within the district an enormous amount of test data to interpret. From individual student profiles and specific subgroups to building and district-wide scores, data analysis helps staff to identify positive and negative trends in student responses. These patterns underscore areas in curriculum and in its instructional delivery, which can be improved to better meet the needs of our population of students, whose needs are diverse and differentiated.

**Job-embedded professional learning** for teachers and staff occurs during the regular school day. Support for instructional programs and teaching is achieved through an Instructional Coaching model. Coaches help teachers implement instructional methods and practices that increase student achievement results. Work begun during the school day continues, at times, in the early morning and after-school hours under the guidance of Coaches.

**Book Study Groups** provide professional learning opportunities at the building levels, where groups of teachers can meet regularly to study a book relevant to their teaching to gain a deeper understanding of research based practices and instructional procedures.

**Lesson Study and Instructional Rounds** provides professional learning for teachers by studying effective student focused lesson models, conducting a lesson while other teachers observe, conducting reflective discussion of the lesson after it is delivered, using evidence gathered from the presentation to improve the lesson and instruction, and revising the lesson and teaching it in another setting to gauge changes in student response and mastery.

**Grade Level meetings** are professional learning opportunities, when teachers, and at times with coaches, focus on an essential question (“How did we improve student listening comprehension this week through read-alouds?” or “What are some examples of strategies that we used this month to reduce office referrals?”) and discuss them. Meeting to review student work products so that there is shared expectation for student success is one of the best uses of grade level meeting time.

**Horizontal Team** meetings provide professional learning through focused meetings of all content areas at one grade level (i.e. all 7th grade English, Social Studies, Math, and Science teachers meet to discuss academic intervention

efforts with the school social worker and psychologist) to plan follow-up action for students. Vertical Team meetings provide professional learning through focused meetings with multiple grade levels in the same content areas (i.e. 7th and 8th grade teachers of Science meet in an effort to ensure that there is curricular alignment in the subject and so that each teacher understands the requisite skills he/she is responsible for teaching in the Science curriculum).

**Focused professional learning** opportunities arise out of the need for all staff members at the district or school level to better understand a particular skill, strategy or concept. These can include content-specific topics such as Trauma Informed Care or specialized offerings for support staff, paraprofessionals, teaching assistants, transportation, school lunch personnel, clerical and custodial staff.

### **Evaluation of Professional Learning**

Professional learning evaluation uses multiple measures to assess the effectiveness of the knowledge and skills acquired in improving professional practice and student learning, such as the use of new learning in instructional planning, the use of student data for the adaptation of teaching strategies, or the enhanced student performance following the application of a different teaching strategy. Professional learning evaluation includes the use of multiple methods and techniques that provide information to ensure ongoing improvements in the quality of the professional learning experience, such as participant reactions, surveys, focus groups, interviews, reflective journals, portfolios or information about student behavior or performance. When measuring the effects of professional learning activities, the district will review the following:

#### **⌘ Participant responses**

Questionnaires offer immediate feedback from participants on a particular workshop, the presenter, time/location and suitability of time/topic to the staff member's needs. A mechanism is in place to allow for practitioner comment relative to the particular professional learning experience through a district-wide common exit ticket that will inform next steps and responsive practice.

#### **⌘ Participant learning**

This is a measure of the knowledge, skills and new attitudes learned by participants. It can be measured by classroom observation by principals or supervisors, coaches or colleagues. Use of new learning can be demonstrated in lesson/instructional planning and/or other changes in the participants' abilities to implement a new skill or strategy into their daily routines.

#### **⌘ Student learning**

Professional learning can be evaluated in terms of impact on the classroom through adjustments in teaching and lesson planning based on student data. Measures of student learning may include portfolios, test results, informal assessments, observations, marks, projects, research, etc. In addition to these cognitive indicators, affective (attitudes) and psychomotor (skills, behaviors), must also be considered. For example, assessment of student attitudes, attendance, behavior referrals, homework/activity completion, school activity participation and classroom behavior may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a professional learning's objective and/or activity, designed to bring about a positive change.

#### **⌘ Annual Needs Assessment**

The Professional Learning Committee will disaggregate the information received from its annual Needs Assessment to evaluate needs and trends.

## CCSD Goals for Professional Learning

**September 2022- June 2024**

***To be reviewed and updated annually***

The following pages describe the three major goals for Professional Learning in this two-year period of time and provide an action plan to realize the goals. The goals are not necessarily inclusive since response to State Education mandates, State Education Reviews (Diagnostic Tool for District and School Effectiveness), and other local and state data could result in a shift. The District Professional Learning Leaders will carefully monitor the plan and be responsive when required.

**GOAL #1: Provide a safe, respectful and responsible school and district community.**

Objective 1.1 Provide targeted professional learning to staff on PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) evidenced based implementation practices with high fidelity. [CCMS SCEP Commitment 1]			
Essential Question: How can a safe, respectful and responsible school community foster learning and student achievement?			
<b>Activities and Strategies:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and implement PD programs designed to prepare staff to fully implement PBIS practices and expectations.</li> </ul>			
Action Plan			
Inputs	Evidence	Responsibility	Timeline
Continue Tier 2 PBIS Classroom Implementation Trainings [MS SCEP]	Communication Artifacts, Agendas, Exit Tickets; PD Schedule	Middle School Principal	Sept. 2022- June 2023
Continue Tier 1 PBIS Classroom Management Strategies for Challenging Behaviors [MS SCEP]	Communication Artifacts, Agendas, Exit Tickets, MS PowerPoint outlining systems and processes [MS SCEP]	Middle School Principal	Sept. 2022

Objective 1.2: Provide targeted professional learning in the social and emotional area specifically in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention for Schools (CPI) and CPI certification and Restorative Practices. [22-23 DCIP Priority #1 and SCEPs Commitment #1]
Essential Question: How can the use of crisis prevention and intervention techniques be used to eliminate the need to rely on high risk interventions?



**Activities and Strategies:**

- Plan and implement Nonviolent Crisis for Schools (CPI) Trainings and Recertification Workshops to proactively prevent and/or deescalate potential crisis situations with students, safely and therapeutically manage a crisis situation with a student, and to help students improve their coping strategies.
- Plan and implement Restorative Practices trainings for the District Team and any untrained staff
- Develop a core Restorative Practice (RP) Team
- Develop a calendar for monthly RP training that focuses on Social Discipline Window; Fair Process; Psychology of Affect; Restorative Practice Continuum

**Action Plan**

<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Provide CPI training strategically to administrators, a defined subset of teachers, special education teachers, teacher assistants, social workers, psychologists, and security/hall monitors	Training schedule, agenda and materials, exit tickets, and certification test results	District CPI Trainers	November 2022- June 2023
Provide CPI recertification training for targeted personnel	Training schedule, agenda and materials, exit tickets, and certification test logs/results	District CPI Trainers	Spring 2023
Provide initial training in Restorative Practices for core RP team [Train the trainer]	Training scheduled, agenda and materials	Ed Life Consulting [Angela Prince]	August 2022
Develop workshop calendar for Social Discipline Window; Fair Process; Psychology of Affect; Restorative Practice Continuum	RP Training Calendar for monthly meeting and PD session	Superintendent, District RP Team	August 2022
Provide initial training in Restorative Practices to any untrained staff	Training scheduled, agenda and materials	Ed Life Consulting & District RP Trainers	September 2022-June 2023

**Goal #2: Ensure that all members of the CCSD professional staff develop the skills, knowledge and strategies to effectively implement curriculum and best instructional practices for 21<sup>st</sup> Learning.**

Objective 2.1: Promote digital literacy learning K-12 and in all content areas.  
 [UE SCEP 22-23- Commitment 2; DCIP 22-23 Priority 2; District Technology Plan Goals 1-3]  
 Essential Question: How can technology integration positively affect learning and achievement?

**Activities and Strategies:**

- Provide training to build teacher capacity in the area of technology integration & use of digital teaching tools
- Provide training to develop knowledge of the Digital Literacy and Fluency Standards
- Provide access to relevant and rigorous professional development to ensure educators and leaders are proficient in the integration of learning technologies

**Action Plan**

Inputs	Evidence	Responsibility	Timeline
Introduce the Digital Literacy and Fluency Standards	Presentation Resources, Agendas, Sign-in Sheets	Director of Instructional Technology, Building Administrators	Sept 2022 - June 2023
Develop PD opportunities such as summer workshops, online workshops and development camps to provide opportunities for horizontal and vertical planning to support consistent approaches to technology integration.	Agendas, Training materials, attendance, surveys, acquisition of devices	Director of Instructional Technology, Building Tech Integrators, Building Leaders & Curriculum Leaders	April 2023 -June 2023
Plan, develop and provide training & support to Curriculum Integration of the Digital Literacy and Fluency Standards	Agendas, Training materials, attendance, surveys, acquisition of devices	Director of Instructional Technology, Building Tech Integrators, Building Leaders & Curriculum Leaders	September 2022 – June 2024
Build teacher capacity in the area of TPACK [technology integration & use of digital teaching tools]. Identify and recognize the expertise within the school and greater community by finding mentors and role models to support our Technology Goals.	Agendas, Training materials, attendance, surveys, acquisition of devices	Director of Instructional Technology, Building Tech Integrators, Building Leaders & Curriculum Leaders	April 2023- June 2024

Objective 2.2: Content Area Learning: Provide opportunities for staff to enhance their content knowledge and learn appropriate teaching strategies based upon Next Generation Learning Standards and best practices in respective disciplines.

Essential Question: How can professional learning strengthen content knowledge and pedagogy of all content area teachers?

**Activities and Strategies:**

- Provide training and support for implementation of the Reading and Writing Workshop in grades K-8
- Provide training and support for content area teams to develop Scope and Sequence documents
- Provide training and support to grades K-8 for implementation of New York State Science Learning Standards [NYSSLS]
- Provide training for implementation of Illustrative Mathematics, Desmos and mathematical practices
- Provide training to teachers in best instructional practices, ie. Kagan, Thoughtful Classroom

**Action Plan**

Inputs	Evidence	Responsibility	Timeline
Provide opportunities/training (team meetings, grade level meetings, after/before school PD/Department meetings) for content area teachers to meet as PLCs to create/revise Scope and Sequence documents pertinent to the content area	Communication Artifacts— (meeting agendas, minutes, materials, guidance documents, etc.) Observation notes and feedback surveys	Building Administrators, Curriculum Leaders	November 2022- June 2023
Provide additional training in the reading and writing workshop model to teachers of reading and ELA.	Scope and Sequence Documents; Training Agendas; Training surveys	Director of Learning, Building Administrators, Literacy Coach	September 2022- August 2023
Provide training in the New York State Science Learning [NYSSLS] to Middle School and elementary classroom teachers [Amplify Science]	Communication Artifacts, Agendas, PD Schedule	Director of Learning, Science Curriculum Leaders, Building Administrators, BOCES Instructional Support Team	September 2022- June 2023
Provide training in Illustrative Mathematics, and other math related programs	Classroom observations; training plans; communication artifacts	Director of Learning, Building Administrators, IHE Partners, District Math Coach	September 2022- June 2023

Objective 2.3 Provide ongoing training for the full implementation of data-driven protocols to guide instructional decision making at the classroom, grade, and building levels. [DCIP Priority #2, SCEPs Commitment #2]

Essential Question: How does data-driven decision making inform and enhance instructional decisions about individual and groups of students?

**Activities and Strategies:**

- Establish and train school-based data teams as a central structure for ensuring that data- driven instruction (DDI) occurs at the classroom and grade levels
- Provide all district leaders with the Data Team training so that they can support teachers at the classroom and building level
- Provide training and support to all district staff in the timely and effective use of data systems ( STAR, NYS and Common Unit Assessments)
- Develop a system based on student achievement data for a regular cycle of review of curriculum and programs to ensure alignment to the NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics

**Action Plan**

Inputs	Evidence	Responsibility	Timeline
Provide training on the Data Warehouse to building data teams	Communication Artifacts, Contract, Agenda, materials	Building Administrators, CIO/Director of Instructional Technology, Curriculum Leaders	December 2022
Provide Leverage Leadership Data Team training for instructional leaders	Attendance in Relay Program; coaching sessions in data meetings	Building Principals Director of Learning	July 2022 – June 2023
Strategically embed training in the data protocol/DDI for teachers	Communication Artifacts, Accountability Log	Building Administrators Director of Learning	September 2022- December 2023
Provide professional learning on the use of assessments (formative, as well as summative) and data driven instruction that promote student growth and produce valid data relevant to the achievement of the NYS Next Generation ELA and Mathematics Learning Standards.	Communication Artifacts, Meetings, Data Team Implementation Plan	Director of Learning, Building Administrators, Curriculum Leaders	October 2022- May 2023
Provide training to teachers in best instructional practices, ie. Kagan, Thoughtful Classroom [UE SCEP #2]	Walkthrough data, training plans, communication artifacts	UE Admin Team, District Instructional Coaches	August 2022- June 2023

**Goal #3:** Align Program Practices with New York State Education Requirements for: the Common Core Learning Standards; New York State Next Generation Learning Standards for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics; New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework; New York State Science Learning Standards; New York State Learning Standards for the Arts; English Language Learner/English as a Second Language Requisites; and Data-Driven Decision Making Protocols.

Objective 3.1 Ensure that a prescribed percentage of Professional Learning hours be specific to the needs of ELLs, co-teaching strategies, and integrating language and content instruction.			
Essential Question: How can the Blue Print for ELL Success and CR 154 Regulations become systemic within the district?			
Activities and Strategies:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that 15% of professional learning hours for all teachers and administrators is specific to the needs of ELLs, language acquisition and cultural competency</li> <li>• Ensure that 50% of professional learning hours for all Bilingual Education and ESL teachers is specific to the needs of ELLs language acquisition and cultural competency</li> <li>• Build capacity for all teachers in the Culturally Responsive Framework</li> </ul>			
Action Plan			
Inputs	Evidence	Responsibility	Timeline
Train faculty, administrators and staff on integrated push-in instructional model	Communication Artifacts (agendas, training plans)	Director of Learning, ESOL Teachers, Building Administrators, BOCES RBERN Team	Ongoing
Facilitate a book study on <u>Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain</u> by Zaretta Hammond	Communication artifacts, sign-in sheets	Building Administrators, Ed Life Consulting	October 2022 – December 2023

**Cheektowaga Central School District - Mentoring Program**

**Goals for the Mentor Program for teachers:**

- Easing the transition of new colleagues to the district
- Fostering a collaborative professional community of administrators, teachers and support staff with a shared sense of responsibility for improving student achievement
- Training and supporting a cadre of learning-centered mentors skilled at peer coaching, instructional design and classroom management
- Improving professional practice based upon the research
- Preparing teachers for the New York State APPR evaluation system
- Retaining highly qualified teachers

Mentoring new teachers is a critical component of the effort to retain highly qualified teachers in the profession. An effective program allows new teachers to improve skills that build confidence and helps them to become successful educators. An essential component of the district’s Professional Learning Plan is the Mentor Program for new teachers. The program seeks to initiate, shape, and sustain the first work experiences of prospective career teachers and other professional staff new to the Cheektowaga Central School District.

The district's Mentor Program for Teachers provides a bridge between a newly hired teacher's previous preparation and a new experience. The program allows the application of their knowledge in the classroom. The district's mentoring program is designed to reduce concerns and attempts to support newly hired teachers to address challenges and initial uncertainty and fear. Induction activities include mentoring, collaboration with other newly hired teachers and their colleagues, and professional learning activities designed to strengthen teachers' skills and ultimately improve student achievement.

Both the Cheektowaga Central School District and the Cheektowaga Central Teachers' Association (CCTA) have long appreciated the value in pairing a respected, experienced teacher with a less experienced new teacher. Mentoring of new staff has existed within the district for many years. In 2014, the district Mentoring Program and the district Instruction Coaching program were aligned to provide consistent support to participants.

The Mentor Program is beneficial for all participants. Experienced teachers develop new skills and insights through mentoring. New teachers experience more productive and satisfying first years. Additionally, the mentoring experience assists new teachers in becoming part of the school community. It is important that mentoring programs have a high degree of confidentiality. Thus, any information emerging from mentoring activities and the mentor relationship are confidential and may not be used to evaluate or discipline a newly hired teacher.

### **Definitions**

**Induction** – An organized process designed to train, support and retain new teachers. Mentoring is a fundamental element of the process.

**Mentor** – Is a tenured teacher with at least three (3) years of teaching experience who has completed the mentor training.

**Mentee** - A New teacher is a professional, starting as a first year teacher in the Cheektowaga Central SD.

**Mentor Coordinator** – The person appointed by the District who oversees the Mentor Program. The Mentor Coordinator will adhere to the rules of confidentiality.

**Evaluation** – At the conclusion of each year, a confidential survey will be distributed to each mentor and mentee for the purpose of evaluating the Mentoring Program. The results will be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee(s).

**Recommendations** – The committee shall forward its evaluation of the program and any recommendations for changes to the Superintendent.

**Concerns** – Concerns relative to a mentor/mentee relationship or mentor/mentee performance shall be addressed with the Mentor Coordinators and the Superintendent, if necessary.

**Mentoring Committee** – The Mentoring Committee will be convened as necessary and will consist of the Mentor Coordinator, Director of Human Resources, up to 3 teachers as selected by the CCTA bargaining unit and up to 3 administrators as appointed by the Superintendent including one administrator from Central Office

**Performance Criteria** – For the purpose of this program the mentee shall work with a mentor towards demonstrating pedagogical proficiency, utilizing best practices research in instructional and related practices, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Planning and Preparation
2. Classroom Environment
3. Instructional Practices and Professional Responsibilities
4. Clinical Observation
5. Best Practices research (ex. Brain-based learning)

**Mentor-Mentee Assignments** – All beginning teachers new to the district will be paired with a mentor. The goal will be to assign pairs within the first month of the school year. Adjustments to the pairs can be made as needed upon

recommendation of the Mentor Committee.

**Confidentiality** – The relationship between the mentor and the mentee shall be one of guidance and support. The process ensures the confidentiality of the participants' interactions, fostering collegiality, inviting honesty, and self-reflection by the mentee about the practice of teaching and learning. Feedback from the relationship is not to be requested by administrators, nor provided by the mentors to the administrators and is not part of the administrative review process.

**Stipends** – The stipend will be in accordance with the CCTA contract.

**Mentor Program Coordination** – The Superintendent's designee and the Mentor Coordinator will assist and support the mentorship program by:

1. Matching mentees with mentors utilizing NYS guidelines.
2. Solving relationship issues.
3. Holding meetings each year to discuss year end results and issues.
4. Adhering to a selection process for mentors.
5. Adhering to a program evaluation device.
6. Collecting and housing mentor/mentee evaluations.
7. Tabulating and reporting year-end program results.
8. Abiding by the rule of confidentiality.
9. Ensuring alignment with NYS Mentorship Program mandates.
10. Ensuring alignment with the CCTA contractual agreement.
11. Reporting program problems.
12. Making recommendations for program modifications.

**Mentor Responsibilities** – The Mentor will support and guide the Mentee by:

1. Completing a Mentor Training Program as prescribed by the District. The training utilizes best practices research and instruction in the areas of planning and preparation, classroom management techniques, classroom environment, instructional practices and professional responsibilities.
2. Promoting instructional competence with respect to classroom management, technology, teaching strategies, lesson planning and record keeping.
3. Sharing ideas and strategies for interacting positively with parents and documenting all parental contacts in current platforms.
4. Identifying all educational resources, their availability and procedures for obtaining and properly using them.
5. Assisting in arranging, organizing and analyzing the physical setting of the classroom including acquiring needed supplies, materials and technology support.
6. Allowing the New Teacher to observe the Mentor and unpacking the lesson together.
7. Observing lessons, collecting data during the observation and sharing and discussing the lesson with the New Teacher for non-evaluative purposes. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide substitute teachers or other class coverage to release the mentor and New Teacher for observation activities.
8. Meeting and recording mentoring activities as per established guidelines [Checklist of Discussion Topics Appendix B and Mentor Calendar]
9. Assisting the New Teacher in setting and meeting realistic goals and reevaluating these goals as necessary as related to their Professional Goals using the current district platform
10. Assisting in answering questions to teacher related problems or seeking additional assistance from other sources in the school community.
11. Completing the appropriate paperwork in a timely fashion. All paperwork shall be submitted to one of the mentor coordinators.

**Mentor Selection Process** –The mentor pool will be comprised of those individuals who have successfully completed the District’s Mentor Training Program. When the district decides to offer a Mentor Training Program, they will notify all professional staff members, who may nominate themselves for the program. The nominations will be reviewed by the Mentoring Committee. The Superintendent may choose to appoint an additional representative to the committee for this process, or the Superintendent may choose to be on the committee personally. Recommendations for inclusion in the Mentor Training Program will be made by the consensus of the Committee.

The selection criteria follows:

1. Successful candidates shall demonstrate outstanding teaching and instructional abilities, effective written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, content area mastery, and knowledge of a variety of instructional and classroom management techniques.
2. The committee will be cognizant of the number of potential mentors required to sustain the program.
3. Tenured teachers with at least 3 [three] years of experience and hold permanent/professional certification will be considered for the training program.

**Matching Mentors with Mentees** –The following criteria will be used for Mentor-Mentee match-ups:

1. Mentors and mentees will be paired according to subject area or grade level to the greatest degree possible.
2. A waiting list of available mentors will be maintained. Mentors will move to the end of the list upon receiving a mentee.
3. Every effort will be made to match mentors and mentees within the same building.

**Documenting Mentor-Mentee Meetings** –Pre-observation, observation, and post-observation meetings that take place between Mentors and Mentees will be documented using a form designed by the Mentor Committee Members. The form will be completed and signed by both the Mentor and Mentee within two weeks of completion of the post-observation according to a prescribed schedule, then submitted to a Mentor Coordinator. An additional form will be submitted before the end of the school year that lists additional meetings beyond the three required summative observations that take place between the Mentor and Mentee.

**Mentee Responsibilities** – The mentee will participate in the program by:

1. Receiving 2 days of training in August during the New Teacher Orientation Program. Teachers hired after the start of the New Teacher Orientation Program shall receive training as necessary during the school year and be assigned to the next New Teacher Orientation Program.
2. Being provided with the opportunity to participate, with other non-tenured teaching staff, in quarterly meetings as a follow up to training and instruction received during the New Teacher Orientation Program.
3. Participating in a minimum of two (2) observations to be conducted by the mentor.
4. Completing the appropriate paperwork in a timely fashion. All paperwork shall be submitted to the District’s Mentor Coordinator for the purpose of complying with NYS Mentoring requirements.

**Program Evaluations** – The program coordinators will hold a minimum of two confidential meetings each year, one for the Mentors and one for the Mentees, as part of the program evaluation. Attendance will be voluntary. Input will be solicited from Mentors and Mentees as part of an overall evaluation of the Mentoring Program. Individual and collective input will be solicited and the information will be compiled anonymously. This anonymous information will be shared with the Superintendent and the Mentoring Committee.



**Cheektowaga Central School District**  
**PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

**1. Please indicate at which education level you are currently assigned. Check all that apply:**

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School

**2. How many years of experience have you had in education?**

- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 15
- 16 – 20
- more than 20

**3. Please indicate your subject area(s) and/or positions(s). Check all that apply:**

- Kindergarten
- First Grade
- Second Grade
- Third Grade
- Fourth Grade
- Fifth Grade
- Sixth Grade
- Seventh Grade
- Eighth Grade
- Art
- Business
- English
- English Language Learners
- Guidance
- Health
- Home and Careers

**4. When do you prefer to attend staff learning programs? Check all that apply.**

- During the workday (full day)
- During the workday (half day)
- After school
- Evenings (4-6)
- Superintendent's Conference Day
- Summer
- Weekends

**4. When do you prefer to attend staff learning programs? Check all that apply.**

- During the workday (full day)
- During the workday (half day)
- After school
- Evenings (4-6)
- Superintendent's Conference Day
- Summer
- Weekends

**5. What programs, courses, and/or workshops would best meet your needs? Check all that apply.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Management                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion of Students w/ Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brain based learning                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Plan Process     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Inquiry                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Interdisciplinary Instruction         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative/Co-Teaching                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Integration of Technology             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Content Area Teaching                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Standards                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Mapping                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking at Student Work               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Inquiry Cycle                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Manipulative Materials                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiated Instruction                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Awareness                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing Best Practices                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Research                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Standards and Evaluations    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ENL/ELL  | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Strategies                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating & Reviewing Instructional Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formative Assessments                          |  |

**6. What delivery methods would you prefer? Check all that apply.**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BOCES programs          | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Grade Programs        | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff led Workshops             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book Clubs              | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson Study                | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Groups/Collegial Circles  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Webinars/Video Presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Subject/Grade specific programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Visitation    | <input type="checkbox"/> On-line Courses             | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Center                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conferences/Workshops   | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of District visitation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Turnkey training                |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional coaching      |  |

Other (please specify):

**7. Would you be interested in training staff?**

**YES**

**NO**

**If yes, what course (s) and/or workshop(s) would you be interested in presenting?**

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## Appendix A

### 22-23 District Improvement Plans and Instructional Technology Plan

#### 2022-2023 District Comprehensive Improvement Plan [DCIP]

BOE and NYSED Approved 8/22

*Priority #1- CCSD commits to creating a restorative culture within the District.*

*Priority #2- CCSD commits to increasing student achievement by providing meaningful learning and feedback to schools, teachers, and students driven by data.*

*Priority #3- CCSD commits to ensuring that all district systems, processes, and procedures are intentionally created and communicated to fulfill the mission, vision, and priorities of the District.*

#### 2022-2025 Instructional Technology Plan

NYSED and BOE Approved June 2022

*Goal #1: To identify and implement the use of new digital applications (software, app, website) that meet the unique needs of our students to improve teaching and learning.*

*Goal #2: To support the use of technology as a learning tool across the entire agency through targeted professional development.*

*Goal #3: To enable district-wide integration of technology and digital learning through a conceptual framework aligned with TPACK, ISTE NETS-D and NYSED Computer Science and Digital Fluency Standards.*

#### 2022-2023 Union East School Comprehensive Education Plan

*Commitment #1- Union East Elementary School commits to ensuring that every child feels safe, respected, and represented in our school community and has intentional opportunities to practice and build social-emotional and cognitive skills.*

*Commitment #2- Union East Elementary commits to ensure that every child has the opportunity and authority to drive and shape their own learning by engaging in meaningful learning that is relevant to them, whereby they can see themselves reflected in teachers, leaders and curriculum and learning material.*

#### 2022-2023 Cheektowaga Middle School Comprehensive Education Plan

*Commitment #1- At Cheektowaga Middle School, we commit to ensuring that every child feels safe, respected, supported, and has intentional opportunities to practice and build social, emotional, and cognitive skills, while developing a true self of belonging that will enable every child having strong, trusting relationships with adults and peers.*

*Commitment #2- At Cheektowaga Middle School, we commit to every child and staff having the opportunity to connect their learning and have a voice.*

*Commitment # 3- At Cheektowaga Middle School, we commit to every child being engaged in meaningful learning that is relevant to them by seeing themselves reflected in teachers, leaders, curriculum, and learning materials.*

