

Maine School Administrative District 29

Including: Region II School of Applied Technology
Professional Learning Community Support System Plan

Developed: May, 2009

MSAD #29 Board Approved: August, 2010

ME Dept. of Education Approved: April, 2010, and July, 2010 (addition of Region II)



Section A

MSAD #29 includes the towns of Houlton, Littleton, Hammond , and Monticello and is composed of two elementary schools, an intermediate school, a junior high school and a high school. The student population is approximately 1300 and is served by approximately 102 professional staff. This Professional Learning Communities Support System (PLCSS) plan is designed to provide support for all teachers, guidance counselors, library-media specialists, special education consultants, speech and hearing clinicians, literacy specialists, and Jobs for Maine Grads teachers. Retiring teachers, who have fulfilled their certification requirements, will be allowed to have their certification renewal application signed.

This plan also encompasses the teaching staff of Region II School of Applied Technology. The school serves an average of 150 students with programs in East Grand, Hodgdon, Katahdin, and Southern Aroostook.

The PLCSS structure for MSAD #29 is composed of the PLCSS Steering Committee that oversees recertification and new teacher mentoring.

The Steering Committee will work closely with area institutions of higher learning, whenever necessary, to direct the development of in-service programs and the training of staff members. In addition, a collaborative use of area specialists to help develop Professional Certification Action Plans (PCAP) will be utilized to facilitate this process.

Section B

The PLCSS will provide support services in order to develop effective educational practice for all certified staff supported by this plan. The PLCSS will provide the Commissioner of Education with recommendations for educational personnel seeking professional certification, professional renewal, and certification advancement.

The PLCSS will have the following responsibilities:

1. The induction of new staff supported by this plan
2. Inform all new staff supported by this plan of their certification responsibilities and provide each with a copy of this PLCSS plan and associated documents/forms
3. Supervise the development and submission of:
 - a. Initial Professional Certification Action Plans and supporting documentation for new educators and for master teacher candidates
 - b. Renewal plans for teachers and educational specialists
4. The assignment of a mentor to new teachers and new educational specialists as needed.

All decisions made by the PLCSS will be made in a professional, fair, and equitable manner. A staff member who feels that a PLCSS's decision is not correct should

address this concern to the PLCSS in person. If the staff member does not deem the decision satisfactory, he or she may take the concern to the PLCSS administrator.

All materials gathered during the course of the certification process are to be considered legally confidential, including, but not limited to, self-assessments, observations, PCAPs, and recommendations. No materials, either written or verbal, may be divulged to any outside sources, including building principals, other administrators, other teachers, and any other staff, unless the individual expressly gives permission in writing. It is the responsibility of each PLCSS member to respect the individual's rights of confidentiality.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of MSAD #29 will be composed of the following: one (1) administrator, six (6) teachers representing each school: two elementary, one intermediate, one junior high, one high school, and one at-large. There is 1 teacher from Region II School of Applied Technology who will attend meetings dealing with the teaching staff of said school. Members of the PLCSS must have at least three years of experience as educators and a majority must have completed at least one five year renewal cycle.

The Steering Committee will have a chairperson and a secretary. The *chairperson* and secretary must be professionally certified teachers and will be elected by the Steering Committee at the last meeting of each year.

The chairperson will be responsible for certification procedures throughout the district including those endorsed by the Steering Committee. Duties of the chairperson will be as follows:

1. Coordinate the setting of Steering Committee.
2. Facilitate meetings.
3. Communicate with the State of Maine Department of Education and other necessary parties.
4. Officially respond to PCAPs and applications for certification action, with the advisement of the Steering Committee.
5. Ensure staff access (electronically and in hard copy) to this PLCSS plan and associated documents/forms.
6. Act as the contact person for all Steering Committee members.
7. Act as the official spokesperson for the district in regard to certification issues.
8. Provide for orientation and training of PLCSS members.
9. Delegate responsibilities to Steering Committee.

The secretary will be responsible for certification procedures throughout the district including those endorsed by the Steering Committee. Duties of the secretary will be as

follows:

1. Set meeting agenda which include meeting dates and times.
2. Notify pertinent staff members of meetings and other relevant information.
3. Maintains a locked file cabinet containing all **confidential** certification files which is accessible to chairperson.
4. Record minutes and send to PLCSS members and to schools for posting.
5. Act as an alternative chairperson

The Steering Committee meetings will be held on a monthly basis. The monthly meeting dates will be determined for the entire year during the first meeting. Members must attend eighty percent (80%) of the meetings. In the case of poor attendance, a replacement will be selected from the pool of qualified staff, and the annual stipend for both individuals will be adjusted accordingly. (The Steering Committee, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools will consider special circumstances.)

The responsibilities of the *Steering Committee Members* are as follows:

1. Assist all staff supported by this plan in the recertification process.
2. Respond to (approve/disapprove) all staff requests for work-related study leading toward certification credit. (See Section G of this plan.)
3. Serve as a liaison to respective staff in all matters of professional growth related to certification.
4. Work closely with the district's leadership to determine areas of need for professional growth.
5. Report to the Superintendent of Schools and School Committee periodically.

Mentor Network

Each provisionally certified, targeted needs, conditional, waiver, and transitional staff member supported by this plan will be assigned a mentor whose main task will be to coach his or her mentee in reaching a higher level of certification. These mentors must be formally trained through the Maine Department of Education approved training in mentoring skills. In doing so, mentors will provide guidance and support based on a professional learning community model. Mentors will also assist their mentees in developing collegial professional partnerships as the primary means of professional development and achieving action plan goals.

Qualifications of *mentors*:

1. At least five years of experience as an educator.
2. Working under a professional certificate.
3. Completed a mentor training program approved by the State of Maine Department of Education.

The responsibilities of each *mentor* are as follows:

1. Be a resource for the mentee either directly or indirectly.
2. Collaborate with the mentee to design a PCAP, which will help the new educator provide documentation of meeting Maine's Ten Teaching Standards.
3. Conduct pre and post-observation conferences.
4. Observe all aspects of performance (including at least three documented observations).

5. Meet on regular basis as referenced in the PLCSS Handbook with the mentee to collaborate and determine the progress of the new educator.
6. Submit a written report to the Steering Committee, indicating whether or not the mentee has met the requirements for a higher level of certification.

Section C

The PLCSS members in each building will make a general presentation to all staff in their buildings by the end of September, each school year. New staff supported by this plan will also meet with the chair person for a formal orientation to discuss:

- Responsibilities
- Roles
- Procedures
- Available services
- Training and professional development
- Process for achieving a professional certificate

The PLCSS plan and associated documents/forms will be distributed to new staff members so that they are aware of the procedures required to achieve and maintain certification.

Section D

Appointment to the Steering Committee shall be made from a pool of qualified staff. Qualified staff members interested in a vacancy shall submit a written notification of interest to the superintendent.

Members of the Steering Committee will hold a three-year term. When multiple staff members from the same building are interested in a vacancy an interview process will occur.

At the beginning of each school year, the names of the PLCSS members shall be recommended to the Superintendent of Schools for approval by the School Committee.

Section E

The PLCSS will make every effort to match qualified mentors with new educators who require a mentor using the following prioritizing guidelines:

- 1) Location - School, building
- 2) Impact areas - Content area, grade level, specialization

Mentors are expected to work with the same mentee for the duration of the mentee's certification period (usually two years).

In the event of a match that does not proceed successfully, a change can be made. The staff member seeking a change shall submit a written request to the PLCSS chairperson. Mentors may be replaced, upon consideration of this written request from the certification candidate or the mentor, by the Steering Committee.

Teachers seeking the Master Teacher Certificate, or its renewal, will work closely with a mentor, in consultation with the Steering Committee, to develop a Master Certificate Action Plan (or Master Certificate Renewal Plan) that supports the applicant in meeting the requirements established in Chapter 118, Section 7.1., including, but not limited to, the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

Section F

Professional Certification Action Plans (PCAP) will be prepared by each mentee, in cooperation with his/her mentor.

A pre-conference, observation and post-conference will be conducted prior to the writing of the mentee's PCAP. The conferences and observation will provide the direction for the PCAP goals. Goals and strategies will be written to reflect Maine's Ten Teaching Standards. The goals and strategies for improving professional skills will be consistent with the certificate level or endorsement. By the end of the provisional certification period, evidence of meeting each of the ten standards will be required.

Teachers seeking the Master Teacher Certificate, or its renewal, will develop a plan as defined in section E.

Section G

The process of delivery of services and the provision of technical assistance shall be ongoing for the staff through each assigned mentor. Mentors will recommend resources for services and technical assistance available to fulfill the goals and objectives of their mentee's PCAP. The Steering Committee will provide each renewing staff member with available materials, services, and ideas to help the individual meet the goals of his/her recertification plan.

In order for a staff member supported by this plan to renew a professional/master teacher certificate he/she must:

Complete six (6) credits or 90 hours of work-related study within the five-year certification period.

[15 hours=1.5 CEUs=1 credit]

- Document correlation between the study and Maine's Ten Teaching Standards (for professional), or the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (for master).
- Receive pre-approval for the study by the Steering Committee. The renewal applicant will present their plan no later than January of year two.

It will be the **responsibility** of all certified staff supported by this plan to maintain a current certificate while employed by MSAD #29, as well as provide the district with a copy of the respective documentation. This information shall be sent to the PLCSS secretary to be placed within their **confidential** file.

Section H

The PLCSS will complete annual program evaluations to assure quality, effectiveness, and efficient management. Evaluation will be organized and directed by the Steering Committee. This will include an online questionnaire at the end of the mentor/mentee cycle, completed by both the mentors and mentees. There will also be a separate questionnaire for staff completing the five-year renewal cycle.

All of this data will be analyzed at the first meeting of the year to evaluate the PLCSS. Goals for the ensuing years will be established based on this analysis.

If necessary, the Steering Committee may meet during the summer to make changes that will be implemented for the next school year.

Section I

Those who've received approved training by the Maine Department of Education will provide training to all new mentors. Training and orientation of new Steering

Committee members will be offered at the first meeting of the year, and then as needed. PLCSS members will attend Maine Department of Education certification conferences, workshops, and trainings when available and appropriate.

Section J

This plan was adopted by the MSAD #29 Board of Directors .

v 04/01/09