



Western Line SCHOOL DISTRICT

L.D.

Professional Development Handbook



2026 – 2027 School Year



“Committed to Excellence in Education”

Western Line School District
Professional Development Handbook
2026-2027 School Year

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

MISSION STATEMENT

The Goal of the Western Line School District is to educate ALL students to become productive citizens by providing a world-class educational system that prepares students for the 21st Century. It is our mission to graduate ALL students on an individualized career plan that will ensure that they are college and career ready.

INTRODUCTION

In 1982, Mississippi passed a landmark piece of legislation which began a grassroots wave of education reform that swept the nation. Included in that legislation were mandates for the establishment of a statewide system of professional development which affected every educator in the state. In 1996 the State Board of Education approved a new professional development model which supports educators in meeting ever changing needs of students as they prepare for the new challenges of a technologically advanced society.

New curriculum frameworks, performance assessments, increased student performance expectations, and changes in school organization call for new forms of professional development which assist educators in developing new skills and strategies to effect change in practice. Professional development must shift from a fragmented system based upon one-shot activities to one which is embedded in every day life of the school. It must be planned and implemented by the educators it is designed to serve.

Educators must have time, resources, and opportunities to assess their own teaching methods, to develop and learn new subject matter, to work together as professionals, to develop and implement school improvement plans, and to stay abreast of current research in their fields of study. Professional development is essential to school improvement and must be seen as an investment in life-long learning for all educators.

The new model for professional development includes multiple forms of learning intended to be relevant to teachers in the classroom, as well as, supportive of school plans for organizational improvement. It is based upon a shared vision and goals for improving student performance including high achievement, behavior, and attitude. It supports professional development that is intensive, high-quality and of a sufficient duration to have a positive impact on teaching and learning and ultimately on student success in the classroom.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEFINITION

Professional Development is a growth-promoting learning process that empowers stakeholders* to improve professional practices within the educational organization.

PURPOSE

To improve student learning by creating an environment that will enable stakeholders* to:

- Invest in quality job opportunities to grow individually and collaboratively,
- Enhance job-related skills,
- Acquire new knowledge, and
- Share expertise and insights.

** Stakeholders- teachers, administrators, staff, and other school personnel*

PRINCIPLES OF EXCELLENCE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development programs must be based on the following principles:

- Professional development is based on a shared vision and goals for improving student performance derived through a strategic planning process.
- Professional development advances individual growth and organizational improvement.
- Professional development involves institutional collaboration.
- Professional development provides for networking and collegiality.
- Professional development models constructivist teaching that builds knowledge through exploring, debating, questioning, and reflecting.
- Professional development provides time and follow-up necessary for change in practice.

- Professional Development is site-based and school-initiated.
- Professional development has an evaluation component that focuses on improvement in teaching practice and in student results.
- Professional development is ongoing and job-embedded.
- Professional development enhances knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and child development.
- Professional development is supported by resources of time, money, and personnel.
- Professional development addresses the diversity of all learners.
- Professional development acknowledges the Standards for Staff Development published by the National Staff Development Council.
- Professional development encourages individuals to generate, articulate, and disseminate knowledge based on their classroom experiences and action research.
- Professional development allows stakeholders to develop and strengthen leadership skills.

DISTRICT/ SCHOOL COMPONENT

Each district must design and implement a professional development program for the purpose of continuous improvement of student learning and performance.

REQUIREMENTS

- The district professional development program is required by law, State Board of Education Policy and for district accreditation.
- District staff development activities may be used for license renewal assuming all follow-up activities are met.
- All district personnel have a contractual obligation to participate in the district professional development program. License renewal options are separate from the required district professional development program.

RATIONALE

Successful district and school professional development programs strengthen the effectiveness of the educational organization, improve student learning and performance, and promote professional growth for all employees.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Professional Development Plan aligns with Goal 1 from the Western Line School District's Strategic Plan: Increase Student Achievement and Academic Performance.

The objectives identified to achieve the goal of increasing student achievement and academic performance are outlined below. The objectives involve fostering a culture of continuous improvement among the district's educators.

Objective 1: Enhance curriculum alignment with state standards by 2026.

Strategies:

1. Review and update curriculum materials annually based on state standards.
2. Develop curriculum mapping tools to ensure alignment across grade levels.
3. Provide professional development for teachers on aligning instructional practices with standards.
4. Implement a curriculum audit process to identify areas for improvement.

Objective 2: Implement data-driven instructional strategies.

Strategies:

1. Provide teachers with ongoing training on data analysis and interpretation.
2. Utilize formative assessments to inform instructional decisions in real time.
3. Establish data teams to analyze student performance data and identify trends.
4. Implement a data dashboard for educators to track student progress and identify areas for intervention.

Objective 3: Provide targeted support for struggling students.

Strategies:

1. Implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework to address diverse student needs.
2. Develop personalized learning plans for students identified as at-risk.
3. Assign academic mentors or tutors to provide one-on-one support.
4. Establish intervention periods during the school day for additional instruction and support.

Objective 4: Foster a culture of continuous improvement among educators.

Strategies:

1. Facilitate regular teacher collaboration meetings to share best practices.
2. Provide opportunities for educators to attend conferences and professional development workshops.
3. Establish a teacher-led professional learning community focused on instructional improvement.
4. Implement peer coaching or observation programs to promote reflective practice among educators.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Data from the following sources will be compiled and analyzed for comparison purposes in the evaluation of the staff development program:

1. Performance appraisal/evaluation instrument results
2. Administrative and peer observations
3. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) and Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) scores
4. Western Line Report Card Statistics
5. Strategic Plan for Improvement
6. ASCD Program Feedback from Participants' Evaluations
7. Teacher and Administrator Feedback from Evaluations

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

In order to accomplish planned district goals and meet the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan for Improvement, the staff development program is to address those areas where the district has identified a need for improvement of performance. The following will be used to develop the Professional Development Program:

1. Curriculum needs based on state assessments results (KRA, MAAP, ACT).
2. Needs assessments from staff as determined by staff meetings and survey.
3. Mandates by State Department of Education, Every Student Succeeds Act, and Learning Forward Standards.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Each employee is required to attend all sessions designed for his/her position as designated on the Schedule of Activities listed on the Western Line School District's Professional Development Calendar. A Group Participation Form will be used to verify attendance. The principal shall send the original Group Participation Form and agenda for all scheduled sessions and approved make-up sessions to the professional development coordinator immediately following each session.

Each employee shall be responsible for the implementation for all professional development activities. Follow-Through forms shall not be required; however, the presenter(s) of the session or his/her designee shall assign an implementation activity to be completed by each participant.

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT

Educators have the professional and contractual responsibility to participate in the school district's professional development program and in professional development options for license renewal. The selection of professional development options is to be focused on improving student learning.

LICENSE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

Within each five-year cycle, an individual must complete the following for license renewal:

Bachelor's degree or equivalent

- Ten (10) continuing education units(CEUs) in content area or job/skill* related area
- Or**
- Three (3) semester hours in content area or job/skill* related area
- And**
- Five (5) continuing education (CEUs) in content area or job/skill* related area
- Or**
- Three (3) semester hours in content area or job/skill* related area.

Masters Degree or above

- Three (3) semester hours in content area or job/skill* related area
- Or**
- Five (5) continuing education units (CEUs) in content area or job/skill* related area.

*Content area refers to the area of certification (e.g., mathematics, science, special education, etc.) Job/skill related areas include pedagogy and skills essential for effective teaching and leadership (e.g., computer technology, cooperative learning, learning styles, methodology, etc.)

RATIONALE

Through varied opportunities for Professional Development, educators can continue to learn both within and outside of local schools and districts. This allows them to stay abreast of current knowledge in fields of teaching and learning and improve educational practices that lead to enhanced student learning. It also encourages networking with colleagues and other professionals, and pursuit of advanced degrees.

CONTINUED EDUCATION UNITS (CEU'S)

The Board of Trustees understands how important professional development is to the school system. It also understands the teachers need to gain CEU's for license renewal. In an effort to give teachers the continued education units necessary to gain license renewal and in an effort to keep teachers in the classroom educating students during as many school days as possible, the Western Line School District has partnered with Delta State University to allow teachers to earn CEU's through the ongoing professional development offered within the school.

Staff members need to complete all forms required by Delta State University. Staff members must note that attendance to all professional developments sessions is required for CEU credit.

The following forms are required to be complete in full by the participant requesting CEU's.

1. Participant Application for CEU credit
2. Professional Development Evaluation
3. WLSD Professional Development Application
4. Payment

Checks or money order should be made payable to Delta State University for the first semester. All Required paperwork must be filled out and turned in to your building principal by the last working day in December for the fall semester. Second semester CEU applications and fees are due by the last working day in May for the Spring semester.

Please note: Delta State University prefers money orders. Check payments must clear the bank before transcripts are mailed. (Minimum wait is 3 weeks from the date check payments are deposited in Student Business Services on the DSU campus.)



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The Division of Continuing Studies
"The Delta's Link to Lifelong Learning"

REQUEST FORM FOR AWARDING CEU CREDIT

In order to receive Continuing Education Credit for a program, this form must be completed and submitted to Graduate and Continuing Studies two weeks prior to the beginning of the program.

NOTE: There is a minimum three-week wait for transcripts/certificates from date check payments are deposited in Student Business Services.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title _____

Instructor _____

Location _____

of Instructional Contact Hours _____ # of CEU Credits _____

Date(s) _____

Time(s) _____

Is this workshop/program open to the public? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Please identify group being served _____

Anticipated Attendance _____

CONTACT PERSON

Contact Person _____

Sponsoring Organization _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

INTERNAL USE

CRN _____ Term _____ Date of Email Confirmation _____

As an institution of higher education and in the spirit of its policies of equal employment opportunity, Delta State University declares its policy of equal education opportunity. All applicants for admission will be considered without regard to applicant's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability related to program performance, disable veteran status, or Vietnam era veteran status.

Kent Wyatt Hall, Suite 239 Cleveland, MS 38733 Phone: 662-846-4700 Fax: 662-846-4313



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PARTICIPANT APPLICATION FOR CEU CREDIT

In order to receive Continuing Education Credit for a program, this form must be completed by each participant and submitted to the Division of Continuing Education with payment attached to the form.

PLEASE NOTE: Payment by money order preferred. There is a minimum **three-week** wait for transcripts/certificates from date check payments are deposited in Student Business Services.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title _____
Sponsoring Organization _____
Location _____
Date(s) _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION (Please do not leave any questions blank)

Name _____
Social Security Number _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____
E-mail Address _____

No Late Applications will be accepted

Sex (circle one)	Male / Female
Date of Birth	
Legal Resident of Mississippi?	Yes / No
Marital Status (circle one)	Single / Married / Separated / Divorced / Widow
Religion (please indicate)	
Race/Ethnicity (please circle one)	White (non-Hispanic) / Black (non-Hispanic) Hispanic (of any race) / Asian or Pacific Islander American Indian or Alaskan Native
Mail a CEU Transcript? (circle one)	Yes / No

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DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Transcript Request

Program Title: _____

Date(s) of Workshop: _____

You may request a CEU transcript by:

Mail: Delta State University
Graduate & Continuing Studies
RE: CEU Information
KWH 239
Cleveland, MS 38733

Fax: (662) 846-4313

Telephone: (662) 846-4027 or
(662) 846-4700

*(Please provide: Name, SSN, current
mailing address, workshop title & your
contact number)*

NOTE: Please allow at least 4 weeks after the completion of the workshop before requesting a CEU transcript. The transcript is accepted by the Mississippi Department of Education for licensure renewal. Certificates are not issued.

CEU TRANSCRIPT REQUEST

I, _____, am requesting a CEU transcript. My Social
(Participant's Name)

Security Number is _____ - _____ - _____. My current mailing address is

(Mailing Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip)

Please mail to:

☐ Current mailing address above

-OR-

☐ Address indicated here:

Thank you,

(Participant's signature)

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DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Division of Continuing Education

Professional Development Evaluation

Seminar Title _____ Date(s) _____

Instructor(s) _____ Location _____

	5	4	3	2	1
	Excellence	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Overall professional development					
Ultimate value of information	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Organization & flow material	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Value of exercise and/or participation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Overall trainer rating					
Answer questions appropriately	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Demonstrated mastery of subject matter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Projected enthusiasm & a positive image	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. What specific information was of greatest value to you?

4. What specific instructional strategies do you suggest for improvement?

5. How do you feel about the amount of participation?

_____ Wanted More _____ Wanted Less _____ Just Right

6. Specially, how will this training benefit you when you return to the classroom or school?

7. Please use the space below to share any other comments or reactions about the training.

8. What future training or follow-up activities do you need to support the concepts you learned in this seminar?

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