

**RCW 28A.415.430 Professional learning—Defined—Scope.** (1) The term "professional learning" means a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement. Professional learning fosters collective responsibility for improved student performance and must comprise learning that is aligned with student learning needs, educator development needs, and school district, or state improvement goals. Professional learning shall have as its primary focus the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting all students to meet the state learning standards.

(2) Professional learning is an ongoing process that is measurable by multiple indicators and includes learning experiences that support the acquisition and transfer of learning, knowledge, and skills into the classroom and daily practice.

(3) Professional learning shall incorporate differentiated, coherent, sustained, and evidence-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job-embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills into their practice.

(4) Professional learning should include the work of established collaborative teams of teachers, school leaders, and other administrative, instructional, and educational services staff members, who commit to working together on an ongoing basis to accomplish common goals and who are engaged in a continuous cycle of professional improvement that is focused on:

(a) Identifying student and educator learning needs using multiple sources of data;

(b) Defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of these multiple data sources and the collective and personalized learning needs of teachers and administrators;

(c) Continuously assessing the effectiveness of the professional learning in achieving identified learning goals, improving teaching, and assisting all students in meeting state academic learning standards through reflection, observation, and sustained support;

(d) Using formative and summative measures to assess the effectiveness of professional learning in achieving educator learning goals;

(e) Realizing the three primary purposes for professional learning: (i) Individual improvement aligned with individual goals; (ii) school and team improvement aligned with school and team improvement [goals]; and (iii) program implementation aligned with state, district, and school improvement goals and initiatives.

(5) Professional learning should be facilitated by well-prepared school and district leaders who incorporate knowledge, skills, and dispositions for leading professional learning of adults and meet the standards described in \*RCW 28A.300.602. These facilitators may include but are not limited to: Curriculum specialists, central office administrators, principals, coaches, mentors, master teachers, and other teacher leaders.

(6) Principals should assist staff with alignment of professional learning tied to curriculum, instruction, and state and local learning goals and assessments.

(7) Professional learning may be supported by external expert assistance or additional activities that will be held to the same

definition and standards as internally supported professional learning, and that:

(a) Address defined student and educator learning goals;

(b) Include, but are not limited to, courses, workshops, institutes, networks, studio residencies, virtual learning modules, and conferences provided by for-profit and nonprofit entities outside the school such as universities, educational service districts, technical assistance providers, networks of content specialists, and other education organizations and associations; and

(c) Advance ongoing school-based professional learning that occurs throughout the year with opportunities for regular practice and feedback while developing new skills. [2016 c 77 s 2. Formerly RCW 28A.300.600.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 28A.300.602 was recodified as RCW 28A.415.432 pursuant to 2017 3rd sp.s. c 13 s 108.

**Findings—Intent—2016 c 77:** "(1) The legislature finds that effective professional learning enables educators to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions needed to help students learn and achieve at higher levels.

(2) The legislature further finds that a clear definition of professional learning provides a foundational vision that sets the course for how state, regional, and local education leaders support educator professional learning in order to advance student learning. A shared, statewide definition is a piece of critical infrastructure to guide policy and investments in the content, structure, and provision of the types of professional learning opportunities that are associated with increased student performance. A definition of professional learning is also an accountability measure to assure that professional learning will have the highest possible return on investment in terms of increased student performance.

(3) Therefore, the legislature intends to adopt a statewide definition of effective professional learning. Each public school and school district should establish targeted, sustained, relevant professional learning opportunities that meet the definition and are aligned to state and district goals." [2016 c 77 s 1.]