



Gardner Public Schools

2019-2022





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DISTRICT VISION/MISSION

EVERY CHILD, IN EVERY CLASSROOM, EVERY DAY, WILL:

feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community;

- Adults will personally welcome each child as they enter the school and each classroom.
- The layout of the school and each classroom will be inviting and conducive to learning.
- Students will learn social/emotional skills through direct instruction, supports, and institutional practices.
- Disciplinary practices are restorative rather than punitive--repairing relationships.
- Schools will actively engage families in the education of their children and community.

have adults consistently interact in ways that foster positive, supportive relationships;

- School expectations, practices, and rules will be informed by the chronological and actual developmental levels of the children we serve.
- Adult responses to children's behaviors will be empathetic and caring, considering their comprehensive knowledge of the child's development and any possible trauma or stressors.
- The school will work proactively and collaboratively with families to support the whole child.

and be engaged in relevant, academically rigorous instruction, informed by data.

- Each lesson will incorporate rigorous student tasks that engage all learners, provoke higher-order thinking, monitor each student's progress, and provide feedback to students for improvement.
- The schools will monitor and adapt their instruction to ensure students learn the skills and knowledge to prepare them for their own future.

Our Core values are: **Community Appreciation Responsibility Excellence (C.A.R.E.)**

DISTRICT/SCHOOL THEORY OF ACTION

If we:

- create, implement, and assess clear, high level common expectations for student learning that are aligned with grade level district and state standards & objectives, ***and***
- teach using rigorous, challenging learning activities and differentiated instructional strategies that support students' social emotional and academic growth while developing positive learning partnerships, ***and***
- utilize academic and social emotional data to inform our instruction and interventions, ***and***
- work in collaboration with families and community partners to engage in shared decision making for effective educational programming,

then:

All students will have equitable access and opportunities to achieve at their highest level, and become lifelong, collaborative, problem seekers and solvers who positively contribute to the workforce and their community.

INTRODUCTION

Gardner Public Schools is committed to providing high quality professional development in alignment with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) standards for high quality professional development. Specifically, the District is committed to provide coherent learning experiences that are systematic, purposeful and structured over a sustained period of time with the goal of improving teacher practice and student outcomes. Professional development will enable educators to facilitate student achievement/growth by acquiring and applying knowledge, skills, and abilities that address the needs of all learners and the improvement goals of the district, school, and individual.

The District also adheres to the four DESE Guiding Principles for High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD):

- **Guiding Principle 1:** HQPD is intentional
- **Guiding Principle 2:** HQPD is a process;
- **Guiding Principle 3:** HQPD is evaluated for effectiveness;
- **Guiding Principle 4:** HQPD requires strong leadership that:
 - Strengthens the structure and organization of professional development
 - Guarantees follow-up to professional development
 - Promotes a culture of high expectations.

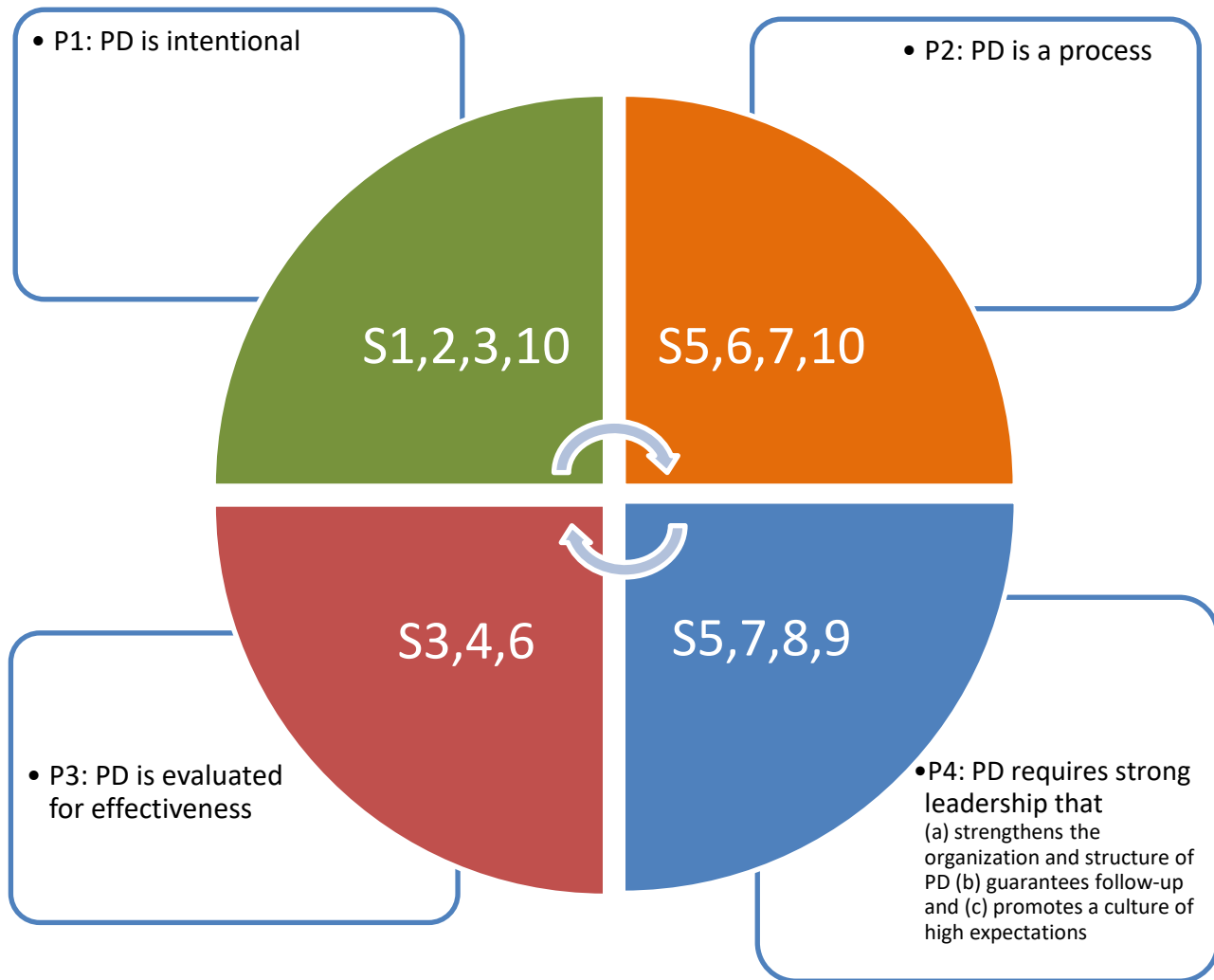
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE

District and building leadership staff meet several times per year to discuss professional development goals, review District academic and social/emotional data to determine professional development needs, provide feedback regarding past, present and future professional development activities and survey staff members regarding individual professional development needs of the District.

Academic and social/emotional data is analyzed by a collaborative team of District and building level administrators from regular education and special education departments to develop comprehensive short-term and long-term professional development plans. Administrators use classroom observation data to determine the level and quality of implementation of professional development-based initiatives as an indicator of success.

Note: **Figure 1** below describes the Professional Development Cycle as followed by the District and as endorsed by the DESE. Each quadrant of the circle represents one of the four principles of high quality professional development with aligned standards (See Appendix A) embedded into each principle quadrant.

Figure 1:



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERINGS

The district will provide professional learning opportunities for all staff members that will support and sustain effective instructional practices for students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. To accomplish this, purposeful professional development is embedded into the daily work of the District on a continual basis and is connected to local and State goals. When possible, the District uses a Train-the-Trainer model for professional development to build the capacity of staff to train their peers/colleagues. Professional development occurs during teacher common planning time; staff, department, and grade level meetings; designated professional development days; and also at Administrative Council meetings.

Types of Professional Development Provided

Mentoring/Induction

A priority of the Gardner Public Schools is to support new teachers through a mentoring/induction program. Beginning teachers are provided a mentor with whom they meet regularly, engage in peer observations, review professional development plans, and attend professional development offerings together.

Expected learning outcomes for the beginning teacher include:

- Development of a thorough understanding of school policies and procedures.
- Use of a range of student pre-assessment and assessment tools to adjust instructional practice to meet diverse learning needs of all students.
- Align instruction to local and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks Standards.
- Use of appropriate classroom management strategies.
- Assess and reflect upon areas for improvement as a result of peer observations; and create a plan for improvement

Expected learning outcomes for the mentor include:

- Demonstration of understanding of the mentor's role in providing instructional, professional, personal support to the beginning teacher.
- Provision of support and peer observation focused on assisting the beginning teachers in addressing developmental areas.
- Reflective feedback to mentee designed to offer strategies and point out areas for growth of new teacher.

The effectiveness of the mentorship program will be monitored carefully through surveys, interviews, and review of records and data collected.

Early Release Days:

Early Release Days support opportunities for staff to participate in ongoing curriculum projects, grade level /cross-school and departmental discussions, in-service training, building level projects and system-wide programs. Principals and curriculum leaders have the primary responsibility for planning and

organizing release day activities in coordination with the Chief Academic Officer, and in accordance with the identified District/building goals.

Workshops / Conferences:

Principals, curriculum leaders, and teachers will identify specific training needs which cannot be provided on-site due to cost or availability of trainers. Attendance at workshops and conferences will provide staff development opportunities in key areas directly related to the curriculum and instructional needs of the school system. Follow-up activities should be planned and scheduled prior to attendance of the workshop/conference.

Curriculum and Instructional Development Projects:

Administrators, curriculum leaders, and teachers will propose projects that will enhance current curriculum and instruction aligned to the District/building goals. The focus will be the revision, design and implementation of curriculum and instructional material in the District. Specific guidelines for outcomes will be developed. All curriculum and instructional development projects must be approved through the Chief Academic Officer prior to the start of the projects.

Study Groups:

Study Groups will meet to share ideas around a common topic of interest. Principals, curriculum leaders and teachers are encouraged to initiate ideas and programs for discussion and study. Study groups, organized and facilitated by teachers, are designed to foster collegiality, collaboration, innovative practices, experimentation and professional and personal growth. Study Groups must meet for a minimum of ten (10) hours. A written summary of the group's outcomes must be completed by each participant.

Collaborative, Consultant-based, Embedded, Long-term:

The District will contract with specialized consultants to work with targeted groups based on needs assessment data to provide specific academic, curricular, instructional, or SEL supports through an embedded, coaching framework. Support will be provided frequently utilizing a full year or multi-year model to observe, provide feedback, model, debrief, and collaboratively facilitate the creation of high quality action plans/implementation strategies.

Graduate Courses:

Staff members are encouraged to enroll in graduate courses at accredited institutions of higher education. Course work is normally for graduate credit beyond the Bachelor or Master degrees. Courses, including online courses, that are not graduate level courses or are offered by other professional development providers will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Non-credit bearing courses will be considered for credit based upon the graduate course formula.

Action Research:

Action Research is a natural part of teaching. To be a teacher means to observe students and study classroom interactions, to explore a variety of effective ways of teaching, and building conceptual frameworks to guide the craft of teaching. The action research seminar provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect, discuss, and research questions of classroom practice. This forum takes place in a safe environment where candid exchanges and support are encouraged. Each participant in action research will choose a question to investigate, gather classroom data on the topic, keep a log, and discuss possible solutions with other participants.

Research and Development:

It is essential that attention be given to the review of current educational practices. Issues such as grade retention, ability groups, grading, learning styles, assessments, etc. affect our educational policies and procedures. There is a need to support research projects in order to provide direction for the school system. Staff development funds would be used to support this research and development. Normally, research and development projects are proposed by the Administration.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

Professional Development for the upcoming three school years will focus on the success of all children through tiered instruction, in the realms of academic and social/emotional growth of students, through the transparent communication to all stakeholders by implementing the following enrichment and training opportunities:

Student Social Emotional Learning:

- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
 - Focus on creating a positive social/emotional/behavioral culture in the school community to reduce the need for reactive disciplinary consequences
- Link Crew program at GHS
 - Encourage positive social/emotional/behavioral interactions and competencies – staff and students create a collaborative and supportive culture for optimal learning conditions in and out of the classroom in a school-wide program
- Practical classroom strategies for tier II behavior management, de-escalation and student self-management skill building
 - CASEL Guidelines
 - Restorative Practices
- PATHS Curriculum for grades K-5

Improved Practices for Meeting the Needs of All Learners:

- Refinement of standards-based curriculum maps, instructional strategies
- Development and revision of common formative, benchmark and summative assessments
- SEI Strategies for ESL instructional Planning and Implementation
- Tiered Instructional Strategies
 - Inclusion and Co-teaching training

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
 - a shift in focus from considering student disabilities to considering variability in all learners - teachers will plan and implement curriculum, instruction, and assessment opportunities for students with multiple access points and methods for engagement and expression of understanding
- Use of Data to determine student achievement and growth and to inform instructional decision making/implementation
 - Small flexible group instruction
- Classroom Discourse protocols and procedures for teacher facilitation of rich student discussion and inquiry-based learning strategies
- Effective questioning strategies and the use of Essential Questions to drive all teaching and learning
 - Overarching questions that keep the “big ideas” of each unit or content area at the forefront
 - Focus on the short-term and long-term learning objectives
- Increasing instructional rigor and the use of formative assessments to adjust instruction in real time
- Collaborative group work for calibrating feedback and grading of student work

Three Year Plan

Focus	2019-2022
Tiered Model of Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTI• DCAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MTSS Blueprint for Tiered Supports• Inclusive practices/ UDL & Differentiated Instruction• Tier 2 & 3 academic and behavioral supports
Inclusive Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common vision of inclusion and co-teaching practices• Consultant support/ inclusion and co-teaching
Social-Emotional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Universal Screeners• De-escalation and practical strategies for tier 2 & tier 3 behaviors• Tier 1 SEL Curriculum implementation
Academic Rigor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of short-term and long-term learning objectives• Creation of Learning Targets and Success Criteria for lessons• Curriculum and Instruction planning• Vertical alignment of curriculum for each content area• Defined Instructional Model & Effective questioning strategies; use of Essential Questions to drive all teaching and learning• Learning Walk data collected and analyzed to determine student supports and interventions• Observation/Feedback/Lesson Study
Use of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning Walk data reflection to determine PD• Collect and analyze formative, benchmark, summative & state assessment data to inform instructional planning and tiered practices• Collect and analyze SEL data to determine and implement targeted, tiered interventions and supports

Appendix A

Massachusetts DESE Standards for HQ PD

	Standards	Indicators
CONTENT STANDARDS	1. HQPD has clear goals and objectives relevant to desired student outcomes.	1.1 Professional development goals specify intended student outcomes. 1.2 Educator learning objectives specify changes in knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to achieve the intended student outcomes. 1.3 Learning objectives are written in SMART format. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific & Strategic • Measureable • Action-Oriented • Rigorous/Realistic/Results-focused • Timed/Tracked
	2. HQPD aligns with state, district, school, and/or educator goals or priorities.	2.1 Professional development goals align with educator performance standards, individual professional growth goals, and/or state, district, or school improvement priorities. 2.2 Professional development prepares educators to address state, district, school, and individual goals or priorities.
PROCESS	3. HQPD is designed based on the analysis of data relevant to the identified goals, objectives, and audience.	3.1 Student data from multiple sources inform decisions about professional development goals and learning objectives for the intended audience. 3.2 Educator data from multiple sources inform decisions about professional development goals and learning objectives for the intended audience.
	4. HQPD is assessed to ensure that it is meeting the targeted goals and objectives.	4.1 Formative assessment using multiple sources of data measures progress toward professional development goals and learning objectives. 4.2 Summative evaluation measures the attainment of professional development goals and learning objectives. 4.3 Data from formative assessment and summative evaluations inform efforts to improve the quality and results of professional development.
	5. HQPD promotes collaboration among educators to encourage sharing of ideas and working together to achieve the identified goals and objectives.	5.1 Professional development includes collaboration among educators to generate relevant, role-specific applications of their learning. 5.2 Skillful, prepared facilitators use protocols, processes, and strategies to facilitate collaboration during and after professional development to support implementation of learning.
PROCESS STANDARDS	6. HQPD advances an educator's ability to apply learnings from the professional development to his or her particular content and/or context.	6.1 Professional development includes multiple opportunities for educators to practice their learning and receive feedback. 6.2 Professional development supports educators to identify multiple applications of their learning within their everyday workplace responsibilities.
	7. HQPD models good pedagogical practice and applies knowledge of adult learning theory to engage educators	7.1 Professional development uses effective, research-based, adult learning strategies. 7.2 Professional development incorporates strategies for active engagement of learners. 7.3 Professional development facilitators model the practices needed to attain goals and learning objectives. 7.4 Professional development includes personalization and differentiation to meet unique learning needs of educators.

CONTEXT STANDARDS	8. HQPD makes use of relevant resources to ensure that the identified goals and objectives are met.	<p>8.1 Sufficient resources (time, funding, staff, materials, technology, etc.) are available to provide sustained support over time for full implementation of learning to attain goals and learning objectives.</p> <p>8.2 Professional development resources are allocated equitably to address high-priority needs.</p>
	9. HQPD is taught or facilitated by a professional who is knowledgeable about the identified objectives	<p>9.1 Skillful, prepared facilitators with content expertise lead professional development.</p> <p>9.2 Facilitators of professional development seek and use feedback, coaching, and other supports to improve their knowledge, skills, and practice as leaders of learning.</p>
	10. HQPD sessions connect and build upon each other to provide a coherent and useful learning experience for educators.	<p>10.1 Professional development incorporates strategies to connect new learning with learners' past learning and experiences.</p> <p>10.2 Individual professional development sessions or meetings link together in a logical and sequential manner to promote attainment of the goals and learning objectives.</p>

Appendix B – Professional Development Calendars

Professional Development Days

2021-2022

August 25 th	Full Day	Convocation
August 26 th	Full Day	Mandatory Trainings
August 27 th	Full Day	Professional Development
September 29 th	½ Day	
November 3 rd	½ Day	
March 11 th	½ Day	
April 1 st	½ Day	

Appendix C – Professional Development Referral Form and Approval Form

Professional Development Request Form

Facilitator(s):

Content area:

Dates of Professional Development Requested:

Nature of Professional Development Proposal (i.e. curriculum planning, instructional strategic design, book study, workshop, etc.):

Brief Description of the Professional Development. Include the learning targets, standards being addressed, number of PDPs and the outcome (product to be submitted):

Signature(s) of Requestee(s)

Date of Request

Signature of Principal/Dept. Head

Date of Approval

Central Office Approval

Date of Approval

Gardner Public Schools

Administrator Attestation of Completion of Staff Facilitated Professional Development

Facilitator(s) _____

Date completed _____

of PDP's recommended _____

Indicate which HQPD standards were met _____

Comments _____

Signature of Principal/Dept Head

Date

Central Office Approval

Date

Massachusetts Professional Development Standards and Indicators

	Standards	Indicators
CONTENT STANDARDS	1. HQPD has clear goals and objectives relevant to desired student outcomes.	1.1 Professional development goals specify intended student outcomes. 1.2 Educator learning objectives specify changes in knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to achieve the intended student outcomes. 1.3 Learning objectives are written in SMART Goal format. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific & Strategic • Measureable • Action-Oriented • Rigorous/Realistic/Results-focused • Timed/Tracked
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PROCESS	3. HQPD is designed based on the analysis of data relevant to the identified goals, objectives and audience.	<p>3.1 Student data from multiple sources inform decisions about professional development goals and learning objectives for the intended audience.</p> <p>3.2 Educator data from multiple sources inform decisions about professional development goals and learning objectives for the intended audience.</p>
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PROCESS STANDARDS	6. HQPD advances an educator's ability to apply learnings from the professional development to his or her particular content and/or context.	<p>6.1 Professional development includes multiple opportunities for educators to practice their learning and receive feedback.</p> <p>6.2 Professional development supports educators to identify multiple applications of their learning within their everyday workplace responsibilities.</p>
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Appendix D – Professional Development Sign-In Sheet

Sign-In Sheet			
Course Title:			
Date:			
School	Name	Role	Signature