

Wachusett Regional School District



Professional Development Plan 2017 – 2018

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Wachusett Regional Professional Development Plan

The purpose of the Professional Development Plan is to provide a framework to guide the professional development based on the needs of District stakeholders. District and school goals, District strategic initiatives, staff needs, as well as state requirements were all used to guide the creation of this plan.

In developing the Wachusett Regional School District (WRSD) 2017-18 Professional Development Plan (PD Plan), several resources were foundational to helping with the identification and prioritizing of initiatives. These included the District Strategic Plan, survey results from staff and administration, results from the strategic planning focus groups, and the current Technology Plan. It should be noted that the PD Plan will be updated as needed and has been expanded in scope to meet the training needs established by WRSD Strategic Plan, which was adopted early in the 2016-17 school year.

Appendix A contains information from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) specific to certification requirements, and Appendix B contains a portion of the WREA contract relevant to professional development.

1. Philosophy, Strategic Plan and District Responsibilities

Philosophy of High Quality Professional Development

WRSD agrees with the philosophy put forth by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on high quality professional development:

“High quality professional development is a set of coherent learning experiences that is systematic, purposeful, and structured over a sustained period of time with the goal of improving educator practice and student outcomes. It enables educators to facilitate the learning of students by acquiring and applying knowledge, skills, and abilities that address student needs and improvement goals of the district, school, and individual.”¹

Vision, Mission and Core Values

This fall, the School Committee adopted the new WRSD Strategic Plan. This five-year plan will serve to guide our work as an educational community. As part of developing the plan, a new mission, vision, and core values were identified. These are presented below.

Vision

The Wachusett Regional School District will foster a vibrant educational community in which all students will realize their highest potential and become responsible and productive citizens.

Mission

The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote student social/emotional well being in a safe and nurturing environment. We will integrate the talent, experience, and knowledge of all members of our community to develop lifelong learners, equipped to think critically in an ever-changing global society.

Core Values

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Commitment to Excellence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modeling effective teaching that engages and meets the needs of all students• Providing a rigorous curriculum with expanding options and opportunities for all• Recruiting and retaining excellent staff |
| Perseverance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenacity and hard work• Persisting in the face of obstacles• Focusing on goals |
| Critical Thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyzing, evaluating, and problem solving• Thinking creatively• Being adaptive |
| Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening and communicating effectively• Maximizing strengths and respecting differences• Cooperating to reach common ground |
| Global Citizenship and Responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating diversity while recognizing commonalities• Demonstrating civic respect by giving back to the communities• Developing student's leadership skills for success in a global society |
| Creativity and Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respecting the diversity of thoughts and ideas• Embedding the arts into content areas• Thinking freely, not fearing mistakes |
| Acceptance and Respect of Others | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrating tolerance• Fostering a community of teamwork and collaboration• Creating an atmosphere of safety and acceptance |

2016-2021 WRSD Strategic Plan

The five-year WRSD Strategic Plan (the Plan) will serve to guide our work as an educational community for the next several years. The development of the Plan was informed by a variety of data sources, including community surveys and detailed input from a variety of focus groups representing staff and community members from all schools and towns. The information gathered from these sources was analyzed and several areas became clear focal points as the Plan developed. These areas of focus became the five domains found in the Strategic Plan and encompass a broad spectrum of the items identified as being most important in ensuring our students become successful and productive citizens.

Each domain was presented in the form of a theory of action by creating an “if/then” statement unique to each domain. Each statement was carefully crafted to encompass the actions that must take place so that we are moving forward within the domain as well as the Plan as a whole.

To support each “if/then” statement, strategic objectives were crafted. The objectives were carefully written to be somewhat specific yet broad enough to allow educators and schools from across the District to align their own specific goals with.

The details presented below were used to guide the development of the 2017-18 professional development plan.

Strategic Plan Domain 1: Leadership, Governance and Communication

Theory of Action: If the district establishes a clearly defined set of goals, develops a responsible budget based on priority initiatives, and works closely with community stakeholders to communicate district needs and adopt the budget, then the district will have the resources to allow students to realize their highest potential.

Strategic Objective 1A: Establish and communicate a clearly defined set of goals and strategic objectives to guide district and school improvement initiatives.

Strategic Objective 1B: Develop a transparent budget that supports the district’s goals and strategic objectives and share details with community stakeholders in an environment open to dialogue and collaboration.

Strategic Objective 1C: Ensure that relevant information is communicated out to community stakeholders and is easily understood.

Strategic Plan Domain 2: Aligned Curriculum

Theory of Action: If educators implement an aligned curriculum that articulates common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking, then students will be prepared for the next level of learning.

Strategic Objective 2A: Develop a consistently implemented and vertically aligned Pre K-12 Curriculum.

Strategic Objective 2B: Develop common, well-defined learning outcomes with a focus on depth of understanding and critical thinking across all grades and content areas.

Strategic Plan Domain 3: Effective Instruction

Theory of Action: If educators implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, and systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data, then all students will be challenged to grow as individuals and global citizens.

Strategic Objective 3A: Implement evidence-based, high-quality instructional practices focused on critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Strategic Objective 3B: Systematically measure, analyze, and act upon student learning data.

Strategic Objective 3C: Staff regularly use technology to support student learning, enhance student engagement, and work toward developing innovative instructional practices.

Strategic Plan Domain 4: Professional Development and Structures for Collaboration

Theory of Action: If staff is consistently provided with professional development that enhances their content knowledge and their pedagogy is enriched through collaboration with staff across all schools in the district, then educators will be able to implement effective educational practices that will improve the learning and growth of all students.

Strategic Objective 4A: Professional development includes high-quality job-embedded professional development aligned with district, school, and educator goals.

Strategic Objective 4B: Systems, structures, and protocols are in place and used to guide collaborative discussions to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practices.

Strategic Objective 4C: Professional development and structures for collaboration are evaluated for their effect on raising student achievement.

Strategic Plan Domain 5: Students' Social, Emotional and Health Needs

Theory of Action: If the district supports effective researched-based practices that promote a healthy school climate, builds an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning, and works collaboratively with families and community services, then students will be able to utilize their knowledge and skills to maximize their learning potential.

Strategic Objective 5A: Build an understanding of social, emotional and physical health as factors affecting learning.

Strategic Objective 5B: Engage families and the community in a partnership to increase the district's capacity to address students' social, and emotional health needs.

MA State Law & Professional Development - District Responsibilities

According to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 71, Section 38Q), school districts are required annually to adopt and implement a professional development plan for all principals, teachers, and other professional staff employed by the district and school council members. Districts are also required to set forth a budget for professional development within the confines of the foundation budget. The plan should identify specific content to be addressed, including training in the teaching of the curriculum frameworks and other skills required for the implementation of the Education Reform Law, including participatory decision-making and parent and community involvement.²

In addition, according to state law (Chapter 71, Section 38G), it shall be one of the objectives of all school districts' professional development plans to satisfy the individual professional development plan (IPDP) required by this section; provided, however, that this requirement shall not be construed to require that a school department or the commonwealth provide funding for the fulfillment of the professional development requirements beyond the foundation budget.³

School Committee - Professional Development Policy

The School Committee also provides some guidelines, although general, with respect to professional development. The Wachusett Regional School District Policy 5251 relating to Personnel Management: Professional Improvement states that the Wachusett Regional School District shall provide opportunity for members of the professional and support staff to increase their competence and job effectiveness with minimum negative impact on classroom instruction.⁴

All of the information above was used in the development of this PD Plan.

2. Needs Assessment

Teaching Staff Survey Results

In the spring of 2017, District staff were surveyed on a variety of aspects related to professional development. The survey asked staff to identify areas where they would like to see training offered as well as to evaluate past practices. The major areas of focus for training, as identified by the survey, are presented below, ranked by the % of respondents that chose each area. In addition, feedback from the evaluation of 2016-17 training initiatives was also used to develop and refine the major areas of focus. The top 5 areas for training are included in the District professional development framework for 2017-18.

Staff-Top Ranking Areas for Training

- 1. Content Specific Training (a priority with 74% of respondents)**
- 2. Integrating Technology Into Instruction (46% of respondents)**
- 3. Social/Emotional Learning (43%)**
- 4. Differentiating Instruction (41%)**
- 5. Teaching Gifted and Talented Students (37%)**
6. Employing Varied Writing Strategies (33%)
7. Teaching Students with Disabilities (31%)
8. Utilizing Varied Reading Strategies (27%)
9. Evaluating Student Work (26%)
10. Using a Variety of Mathematics Instructional Strategies (20%)

Staff Responses to PD Questions

The survey asked respondents to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with various statements relating to professional learning practices in the District. This year's responses are compared to last year's responses in the table on the next page. Some positive results are noted below:

- Staff indicated that the 2016-17 PD offerings were better aligned to school and District goals than the previous year, with responses up over 44%.
- Staff indicated that PD offered in 2016-17 was more likely to help them improve student learning with responses up 29% from the previous year. They also indicated that they are better prepared to meet diverse student needs (up over 25% from the previous year).
- Over 71% of staff feel there is enough PD time available during the year to meet their needs.

Some areas for the District to grow are:

- Only 26% of staff indicated that PD deepens their content knowledge. Providing more content specific PD. This will continue to be a priority for the District in 2017-18.
- A little less than three-quarters of staff feel that there is no follow up to PD and that PD is not evaluated with the results communicated to them. Both of these areas will be a focus in this year's plan.
- Although more staff indicated that PD offerings are being differentiated better than in the past (increase of over 25% of respondents), there are close to 60% of staff who feel PD offerings are not being sufficiently differentiated. Differentiating PD to better meet staff needs will be an area of focus for the District.
- Only 36% of staff indicated that there are sufficient resources available to meet their PD needs. Although this was higher than in the past, this needs to be a priority.
- Only 48% of staff feel that PD provides them with an opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues. This will be an area of focus for this plan as well.
- Less staff this year than last year indicated that they have been adequately trained to examine student work with colleagues and make adjustments to practice. The survey showed that the District had made little growth in these two areas.

Table 1: A Comparison of 2016 Staff Survey Results with 2017 Results

| Questions from Teaching Staff Survey | 2016 | 2017 | Difference |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| 1. PD offerings align to school and district goals | 38.8% | 83.3% | +44.5% |
| 2. Sufficient resources are available to meet PD needs | 11.6% | 36.4% | +24.8% |
| 3. Enough PD time provided during the year to meet needs | 47.6% | 71.5% | +23.9% |
| 4. Release days allow for beneficial PD to occur | 48.1% | 64.4% | +16.3% |
| 5. PD is differentiated to meet my needs | 15.1% | 40.6% | +25.5% |
| 6. PD deepens my content knowledge | 17.4% | 26.4% | +12.0% |
| 7. PD encourages me to reflect on my practice | 53.4% | 67.4% | +14.0% |
| 8. Follow up to PD is provided | 20.4% | 27.8% | +7.4% |
| 9. PD provides opportunities to collaborate with colleagues | 42.5% | 48.3% | +5.8% |
| 10. All PD is evaluated and results communicated | 15.6% | 28.2% | +12.6% |
| 11. PD enhances my knowledge of meeting diverse needs | 22.8% | 48.6% | +25.8% |
| 12. PD enhances my ability to improve student learning | 32.2% | 61.3% | +29.1% |
| 13. I have trained to examine student work w/colleagues | 47.3% | 43.6% | -3.7% |
| 14. I have been trained to analyze data and make adjustments | 50.7% | 50.0% | +0.7% |

Blue indicates 80% or more agreeing with the statement; Red indicates 45% or less agreeing.

Administration-Top Ranking Areas for Training

- 1. Integrating Technology into Instruction (a priority with 65% of respondents)**
- 2. Social/Emotional Learning (59% of respondents)**
- 3. Effective Teaching (42%)**
- 3. Variety of Assessments (42%)**
- 3. Teacher Collaboration/PLC's (42%)**
- 3. Observation Feedback (42%)**
- 3. Looking at Data (42%)**
8. Differentiating Instruction (39%)
8. Budget Development (39%)
8. Difficult Conversations (39%)

Administration Responses to PD Questions

The survey asked respondents to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with various statements relating to professional learning practices in the District. The responses were compared to last year's responses in the table on the next page. Some results are noted below:

- The administration indicated that the 2016-17 PD offerings were more aligned to school and District goals than the previous year, with responses up almost 48%.
- The administration felt that the current format of meeting every other week during the school year and three days over the summer (Summer Retreat) allows for beneficial PD to occur.
- Administration felt that the training they received during the 2016-17 school year provided them with opportunities to reflect on their practice (up 39% from the previous year) and collaborate with colleagues (up 44% from the previous year).

Some areas for the District to grow are:

- Only 46% of administration indicated that there are sufficient resources available to meet their PD needs. Although this was 26% higher than in the past, securing sufficient PD funds needs to a priority. This will continue to be a priority for the District in 2017-18.
- Although more administrators now feel that there is enough time provided during the year to meet their PD needs (with responses being up almost 42% from the previous year), this still needs to be an area for the District to work on addressing.
- Although more administrators indicated that PD offerings are being better differentiated now than in the past (an increase of almost 49%), there are close to 40% of administrators who feel PD offerings are not sufficiently differentiated. Differentiating PD to better meet the needs of all will continue to be an area of focus for the District.
- Similar to staff survey results, the administration also indicated that the District needs to provide training on how to examine student work with colleagues and to make adjustments based on the data. The survey showed that the District had made little growth in these two areas.

Table 2: A Comparison of 2016 Administration Survey Results with the 2017 Results

| Question | 2016 | 2017 | Difference |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| 1. PD offerings align to school and district goals | 47.8% | 87.5% | +47.8% |
| 2. Sufficient resources are available to meet PD needs | 26.1% | 45.8% | +26.1% |
| 3. Enough PD time provided during the year to meet needs | 26.1% | 68.0% | +41.9% |
| 4. PLT/Cabinet format allows for beneficial PD to occur | 47.4% | 85.0% | +37.6% |
| 5. Summer retreat allows for beneficial PD to occur | 80.9% | 88.5% | +7.6% |
| 6. PD is differentiated to meet my needs | 13.0% | 61.9% | +48.9% |
| 7. Admin PD encourages me to reflect on my practice | 60.9% | 100% | +39.1% |
| 8. PD provides opportunities to collaborate with colleagues | 43.5% | 87.5% | +44.0% |
| 9. All admin PD is evaluated and results communicated | 17.4% | 69.6% | +52.5% |
| 10. PD enhances my knowledge of meeting diverse needs | 52.2% | 69.6% | +17.4% |
| 11. PD enhances my ability to provide feedback to staff | 72.7% | 73.9% | +1.2% |
| 12. I have been trained to examine student work w/colleagues | 43.5% | 40.0% | -3.5% |
| 13. I have been trained to analyze data & make adjustments | 52.1% | 60.0% | +7.9% |

Blue indicates 80% or more agreeing with the statement; Red indicates 45% or less agreeing.

Strategic Plan Focus-Groups

Over the winter of 2015-2016, input was gathered from various stakeholders throughout the Wachusett Regional community. Stakeholder groups included the School Committee, staff from each school, community members from all five towns, administration, and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. All participating groups were asked to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of the District as well as identify opportunities and threats that the District should examine as part of the strategic planning process. Executive summaries from each of these focus groups were examined to identify any specific professional development initiatives and guidance for the development of this plan.

The following is a list of these areas, ordered from most often mentioned to the least frequently mentioned. These top five areas are included in the 2017-18 professional development framework.

- 1. Aligned K-12 curriculum (identified by 11 focus groups)**
 - 2. Technology integration (identified by 10 focus groups)**
 - 3. Instructional Practices (identified by 5 focus groups)**
 - 4. Collaboratively examining student work (identified by 3 focus groups)**
 - 5. Managing workload and stress (adults) (2 focus groups)**
 6. Student stress (1 focus group)
 6. SPED (1 focus group)
 6. ELL (1 focus group)
 6. Evaluation Process (DDMs) (1 focus group)
 6. Co-teaching (1 focus group)
 6. Early Intervention (Response to Intervention) (1 focus group)
- Aligned K-12 curriculum, technology integration, instructional practices, collaboratively examining student work (tied in with Strategic Plan Domain #2: Aligned Curriculum, Domain #3: Effective Instruction, Domain #4: PD and Structures for Collaboration):
 - One training implication from examining these top four areas is the need for teachers and administrators to work together to examine curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) training provides a proven framework for these conversations and will be part of this plan.
 - Aligned K-12 curriculum, tied in with the Strategic Plan, Domain #2 Aligned Curriculum and Domain #3 Effective Instruction):
 - Training implications, when this broad initiative is unpacked, include:
 - Developing priority learning targets
 - Developing and implementing common assessments
 - Examining student work
 - Integrating technology (Domain #3):

- Success here implies different types of training for different subjects and grade levels, as well as some common training (Google Classroom for example).
- Much of this is detailed below under the next section entitled Technology Plan
- Instructional practices (Domain #3):
 - Different training for different subjects and grade levels
 - Funding has to support small group needs and individual teacher needs
 - Training on effective instructional practices will be a focus of this plan
- General/overarching themes:
 - Many of the focus groups also identified teachers as a strength of the District. It makes sense to leverage our staff to help meet professional development needs.
 - The District will continue to use Title IIA federal grant funds as well as the locally budgeted Wachusett Regional Education Association PD funds to help support priority areas of training identified in this plan.

Technology Plan

As detailed sections above, responses to the Staff PD and Administration PD Surveys listed technology professional development as a priority area for training. Professional development is mentioned in several parts of the 2016-2021 WRSD Technology Plan⁵ (Tech Plan) as well. Important aspects are discussed below, along with any implications for training.

- The executive summary⁶ provides a detailed District vision for student learning and has several areas of focus:
 - “...all students can learn and continuously grow as independent, confident, resilient and thoughtful individuals who are able to explore new ideas, reflect on progress, and challenge themselves in today’s ever changing world.”
 - With respect to technology, “...District technology must support the communication needs of teachers and students alike, allowing them to exchange ideas and feedback at anytime. In addition, students and teachers must be able to utilize web-based tools and digital resources in order to collaborate, analyze data, and share information with others.”
 - More specifically, “...technology is used to enhance student learning by creating personalized, student-centered learning environments, where every student has equal access to the curriculum.”
- The plan goes on to make the following statement about the importance of staff training and the ultimate success of the plan’s initiatives:
 - “...our teachers need to have access to quality, on-going professional development. We believe that developing teachers who are comfortable and experienced integrating technology into their instruction is one of the most important goals of our District and its schools today.”⁷
- In a later section of the Tech Plan (Benchmark 5), expectations of the use of virtual learning and communications are outlined:

- "...2. Utilization of digital tools and software (by staff) to assess student learning and provide immediate student feedback. 3. Utilization of web-based tools to encourage student centered learning, and collaborative projects."⁸
- Clearly, providing ongoing, high quality training to staff is recognized in the plan as being a critical area for overall success.
 - Specifically, training in various web-based resources and supporting students in online learning environments, including providing timely feedback, are areas of focus for professional development.
- The Department of Education (DESE) goal under Benchmark 3 of the technology plan is specific to professional development.
 - This goal states: "At least 90% of District staff will have participated in high-quality professional development (as it relates to technology)." We have not met this goal as a District.
 - The plan goes on to state, "Although technology professional development occurs throughout the school year and includes coaching, as-needed training, District-based mentoring, support groups, and online offerings, training initiatives have primarily focused on small groups and have not involved all staff. In addition, a lack of consistent funding of technology professional development has resulted in these training initiatives being limited in scope, unable to be sustained year-to-year, and only meet the needs of a few."⁹
- The plan goes on to describe specific actions that must be taken next and areas of focus:
 - "To expand the scope and allow more staff to participate, technology professional development has to be consistently funded on an annual basis, include a wider variety of delivery models, and be based on input from staff."¹⁰
 - The staff PD Survey was created in part to provide staff with input into the direction of our PD Plan.
 - The District has decided to revise how Title IIA federal grant funds are used to better support individual and small group training initiatives, as well as continue to support major District initiatives such as those identified in the PD and Technology Plans.
 - The Tech Plan specifically asks to expand the scope of offerings to allow more staff to participate.

3. Planning for Professional Development

Effective professional development can occur at various times, both within and beyond the school day and school year. Effective professional development may also take on different formats, with some initiatives employing more traditional modes of learning and situations such as face-to-face, instructor-facilitated whole group training. Other forms engage individuals or small groups via online learning environments where the learner directs the pace of the

learning. Whatever the format, available time plays a large role in the effectiveness of a potential training initiative. To identify some potential opportunities, available time has been identified below.

The chart below details the contractual time that is available for meetings and/or professional development in a school year.

Contractually Available Staff Time

| Opportunity | Available Time |
|---|-----------------------|
| District-wide PD Day (6 hours/day) | 12 hours |
| Early Release Day (2 hours each day) | 8 hours |
| Faculty / Curriculum / Grade Alike Meetings (Per contract language, meetings occur, “no more than two (2) times per month, not to exceed two (2) hours total meeting time per month” ¹¹) | 20 hours |
| Total Available Time | 40 hours |

The chart below details the time that is available for administrators to meet each year. Some of this time will be dedicated to providing professional development each year.

Available Administrative Meeting Time

| Opportunity | Available Time |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Principal Leadership Team Meetings | 15 Hours |
| Cabinet Meetings | 15 hours |
| Summer Retreat | 16 hours |
| Total Meeting Time | 46 hours |

4. 2017-2018 Professional Development Framework

The main goal of the professional development plan is to develop priority focus areas for professional learning. These will be used to plan for the expenditure of both the operating budget for professional development and the federal Title IIA grant.

Below are several bullets that come from the needs assessment and an analysis of District and school improvement goals. These are not professional development initiatives, but will influence how we approach professional development going forward.

- Based on the feedback from the needs assessment, beginning in the fall of 2016, professional development initiatives will be evaluated and the results communicated back to participants.
- The Professional Development Task Force will develop a newsletter that will identify out-of-District PD offerings in various content and pedagogical areas. This will allow educators to identify opportunities that align to their expressed needs via their individual professional development plans and to help meet their individual needs for certification.
- District release and full days will be used primarily to support various District initiatives detailed below in the Professional Development Framework. Wherever feasible, professional development initiatives will be differentiated to meet the varying proficiency levels of educators across the District.
- The needs assessment identified our staff as a strength of the District and this plan looks to tap into staff expertise to help provide quality, differentiated professional development.
- From the needs assessment, we will expand the scope of offerings as well as the methods of delivery to allow more staff to participate in professional development. It should be noted, however, that we will continue to offer after school classes, as we have a limited amount of time available for training as detailed in part 3 above.
- We will use survey data on an annual basis to identify topics of greatest interest.

Priority Areas for Professional Development

| Priority Focus Areas | Details |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Integrating Technology Into Instructional Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Web-based tools b. Use of learning management systems and online learning environments | <p>The District will again offer technology integration training as well as solicit teacher-leaders to offer PD. The District will continue to sponsor staff to attend Google Training events. Individual staff members and groups of educators are encouraged to pursue either WREA PD funds or Title IIA funds to support training not offered by the District. Title IIA funding will support the priority areas a-c identified in the box to the left.</p> |
| <p>2. Effective Instructional Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Content Specific b. Teaching Gifted Students c. Writing Instruction d. Reading e. Math f. Conducting Observations | <p>The District will offer some content specific training based upon identified priorities. For 2017-18, these priorities are math, literacy (reading and writing) and science. Title IIA funds will be used to support these initiatives as well as other content areas on a rotating basis by year. This year History/Social Studies and Physical Education are two other subjects that will be supported by the grant. For administration, PD will focus on conducting observations and providing meaningful feedback. Staff are encouraged to apply for WRSD PD funds to support training beyond topics listed above. Grant funds from Title IIA, Title III, and SPED IDEA will be used to provide District-sponsored professional development in these areas.</p> |
| <p>3. Meeting the Social and Emotional Needs of Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Suicide Prevention b. Student Emotional Health c. Bullying Prevention d. Professional Culture e. SEI f. Special Education | <p>District training initiatives will focus on the areas of suicide prevention, student social/emotional health, bullying prevention and intervention, improving professional culture, and managing work-related stress. In addition, the District will continue to offer SEI and Special Education courses that meet the Department of Education teacher recertification requirements. Staff are encouraged to apply for WRSD PD funds to support training beyond topics listed above. Grant funds from Title IIA, Title III, and SPED IDEA grants will be used to provide District-sponsored professional development in these areas.</p> |
| <p>4. Differentiating Instruction</p> | <p>Title IIA grant funds will be used to provide training in this area. In addition, any staff member may apply for WREA PD funds to support training in this area. WREA PD funds do have a yearly limit of \$400/person.</p> |
| <p>5. Evaluating Student Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) b. Using Data to Improve Student Learning | <p>District training under this section will focus on working together in collaborative teams to examining student work and use the findings to inform instructional decisions. Outside trainers mixed with local leaders will provide training in this priority area to staff. Title IIA and local funds will be used to support training in this area.</p> |

Appendix A: DESE Guidance on Certification

MA DESE Certification - Educator Requirements¹²

If renewing a professional-level license with an expiration date that falls on or after July 1, 2016, the following requirements apply to renewal of a primary license (even if you renew your license early):

1. Professional development activities shall be identified by the educator and supervisor during the development of, and review of, the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)* in order to better support student achievement. Individual professional development plans must include at least 150 PDPs including:
 1. At least 15 PDPs related to SEI or English as a Second Language.
 2. At least 15 PDPs related to training in strategies for effective schooling for students with disabilities and instruction of students with diverse learning styles.
 3. At least 90 PDPs in the content area of the license or in pedagogy, with no less than 60 PDPs in or related to the content area of the educator's primary license.

*ALL educators are required by the State to complete and maintain an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and have the plan approved by their building administrator. The PD offerings they pursue should be aligned with the goals they have identified in their plan. As indicated in [603 CMR 44.04\(1\)\(c\)](#), the same plan can be used to satisfy the requirements for license renewal and educator evaluation.

MA DESE Certification - SEI Requirements

[Sheltered English Immersion \(SEI\)](#) and its impact on Renewal:

The SEI Endorsement requirement is at the center of the Department's RETELL initiative to transform the teaching and learning of ELLs across the Commonwealth.

- All incumbent core academic teachers of ELLs, must earn a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement, and
- All incumbent principals/assistant principals and supervisors/directors who evaluate core academic teachers of ELLs must earn an SEI Administrator Endorsement.

Appendix B: WREA-WRSD Contract Language

Professional Development Specific Language

Article 16: Staff Development Planning

- A. Utilization of staff development time referenced in this Article shall be developed with input from the Association annually. Consideration shall be given to school/department site activities, varied experiences and opportunities.
- B. This time shall be planned so as to provide eligibility for credit necessary to maintain professional status. Individual groups of teachers may submit proposals to the principal, for Superintendent and Principal approval, for staff development programs for these days.
- C. Bargaining unit members may submit proposals for the first professional development day to their building administrator and/or Superintendent prior to June 30th of the preceding school year and prior to December 31st for the second professional development day of that respective school year.
- D. Recognizing the importance of professional development in maintaining high qualified teaching staff, the District will set aside a sum of money for each fiscal year equal to two times the Masters, Step 1 salary for that year. These funds will be for the specific use by the members of the WREA to help defray the costs associated with professional development.
 1. These costs may include, but are not limited to, conference expenses, school visits, course fees, travel directly associated with professional development, workshop fees, and class coverage for WREA members attending professional development.
 2. WREA members who wish to avail themselves of professional development opportunities as outlined in this article may apply to the District in writing for payment up to, but not exceeding, the costs associated with such professional development, pending administrative approval. The District reserves the right to retroactively increase funding if all professional development monies have not been requested by June 1 of the school year.
 3. Any monies that have not been spent during the current school year will be forfeited.
 4. When possible, WREA requests for administrative approval and payment under this article must be made, in writing at least ten (10) school days prior to the opportunity and also must contain an explanation of the educational value of the request.
 5. Upon completion of professional development as outlined in this article, members may be requested to share this experience in writing and/or in person with other members of the District staff.¹³

References

1. DESE High Quality Professional Development, retrieved from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.html>
2. Massachusetts General Law, retrieved from <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section38q>
3. Massachusetts General Law, retrieved from <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section38G>
4. Wachusett Regional School Committee Policy, retrieved from <http://www.wrsd.net/schoolcommittee/policies/P5251.pdf>
5. WRSD Tech Plan retrieved from <http://www.wrsd.net/documents/TechnologyPlan.pdf>
6. 2016-2021 WRSD Technology Plan, retrieved from <http://www.wrsd.net/documents/TechnologyPlan.pdf>, page 3
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., page 12
9. Ibid., pages 9-10
10. Ibid., page 10
11. WREA Contract, Page 16 Section E. 7.
12. Professional License Renewal 2015 Addendum: Guidelines For Massachusetts Educators, retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/educator-effectiveness/licensing/renewal-professional-license-2015-addendum-guidelines.pdf>
13. Collectively Bargained Agreement Between the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc., and the Wachusett Regional School District, (WREA Contract), July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017, pages 19-20.