Castleberry ISD

Met Standard

Texas Education Agency

2016 Academic Distinction Designation

A Transformative Approach to Professional Learning

Why Transform Professional Development?
The National Staff Development Council states that educators are most effective when they use their minds as active learners and problem solvers. This seems elementary, but some school systems use professional development in ways that discourage rather than encourage educators' intellectual development. In these school systems, the approach to professional learning is, in effect: "We've determined what you need to learn. We've determined the best way for you to learn it. We've determined how you should use the learning we provide you." As a result, it is no wonder that some educators have so little investment in their learning, or so little commitment to applying their learning to benefit their students. Therefore, we should not be surprised when educators replicate this same approach to learning in their classrooms (Definition of Professional Development, n.d.).

How will the district support professional learning?
The goal of this plan is to provide a framework for professional learning in Castleberry ISD. The Professional Learning Plan consists of an aligned and integrated approach to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, developing educators' professional thinking and practice, and raising student achievement (Definition of Professional Development, n.d.). Educators experience ***transformative learning*** when they reflect on assumptions or expectations about what will occur during a lesson, has found these assumptions to be faulty, and revises them so their teaching practice changes to improve learning (Cranton, 1996). Therefore, the traditional term "professional development" at CISD has been changed to "professional learning" to reflect a new emphasis on continuous educator growth and transformation of instructional practice for the purpose of improving student achievement.

In the past, professional learning has focused on isolated concepts such as developing content expertise, becoming familiar with certain learner groups, and infusing technology into the classroom, to name a few. However, when educators are not afforded opportunities to collaboratively develop learning activities based on introduced concepts, put them into practice, and reflect on the results and adjustments needed after implementation, professional learning becomes a ***splintered array of activities*** designed to increase knowledge and understanding in ***disconnected*** fields (Cranton, 1996).

Research indicates that excellent teacher professional learning:
- is ***integrated*** into the everyday life of the school and teacher
- offers opportunities for ***reflection*** and learning from experience
- encourages and supports ***innovation*** and ***collaboration***
- helps teachers to develop and critically engage with their own theories of learning
- enriches teachers' learning through critical engagement with the theories of others
- is sustained over time and supported by people with expertise

Therefore, CISD school leaders recognize professional learning as an integral part of school improvement, with professional learning planned and provided systematically according to the needs of educators (Professional Development, 2015).

What is Transformative Learning and Critical Reflection?

Educators must be adult learners continually striving to update, develop, expand, and deepen their professional perspectives both on their subject area and on their goals and roles as educators. The educator who is not a learner becomes an assembly-line worker implementing well-worn habitual tricks and techniques to process learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills. The educator who is not a learner cannot act as a model of learning. The educator who is not a ***critically self-reflective learner*** will not be likely to stimulate critical reflection among learners (Cranton, 1994). Therefore, in order to develop and improve as an educator, it is necessary to learn from experience through reflection. Educators are always learning simply by doing their jobs. However, the process is significantly advanced by reflection, which is a fundamental part of teacher development theory. This essentially involves critical analysis of one's practice, with the aim of reaching a new perspective with modified attitudes. Teachers must be careful to critically analyze their attitudes and actions, in order to improve. ***Once the educator changes their instructional practice based on the outcomes of their reflection, transformative learning occurs.*** See Figure 1 for the educator reflective cycle.

Traditional vs New Personal Learning

Traditional Professional Learning. When it comes to professional development, teachers have often relied on several of the following elements:

- Attending conferences and seminars.
- Subscribing to journals.
- Joining professional organizations.
- Reading education books.
- Connecting with mentors and colleagues.
- Hearing guest speakers.
- Taking courses.

Each of the above traditional methods is still extremely worthwhile. But at the same time, they come with certain limitations. They cost money, are limited to certain times and places, deal with content that may or may not pertain, and connect teachers to a restricted number of resources. While taking advantage of traditional **professional development** opportunities, the effective teacher can also more thoroughly customize their self-education with new, digital resources.

New Professional Learning. Several newer, technology-based opportunities have emerged within recent years. Consider how you might further customize your professional growth with any of these opportunities:

- Web 2.0 communication tools
- Social media (i.e. **Twitter**, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, Google+, etc.).
- Podcasts
- Video conferencing
- Photo sharing
- **Blogs** and articles

When it comes to professional development, there are too many resources out there with too many customizable options for teachers to sit back and wait to be told what to learn. Teachers who want to experience inevitable improvement must connect themselves to the resources that fit their needs and their schedule.

Website Reference: http://www.teachhub.com/professional-development-3-components-growth.

To be a critically self-reflective educator is to be a lifelong learner. The educator who feels that he or she has found all the answers has stopped questioning, reflecting, and learning. Transformative learning is a continual process of growth and development for the learner and for the educator-learner (Cranton, 1994).

CAREER and Technology

Career and Technology

Implement the Achieve Texas College and Career Initiative.

Offer multiple career preparation learning opportunities for students.

Continue to offer Tech Prep programs with a seamless transition to post-secondary education.

Measures: Certifications, Texas Achievement Plan, College Tech Prep enrollment, TSI College Readiness Assessment.

Family Engagement

Establish new ways to involve parents and families in the education of their children.

Foster regular two-way meaningful communication involving student academic learning.

Engage parents as partners in supporting learning at home.

Measures: Attendance, volunteer data, family engagement offerings and parent training offerings.

Federal Programs

Plan for comprehensive, long-term improvement with resources available.

District will maintain compliance with all NCLB requirements.

Measures: PBMAS, System Safeguards, Compliance Crosswalk, Audit, TEA System Safeguards.

Human Resources

Retain our dedicated professionals by providing competitive salaries, first rate benefits, ongoing support systems, and professional training.

Implement hiring protocols that include a screening process to ensure candidates meet the needs of the diverse student population in CISD.

Measures: Teacher retention rate, Climate Survey, PDAS.

Interventions

To provide early identification and support for students with academic or behavioral needs.

Measures: Failure Rate, Discipline Report, TAPR.

CAREER and Technology Education

CISD provides opportunities through a rigorous Career and Technology Education (CTE) program for all students in 9th – 12th grades. Students are able to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills essential for continuing education at post-secondary level, as well as acquiring the skills and certifications needed to gain entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job. CTE programs are based on the belief that the curricula of the 21st century should combine rigorous academics with relevant career education. When schools integrate academic and technical education, students can see the "usefulness" of what they are learning.

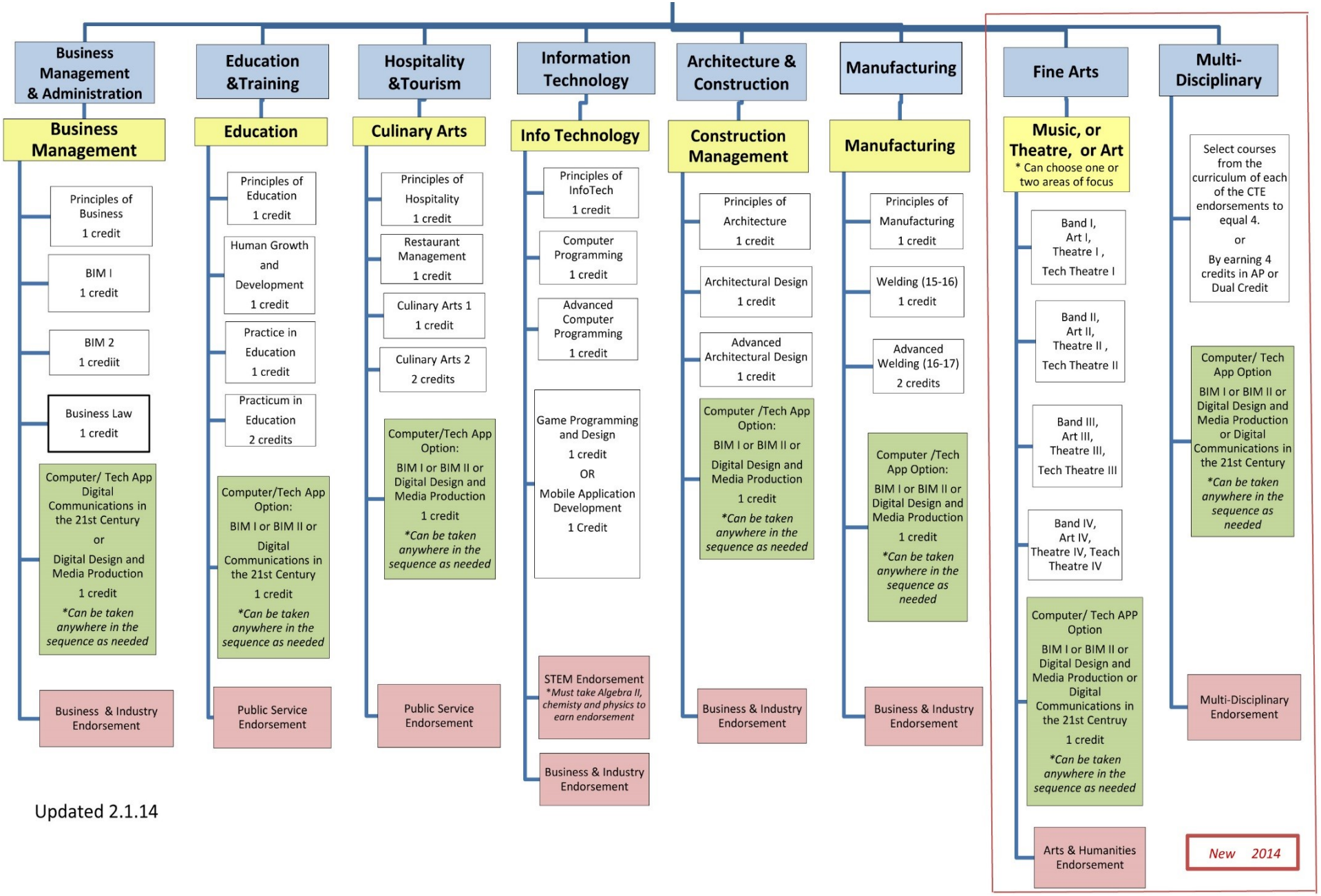
Tech Prep Credit

A key feature of the CTE programs of study is a program articulation with Tarrant County Community College. Students take a cohort sequence of courses in high school. The articulation agreement permits students to move from high school to higher education without course duplication, thus allowing them to receive college credit through "Advance Technical Credit" for high school courses that contain the same content as equivalent college courses.

Career Clusters/Pathways

A Career Cluster is a grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities. The Career Clusters provide an organizing tool for schools to build their CTE programs. CISD offers seven career clusters, known as Career Pathways of Study.

Endorsement / CTE Programs of Study Course Sequence for Freshman Entering 2014 and beyond



Updated 2.1.14

FAMILY Engagement

CISD recognizes the benefits of family engagement in our schools. Parents are the primary influence in their child's lives. Effective family engagement takes many forms including: communicating, volunteering, school decision making, and advocacy. Family engagement is a meaningful two-way relationship involving the school and the parent. Research supports parent/family engagement in higher achievement of students. Students who have family involvement in their schools achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level. Students achieve higher test scores, have better attendance, and complete homework more consistently. These students also have higher graduation rates and enrollment in post-secondary institutions.

Each campus develops an annual Family Engagement Plan that ensures effective involvement of parents in the academic growth of their child. Schools seek to build plans that involve families and community members in meaningful activities that improve student academic achievement. The plans are developed with the intent of expanding parental options to assist their child's learning and to seek active involvement in the education of their child. The District offers assistance to schools in educating teachers and staff in how to involve and engage parents as equal partners.

The coordination, implementation, and evaluation of Family Engagement programs are completed, with the involvement of parents, on an annual basis. Strategies are identified to provide more effective family engagement opportunities to reach parents of all children. Parents and community members are partners in this process through membership on the campus site-based teams, District Family Engagement Committee, DEIC, volunteer committees, PTO organizations, and classroom involvement. Surveys are utilized for input from parents and community members on parent needs.

Campuses present numerous opportunities for family engagement. Listed below are some of the program offerings:

- School-Parent Compacts
- Coffee with Counselors
- Family Reading Night
- Family Math Night
- Family Science Night

FAMILY Engagement

- College Night
- Saturday Meet the Teacher
- Kindergarten Round Up
- Family Fun Night
- Academic Saturday School Parent Participation
- Academic Showcase Open House
- Special Needs Parent Trainings

The District is committed to ensuring that information is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, and in a language the parents can understand. An English and Spanish version of most parent correspondence is provided. All parent meetings are conducted with a translator and translation headsets. The District is sensitive to transportation and child care needs of parents and addresses those in planning activities. In order to maximize family engagement and participation in their children's education, campuses are committed to arranging school meetings at a variety of times to accommodate parents who work.

FEDERAL Programs

Public Law 107-110 was enacted to provide federal funds to close the achievement gap and improve academic achievement of the disadvantaged, so that no child is left behind. CISD receives the following federal funds to support student learning:

Title I, Part A-	Grant funding is provided to campuses for improving basic programs. The funding is for resources to help schools with high concentrations of students from low-income families, and to provide a high-quality education that will enable all children to meet the state's student performance standards.
Title I, Part C-	Grant funding is provided for a Migrant Education Program that is designed as a support program to help migrant students overcome the challenges of mobility, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, and other difficulties associated with a migratory lifestyle. CISD utilizes the services of Region XI Service Center for this program.
Title II, Part A -	Grant funding is provided for teacher and principal training. The funds are used to elevate teacher and principal quality through research-based professional development.
Title III, Part A-	Grant funding is provided to help ensure that children who are Limited-English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.
IDEA, Part B -	Grant funding is for individuals with disabilities to offset part of the costs of the K-12 education needs of children with disabilities.
Carl Perkins -	Funding is provided to develop and support the career and technical skills of secondary education students.