

New York State Teacher Center Standards

New York State Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers support New York State's efforts to encourage higher learning standards.

Teacher Centers provide professional development to over 200,000 teachers, every year, on a wide variety of topics related to the Learning Standards and school improvement.

Teacher Centers are governed by Policy Boards comprised of teachers and administrators, as well as representatives of post-secondary education, business, cultural and community organizations, and parents. The Centers are linked by seven regional networks that provide teachers, school districts and Centers opportunities to share resources, plan collaboratively, and respond to regional as well as to individual initiatives. Teacher Centers provide direct assistance with the development and training of school district Professional Development Planning Committees and mentoring programs that are required under Commissioner Regulations 100.2

(dd). Oversight for the Teacher Center grant application process and program is provided by the State Professional Standards and Practices Board for Teaching. Political and educational leaders of New York State support Teacher Centers as an essential institution for the sustained professional growth of New York State's teachers and other educators. These leaders place their confidence in school practitioners, in partnership with others, to identify, plan, and implement comprehensive professional development to assure that the State's elementary and secondary school students have the benefit of the most current and effective instruction available.

Because organizations grow and prosper by learning from their own work, members of New York State Teacher Centers have undertaken the responsibility of setting standards for professional development practice. This document, developed by the Teacher Center Evaluation and Strategy Advisory Committee, results from the collaboration of Teacher Center Directors and Policy Board members throughout the State. National, external evaluators have reviewed these New York Teacher Center Standards.

These standards reflect the experience and insight gained in the long history of Teacher Centers. The purpose of this document is to guide those working with Centers, their constituents, and others interested in effective professional development.

Through their collaborations with one another, school districts and other educational and community organizations, the Centers have provided sustained, immediate, cost-effective and efficient professional development for educators.

Standards for Professional Development

New York State Teacher Centers have developed criteria for professional development based upon research and national standards (National Staff Development Council www.nsd.org). **Professional development**

- supports professional learning communities focused on student achievement.
- is driven by clear coherent individual and organizational goals as identified by the district's PD Plan.
- focuses on improving student learning.
- is designed and facilitated by those who participate.
- respects and nurtures the leadership and intellectual capacities of educators.
- facilitates continuous inquiry and reflection embedded in the daily life of schools
- is supported by research and institutional resources such as time, staffing, and funding.
- addresses current issues in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- facilitates the use of technology to enhance instruction.

Standards for Operation and Governance of Individual Centers

Governance

New York State Teacher Centers are governed by Policy Boards composed of the multiple constituencies set forth in Educational Law 316.

Policy Board members and staff

- are elected and/or appointed by their respective constituencies.
- apply high standards for professional development in carrying out their roles.
- recruit, retain, and support personnel necessary to carry out the Center's mission.
- work collaboratively with school districts and other constituent organizations and agencies.
- ensure that the Center fulfills state and local requirements.

Management

New York State Teacher Centers must comply with statute, regulation and local policy.

Policy Board members and staff

- establish and maintain a professional working environment with appropriate resources.
- employ a variety of communication strategies to ensure the full participation of constituents.
- maintain electronic communication facilities linking individual Centers and the statewide network.
- establish and maintain sound fiscal policies and practices.
- seek resources in addition to New York State funding.
- comply with New York State records management regulations and guidelines.
- provide required documentation to the New York State Education Department.
- operate in accordance with Education Law 316 and Commissioner's Regulations Part 81.

Program

New York State Teacher Center programs promote continuous inquiry and growth.

Policy Board members and staff

- apply knowledge of current research in professional development.
- use a variety of strategies and techniques for identifying the professional growth needs of constituents.
- design and implement a variety of activities and programs responsive to needs assessment and evaluation data.
- align local needs with state initiatives, standards and assessments.
- enable educators to participate in collaborative program design.
- address educators' needs at different stages of their careers by providing opportunities for reflection and inquiry.
- collaborate with school districts and other organizations and agencies to enhance the range of program opportunities.
- uses student data to identify professional development needs.

Evaluation

New York State Teacher Centers use program evaluation data collected in a variety of ways.

Policy Board members and staff

- use individual program evaluation to assist in the development of new activities and refine continuing programs.
- employ a variety of evaluation strategies to assess the impact of the Center's activities and programs.
- include both quantitative and qualitative data in evaluation design.
- examine the impact of programs on teacher effectiveness and student learning.
- share evaluation findings broadly to build awareness and support for Teacher Center work.

Conclusion

Political and educational leaders of New York State support Teacher Centers as an essential institution for the sustained professional growth of New York State's teachers and other educators. These leaders place their confidence in school practitioners, in partnership with others, to identify, plan, and implement comprehensive professional development to assure that the State's elementary and secondary school students have the benefit of the most current and effective instruction available.

The organizational structures, programs and services of the New York State Teacher Centers reflect the national standards for professional development. **Teacher Centers:**

- recognize that professional growth is integral to teachers' work.
- embed professional growth in the daily lives of schools.
- model for teachers and students the importance of life-long learning.
- promote the growth of communities of learners.
- encourage teachers to assume leadership roles.