



Representative Professional Development Programs

LCI

learner-centered
initiatives

Learner Centered Initiatives offers innovative, research-based professional development programs that help educators to improve their practice. All of our programs and services are customized and crafted with clients, based on their needs and goals. They can be facilitated onsite or via technology-assisted means. What follows is a representative sampling of our offerings.

Our sessions are interactive and model learner-centered approaches. Program activities honor how adult learning takes place, combining individual and collaborative experiences that are grounded in current research on best practices. Our sessions are engaging and collaborative, featuring access to models, guided design activities and ongoing feedback. Throughout each program, participants are provided with tools to diagnose and monitor their learning.

To learn more about any of these programs, or to build a program to meet a specific need, please contact us at info@lclitd.org.

We also offer Needs Assessment and Audit services, along with Consulting and Coaching services for school and district leaders. These services can be delivered concurrent to, or in lieu of, programs. Contact us for more information.

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Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning

This program explores multiple perspectives on what it means to facilitate adult learning, as a first step in defining participants' approaches to facilitation and their roles in that context.

Participants may:

- learn about the pedagogy and approaches to facilitating adult learners
- examine existing criteria for quality facilitation
- develop their own checklist/rubric for quality facilitation
- self-assess and set goals for improvement using their criteria

Enhancing the Work of Professional Learning Communities

This program focuses on increasing the thoughtfulness and effectiveness of learning communities.

Learning experiences may include:

- exploring and assessing the dispositions and habits of mind that support learning communities
- reviewing, selecting, adapting and using text-based protocols
- assessing and refining protocols for analyzing teachers' or students' work to ensure rigor in the process
- practicing using peer review and self-assessment processes to refine and reflect on participants' practices

Learning from Each Other - Developing and Using a Peer Inter-visitation Protocol

Participants in this program co-design, pilot and revise a peer visitation process that embeds reflection, low-inference observation, and collaborative problem solving. Teachers learn how to provide feedback to each other, and set and monitor instructional goals.

Strategic Learning and Self-Regulation

Participants in Strategic and Self-Regulation deepen their ability to help themselves and their students become more strategic and purposeful learners. Participants may:

- discuss different perspectives related to learning and their implications for how we approach teaching and assessment
- examine the role of a growth mindset in promoting learning
- explore self-regulation as a construct and its relationship to helping adults and students learn to learn
- identify and discuss skills and strategies that support strategic learning
- select and adapt reflective prompts and questions
- develop activities that enable practitioners to use and teach strategic learning to others

Designing Performance Assessments

This program is designed to build the capacity and aptitude of practitioners to assess outcomes of significance, as well as developing instructionally valid authentic assessment experiences and tasks for students.

Participants will understand the value and uses of performance-based assessment by:

- examining and discussing the attributes of authentic performance assessments, and
- exploring the roles of students in using and evaluating performance measures.

They will also develop student-centered, integrated or inter-disciplinary performance assessments by:

- identifying opportunities and entry points within their curriculum for performance assessments, (b) identifying learning outcomes and standards suitable for the use of authentic assessment,
- assessing skills, non-cognitive outcomes and dispositions such as problem-solving, meta-cognition and critical thinking
- (e) designing scoring metrics and tools, including rubrics and checklists, that promote student involvement and input throughout the learning and assessment process,
- (f) incorporating reflective prompts and questions into their assessments
- (g) analyzing student work resulting from the implementation of their tasks

Designing a Balanced and Diversified Assessment System: A Program for School and District Leaders

Do we want schools to promote students' agency and engagement? How important is it for teachers to know what students can do with what they learn? How do we best promote the connection between students' work in school and the outside world? Performance assessment can help school leaders to address these all.

This program helps participants support best practices through a deep exploration of performance assessment and its role in promoting quality teaching and learning. It addresses how performance assessment supports a balanced and diversified assessment system; and how school leaders can integrate these assessments into their systems to promote quality and improvement.

Formative Assessment = Feedback for All

When feedback is focused on the quality of work as well as processes and strategies used, everyone learns. Formative assessment, embedded in curriculum and instruction, allows teachers and students alike to assess understanding as it is developing. It is vital to reinforcing strengths, identifying misconceptions, and revealing struggles and questions. Effective use of formative assessment truly can be “transformative” (Popham 2008, Brookhart, 2008).

This program is grounded in research-based strategies for improving the use of formative assessment measures. Through hands-on practice with their own curriculum and student work, educators learn to:

- be learner-centered by using informal and formal checks for understanding and skill
- use formative assessments to make decisions about what to re-teach and who to support with different scaffolds
- provide quality and substantive feedback to students when it is most useful – during the learning process
- engage students in the feedback process through peer review and self-assessment, and use various feedback tools, such as feedback notes, checklists, rubrics, and peer review protocols
- incorporate standards espoused by teacher evaluation frameworks into teachers’ use of formative assessment

Aligning Standards, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

This program is designed to facilitate participants’ understanding of quality standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment, and may incorporate a design component.

Learning experiences include:

- ascertaining the congruence among curriculum, instruction and assessment
- aligning curriculum documents, CCLS and content standards
- identifying and using diversified assessments
- designing authentic tasks
- creating assessment tools such as rubric and checklists
- exploring the value of reflection in supporting learning

Providing Students with Quality Feedback

This program exposes teachers to protocols for examining student work which inform quality feedback and promote instructional decisions that meet student needs and move learning forward. In this session, participants learn to:

- review protocols for examining student work
- examine and apply attributes for quality feedback
- use analysis of student work to make informed decisions about classroom practices
- differentiate instruction to meet student needs.

Rubrics and Checklists: Using Explicit Criteria for Instruction and Assessment

This program demonstrates the value that checklists and rubrics hold in supporting and assessing learning. It allows participants to explore ways in which the development and use of clear criteria using checklists, rubrics and models can contribute to increased student ownership over learning and increased achievement. It also provides participants with an opportunity to operationalize outcomes they value, such as thinking, reflection, or collaboration, but which are not formally assessed in their current units or lessons. Program participants:

- learn about the various types of rubrics that teachers use
- discuss and analyze models of quality checklists and rubrics
- examine different methods for generating rubrics
- use a rubric development process to create a rubric
- view a lesson to identify strategies for involving students in rubric development

Unit Design - Prepare Students for the Future - What is Worth Teaching?

Now more than ever, we need curriculum that is worth teaching. Our current students will face complex global problems as they leave school, and curriculum must require students to think and use 21st century skills. This program will equip educators with the knowledge and abilities to design that curriculum, as participants are guided through the drafting and revision of rigorous interdisciplinary units. During the program, participants will:

- design using Common Core, state standards and 21st century skills
- use conceptual organizing centers to drive design
- embed essential and guiding questions that foster thinking.
- design authentic culminating tasks
- create learning opportunities to address diverse learning needs
- embed diagnostic, formative and summative assessments
- design reflection opportunities using targeted prompts, checklists and rubrics

Aligning Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

This program is designed to facilitate participants' understanding of quality standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment. Depending on their degree of readiness and the length of the program, participants might design and implement standards-based learning opportunities and assessments for use in their classrooms. Learning experiences include:

- determining congruence between curriculum, instruction and assessment
- aligning curriculum documents and CCLS and content standards
- identifying and using diversified assessments
- designing authentic tasks
- creating assessment tools such as rubric and checklists
- exploring the value of reflection in supporting learning

Critical Thinking, Curriculum and Assessment Design

This program helps participants deepen the quality and raise the standards of curriculum and assessment tasks. Participants will examine different frameworks for evaluating thinking demands including Depth of Knowledge, the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, and the Rigor and Relevance Framework, and will use them to revise and increase the level of thinking demand in the tasks and learning experiences they design.

Program activities include:

- defining rigor and identifying the characteristics of academically rigorous curriculum and instruction
- examining classroom tasks that support rigor through the development of thinking skills
- exploring the language, skills and abilities of critical thought
- exploring ways to increase the level of thinking in tasks and learning experiences
- using new learning to identify possible changes to practice that will improve rigor in upcoming lessons and tasks.

Using Student Work to Improve Teaching & Learning: What Does It All Mean?

The ability to carefully examine many types of assessments, learn from them and use that learning to re-think teaching is a process that effective teachers must master. This program enables participants to work with others to learn how to examine various types of student work (such as journals, written pieces, quizzes, oral presentations, lab reports, discussions, performances, etc.), to analyze student understanding and then identify the implications for their practice. Design work may also be included.

Reporting with Multiple Measures of Student Learning

Participants in this program examine the use of different assessments in determining student performance, and explore multiple measures charts for communicating the connection between assessments and standards-based reporting tools. Learning opportunities include:

- examining assessment types and moments
- aligning grading practices to standards
- collecting and analyzing student work as evidence of learning

Addressing the Needs of Diverse Learners

This program assists participants in understanding key curriculum, instructional, and assessment variables that they can manipulate to address the needs of different students. Learning opportunities may include:

- examining the use of diagnostic data to determine what students already know and can do
- exploring the use of multiple intelligences and learning styles in instruction and assessment
- investigating the role of flexibility in assessment examining the role of choice in students' selection or use of learning material in promoting student engagement
- incorporating different scaffolding strategies into teachers' instructional and assessment practices

Managing Standards with Special Student Populations

In this program, participants learn how to reconcile students' Individualized Educational Plans and state standards in order to design powerful and meaningful learning experiences for their students. Depending on their readiness and on the length of the program, participants may produce materials that assist them in the planning and implementation of learning experiences that meet the standards and student needs.

Supporting English Language Learners

Teachers will deepen their understanding and incorporation of the CCLS and shifts to:

- Design and revise lessons and units to incorporate CCLS and shifts
- Analyze classroom videos to examine and review instructional strategies and scaffolds to support ELLs
- Incorporate text-based questions that tap different levels and kinds of thinking into texts
- Review and assess a variety of research-based strategies for supporting ELL's reading, writing, listening and speaking
- Practice using text and other discussion protocols that promote depth of understanding
- Explore web-based resources that support ELL teachers and their students
- Engage in close-reading experiences that deepen their understanding and use of the CCLS standards
- Increase their attention and use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment that explicitly incorporate standards and shifts

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How Do Questions Teach? Action Research in Support of Student Learning

This awareness program is for schools, districts or groups of educators who want to explore action research as a professional development option or as a professional growth option for tenured teachers.

The following questions guide the program:

- What is action research?
- How is it different from and similar to collegial inquiry?
- How does it support the learning of leaders, teachers and students?
- How does it enhance the work of professional learning communities?
- What does it take to design and carry out an action research project?

Planning an Action Research Project

This program is intended for educators who have decided to engage in action research, and helps individuals, pairs or small groups to design a meaningful, job-embedded study. It addresses the following questions:

- What are the phases of action research?
- How do I select a topic that is meaningful and job-embedded?
- What are my action research questions? What data sources will help me to answer my questions?
- How will I access various perspectives while I study?

Implementing Action Research: Dealing with Data & Documenting My Learning

The action research process can be creative and meaningful, and data can help educators to understand the impact of the process. This program helps educators to identify data sources, analyze data over time and document their learning.

It addresses the following questions:

- What data sources can you use?
- What data sources fit my inquiry questions and are already part of my practice?
- How do I organize my data for analysis?
- What data analysis strategies are best suited to the data I am collecting?
- How do I keep track of my changing practice and thinking?

Why Learn with Others? - Using the Collegial Inquiry Process to Deepen Understanding and Improve Teacher Practice

This awareness program is for schools, districts or groups of educators who want to explore the value of collegial inquiry as a possible professional development model. It addresses the following questions:

- What does the collegial inquiry process look like?
- What value does the collegial inquiry process hold for educators and for students?
- How do we assess our readiness for the collegial inquiry process?

Planning Collegial Inquiry

This program is designed for groups of educators who have decided to engage in collegial inquiry and who need support to design an inquiry study. It addresses the following guiding questions:

- What are the steps in planning a collegial inquiry project?
- How do we align our work with the school/district priorities or vision?
- Why is our chosen topic worth studying?
- What specific inquiry questions will guide our study?
- What will be our criteria for success?
- What data do we need to collect?

Implementing Collegial Inquiry: Dealing with Data, Reflection and Change

The work of an inquiry group must include the ongoing and effective use of data, analysis and reflection. This program helps educators to make decisions about what data to examine, how to analyze the data and how to document the learning that results.

Enhancing the Work of Professional Learning Communities

This program focuses on increasing the thoughtfulness and effectiveness of learning communities. Learning experiences include:

- exploring the role of habits of mind and dispositions in learning communities
- reviewing, selecting, adapting and using text-based protocols
- assessing and refining protocols for analyzing teachers' units, lessons and assessments
- assessing and refining protocols for using teacher and student work to inform changes in teaching
- practicing using peer review and self-assessment processes to refine and reflect on own practice

Facilitating Collegial Inquiry

Facilitating collegial inquiry requires an understanding of the inquiry process and the ability to manage the work and thinking of a group. This program provides tools for facilitators who must guide a group through all phases of the process, including, planning, data collection and analysis, assessment and documentation. It also provides tools for decision making, discussion and the use of democratic and collaborative processes.

This program addresses the following questions:

- How do I support a group through the planning phase without taking over control of the decision making?
- How can I manage the diverse perspectives of a group?
- How can I ensure that dialogue is productive?
- What strategies support data analysis?
- How do I document the work and thinking of a group?

Designing Close Reading Experiences

At its heart, close reading is about critically reading a text for deep understanding. This program provides a process for designing close reading experiences that allow students to successfully read complex text and includes design work.

- Teachers in this program will deepen their ability to design close reading experiences by:
- articulating what readers do when they read closely
- defining the elements of a close reading experience
- analyzing classroom examples of close reading experiences
- using a protocol for designing a close reading experience
- identifying lessons needed for students to engage successfully in close reading
- Participants leave this clinic with a deeper understanding of close reading, a protocol for design and a draft of a close reading experience.

Participants **MUST** bring 2-3 complex texts, for their grade level and subject area, to design with.

Helping Students to Ask and Answer Questions

The questions we ask define the thinking we elicit. Questions play a significant role in promoting higher order thinking but they play an equally important role in scaffolding students' ability to understand increasingly complex texts, in broadening what students attend to, in democratizing the discourse in a class, and in uncovering how students are making sense of new material. Refining our ability to ask different kinds of questions and helping students become better questioners themselves, can greatly assist teachers in addressing the Common Core Standards and many other learning outcomes.

Teachers in this program will deepen their questioning skills and foster students' ability to ask questions by:

- Distinguishing among essential, guiding, text-based and reflective questions as they relate to Common Core and other standards
- Designing questions that attend to different levels of thinking and depth of knowledge
- Exploring strategies for teaching students to develop and respond to their own questions

Inference-Making and Other Powerful Reading Practices

This program focuses on key reading comprehension strategies that support strategic reading. Depending on the scope of these program, teachers either explore a variety of reading strategies or delve deeply into particular ones. All programs include practical methods for supporting student acquisition of these strategies. Learning experiences include:

- examining lessons and videos that address reading comprehension strategies
- examining the role of think-alouds in teaching students' comprehension strategies
- exploring the role of meta-cognition in reading
- creating or adapting tools to support student use of the comprehension strategies
- scaffolding instruction to allow for student independence.

Providing Students with Quality Feedback

This program exposes teachers to protocols for examining student work which inform quality feedback and instructional decisions that meet student needs and move learning forward. Participants examine student work in order to impact student learning by:

- reviewing protocols for examining student work
- examining and applying attributes for quality feedback
- using analysis of student work to make informed decisions about classroom practices
- differentiating instruction to meet student needs.

Reading across Content Areas

This program is designed to support the exploration of skills and strategies that support successful reading in various disciplines. It enables participants to learn about the value of the "think aloud" and its place in the strategy instruction model called gradual release of responsibility; explore features and structures of informational texts; practice using strategies for determining importance and understanding stated information; examine lessons on making inferences and drawing conclusions; explore strategies for word solving and vocabulary building; and explore strategies for use with English language learners. Participants read, discuss and use the research on best practices for enhancing students' comprehension of subject-specific texts inside various disciplines.

Using Classroom Discourse to Uncover Understanding

In order for students to be engaged in their learning, they must be involved in a meaning-making process. Classroom discourse is a forum where students construct understanding together through articulating their thinking, questioning, exploring different perspectives and becoming comfortable with the tentative nature of understanding. Any teacher who has tried to structure a deep discussion knows it does not just happen. Like any other learning process, classroom discourse needs to be taught.

Participants in this program will have the opportunity to determine expectations for discourse in their classroom. During the program, participants will:

- analyze student-led discourse samples
- use discourse to construct understanding
- develop a classroom discourse rubric
- participate in role playing scenarios you would encounter in facilitating discourse
- practice acting as facilitator
- receive feedback through peer reviews, self-assessments and conferences
- design a plan for teaching discourse

Vocabulary Instruction

Grounded in research, this program focuses on the development and use of vocabulary instructional strategies that emphasize student acquisition of Tier Two and Tier Three words. Participants examine criteria for choosing words, instructional strategies and appropriate means of assessment. These programs can be customized to meet the specific needs of different grade levels or content areas. Learning experiences include:

- using criteria for identifying Tier Two and Three words
- discussing different strategies for introducing Tier Two and Three words to students
- exploring strategies for teaching and reinforcing the use of new vocabulary
- analyzing lessons and videos that showcase methods for supporting students acquisition of new words
- examining appropriate means of assessing student understanding and use of vocabulary

Designing Performance Assessments

This program is designed to build the capacity and aptitude of practitioners to assess outcomes of significance, as well as developing instructionally valid authentic assessment experiences and tasks for students.

Participants will understand the value and uses of performance-based assessment by:

- examining and discussing the attributes of authentic performance assessments, and
- exploring the roles of students in using and evaluating performance measures.

They will also develop student-centered, integrated or inter-disciplinary performance assessments by:

- identifying opportunities and entry points within their curriculum for performance assessments
- identifying learning outcomes and standards suitable for the use of authentic assessment,
- assessing skills, non-cognitive outcomes and dispositions such as problem-solving, meta-cognition and critical thinking
- designing scoring metrics and tools, including rubrics and checklists, that promote student involvement and input throughout the learning and assessment process,
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Using Explicit Criteria for Instruction and Assessment

This program helps participants to understand the value that checklists and rubrics hold in supporting and measuring learning. It allows them to explore ways in which the development and use of clear criteria using checklists, rubrics and models can contribute to increased student ownership over learning and increased achievement. Specific learning experiences include:

- learning about the various types of rubrics that teachers use
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- examining the use of diagnostic data to determine what students already know and can do
- exploring the use of multiple intelligences and learning styles in instruction and assessment
- investigating the use of flexibility in assessment
- examining the role of choice in students' selection or use of learning material
- incorporating different scaffolding strategies into our instructional and assessment practices.

Managing Standards with Special Student Populations

In this program, participants learn how to reconcile students' Individualized Educational Plans and state standards in order to design powerful and meaningful learning experiences for their students. Depending on their readiness and on the length of the program, participants may produce materials that assist them in the planning and implementation of learning experiences that meet the standards and student needs.

Learning opportunities include:

- aligning IEP goals with standards
- creating learning experiences addressing IEP goals and standards
- determining appropriate assessments to measure student achievement, and growth and development
- designing documentation tools to monitor student progress and attainment of IEP goals

Unpacking and Using the Common Core Standards

This program is designed primarily for classroom practitioners. Participants engage in activities designed to enable them to unpack, understand, align and apply the Common Core Standards to their own professional context.

Standards Based Design

Created for schools, districts, networks and regions that have designated individuals or teams directly responsible for the design of curriculum or assessment, these programs foster a deep understanding of the Common Core Standards and other Standards (content, IB, ISTE, etc.) in the context of learner-centered curriculum and assessment design or refinement. Participants are encouraged to bring a curriculum design or alignment project, so that their learning can have direct and practical application.



Learner-Centered Initiatives works to improve education by focusing on teaching, learning and leadership practices. We use a systems approach, recognizing that changes made in one area will naturally interact with, and affect, other components and participants in the system.

At LCI, we practice the priority that our name establishes, integrating learner-centered practices into our work, engaging participants' perspectives, energy and expertise and tapping their passion for education. Our programs, products and services are customized to each clients' needs and interests. They integrate educational practices grounded in research and refined through practical field-application, as well as relevant neuroscience approaches.

We are a certified MWBE in NYS and NYC, and have been successfully helping clients since 1995.

[Contact us](#) for more information about our professional development programs, Needs Assessment, Audit, Data Analysis or Coaching and Consulting services.

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