



Resolution on Professional Learning

The Boston Teachers Union believes that successful professional learning that promotes and improves student learning and well-being requires that educators be recognized both as professionals and as learners. In accordance with this understanding, the BTU sets forth the following as standards for powerful professional learning, and through the Professional Learning Initiative aims to support, promote, and create learning experiences that are:

Relevant - In order to be relevant to educators' work, professional learning should be *job-embedded* and *role-related*, allowing educators to practice their learning over time in the authentic contexts in which they work. Relevance is also achieved by *differentiation*, with learning opportunities that respect and build upon the unique knowledge and skill of the individual educator, balancing the need to learn *specific tools and strategies* with the complementary need for *reflection* and *theoretical understanding*.

Inquiry Driven - Priorities for professional learning must be identified at the classroom level, arising from educators' *authentic challenges and questions of practice*. Where priorities are identified at the school and system level, the voice and experience of practitioners must be taken into account. The process for identifying these priorities should be *data-informed*, with questions arising from multiple sources of *qualitative and quantitative data*, especially *student-work*.

Continuous - Deep learning is unlikely to occur within the span of a short workshop or lecture, so professional learning should be designed to allow educators the opportunity to experiment with new practices, incorporate new research, and make adjustments to practice over time. Ongoing in-class support should encourage making new learning a real and effective part of practice.

Led by Educators Themselves - Wherever possible, professional learning should be facilitated by the professionals who do the work everyday, while valuing the knowledge and potential contributions of education researchers and outside experts. When qualified practitioners are not able to facilitate, professional learning should be designed to *build capacity* among educators to lead in the future.

Aligned to Principles of Adult Learning - In accordance with the best research on adult learning, professional learning should be conceived, developed, and implemented collaboratively with time made for developing *collaborative* practice among colleagues with diverse backgrounds, knowledge, and experience. These *reflective* communities of practice (physical and virtual) promote meaningful *accountability* that is developed internally while ensuring *safety* and *support* for appropriate *risk-taking and mistake-making* inherent in processes of deep learning.

Documented and Shared - Professional learning should enable educators to demonstrate what they have learned (e.g. written research or reflection, portfolio assessments, photo or video documentation) and share it with other educators in order to support their learning.