Professional Learning: 2020–2021 Evaluation Summary

Review of Implementation

Department of Research and Evaluation

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Executive Summary

This report summarizes implementation of the goals and some of the programs managed by the Professional Learning (PL) Department in the 2020–2021 academic year.

The PL Department offers a comprehensive and sustainable approach to improving staff's effectiveness by ensuring that a variety of continuous and innovative PL opportunities, aligned to the district's mission and strategic plan, is available to all staff in Austin Independent School District (AISD). PL Department staff work to develop, organize, and facilitate PL opportunities for the district, as well as identify high-quality external PL opportunities. The PL Department's expertise is available to all staff within the district who are designing a PL activity. This may include helping design the PL activity (e.g., creating content), supporting the activity (e.g., grading), organizing (e.g., social and emotional learning [SEL] symposium), assisting with developing implementation plans, and/or facilitating sessions.

Key focus areas for PL opportunities in AISD in the 2020–2021 academic year included

- induction, mentoring, and new teacher support
- blended and personalized learning,
- whole child (cultural proficiency and inclusiveness [CP&I], SEL, creative learning initiative [CLI], coordinated school health),
- mastery learning,
- and problem-based learning.

Overall, the PL Department provided a large number of PL opportunities for district staff, and continues to develop (e.g., CP&I) and refine sessions to meet the needs of district staff. In addition, the PL Department conducted critical work to ensure staff were prepared to return in person and provide instruction (e.g., curating resources for concurrent training and the reopening playlists) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff typically responded positively to PL activities available through the PL Department (e.g., program surveys), as well as available through the district (e.g., Teaching, Empowering, Learning, Leading [TELL] Survey results). Recommendations for the following academic year include:

- Working with University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) to increase the number of Student Teaching Program participants placed at Title I campuses. Examining placement from fall and spring semesters, AISD placed 53% and 56%, respectively, of participants on a Title I campus. However, only 24% and 30% of participants in the fall and spring semesters, respectively, assigned by UT Austin were placed on a Title I campus. Because the Student Teaching Program serves as a pipeline for future teachers in the district, it is important that participants are prepared to provide instruction to students with varying needs. Recommendations include (a) ensuring that UT Austin recruits more cooperating teachers from Title I campuses, as well as (b) UT Austin uses the pool of cooperating teachers recruited from Title I campuses.

- Using multiple methods to measure the impact of CP&I PL training. This may include examining Professional Pathway for Teacher (PPfT) and campus administrator performance review scores, as well as incorporating/using items on the Student Climate Survey, TELL Survey, and the Multi-Program Survey.

- Continue to use multiple method to conduct formative research to ensure PL activities are relevant and aligned, as well as to improve design (e.g., conducting think tanks and needs assessments, and using results from the TELL Survey, Family Survey, and Student Climate Survey to determine areas of needs). An analysis of TELL Survey results suggests providing more content-specific PL opportunities for fine arts teachers and 6th-grade teachers employed on elementary schools.

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Introduction

Purpose of 2020–2021 Evaluation

The purpose of the 2020–2021 evaluation was to (a) understand the work of the Professional Learning (PL) Department and (b) provide summative data on implementation and outputs.

Department Description and Goal

The PL Department includes the director of PL activities, an administrative supervisor, 4.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) PL design coordinators, a registration clerk, and an administrative assistant.

The PL Department offers a comprehensive and sustainable approach to improving staff's effectiveness by ensuring a variety of continuous and innovative PL opportunities, aligned to the district's mission and strategic plan, are available to all staff in Austin Independent School District (AISD). PL Department staff work to develop, organize, and facilitate PL opportunities for the district, as well as identify high-quality external PL opportunities.

Key focus areas for PL opportunities in AISD in the 2020–2021 academic year included

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- blended and personalized learning,

- whole child (cultural proficiency and inclusiveness [CP&I], social emotional learning [SEL], creative learning initiative [CLI], coordinated school health),

- mastery learning, and

- problem-based learning.

PL opportunities foster a growth mindset and urgency for change, which result in a meaningful change in practice. PL opportunities develop staff's capacity to design, facilitate, and support highly engaged learning and ultimately support students' achievement.

Department Design

The PL Department's vision is as follows: "AISD's Professional Learning Department creates, provides, and supports the development of equity-focused, high-quality, and accessible professional learning opportunities that are aligned to the district's strategic plan and board priorities for all AISD staff." The department works continuously to refine and create content that is relevant to current district initiatives that supports staff at all levels (e.g., no experience with topic). For example, some adaptations made for COVID-19 included creating PL opportunities that were relevant to (a) concurrent teaching and learning, (b) health and safety, (c) using district technological resources, and (4) substitute training in the 2020–2021 academic year. In addition to designing PL opportunities to build staff's capacity for pedagogy, capacity for andragogy (i.e., the method and practice of teaching adult

learners) is also a focus within the department (e.g., PL opportunities for departments that deliver PL opportunities and PL opportunities for instructional coaches [coaching connection]).

The PL Department's expertise is available to all staff within the district who are designing a PL activity. This may include helping design the PL activity (e.g., creating content), supporting the activity (e.g., grading), organizing (e.g., SEL symposium), assisting with developing implementation plans, and/or facilitating sessions.

In addition to ensuring a variety of PL opportunities are available in the district, the PL Department manages the Human Capital Platform (HCP), which houses the district's Professional Learning Management Systems and offers space to host PL activities; PL Studio, which provides staff a space for creating and editing electronic PL products; and model classrooms.

In addition to key focus areas, three targeted goals were identified for the 2020–2021 academic year:

- to provide more equitable PL opportunities for all staff members through clear learning progressions and key competencies aligned to district priorities and evaluation tools.

- to increase support for novice teachers and new hires in order to increase teacher effectiveness, satisfaction, and retention by implementing a differentiated campus-based mentoring program for up to 20 targeted campuses.

- to develop a comprehensive professional learning plan for CP&I, including required CP&I PL opportunities for staff with prioritization of campus educators, systems, campus leaders; and training for PL providers on designing and delivering PL opportunities through an equity lens.

Additionally, the PL Department continues to annually support a variety of PL activities unique to their department:

- Induction, mentoring, and new teacher support: This includes the Teacher Induction Program (TIP) activities (e.g., AISD Connect, Kick Start, TIP new teacher orientation week, TIP late-hire new teacher orientation, TIP mid-year conference) and the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program.

- National Board (NB) certification: NB certification is the highest professional credential in the field of teaching that develops staff, using self-reflection and a study of practice during the process. AISD's NB Certification Program is a two-year commitment that offers participants many resources to achieve certification. This includes monthly cohort meetings facilitated by AISD NB-certified staff, individual mentors for each participant, facilitators who assist in refining certification submissions, peer support, and funding for submissions. Similar support is provided to staff who opt to recertify; certification is valid for five years before needing to recertify. Additionally, a $2,000 stipend is available annually for certified teachers. The PL Department also coordinated the implementation of the Teacher Incentive Allotment

(TIA), which provides additional funds to those serving in teacher roles.

- Professional learning exchange days (PLED): Annually, exempt, campus-based professional staff are encouraged to exchange two non-duty days of PL activities for two regular duty days. This allows staff to have flexibility with PL activities and takes into consideration the time staff spend on PL activities outside of duty days.

- RENEW: Two duty days were included for non-exempt, campus-based staff to ensure time and access to job-related PL trainings through RENEW.

- Student Teaching Program: The Student Teaching Program offers students nearing the completion of their teacher preparation program a chance to enter classrooms and learn from an effective AISD teacher. Student teachers gain valuable experience, while cooperating teachers who host the student teachers gain mentoring experience. Student teachers are placed into AISD classrooms each semester.

- AISD EDU Conference: As a collaborative effort between AISD's PL Department, Technology and Integration, Academics and SEL, and School Leadership, a multi-day conference is offered that empowers teachers and staff to control their learning by offering a variety of sessions that are selected based on a staff's specific needs or interests.

- Coaching Connection: As a collaborative effort between AISD's PL Department and Offices of Academics and School Leadership, the Coaching Connection PL opportunity was redesigned and compulsory this year. This PL opportunity notes the importance of instructional coaches in teaching and learning and ensures coaches are prepared to support instructional staff.

- Required trainings: The PL Department manages the annual required training for all staff, newly hired staff's required training, and assists departments in the development, communication, enrollment and tracking of legal and district requirements.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of programs the PL Department manages and only includes the programs that will be highlighted for the 2020–2021 academic year. For example, the PL Department serves as a resource to the district to develop staff's ability to develop engaging PL activities, as well as works with district staff to ensure PL activities are aligned. Much of the training for PL providers is not documented in HCP; therefore, it is difficult to capture the implementation work completed related to training PL providers.

Description of 2020–2021 Program Evaluation and Support

Overview

The Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE) supports the PL Department annually on various programs of interest. This year, DRE provided program evaluation and support activities for the TIP, Student Teaching Program, and NB certification. Additionally, this report is focused on the 2020–2021 implementation work.

Evaluation Methods

2020–2021 Implementation Evaluation Process

Evaluation of the 2020–2021 PL Department implementation focused on assessing how well the department is operating in terms of its implementation activities. Questions that guided the evaluation included:

- What was the implementation work that helped reach the 2020–2021 PL Department's goals?

- What was the implementation work for the 2020–2021 PL Department's programs?

- What implementation work occurred in response to the changing needs of the district?

Results of the 2020–2021 PL Department Implementation

What was the implementation work for the 2020–2021 PL Department's goals?

Goal 1: Provide more equitable PL opportunities for all staff members through clear learning progressions and key competencies aligned to district priorities and evaluation tools

One area of improvement recognized by the PL Department includes developing a clear learning progression for staff as well as organizing it around key competencies aligned to district priorities and evaluation tools. Past feedback has indicated confusion about where to proceed after completing a PL activity (e.g., what occurs next, what is required or optional).

Playlists

Playlists were introduced this year to provide direction and goals for PL activities. Various playlists were developed, in addition to two playlists used to streamline challenges of reopening campuses for in-person instruction due to COVID-19. Playlists identified learning goals, identified success criteria, and allowed participants to check their understanding of the PL activities through a short assessment (Figure 1 and 2). Playlists are easily labeled for prospective participants to determine what their content or area of focus is, if they are PLED eligible, and if they are geared toward a particular grade or experience level.

Figure 1.

Asynchronous Reopening Playlist Example

AISD EDU
YOUR LEARNING. YOUR CHOICE. YOUR AISD.

2020-2021 Austin ISD Professional Learning
Asynchronous Reopening Playlist

Purpose: *In response to the unfolding reopening environment in Austin ISD, the district is providing an aligned professional learning (PL) experience that addresses the health and safety protocols in place as well as changes to the teaching and learning environment for staff members. This document will guide staff members through learning that is aligned with the current professional learning priorities.*

Professional Learning Priorities: As AISD reopens schools for SY 2020-2021, professional learning will be structured into four main priorities:

- **Welcome Back & Health/Safety Orientation**
- **High-Quality Online Experiences, Interaction, and Feedback**
- **Whole Child, Trauma Informed, Social Emotional Learning, and Culturally Proficient and Inclusive Practices**
- **Learning Standards to Guide the Student Experience and Communicate Progress Towards Mastery**

This Reopening Playlist provides AISD staff members with clear learning goals for each of the PL priorities, including required PL experiences ("Must Do") and choice experiences ("May Do"). These PL opportunities allow for staff to progress and develop in each of the learning areas within the 4 PL priorities.

Desired outcomes of this playlist can be described using the Learning Goals and Success Criteria below:

Learning Goals:

1. Establish Professional Learning Goals by collaborating with campus administration to prepare for reopening of school and through self-assessment and reflection.
2. Develop and/or facilitate high quality learning experiences for all students that reduce the predictability of success and failure by race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, immigration status, language, and other human differences.

Success Criteria:

1. Implement high quality learning experiences for all students that reflect progress towards identified standards and goals.
2. Communicate with and respond to feedback from families and students.
3. Continue to engage as a community of learners with campus and district colleagues.

Directions:

1. **Review the competencies/learning goals for each of the PL Priorities.**

   To create a copy of this playlist for your records, click: https://bit.ly/AISDReopeningPlaylist   1

Source. **AISD PL Department**

Figure 2.

Asynchronous Reopening Playlist Example

Learning Playlist:
May Do Playlist:

Welcome Back and Health/Safety Orientation			
Competency/Learning Goal *I can...*	**Learning Opportunities**	**Pre Self-Assessment** Scale: 1 = I need more help, please! 4 = I can apply meaningfully to my practice	**Post Self-Assessment** Scale: 1 = I need more help, please! 4 = I can apply meaningfully to my practice
❏ **I can** follow health and safety protocols and am aware of the leave and accommodation options as well as the employee wellbeing resources available to me.	**SafeSchools Courses in HCP:** • Coronavirus Awareness • Common Illness Prevention • Coronavirus: CDC Guidelines for Making & Using Cloth Face Coverings • Coronavirus: Cleaning & Disinfecting your Workplace • Coronavirus: Preparing Your Household	**Indicate Your Level of Understanding *BEFORE* Engaging in Learning.** 1 2 3 4	**Indicate Your Level of Understanding *AFTER* Engaging in Learning.** 1 2 3 4
❏ **I can** practice adult SEL practices and model them for colleagues and students.	**AISD Resources:** • Adult SEL 101 - Online Course • Mindfulness Website • Austin ISD Employee Assistance Program • Coronavirus: Managing Stress & Anxiety - HCP#45798	**Indicate Your Level of Understanding *BEFORE* Engaging in Learning.** 1 2 3 4	**Indicate Your Level of Understanding *AFTER* Engaging in Learning.** 1 2 3 4
Notes for reflection:			

Source. **AISD PL Department**

Backpacks

Backpacks were introduced this year to organize resources needed for PL activities, as well as to offer supplemental resources and information. An example of a backpack is provided in Figure 3.

Backpack Example

Coaching Backpack

This document is designed to provide you with a general outline of today's coaching session, as well as resources needed for specific topics. Please note, all resources are "force copy" documents. This means that when you click the link, you will be asked to make a copy for yourself. This copy will live in your Google Drive if you need to find it again.

Topic	Resource
Welcoming Ritual - Review of AISD Coaching Pillars and Self-Assessment	Coaching Pillars Self-Assessment
Overview: AISD Coaching Pillars in a Virtual Environment and a Global Pandemic	Coaching in a Virtual Environment Infographic
AISD Coaching Pillars in a Virtual Environment - Asynchronous Processing Time	Coaching Playlist and Reflection Guide
Whole Group Debrief	
Coaching Practice	Coaching Stems
Review of Coaching Toolkit BLEND Course	Coaching Toolkit BLEND Course
Campus Leader Goal Setting and PL Plan	Campus Leader Goal Setting and Professional Learning Plan (Download link in order to access fillable sections)

Slides from Session

Resources for Supporting Resistant Teachers

AISD Coaching Protocol
Utilizing the 5 Coaching Pillars of the AISD Coaching Framework

Source. **AISD PL Department**

Professional Learning Work Group (PLWG)

The PLWG met three times in the 2020–2021 academic year and comprised of district leaders from a number of departments who worked collaboratively toward outlining the PL calendar for the year. Sessions are used to improve the quality of PL activities, align PL activities to district initiatives, and provide updates about HCP, among other tasks (Figure 4).

Figure 4.

Example of Tasks for the PLWG to Improve the Quality of PL Activities

Instructions

Break-Out Rooms are named broadly by team, department, or organization. You will choose your break-out room and will be able to move rooms if you need to. The Professional Learning Team will be popping in the various rooms to answer questions and/or provide support as needed.

We will return to the main room at 11:20.

Action Steps

1. **Reflect** on the Professional Learning your team has offered in the past.
2. **Consider** what you have kept, tossed, changed, and added.
3. **Apply** noticings and wonderings from this morning.
4. **Use** this planning tool to help guide your professional learning offerings for next year.
5. **Upload** your final products as a pdf to the Google folder here. Please include the name of your team, department, or organization in the title of the pdf. Please have all plans uploaded into the Google folder by Friday, February 26.

Source. AISD PL Department

This year, cultural responsiveness was a focus during the PLWG. This included ensuring attendees and their teams completed the culturally responsive PL activities. The PLWG spent time reflecting on the PL activities in the meeting and available in the district, how the PL activities affected their team/department, and goals for the district. The goals included staff being able to apply a more culturally responsive lens when creating PL opportunities.

Learning Goals and Success Criteria

To align with classroom instructional expectations and provide clarity to the adult learning process, the PL Department provided clear learning progressions in PL opportunities for staff members. PL activities included a learning goal and success criteria, which indicated a clear outcome for the PL opportunity and how that outcome was achieved. For example, the reopening playlist (Figure 1) included two learning goals and three success criteria. The success criteria of the reopening playlist were to ensure staff had the capacity to provide high-quality instruction, communicate with families and students, and engage with colleagues as a community of learners.

Goal 2: Increase support for novice teachers and new hires in order to increase teacher effectiveness, satisfaction, and retention by implementing a differentiated campus-based mentoring program for up to 20 targeted campuses.

AISD's Beginning Teacher Collaborative (BTC), an extension of the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program and the TIP, was introduced this year to provide more strategic support on campuses with high levels of need/turnover.

Research showed consistent and experienced teaching staff were associated with more successful students. An analysis done by the PL Department confirmed that these trends in AISD persisted, more inexperienced and out-of-field teachers were employed at high-poverty schools, and turnover wass higher on Title I campuses than on non-Title I campuses. Therefore, schools with higher needs or turnover were identified for the BTC; the criteria included (a) campus with a 30% turnover rate or

more, (b) multiple years of above-average turnover (21% for AISD middle schools), (c) administrator experience, and (d) results based on AISD's Teaching, Empowering, Learning, Leading (TELL) Survey. The TELL Survey is administered annually and measures aspects of campus staff's opinion about campus climate (e.g., general climate, leadership, student conduct, and community support and engagement). Novice teachers employed on BTC campuses receive support from both the BTC and the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program.

The overall goal of BTC was to:

- grow and retain strong and highly effective teachers at the highest-need campuses

- differentiate and strengthen capacity to mentor and provide support for novice teachers

- increase the amount of campus-specific support

- develop a sense of community for AISD novice teachers

The logistics of the program were finalized in the 2020–2021 academic year, and implementation work for BTC began late in the year; therefore, work related to implementation was not included in this report. Planned BTC implementation work in the future will include campus leadership meetings, mentor meetings, direct coaching support, and monthly newsletters; however, work may change to improve the program as feedback is received.

Overall, the PL Department supported a total of 18 campuses with additional, targeted mentoring support. The PL Department supported four middle school campuses, and through a partnership with the University of Texas at Austin, provided support to 14 elementary campuses as well. See Appendix A for a list of BTC campuses. The PL Department applied for and was awarded additional funding to support BTC through the Mentoring Program Allotment Cycle 2 for the 2021–2022 academic year.

Goal 3: Develop a comprehensive professional learning plan for CP&I, including required CP&I PL opportunities for staff, with prioritization of campus educators, systems, and campus leaders; and training for PL providers on designing and delivering PL activities through an equity lens.

CP&I is part of the AISD overarching PL design and support plan; therefore, a number of learning PL sessions have been developed that focus on equity and CP&I. PL opportunities are designed to develop staff at various levels and positions within AISD, as well as various levels of capacity, to implement CP&I in their work. A number of CP&I-focused PL sessions have also been embedded into the annual sequence of PL activities for teachers, campus leaders, department leaders, and support staff. For example, Whole Child, Equity, and CP&I PL sessions were embedded in the learning sequence for all teachers and all campus leaders in the 2020–2021 academic year, while staff entering into principal positions in AISD were required to attend a Beyond Diversity I (Courageous Conversations & Pacific
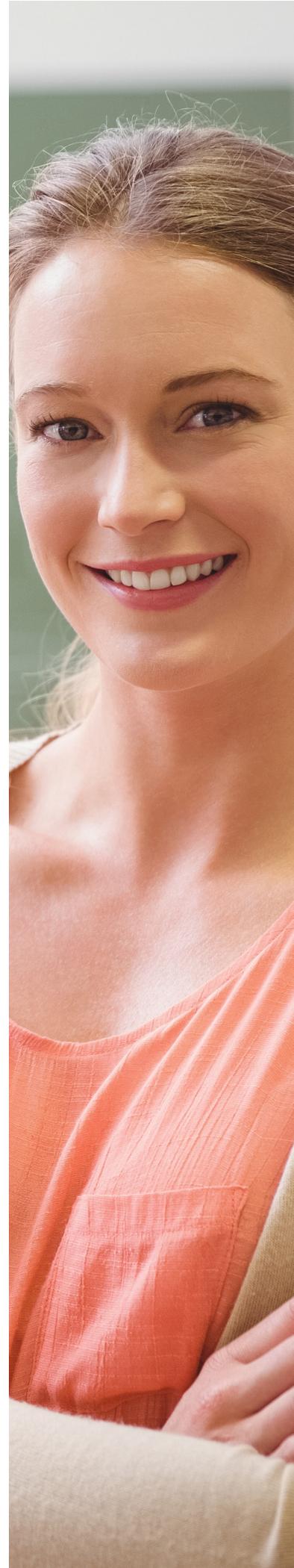
Education Group) workshop. An optional PL option titled AISD Equity Summit was available to all staff, and staff can opt-in and complete a Professional Pathway for Teacher (PPfT) Leadership Pathway focused on CP&I.

It is important to note that a number of PL sessions available increase capacity/ awareness for CP&I although that is not the focus of the session, so it is difficult to create an exhaustive list of PL sessions offered related to CP&I. Table 1 shows a sample of CP&I implementation activities; see Appendix B for a larger inventory of CP&I PL opportunities available to staff from AISD.

Table 1.

CP&I/Equity PL Sessions Embedded Into Staff Learning Sequence

Series	PL session	Metric
AISD Reopening Professional Learning	**- Cultural proficiency and Inclusiveness** **- Using Your Voice for Equity** **- Road to Equity is Paved with Emotions** **- Supporting Transgender and Nonbinary Students** **- Restorative Practices**	**1,623 attendees**
AISD EDU's Personalized Learning Conference	**- Equity Keynote** **- Micromessaging to Build Community** **- Inclusive Practices** **- Moving Beyond Kindness: Genius, Joy, Justice** **- Responsive Classroom** **- Speak Up: How to Respond to Everyday Bias, Prejudice, and Stereotypes**	**1,561 attendees**
TIP Welcome Week	**- Equity Keynote** **- CP&I introduction** **- Whole Child/Mindfulness introduction**	**519 attendees**
Leadership Institute	**- Equity keynote & panel including Dr. Terrence Greene, Dr. Stephanie Hawley, Dr. Mark Gooden, Dr. Anthony Brown** **- Cultivating Community, Culture and Climate for Racial Equity & Inclusiveness** **- Deconstructing Racism and Leadership for Racial Equity**	**500 attendees**
Anti-Racist Leadership Series	**- Anti-racist Leadership & Campus/Departmental Planning**	**146 attendees**
Ongoing Equity Office and CP&I Professional Learning	**- Community Retreats** **- Engaging Marginalized Communities** **- Using Your Voice for Equity** **- Deconstructing Racism** **- Culturally Responsive Restorative Practices** **- Decolonizing the Curriculum** **- Examining the Presence and Role of Whiteness in Education**	**Ongoing**

Source. **AISD PL Department and HCP records**
Note. **This is not an exhaustive list as numbers may not include campus-based PL sessions related to CP&I and equity (e.g., book studies, other team and individual learning).**

The number of staff who attended at least one CP&I/Equity PL session recorded in HCP has increased substantially since the 2018 calendar year (Table 2). As of the 2020 calendar year, 6,875 staff attended at least one CP&I/Equity PL session; as this information relates to calendar year, data for 2021 are still being collected and are

unavailable currently. The number of PL sessions related to CP&I/Equity is likely higher, as staff may have attended multiple different PL activities related to this topic throughout the year.

Table 2.

There was a 138% increase in the number of staff who attended at least one session related to CP&I/Equity from the 2019 calendar year to the 2020 calendar year.

Calendar year	# of staff	% change
2017	1,422	
2018	1,645	16% increase
2019	2,884	75% increase
2020	6,875	138% increase
2021		Ongoing

Source. AISD PL Department and HCP records
Note. This is not an exhaustive list as numbers may not include campus-based PL sessions related to CP&I and equity (e.g., book studies, other team and individual learning).

In addition, multiple new PL sessions are already in development for the following academic year or opened in late Spring 2021. The PL Department is working with multiple departments (e.g., Office of Equity, Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness, Talent Acquisition) to prioritize PL efforts related to CP&I and educational equity and to develop self-reflection tools that have a clear learning progression related to CP&I for staff. Table 3 shows a summary of additional equity and CP&I PL sessions; sessions are not exhaustive.

Table 3.

PL Opportunities in Development by Audience Served

Audience	PL session	Timeline
All staff	- Be a Beacon Part 1: Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth 101 - Be a Beacon Part 2: Interrupting Bullying & Harassment of LGBTQIA+ Youth (Online Courses in Collaboration with Out Youth)	April 2021–ongoing
	- Intro to Equity - Developing Common Language - Identity - White Supremacy Culture - Engaging Communities with Marginalized Identities	Fall 2021–ongoing
Board of Trustees and executive leadership	Scope of PL activity in development in collaboration with Equity Office (Consideration of Beyond Diversity I/II and Internal Offerings)	Fall 2021
New to AISD teachers	Year-Long Learning Progression on Culturally Responsive Teaching	Fall 2021–May 2022
Departments providing PL opportunities	Culturally Responsive Professional Learning Design	Spring 2020–ongoing

Source. AISD PL Department and HCP records
Note. This is not an exhaustive list as numbers may not include campus-based PL sessions related to CP&I and equity (e.g., book studies, other team and individual learning).

What is the implementation work for some of the 2020–2021 PL Department programs?

Induction, mentoring, and new teacher support

Induction, mentoring, and new teacher support include various components, such as the TIP Welcome Week (a week-long professional learning opportunity to onboard teachers new to the district); the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program; AISD CONNECT, which includes various PL opportunities (e.g., Kick Start sessions (1.5 hour summer PL sessions for new hires to learn about AISD programs, such as PPfT and technology design]), and ongoing support and PL opportunities throughout the academic year.

The TIP Mid-Year Conference is a new PL opportunity hosted this year on January 23, 2021, to offer additional support to novice teachers. Topics covered at the TIP Mid-Year Conference included building relationships with students, concurrent teaching, differentiating for bilingual students, PPfT appraisal for new teachers, optimizing your mentorship experience, teaching in Zoom, differentiation for students with specials needs, rules of engagement and our new norm, bringing the instructional playbook to life, and professional learning communities (PLCs) based on grade level.

Unlike in previous years, the TIP Welcome Week was delivered in an entirely virtual format. The change to a virtual format produced positive changes and challenges with these professional learning opportunities. One challenge was that a short portion of the TIP Welcome Week sessions was dedicated to providing necessary employment items (e.g., badges, orientation packets, AISD-branded items, personal synchronous contact with each teacher new to the district). However, the PL delivery change also ensured a more strategic debrief time for each session, as well as a competency based training model.

Conducted through Zoom sessions, the TIP Welcome Week included a mix of synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Additionally, opportunities were built for teachers new to the district to attend the AISD personalized learning conference, which provided a more personalized learning experience for teachers to select sessions on topics for which they may need more support.

Table 4 shows the implementation activities for induction, mentoring, and new teacher support.

Table 4.

Implementation Work for Induction, Mentoring, and New Teacher Support

Activity	Session	Metric
TIP Welcome Week	- 1 trainer-of-trainer PL session	- 60 trained facilitators
	- 4 days of PL activities for relevant staff new to AISD	- 519 staff who are new to the district
TIP Late Teacher Orientation	- 1 asynchronous BLEND PL session	- 238 staff
TIP Mid-Year Conference	- 1 PL session	- 79 staff
Novice Teacher Mentoring Program (including BTC campus)	- 1 BLEND PL session for mentors	- 120 LMTCs
	- 1 BLEND PL session for lead mentor teacher contacts (LMTC)	- 463 mentors currently assigned novice teacher (some mentors were assigned more than one novice teacher)
	- LMTC provides 1 beginning- and 1 middle-of-year meeting with novices and mentors to review program expectations.	
		- 530 novice teachers supported
Kick Start sessions	- 4 PL sessions	- 113 attendees over four sessions
	Teams represented at each session included Academics and SEL, Employee Effectiveness, PL Department, and Technology Design team.	
AISD CONNECT	5 PL sessions	- 34 attendees
	• Introduction to BLEND (Canvas learning management system)	- 27 unique attendees
	• Who CARES about effective communication and how it leads to equitable outcomes?	
	• CONNECT with the Professional Resource Library to Discover eBooks & Audiobooks	
	• Connect with the Professional Resource Library	
	• Self-Reflection and Self-Care	

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Overall, 97% of TIP Welcome Week survey respondents indicated they planned to implement the strategies that were modeled in training. With regard to the TIP mid-year conference, 87% selected a 4 or 5 (1 = not valuable; 5 = extremely valuable) when responding to the item "How valuable was the session?". Eighty-nine percent of respondents indicated the Kick Start sessions were helpful; all respondents chose between a 3 and 5 (1 = not helpful; 5 = extremely helpful) when responding to the item "How helpful was the session?"

The majority of respondents to the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program survey (n = 230) for novice teachers indicated a positive experience with the district's mentoring program. Table 5 shows a sample of results from the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program Survey for novice teachers; for example, 90% of respondents indicated the quality of mentoring support was sufficient to meet their needs. Additionally, over half (57%) of novice teachers met with their mentor once per week or more.

Table 5.

Novice Teacher Mentoring Program Survey Novice Teacher Results

Item	Percentage agree/strongly agree
Your mentor was able to address your needs with regard to questions and concerns around campus policies and procedures.	96%
Your mentor was able to address your needs with regard to instructional practice and resources.	95%
Your mentor was able to address your needs with regard to classroom management.	93%
The quality of mentoring support was sufficient to meet your needs as a novice teacher.	90%
The quantity of time spent with your mentor was sufficient to meet your needs as a novice teacher.	88%

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Four hundred and sixteen mentors also responded to a survey regarding their experience. Overall, 98% strongly agreed or agreed that the middle-of-year meeting was beneficial. Additionally, mentors found program emails (90%) and mentor toolkits (45%) were the most beneficial support for their mentoring practice.

National Board Certification

The district had 221 NB-certified staff employed as of March 2021. Staff enrolled in the NB Certification Program will be referred to as candidates in this section. AISD's NB Certification Program is a two-year process with a number of support components for the program candidates, including:

- Mentors: Mentors are available to offer support on a regular basis. Candidates are provided a mentor for the duration of the program.

- Facilitators: Facilitators are available to help proctor/refine candidates' training sessions, as well as to offer support to the candidates and to review candidate deliverable.

- Course fees: AISD provides funding for the four components, up to $1,900, which are submitted to the National Board for Professional Standards (NBfPS).

Table 6 shows implementation activities for the AISD NB Certification Program.

Table 6.

Forty-six PL sessions were conducted for NB certification candidates this year.

Component	Process output	Metric
Candidate training	- 46 PL lessons	- 636 attendees - 62 unique attendees
	- 7 renewal cohort PL	- 212 attendees - 34 unique attendees
Facilitator training	1 PL sessions	- 7 attendees
Mentor training	2 PL sessions	- 32 attendees

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Twenty-three candidates continued the NB Certification Program (e.g., continued to attend PL activities, submitted deliverables to NPfPS from last year's cohort. Thirty candidates are working on their renewing their certification; staff typically receive their certification at the beginning of the spring semester.

The application process for the 2021–2022 academic year began in February 2021. This year, 77 people applied to be in the NB Certification Program, 64 were eligible, and the top 36 selected; due to additional funding provided by TIA to support the NB certification process, the size of the initial cohort was increased from 30 to 36.

Professional Learning Exchange Days

A total of 328 PLED-eligible sessions were offered through HCP; staff could also submit PL opportunities that were not provided by AISD. PL opportunities that qualified as PLED eligible were approved at the discretion of the principals to ensure PL opportunities completed were relevant to the needs of the campus. Staff were able to complete PL activities for PLED for the 2020–2021 academic year from May 30, 2020, until March 31, 2021.

PL Department staff actively monitored PLED Completion status and provided monthly updates to principals and PLED-eligible staff members regarding PLED completion status. PLED-eligible PL activities taken during the allotted time period were as follows:

- Ninety-eight percent of staff used their eligible PLED days. A total of 5,836 staff were eligible to complete PLED this year. as of January 1, 2021; this accounted for staff who resigned or new staff; 147 did not complete their PLED hours.

- About 10% (*n* = 3,657) of courses were labeled external PL activity requests; however, further analysis indicated a large number of the external PL courses taken were provided by AISD.

- Of PLED-eligible courses taken through a district PL session (n = 31,248), the largest percentage of staff attended PL opportunities sponsored by the Talent Acquisition and Development Department (29%), followed by courses from the SEL Department (27%; Table 8). Overall, 38% of courses submitted

AISD supports a new cohort of 30 candidates for NB certification each semester. In the 2021–2022 academic year, 36 candidates were selected, due to the additional funding provided by the TIA. The application selection process to select the candidates for the following academic year typically begins in the spring. To qualify for the program a staff should

- be employed as a teacher, librarian, or counselor;
- hold a bachelor's degree;
- have 3 full years of teaching or school counseling experience; and
- have a valid state teaching or school counseling license.

The application includes a written submission and principal's recommendation, which are reviewed and scored by the PL Department. Additionally, various forms of campus status are taken into account to ensure future NB-certified staff are represented on all campuses. Years of service is used as a tiebreak if needed. Each application is scored on the criteria shown in Table 7.

Table 7.

Criteria for Scoring NB-Certification Applications

Criteria	Points
Written submission	5
Principal recommment-dation	5
low NB-certified teachers represented campus	1
Title I campus status	1
Improvement required campus status	1

Source. AISD PL Department

that fulfilled PLED requirements was for the AISD EDU Personalized Learning Conference and Three Signature SEL Practices in BLEND.

Twenty-nine percent of PLED credits completed through an AISD PL opportunity were listed under the Talent Acquisition and Development sponsor.

Sponsor	Percentage
Talent Acquisition & Development	29%
Social & Emotional Learning	26%
Advanced Academic Services	10%
Integrated Technology	9%
Special Education	6%
Early Childhood	5%
Human Resources	4%
Bilingual Education	3%
Child Study Systems	2%
Library Media Center Department	2%
504 Services	1%
Language Ats Department	1%
Fine Arts	1%
Other	2%

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Overall, PLED completion rates were higher in the 2021 academic year than last year (98% and 94% respectively). The PL Department continuously works to refine the PLED Program to ensure a smooth process for eligible staff members. As in previous years, the PL Department made improvements to their data-tracking process. The PL Department also works to ensure flexibility for the varying expectations of campus administrators. However, confusion remains regarding what is PLED eligible and what is captured in HCP.

RENEW

RENEW was available to non-exempt, campus-based staff to ensure they had access to high-quality PL opportunities relevant to their position. Non-exempt, campus-based staff (classified) included positions such as administrative assistants, accounting technicians, clerks, library assistants, library clerks, registrars, teaching assistants, graduation coaches, and parent support specialists, among others.

Non-exempt, campus-based staff were not scheduled to work on PLED, and additional days were added in the beginning of the year to account for PL sessions completed by these staff. These employees attended PL sessions on the 2nd and 3rd day they were scheduled to work in the academic year. Staff members worked with administrators to determine their learning plan outside of the required sessions. Job-specific learning sequences were developed to ensure staff were trained for their specific role.

Table 9 lists required implementation activities related to the RENEW program for

non-exempt, campus-based staff. Because sessions were available to all staff (not just classified staff), specifics related to the number of attendees are not included in the following section, as numbers may be inflated.

Table 9.

Required PL Activities for Classified Staff for RENEW

Audience	Topic	Session title
All staff	**- Reopening**	**- Welcome Back and Safety Orientation Training**
	- Trauma-informed practices and AISD communication tools and resources	**- Trauma-Informed Practices** **- AISD Communication Tools and Resources**
- Returning staff: all three sessions	**Customer service**	**- Creating an Exceptional Customer Service Experience Online** **- CARES Certificate Training**
- New to AISD staff: at least two sessions		**- Customer Service for Teachers and Other Staff: Communicating with Parents and Caregivers**
Teacher assistants	**Culturally responsive instruction**	**- Developing Culturally Responsive Instruction**

Source. AISD PL Department data

Table 10 shows the learning sequence for PL activities for each job role completed during the RENEW days. Because sessions were available to all staff (not just RENEW eligible staff), specifics related to the number of attendees were not included in the following section, as numbers may be inflated.

Table 10.

Sequence of Position-Relevant PL Activities Completed During RENEW Days

Audience	Day 1	Day 2	Other
- Bookkeepers **- Administrative assistants**	**- Required and choice online courses**	**- CARES/Let's Talk** **- Registration**	**- DocuSign online course**
- Attendance clerks **- Elementary clerks** **- Registrars** **- PEIMS clerks** **- Front desk clerks**	**- Required and choice online courses**	**- CARES/Let's Talk** **- Registration**	**- Attendance reporting**
- Special education teaching assistants	**- Paraprofessional Roles & Responsibilities - Essentials for System Year 2020–2021** **- AcceliPLAN for Paraprofessionals** **- Procedural safeguards, Individualized Education Program (IEP) compliance essentials, restraint & seclusion essentials**	**- AcceliPLAN Implementation & Follow-Up** **- Paraprofessional Roles & Responsibilities - Essentials for System Year 2020–2021 Follow UO** **- Special Education Instructional Service Guidance for Continuous Learning**	**- Exceptional child library and other online resources (new to district/program or paraprofessionals for special education programs)**

Audience	Day 1	Day 2	Other
- Multilingual education teaching assistant	- AISD bilingual/English as a second language programs and design - Menu of choice provided during the 3 hours of synchronous time.	- Emergent bilingual instructional strategies - Menu of choice provided during the 3 hours of synchronous time	
- Early childhood education teaching assistants	- Trauma-based relational intervention	- Seesaw	- Power of Language - Families and Educators Supporting Learning at Home or Math Talk Matters - Meaningful Conversations or Promoting Social Emotional Development in Young Children
- DELTA teaching assistants	- All required online courses through HCP - Equity discussion with Shane Whalley	- Continued professional development on the Odysseyware online credit recovery program	
- Child care workers	All required online courses through HCP - Review COVID-19 protocols for child care found on the Texas Health and Human Services child care licensing website	- Health and safety training related to COVID-19 through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension	
- Parent support specialists	- Assisting with registration - Customer service, diversity, AISD communications tool and resources	- Culturally responsive family and community engagement standards of practice	
- Library clerks	All required online courses through HCP	- Digital Resources for Kindergarten-12: Learning in the Age of COVID or READ WOKE: 5 Ways to Identify a #READWoke Book and 3 #OwnVoices Authors to Diversify Your Collections - 2 PL sessions related to AISD digital resources: - District Digital Resources overview - Library Distance Learning Development: Introduction to World Book Online - E-Book Dating Game - District Digital Resources for Humanities	

Audience	Day 1	Day 2	Other
- Graduation coaches	- Empathy presentation - New attendance requirements - 5Lab BLEND engagement report - Virtual positive home visit - Required district online training	- Using eCST to support American Disability Act documentation, - Truancy prevention grant SSS virtual student/family engagement - Dropout recovery case studies	- Data and relationships to support transitions to school - Engaging students and families during COVID-19
- Security guards/In school suspension monitors			- Required district online training - Other training as directed by campus principal
- Custodians - Food services - Transportation services			- Reopening plans, standards, safety and cleaning protocols TBD by Department

Source. AISD PL Department data
Note. Other includes PL activities relevant to that audience that can be completed on either day.

Student Teaching Program

AISD's Student Teaching Program partners with various universities, colleges, and alternative certification programs to provide students preparing to enter the teaching profession with experience in a classroom environment. Additionally, the Student Teaching Program can serve as a teacher pipeline for the district; 86% of respondents in the spring cohort for the Student Teaching Program Survey indicated they were interested in employment in AISD. Student teachers and interns have the opportunity to gain valuable experience working in and making professional connections in an urban school district. For cooperating teachers who host a student teacher/intern in their classroom, the student teaching experience provides an opportunity to develop their mentoring capacity.

Historically, there have been fewer student teachers during the fall semester than the spring semester; this is likely because many student teachers complete their practicum during the last semester of the program, which typically ends in spring. Additionally, the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) completes its own recruitment and placement for its student teachers, which may affect the placement characteristics.

Table 11 shows implementation of activities for the Student Teaching Program.

Table 11.

Implementation Work for the Student Teaching Program

Semester	Metric	Characteristic

Fall 2020	- 118 total student teachers and interns (may have been placed in multiple classrooms)
	  • 42 enrolled in UT Austin
	  • 78 enrolled in another teacher preparation program
	
	- 273 teachers expressed interest in hosting (number may be higher as UT Austin does its own recruitment and placements)
	
	- 252 attended student teacher orientation (may include university supervisors, coordinators, and other stakeholders)
	
	- Student teachers completed the Student Teacher: Access to AISD Technology Systems' PL session
		Level
		  • 54% elementary school
		  • 15% middle school
		  • 31% high school
		
		Title I
		  • 42% placed on at least one Title I campus
		  • 53% Title I placements by AISD
		  • 24% Title I placements by UT Austin

Spring 2021	- 256 total student teachers and interns (may have been placed in multiple classrooms)
	  • 177 enrolled in UT Austin
	  • 79 enrolled in another teacher preparation program
	
	- 219 teachers expressed interest in hosting (number may be higher as UT Austin does its own recruitment and placements)
	
	- 338 attended student teacher orientation (may include university supervisors, coordinators, and other stakeholders)
	
	- Student teachers completed the Student Teacher: Access to AISD Technology Systems' PL session
		Level
		  • 54% elementary school
		  • 16% middle school
		  • 30% high school
		
		Title I
		  • 38% placed on at least one Title I campus
		  • 56% Title I placements by AISD
		  • 30% Title I placements by UT Austin

Source. AISD PL Department data

A survey was conducted with the spring cohort; the fall cohort was not given the survey. Overall, respondents to the Student Teaching Program Survey indicated a positive experience with their placement (n = 95%) and would recommend their cooperating teacher for placement in the future (95%). The Cooperating Teacher Survey indicated that the majority of respondents (91%) would recommend the student teacher/intern for employment with the district to their principal. Additionally, several cooperating teachers indicated that the Student Teaching Program was mutually beneficial to them because they were able to learn new practices and gather new viewpoints.

AISD EDU Conference (Personalized Learning Conference)

The first AISD EDU Conference was hosted in the 2019–2020 academic year. The PL Department partners with Technology Integration, Academics, SEL, and School Leadership to create this multi-day conference, which empowers participants to control their own learning. The conference celebrates teaching and learning, and participants are able to cultivate new skills and knowledge and garner new resources based on their needs, meet instructional leaders, and collaborate and build relationships with district staff. This year, the conference featured sessions aligned with (a) whole child, (b) literacy/biliteracy, (c) differentiating and personalizing content and curriculum, and (d) CP&I. However, sessions were available for a variety of topics, such as informational sessions regarding the PPfT appraisal system. Campus-based exempt staff were able to receive PLED credits for attending the conference.

There were a total of 2,106 unique attendees. A breakdown of attendees by day indicates that more than 1,500 attended on the second and third day of the conference (Table 12).

Table 12.
The conference had the highest number of participants on August 4.

Class date	# of attendees
08/03/2020 (PM sessions only)	783
08/04/2020	1,833
08/05/2020	1,538

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

The first day of the conference featured a keynote session titled Moving Beyond Kindness: Genius, Joy, Justice. Overall, 207 sessions were scheduled on Tuesday and Wednesday. There were 130 unique sessions conducted, with 165 unique facilitators. Ninety-five percent of scheduled sessions were conducted. The majority of sessions ($n = 60$) were related to personalization and blended learning, followed by sessions related to student agency ($n = 58$), differentiation and mastery ($n = 51$), and CP&I ($n = 38$).

Sixty-two percent of attendees were at the elementary level, 17% at the middle school level, 17% at the high school level, 4% were central office staff; <1% were from special campuses or were missing an assigned location. Additionally, 91% of attendees were teachers, 3% were librarians, 2% were counselors, 1% were coaches/specialists, and the remaining 3% had other roles.

Coaching Connection

The Coaching Connection PL series was created due to the lack of training available for coaching staff that focused on improving the coaching practice. The PL Department partnered with the Office of School Leadership this year to refine the Coaching Connection PL opportunity. This included ensuring content was aligned with AISD's Office of School Leadership, Academics office, Human Capital Department, overall district vision, and coaching best practices (e.g., work from Jim

Knight, Elena Aguilar, Joellen Killion, and Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, who are leaders in the educator coaching and leadership field). The PL series included:

- A review of the five AISD coaching pillars (i.e., trust and relationships; positive presuppositions; active listening; pause, paraphrase, pose questions; powerful feedback) and coaching protocols

- Unpacking standards and curriculum documents

- Data-driven instruction and PLCs

- Formative assessment

- Observation and feedback

- Self-assessments

- AISD coaching pillars in a virtual environment and a global pandemic training

- Coaching practice

The spring semester had five Coaching Connection sessions. All sessions contained coaching practice based on the pillars and best practices developed by the PL Department. Table 13 shows implementation activities for the Coaching Connection PL series.

Table 13.
Implementation Work for the Coaching Connection PL Series

Topic	Metric
- Unpacking blueprints, yearly planning guides (YPG), and unpacking the essential standards - Observation and feedback	88 attendees
- Formative assessment - Data-driven instruction	63 attendees
- Formative assessment - Observation and feedback	50 attendees
- Mastery learning - Data-driven instruction and PLCs - instructional coaching	53 attendees
- PLCs - Reflection, planning, and goal setting	55 attendees

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Feedback surveys were administered at the end of each session. Examining results from a session relating to formative assessment, 43 attendees provided feedback and 91% strongly agreed/agreed that the content provided applied to their current role. Responses were also positive to the statements "I found value in engaging in practicing coaching conversations with my colleagues" (84%) and "I found value in investigating the learning goals and success criteria and engaging in a self-assessment" (89%). Respondents suggested that they found value in the session allowing them to practice coaching skills (e.g., actively listening) and learning from other coaches.

Other PL Activities

In addition to the programs highlighted in the section above, the following section highlights other activities the PL Department was involved with in the 2020–2021 academic year; however, this list is not exhaustive.

Lessons From the Field Podcast

A podcast was created in which AISD staff share their experience and how continuous PL shapes their work. This year, episodes included topics such as TIP, distance learning, and mindfulness. In 2020–2021, a total of 32 episodes were created, from episode 9 to episode 40 (prior episodes were created in 2019–2020). A total of 46 speakers across 34 departments/campuses captured experience from a variety of environments. See Appendix C for a list of podcast episodes. The lessons from the field podcasts are hosted on numerous platforms to ensure accessibility (e.g., Anchor, Apple, Android). Usage information on each episode is unavailable because the PL Department only has information from Anchor; therefore, this is not included in this evaluation.

Substitute Teacher PL

This PL was created in response to the increasing need for substitute teachers during the 2020–2021 academic year. The PL Department collaborated with various departments (e.g., Talent Acquisition and Development, Management Information Systems, Academics, and Technology Design) to develop this course. The substitute teacher PL opportunity was a 3-hour training that primed substitute teachers on how to prepare and substitute a class, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics in this session included using Zoom, accessing the AISD portal, navigating and using BLEND, taking attendance, and using Google tools.

Overall, 635 substitutes were trained through this course. The PL opportunity was originally a synchronous session; however, it was redesigned to be used as an asynchronous course as well for substitutes to use in future academic years.

Special Education PL

In 2020–2021, the PL Department collaborated with the Special Education Department to help coordinate PL activities for special education personnel. For example, a sequence of PL activities for special education teacher assistants was included in the RENEW program. Additionally, this year, the special education conference was aligned with the AISD personalized learning conference, reducing the number of days a staff member may have had to spend on PL activities.

Supporting Distanced Learning and Reopening

A variety of PL activities were developed to support distance learning and reopening; therefore, it is difficult to capture all the implementation activities in this report. The following section highlights some of the many activities conducted in support of distance learning and reopening (e.g., formative research, a 4-day reopening EDU, concurrent training PL activities, and the reopening playlist) but it is not exhaustive.

Formative Research

Various tools were used to gather information to help inform design to ensure future PL opportunities aree relevant to the needs of staff. A survey was administered to teachers in spring 2020; the results informed PL development for the summer and the 2020–2021 academic year. For example, results were used to guide the Kick Start sessions and novice teacher mentoring support. Five think tanks were hosted with teachers and classified staff members to take an equity by design approach when designing future PL opportunities. Additionally, daily task force meetings with representatives from multiple departments were conducted over the summer to develop the four priorities for future PL activities:

1. Welcome back and health/safety orientation

2. High-quality online experiences, interactions, and feedback

3. Whole child, trauma informed, SEL, and CP&I practices

4. Learning standards to guide students' experiences and communicate progress toward mastery

Reopening Playlist

Two reopening playlists were created to consolidate the required training (e.g., attendance taking procedures) and optional resources that staff have access to from the district to increase staff capacity to provide instruction (e.g., concurrent teaching PL activities, technology support). One highlight of the various support pieces the PL Department created for reopening was the welcome back and safety orientation PL activity, which ensures staff are aware of protocols to ensure staff, students, and families are safe when returning to campus. Technology was also a theme for PL activities; this included information about available technological resources for staff, as well as support to develop staff's capacity to use technology tools.

Table 14 shows implementation activities from the reopening playlist related to required training. Additionally, the reopening playlist includes a list of optional resources that may be useful for staff (Table 15); resources include district-provided PL courses in HCP, BLEND courses, district resources (e.g., CP&I newsletter), and external websites (e.g., map assessment). Table 15 displays the number of optional resources included in the reopening playlist, as opposed to the number of users, because identifying usage information for the categories is difficult.

Table 14.

Mandatory PL Sessions in Preparation for School Reopening

Session	Metric (unique attendees)
Welcome Back and Safety Orientation (all staff)	8,312
Attendance Taking Procedures (all teachers)	5,666
Civil Rights in Food Service (legal requirement for all teachers)	4,824
3 Signature SEL Practices (all teachers)	4,260
Accessing Online Courses and Curriculum Materials Introduction (all teachers)	4,095
Shifts to Mastery Learning: Progress Monitoring and Feedback (all teachers)	3,826
Open for Learning: AISD Reopening Guide to Support and Connect Our School Community	2,679
Go Guardian (teachers grade 3-12)	1,920

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data

Table 15.

Number of Optional Resources Provided in the Reopening Playlist

Topic	Competencies	Type	# of resources
Welcome back and health/safety orientation	- I can follow health and safety protocols and am aware of the leave and accommodation options as well as the employee well-being resources available to me. - I can practice adult SEL practices and model them for colleagues and students.	HCP	7
		AISD resource	2
		External website	1
High-quality online experiences, interaction, and feedback	- I can create an accessible and developmentally appropriate digital environment. - I can support student and family digital competency, including safe and responsible practices online. - I can develop synchronous, asynchronous, online, and offline experiences that incorporate the high leverage personalization strategies.	BLEND	9
		HCP	4
		AISD resource	5
		External website	5
Whole child, trauma informed, SEL, and CP&I Practices	- I can focus on learning about myself as a racialized being with a unique worldview that impacts my ability to create and nurture an inclusive classroom. - I can build relationships virtually and/or in person and implement SEL practices in my classroom. - I can create identity safe, brave spaces for all learners, ultimately expanding and deepening equitable SEL. - I can meet the basic relationship and developmental needs of students dealing with trauma,;my own needs as a teacher; and the needs of other adults who seek to help them heal, learn, and grow.	BLEND	1
		HCP	6
		AISD resource	6
		External website	6
		Webinar series	1
Learning standards to guide the student experience and communicate progress towards mastery	- I can describe the importance of communication of clear learning goals for students, families, and teachers, and communicate student progress using a common learning reflection guide. - I can collaborate with my campus community by applying PLC best practices with the goal of improving student outcomes.	BLEND	2
		HCP	5
		AISD resource	2
		External website	5

Source. AISD PL Department data and AISD HCP data
Note. Resources may include suggested PL sessions, blog posts, and informational websites.

Reopening Learning EDU Conference

The Reopening Learning EDU Conference was developed in response to the two-week delay in the class start date in fall 2021. The conference was developed in three weeks and included four days of additional PL activities provided by the PL Department to ensure all instructional staff were prepared for school reopening. The conference was created to provide intentional training with PL activities aligned to immediate needs of the teaching and learning environment of the 2020–2021 academic year; PL activities were centered around the four main priorities.

The reopening conference was structured to include one day of on-campus-provided PL activities on August 18. District-provided PL activities were provided to instructional staff on all campuses with PL activities for six vertical teams on August 19 and 20, and another set of district-provided PL activities was provided on August 21 and 24.

Concurrent Teaching

The PL Department worked to develop a training and toolkit of resources related to concurrent teaching to address the needs of the teaching and learning environment in the beginning of the academic year. Designing the concurrent teaching resources required hundreds of personnel hours and included activities such as videoing classrooms, identifying and coordinating resources, editing, and contextualizing the content in the toolkit and PL session.

Overall, the resources provided staff with an overview of steps and considerations for designing and facilitating within a concurrent classroom. For example, resources developed included a sample of a station rotation model and sample dual-language kindergarten through grade 5 schedules. Other PL activities were suggested, such as the BLEND courses Individualized instruction for students with Special Needs and AISD EduDisplay. A list of resources was also compiled from outside sources, such as a blog post related to Teaching in a hybrid classroom. The flyer posed thoughtful questions, such as "How might you pull ideas from multiple models to meet your needs?" , "How could you use a management system like GoGuardian or Jamf to help you monitor and assist all students on devices?", and "What types of routines will you need to establish for your learners to develop consistency and ease transitions?" The concurrent teaching resources were disseminated through email to staff.

Additionally, 230 staff enrolled in a BLEND course for deeper learning regarding implementing a concurrent classroom.

What were some barriers to participating in PL activities?

The PL Department has received anecdotal accounts that indicated time as a limitation to participating in PL activities. For example, not enough substitutes/funds for substitutes were available for campus staff to complete PL activities that occur during duty time, as well as additional time spent preparing for instruction due to changes in the teaching and learning environment. Additionally, a large amount of PL sessions were required by the district, which may have reduced staff member's

ability to complete elective PL activities.

Overall, as indicated by the TELL Survey, 89% of respondents indicated they had an appropriate amount of time for PL activities. Seventy-nine percent indicated an appropriate amount of time for PL activities in their primary content area. Additionally, examining further, teachers who taught fine arts and 6th-grade teachers employed on elementary campus had the lowest level of agreement regarding feeling that PL activities were offered in their primary content area. Ninety-one percent of respondents indicated that sufficient resources were available for PL activities in their campus.

What were campus staff's perception of PL activity available?

Examining results from the TELL Survey, respondents generally responded positively regarding PL activities (Table 16). Ninety-one percent indicated PL activities enhances teachers' ability to improve student learning, and 92% indicated PL activities enhanced teachers' ability to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student learning needs.

Table 16.

The majority of respondents responded positively to items related to PL activities on the TELL Survey.

Item	Percentage agree/strongly agree
Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to improve student learning.	91%
Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student learning needs.	92%
Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.	96%
Professional learning opportunities are aligned with the school's improvement plan.	94%
Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers.	83%
Professional development deepens teachers' content knowledge.	87%

Source. AISD TELL Survey

Conclusion and Recommendations

This report summarizes process evaluation data for goals and some of the programs managed by AISD's PL Department in the 2020–2021 academic year. Overall, the PL Department provided a large number of PL opportunities for district staff, and continues to develop and refine sessions to meet the needs district staff. In addition, the PL Department conducted critical work to ensure staff were prepared to return in person and provide instruction (e.g., curating resources for concurrent training and the reopening playlists) during the COVID-19 pandemic).

Overall, staff typically responded positively to PL activities available through the PL Department (e.g., program surveys), as well as available through the district (e.g., TELL Survey results). Recommendations for the following academic year include:

- Working with UT Austin to increase the number of Student Teaching Program participants placed at Title I campuses. Examining placement from fall and spring semester, AISD placed 53% and 56%, respectively, of participants on a Title I campus. However, only 24% and 30% of participants in the fall and spring semester, respectively, assigned by UT Austin were placed on a Title I campus. Because the Student Teaching Program serves as a pipeline for future teachers in the district, it is important that participants are prepared to provide instruction to students with varying needs. Recommendations include (a) ensuring UT Austin recruits more cooperating teachers from Title I campuses, as well as (b) using the pool of cooperating teachers recruited from Title I campuses by AISD.

- Using multiple methods to measure the impact of CP&I PL training. This may include examining PPfT and campus administrator performance review scores, as well as incorporating/using items on the Student Climate Survey, TELL Survey, and the Multi-Program Survey.

- Continuing to use multiple methods to conduct formative research to ensure PL activities are relevant and aligned, as well as to improve design (e.g., conducting think tanks and needs assessments, and using results from the TELL Survey, Family Survey, and Student Climate Survey to determine areas of needs). An analysis of TELL Survey results suggests providing more content-specific PL for fine arts teachers and 6th-grade teachers employed in elementary schools.

Appendix

Campuses Receiving BTC Services

Level	Campus
Elementary	Allison
	Barrington
	Brown
	Cook
	Galindo
	Harris
	Houston
	Metz Sanchez
	Oak Springs
	Odom
	Pecan Springs
	Rodriguez
	Walnut Creek
	Wooldridge
Middle	Dobie
	Martin
	Paredes
	Webb

Source. AISD PL Department data

Table A2.
Inventory of CP&I/Equity PL Opportunities

Audience	PL session	Timeline
Central office administrators	Introduction to Leading for Equity and Inclusion at AISD: Parts 1 and 2	Fall 2019
	Cultivating Community, Culture and Climate for Racial Equity and Inclusiveness (Leadership Institute)	July 2020
	Deconstructing Racism (session also offered at Leadership Institute)	Ongoing
	LEADS Part 1 and 2-PEG (Leadership for Racial Equity)	July 2020
	Beyond Diversity (Courageous Conversations and Pacific Education Group)	Spring 2019– Ongoing
	AntiRacist Leadership Series (primarily with principals, included Schools Office and Talent Acquisition and Development)	Summer 2020– Spring 2021
	Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening School	July 2020
Campus administrators	Beyond Diversity (Courageous Conversations and Pacific Education Group)	Spring 2019– Ongoing
	AntiRacist Principal Vertical Team Leadership Series	Summer 2020– Ongoing
	AP Winter Conference: Equity by Design at AISD	February 2020
	Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening School	July 2020
	AP Winter Conference: SEL as a Lever for Equity	December 2020
Available to all AISD staff	National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE): Micromessaging to Reach and Teach Every Child and NAPE Equity Coaching	2014–Ongoing
	Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness Leadership Pathway (72 teachers)	2020–2022
	SEL Symposium: Creating Everyday Brave Spaces	June 2020
	Culturally Responsive Restorative Practices in AISD	Ongoing
	Cultural Proficiency: The 6th C	Ongoing
	Introduction to Leading for Equity and Inclusion	Ongoing
	Speak Up: How to Respond to Everyday Prejudice, Bias, and Stereotypes	Ongoing
	Isolating Race: Making the Invisible Visible	Ongoing
	Becoming an AntiRacist Educator: Words Have Power	Ongoing
	Connecting With Families: Exploring and Planning to Interrupt Implicit Bias and Stereotype Threat	Ongoing
	It's Not Discipline: Culturally Responsive Restorative Practices 101	Ongoing
	Mindfulness and Unconscious Bias	Ongoing
	White Fragility: Understanding Whiteness to Overcome Discomfort in Conversations About Race	Ongoing
	Reopening Guide to Support and Connect Our School Community	October 2020
	The Road to Equity Is Paved With Emotions	Ongoing
	SEL 101: Working to Create Equitable Schools	Ongoing
	In a Racially Unjust World, What Good Is Mindfulness?	Spring 2021
	Restorative Practices in AISD	2017–Ongoing

Source. AISD PL Department data

Lesson From the Field Podcast Episodes

Date released	Guest(s)	Topics
July 7, 2020	Lavell Lathan, teacher at LBJ High School	Working with students and families, perspective from a first-year teacher, challenges in a distance learning environment, balancing personal life and work life, opportunities and take-aways
July 14, 2020	- Michelle Hernandez, professional learning design specialist - Josefina Hughes, professional learning design specialist - Leslie Barrett, professional learning design specialist	Evolution of CONNECT and school year 2019–2020 activities, making connections with staff, collaborations with AISD departments and Kick Start, how do staff find out more about CONNECT?
July 21, 2020	Jeff Seckar-Martinez, teacher at McCallum High School	Working with students and families, supporting students using technology, challenges and opportunities for distance learning, positives from the experiences, looking ahead to the fall
July 28 2020	Veronica Sharp, principal at Brown Elementary School	Working with students and families, looking ahead to the fall, a day as an administrator in a distance learning environment
August 04, 2020	Eric Ortmann, teacher at Crockett High School	Working with students and families, challenges teaching in a distance environment, new discoveries shifting to a distance environment, advice to prepare for the new school year
August 11, 2020	Leyla Olano, assistant principal at Joslin Elementary	Experiences as an assistant principal in her first year in AISD, transition to distance learning, preparing for the start of school, transition from middle school to elementary school
August 18, 2020	- Dr. Suzanne Newell, director of academics - David Reinhart, director of professional learning	Preparations to support teachers return, reopening conference competencies, choice, and variety for learners, continued support after reopening
August 25, 2020	Sterlin McGruder, principal at Northeast Early College High School	The 2019–2020 school year and the transition, SEL in a distance learning environment, challenges during the 2019-2020 transitions, online tools and resources, advice for the start of the school year
September 1, 2020	Sandy Chilton, Uphaus Early Childhood Center	Ending the 2019–2020 school year, distance learning for Early Childhood students, challenges in moving to distance learning, planning for the start of the upcoming school year
October 6, 2020	- Ami Cortes-Castillo, director of early childhood - Jessica Jolliffe, assistant director of humanities - Danielle Perico, assistant director of STEM	Work to support the start of school in 2020–2021, challenges and learning from the work, successes and what is working well, what school might/could look like, what role is the instructional coach now serving in?
October 13, 2020	James Butler, the mindfulness specialist	What is mindfulness? What does it look like in AISD? Starting mindfulness practices, educator-specific practices, distance learning discoveries, top 3 recommendations, vision of mindfulness
October 20, 2020	- Sara Freund, CP&I specialist - Bavu Blakes, CP&I specialist	What is CP&I?, CP&I work in AISD, CP&I professional learning in a virtual environment, words of inspiration, where to start the journey?
October 27, 2020	- Laura Browder, interim director of technology integration - Shane Rosenkrantz, learning systems coordinator	Projects of the technology design team, high-leverage personalization strategies, Blueprint courses, technology design coaches, words of inspiration

Date released	Guest(s)	Topics
November 3, 2020	- Dr. David Kaffman, executive director of multilingual education - Dr. Aida Alanis, assistant director of multilingual education - Salimah Shamsuddin, refugee family support coordinator	Work of the Multilingual Team, challenges and opportunities in a distance environment, where to go to for support
November 10, 2020	- Katy Escandell, assistant director of special education - Chad Ouellette, assistant director of special education	Special education work, instructional resources, using the resources and the specialized curriculum, challenges and opportunities teaching in a distance environment
November 17, 2020	- Dr. Jane Ross, executive director of Child Study System - Cherry Lee, Child Study Systems team - Bertha Arellano, team - Pam Martin, Child Study Systems team - Stacia Bowley, Child Study Systems team	Work of the Child Study System, PALS Program, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Professional School Counseling, dropout prevention and truancy, shifts in the work, connecting with the Child Study System team
December 1, 2020	Elise Baughman, teacher at McCallum High School	Current teaching situation, learning and discoveries, building relationships and engagement, new resources
December 8, 2020	Lorrie Salome, teacher at Hill Elementary	Overview of teaching at this point in time, organizational structure, student engagement, challenges in teaching, what do you wish you had known then that you know now?
December 15, 2020	Nicole Miller, Campbell Elementary Media and Performing Arts Institute	Teaching in concurrent setting, engaging students at home with student in the classroom, journey to this point, new learnings, culture of the campus
January 12, 2021	Matthew Castilleja, professional learning design specialist	Experiences in supporting campuses in the fall, structure of a typical day, challenges and celebrations
January 19, 2021	Daniela Willett, teacher at Overton Elementary	What does teaching look like now?, Engaging in-person and virtual learners, challenges experienced, discoveries, what I had wished I had known a year ago
January 26, 2021	Jon Bailey, principal at LBJ ECHS	Present reality and phases to continue learning, past experiences influencing decisions, transition to current teaching, creating campus culture, opportunities and learnings, personal professional development opportunities
February 2, 2021	Daniela Garcia, counselor at Harris Elementary School	Reflecting on 2020 as an elementary school counselor, a day in the life, changes in the role, supporting student and families, new discoveries and opportunities, if you could go back in time
February 9, 2021	Keith Moore, principal at Campbell Elementary Media and Performing Arts Institute	Current reality, transition to distance learning, developing campus culture, opportunities gained, the community, leadership development
February 23, 2021	Dr. Sanford Jeames, coordinator of the Health Sciences Program at Eastside Memorial Early College High School and adjunct professor at Huston-Tillotson University	Current realities, week in the life in Dr. Jeames class, discovered opportunities, personal professional growth, what do you wish you had known a year ago?

Date released	Guest(s)	Topics
March 10, 2021	Jennifer Smith, teacher at Mendez Stem Academy	What does your current reality look like?, Engaging students in an online environment, campus collaborations, the transition from 5th grade to 6th grade, challenges and opportunities, a look back in time
March 24, 2021	Tania Tasneem, teacher at Kealing Middle School	Current reality of working with students right now, building relationships, engagement, assessing learning, learned opportunities, campus innovation connector role
March 30, 2021	Katie Gibbons Brown, teacher at Cowan Elementary School	Teaching right now, a day in the life of students, pivotal instructional moves throughout the year, opportunities learned, engagement, working with new AISD teachers
April 8, 2021	Vicente Escalante, teacher at Reilly Elementary School	How has the year gone?, A day in the life of student, transition for students in early childhood, student engagement, opportunities and learnings, looking ahead to the fall, how to pursue this teaching role
May 26, 2021	Melissa Prepster, teacher at Gorzycki Middle School	Experiences and learnings this year, building relationships, challenges, a day in the life of, pedagogy to keep for next year
June 1, 2021	Jeffrey Heffler, teacher at Paredes Middle School	Description of this year, transition from band directing to teaching English, challenges and learnings, planning for success in the fall, professional learning and growth
June 8, 2021	Alana Urbano, teacher at Hart Elementary School	Journey this school year, teaching elementary music and essential area content, connecting classroom to the community

Source. AISD PL Department data