6A:9-15.2 Definition of professional development

(a) Professional development shall be comprised of professional learning opportunities aligned with student learning and educator development needs, and school, school district, and/or State improvement goals.
(b) Professional development shall have as its primary focus the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting all students to meet the CCCS.
(c) Professional development shall include the work of established collaborative teams of teachers, school leaders, and other administrative, instructional, and educational services staff members who commit to working together to accomplish common goals and who are engaged in a continuous cycle of professional improvement focused on:
1. Evaluating student learning needs through ongoing reviews of data on student performance; and

2. Defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of these data.

(d) Professional learning shall incorporate coherent, sustained, and evidenced-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job- embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills to their work.
(e) Professional development may be supported by external expert assistance or additional activities that:
1. Address defined student and educator learning goals;

2. Advance primarily ongoing school-based professional development; and

3. Include, but are not limited to, courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences provided by for-profit and nonprofit entities outside the school such as universities, educational service agencies, technical assistance providers, networks of content specialists, and other education organizations and associations.

(f) Professional development shall align with the professional standards for teachers and school leaders in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3 and the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3.

6A:9-15.3 Standards for professional learning
(a) Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and improves results for all students shall be guided by the following standards:

1. Learning communities: Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment;

2. Leadership: Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning;
3. Resources: Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning;

4. Data: Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning;

5. Learning designs: Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes;

6. Implementation: Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change; and

7. Outcomes: Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

(b) The standards in (a)1 through 7 above shall serve as indicators to guide the policies, activities, facilitation, implementation, management, and evaluation of professional development.