

Professional Learning in Action

The Partnership for Children and Youth (PCY) is implementing an initiative to support cross-sector professional learning, called the Expanded Learning 360°/365 professional learning community (PLC). Through the initiative, PCY engages teams of school-day and expanded learning programs from nine California school districts to align social and emotional learning (SEL) practices across school and expanded learning settings.

American Institutes for Research is partnering with PCY to explore and describe the practices that promote quality PLC implementation.

360°/365 Districts

1. Fresno
2. Los Angeles
3. Oakland
4. Sacramento City
5. San Francisco
6. San Leandro
7. San Rafael
8. Santa Ana
9. Visalia

“360/365 meetings are an opportunity to pause, come together, and talk about our work [while] getting to know and learn about each other’s work.”

– District Team Member

Key components of a professional learning community

As part of the study, we explored the components that foster learning and collaboration in the 360°/365 PLC. Participants said eight key components were instrumental in the PLC experience.

- **Shared values and vision.** Together, participants build guidelines and norms, including overarching goals, commitment, and accountability for active participation.
- **Mutual trust and respect.** Facilitators establish a space where district teams can share expertise and reflect openly on their local experience.
- **Collective responsibility.** Convenings are structured and provide ample time for teams to collaborate, reflect, and build participants’ goals (for alignment with SEL).
- **Reflective practice.** Meetings include opportunities for teams to engage in ongoing dialogue to share insights, successes, and challenges.
- **Inclusive membership.** Facilitators encourage participants to expand their learning community membership to include other key stakeholders.
- **Collaboration.** Participants have opportunities to work within their own district teams and across districts to share promising practices, discuss experiences, and advance action plans.

PLC Facilitation Tips

- TRUST the process
- LISTEN to participant feedback
- Be FLEXIBLE
- COLLABORATE
- REFLECT and ADJUST
- SHARE lessons learned

- **Knowledge building.** Teams spend part of each PLC sharing and learning about relevant SEL content, strategies, and research from internal and external experts.
- **Networks and partnerships.** Facilitators provide external supports through consultants who broker resources, expand partnerships, and support continuous quality improvement.

“[It has] become clear, this is a prolonged iterative process, and it needs time in order to be successful, and it’s not overnight, or in one school year. It’s not a short game, it’s a long game, and that’s important to know when taking it on.”

— District Team Member

The professional learning community experience

The 360°/365 PLC initiative focuses on the alignment of SEL between school day and expanded learning opportunities. Through active participation in PLC activities, district and expanded learning teams report having:

- Developed a shared language
- Adopted SEL expectations and standards
- Piloted SEL strategies and curricula
- Included SEL in district continuous improvement processes
- Conducted site visits
- Participated in cross-sector PD
- Adopted observation and assessment tools
- Implemented district-level working groups

Through active participation in PLC activities, district and expanded learning teams experienced:

Collaboration: active meetings with intra-team planning time to draft and update SEL alignment goals and action plans.

Practice: time to learn new strategies and exchange promising practices, including common pitfalls, across PLC teams.

Reflection: continuous improvement driven by data (qualitative and quantitative), including external support from a consultant with a defined scope of work.

“...through dialogue with different districts we were able to see where SEL fit into our existing program and then what we could do moving forward to enhance it.”

— Expanded Learning Opportunity Team Member



Expanded Learning 360°/365
Skills for Success in School, Work and Life

Expanded learning: 360°/365 is a collaborative project dedicated to promoting the development of critical skills beyond academics that research has identified as essential to young people’s success in school, work, and life.

For more information please visit, www.partnerforchildren.org/social-emotional-learning.