

The Connections Organization Schools are dedicated to the continued professional learning of all of their employees and recognize this is a critical strategy for promoting growth and success of both staff and students. Within the Connections Organization, professional development is designed with a focus on student needs and is structured to allow for collaboration amongst teams to learn and problem-solve ways to more effectively respond to the educational, behavioral, and therapeutic needs of our students.

Some of the mandated professional development topics provided to staff is inclusive of, but not limited to the following topics:

- DCFS Child Abuse and Neglect 105 ILCS 5/10-23.12. Mandated Reporter Training
- Bloodborne Pathogens OSHA 29CFR 1910.1030 (g) (annual)
- Diabetes 105 ILCS 145/25 (Annually if any child in school has diabetes)
- Food Allergy and Anaphylactic Shock 105 ILCS 5/2-3.149 105 ILCS 5/22.39 e (Training mandated at least every two years for all school personnel)
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training/Crisis Prevention Intervention Training
- Sexual Harassment and Discrimination – Title IX 20 U.S.C. 1681 – Recommended annually for all school personnel .

Additional professional development provided to our staff include such important topics as the following :

- Cultural Competency
- Supporting Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Youth
- Trauma Informed Therapy & Classroom Strategies
- IEP Development
- Functional Analysis & Behavior Intervention Plan Development
- Differentiating Instruction Tailored to Meet the Needs of Students
- The Danielson Model for Effective Teaching Practices
- Transition Planning for Post-Secondary
- Supporting the Sensory Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Working with diverse clinical presentations and diagnoses

