

**Avoca Central School District  
Professional Development Plan  
2025-2026**



BEDS Code: 570201040000

**Avoca Central School District Professional Development Team**

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**Business Manager:** Theresa Stopka

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**Elementary Classroom Teachers:** Amy Stewart, Megan Grillo, Molly VanDelinder (parent)

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**High School Classroom Teachers:** Jamie Bonham, Hilarie Sutherland

**Special Education Teacher:** Elizabeth Wood

**Approved by the Board of Education  
July 2, 2025**

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## **Avoca Central School Mission Statement**

We prepare each student to be a contributing member of their community and life-long, critical, independent thinkers in the career, college, or military experience of their choosing.

## **Avoca Central School Vision Statement**

We are a model school that provides a safe, inclusive, nurturing, welcoming, and challenging program focused on all aspects of learning and growing as a learner and a person.

## **Our Core Values**

### **Holistic Approach**

Foster the development of well-rounded students.

### **Inclusivity**

Offer high quality experiences for all students from all backgrounds.

### **Innovation**

Focus regular review, updates, and growth in all of our programming.

### **Excellence**

Strive to be a community that people choose and a school that children are excited to attend.

### **Collaborative**

Work together as a team that encourages everyone to participate.

### **Responsive and Engaged**

Be responsive to community values and available resources while providing programs that meet the needs of every child and a workplace that supports all staff members.

### **Caring**

We demonstrate compassion and consideration for the well-being and needs of others.

### **Integrity**

We are ethical and consistent in our actions, values, and principles.

## **Professional Development Philosophy**

Professional development at Avoca Central School is a vital component of our commitment to providing quality education for all students. We are committed to high-quality, research-based professional development that provides ongoing opportunities for growth for teachers and staff that enables us to achieve shared district goals and initiatives. Learning opportunities are grounded in the district's mission, and are implemented in ways that support and promote continuity and sustainability in instructional practice, collaboration, and self-reflection.

We strive to provide professional development in alignment with the New York State Professional Development Standards (<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/pdstds.pdf>):

1. *Design*: Professional Development design is based on data; is derived from the experience, expertise and needs of the recipients; reflects best practices in sustained job-embedded learning; and incorporates knowledge of how adults learn.
2. *Content Knowledge and Quality Teaching*: Professional development expands educators' content knowledge and the knowledge and skills necessary to provide developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and assess student progress.
3. *Research-based*: Professional development is research-based and provides educators with opportunities to analyze, apply, and engage in research.
4. *Collaboration*: Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill, and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment.
5. *Diverse Learning*: Professional Development ensures that educators have the knowledge and skills to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
6. *Student Learning Environments*: Professional development ensures that educators are able to create safe, secure, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students.
7. *Parent, Family, and Community Engagement*: Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill, and opportunity to engage and collaborate with parents, families, and other community members as active partners in their children's education.
8. *Data-Driven Professional Practice*: Professional development uses disaggregated student data and other evidence of student learning to determine professional development learning needs and priorities, to monitor student progress, and to help sustain continuous professional growth.
9. *Technology*: Professional development promotes technological literacy and facilitates the effective use of all appropriate technology.
10. *Evaluation*: Professional development is evaluated using multiple sources of information to assess its effectiveness in improving professional practice and student learning.

## **Integration of Professional Development**

Professional development is centered around building meaningful and authentic connections between curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and strengthening social-emotional development across grade levels. All teachers (including teaching assistants and long-term substitutes) are provided professional development opportunities designed to address students' needs and enhance instructional practice to support student achievement toward proficiency in NYS learning standards. Multiple sources of data are utilized to identify areas of strength and areas of need on an ongoing basis, including, but not limited to:

- School report cards
- iReady Benchmark Assessments for Reading and Math
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (K-5)
- Leveled Literacy Intervention Assessments (RtI)
- Summative assessments
- Formative assessments
- Grade 3-8 NYS ELA and Math assessments
- NYS Regents exams
- Student surveys
- Staff surveys
- Feedback from members of the PD Committee
- Formal and informal teacher observations

During the 2025-2026 school year, four days are designated as Superintendent Conference Days. In addition, one day is scheduled as an Early Release Day. Therefore, instructional staff have an opportunity to potentially participate in approximately 28 professional development hours per year within the district. This will allow teachers holding a professional certificate to complete 100 hours of CTLE credit every five years, as required by NYSED. A variety of additional professional development opportunities are also offered through our regional BOCES and in our surrounding area.

Staff members who work with students with disabilities have opportunities to deepen their understanding of students' unique needs and development through local BOCES trainings, as well as professional development offered in the region.

At the conclusion of each Conference Day, all staff will have an opportunity to share their feedback related to the activities they participated in. This feedback will be used to guide future planning to ensure subsequent collaboration and PD opportunities meet the needs of staff in a meaningful and timely manner.

## **Professional Development Goals**

- 1. Goal 1: Strengthen instructional capacity across all grade levels by providing targeted professional development on active student engagement techniques, inclusive teaching strategies, and differentiated instruction to ensure that all students are equipped to grow and succeed as learners.**
- 2. Goal 2: Build staff capacity in effective classroom management by developing a shared understanding of structured routines, clearly defined norms and expectations, and evidence-based classroom-level behavior support strategies to promote a positive and productive learning environment across all grade levels.**

## Action Plans

*(Please see Appendix A for a list of all anticipated workshop topics, trainings, and consultants to be utilized by the district.)*

**Goal 1: Strengthen instructional capacity across all grade levels by providing targeted professional development on active student engagement techniques, inclusive teaching strategies, and differentiated instruction to ensure that all students are equipped to grow and succeed as learners.**

<b>OBJECTIVE:</b>  Provide educators with sustained, targeted professional learning opportunities that build their knowledge and application of active learning techniques, differentiated instruction, and inclusive teaching practices, resulting in increased student engagement, equitable access to learning, and measurable academic growth across all grade levels.				
<b>ESSENTIAL QUESTION:</b>  How can we design and implement active learning opportunities, differentiation, and inclusive instructional strategies that effectively support the diverse learning needs of all students across grade levels?				
<b>ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES:</b>  Activities and strategies include ongoing professional development through district and regional workshops, collaborative planning sessions, offering model classrooms and peer observations, instructional coaching opportunities, and utilizing professional learning communities to build and share strategies.				
Timeline	Learning Opportunity and Learning Partners	Evidence of Implementation	Measure of Progress/ Person Responsible	Opportunity for Continuous Collaboration and Reflection
June 2025–September 2025	<b>Create a calendar for monthly PD and instructional toolkit (high-impact strategies, templates, checklists)</b>  Teachers K-12  <b>Facilitator:</b> Avoca Administration, Teachers	-Teacher feedback and implementation	-Attendees, engagement in PD sessions	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days -Monthly Grade-Level PLC Meetings (Elementary) -Monthly Department Meetings (Secondary)
July 2025–June 2026	<b>Regional SIP Catalog Offerings based on the Science of Reading</b>  Teachers K-12  <b>Facilitator:</b> GST BOCES SIP Offerings	-Teacher feedback and implementation	-Attendees, engagement in PD sessions	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days -Monthly Grade-Level PLC Meetings (Elementary) -Monthly Department Meetings (Secondary)

September 2025–April 2026	<b>Delivery of monthly PD on instructional strategies</b>  All district staff  <b>Facilitator:</b> Principals/ Administrators	-Delivery and modeling of a research-based, highly-engaging instructional strategy -Strategies facilitate the inclusion of all learners and learning needs -Add to instructional toolkit for all staff to access	-Staff participation -Walkthroughs, formal/informal observations -utilization of toolkit	-Staff Conference Days -Monthly Grade-Level PLC Meetings (Elementary) -Monthly Department Meetings (Secondary) -Monthly Staff Meetings
May 2026–June 2026	<b>Showcase of Practice and Reflection</b>  All district staff  <b>Facilitators:</b> Teachers, Principals/ Administration	-Facilitate showcase where teachers share lesson artifacts and insights -Input information into a PD Impact Report to share outcomes, lessons learned, and ideas for ongoing learning and implementation.	-Staff and admin walkthroughs -Shared reflections -Completion of PD Impact Report -Ideas and support for ongoing/future learning opportunities	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Monthly Grade-Level PLC Meetings (Elementary) -Monthly Department Meetings (Secondary) -Staff Meetings
June 2026	<b>Student and Staff Survey</b>  Students, K-12 Educators  <b>Facilitators:</b> Principals/ Administration	-Gather teacher/student feedback -Virtual and/or physical survey reflecting on instructional strategies (use, implementation, effectiveness) and classroom management throughout the school year.	-Receipt of completed surveys	-Time to review, reflect, and collaborate with other staff members and administration -Analyze information and use in "Next Steps" planning session



**Goal 2: Build staff capacity in effective classroom management by developing a shared understanding of structured routines, clearly defined norms and expectations, and evidence-based classroom-level behavior support strategies to promote a positive and productive learning environment across all grade levels.**

<b>OBJECTIVE:</b>  Deliver targeted professional learning that equips staff with the knowledge and tools to establish and maintain structured routines, clearly defined norms and expectations, and implement evidence-based behavior support strategies, fostering consistent, positive, and productive classroom environments across all grade levels.				
<b>ESSENTIAL QUESTION:</b>  How can we create consistent, structured classroom environments through shared routines, norms, and behavior support strategies that foster positive and productive learning across all grade levels?				
<b>ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES:</b>  Activities and strategies include ongoing professional development through district and regional workshops, collaborative planning sessions, offering model classrooms and peer observations, instructional coaching opportunities, and utilizing professional learning communities to build and share strategies.				
Timeline	Learning Opportunity and Learning Partners	Evidence of Implementation	Measure of Progress/ Person Responsible	Opportunity for Continuous Collaboration and Reflection
July 2025– June 2026	<b>GST BOCES SIP Offerings</b>  All District Staff  <b>Facilitator:</b> GST BOCES	-Teacher feedback and implementation	-Attendees	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days
July 2025	<b>Collect and analyze student behavior report data</b>  Avoca Admin, PD Plan Committee  <b>Facilitator:</b> Administration	-Review behavior data -Analyze/identify areas of classroom management needs	-Thorough analysis and understanding of behavior reported -Use analysis to create classroom management resources	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days
July 2025–June 2026	<b>Revisiting/Revising of Classroom Management Expectations and resource toolkit</b>  All district staff  <b>Facilitator:</b> Administration, PD Plan Committee	-Administration and members of Professional Development Team create Classroom Management Guidelines and a resource toolkit with evidence-based practices and resources	-Classroom implementation and staff utilization of resources	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days -Monthly Staff Meetings
January 2026	<b>Collect and analyze student behavior report data</b>  Avoca Admin, PD Plan Committee <b>Facilitator:</b> Administration	-Mid-year analysis, comparison to July 2025 data -Identify areas of growth and areas of need/support	-Lower frequency and severity of behaviors reported	-Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members -Staff Conference Days

June 2026	<b>Collect and analyze student behavior report data</b>  Avoca Admin, PD Plan Committee  <b>Facilitator:</b> Administration	-End of year analysis, comparison to July 2025 data -Identify areas of growth and areas of need/support	-Lower frequency and severity of behaviors reported	-Share analysis with all staff -Time to reflect and collaborate with other staff members
May-June 2026	<b>Student and Staff Survey</b>  Students, K-12 Educators  <b>Facilitators:</b> Principals/ Administration	-Gather teacher/student feedback -Virtual and/or physical survey reflecting on instructional strategies (use, implementation, effectiveness), SEL and CRSE practices, and classroom management throughout the school year.	-Receipt of completed surveys	-Time to review, reflect, and collaborate with other staff members and administration -Analyze information and use in "Next Steps" planning session

## Provisions for Mentoring Program

The Avoca Central School District's Mentoring Program is defined by the Board of Education policy, as outlined below:

*First year teachers must participate in a mentoring program as a component of the School District's Professional Development Plan. The purpose of the mentoring program is to increase the retention of new teachers and improve their ability to assist students in attaining State learning standards. The mentor's role is to provide guidance and support to a new teacher. However, additional mentor responsibilities may be negotiated and reflected in a collective bargaining agreement. (Policy 6160; Adopted 9/15/15)*

In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations, the elements of the mentoring program include:

<b>Procedure for selecting Mentors</b>	<p><i>A committee made up of three teachers, appointed by the association, and two administrators will select and match the mentor with the teacher.</i></p> <p><i>When selecting the mentor teachers, the committee will ensure that each mentor has:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Volunteered to be a mentor</i></li> <li>• <i>Tenure in the district</i></li> <li>• <i>An awareness of the subject matter/curriculum</i></li> <li>• <i>Knowledge of instructional/learning theory</i></li> <li>• <i>Demonstrated transfer of theory into practice</i></li> <li>• <i>Effective interpersonal communication skills</i></li> <li>• <i>An understanding of the concept and value of continuous professional development</i></li> <li>• <i>An understanding of the importance of confidentiality.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Wherever possible the Teacher Mentoring Committee shall match the mentor and the new teacher in each of the following areas:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenure</i></li> <li>• <i>Certification</i></li> </ul>
<b>Role of the Mentors</b>	<i>Teacher mentors support and advise new teachers with the intention of building skills that directly affect students' performance and maintain retention of quality new teachers.</i>
<b>Preparation of Mentors</b>	<i>It shall be the responsibility of the Teacher Mentor Committee to assign a mentor to assist those teachers with less than three years' experience. Once assigned the mentor, the mentor coordinator and the committee will provide each new mentor with training. The mentor will then meet with the new teacher to develop a mentoring program which is consistent with the guidelines set forth in the program guide.</i>
<b>Types of Mentoring Activities</b>	<p><i>Monthly Meetings</i>  <i>(possible topics to discuss)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Curriculum</i></li> <li>- <i>Unit and Lesson Planning</i></li> <li>- <i>Instructional Techniques</i></li> <li>- <i>Management Strategies</i></li> <li>- <i>Teacher Responsibilities and Timelines</i></li> <li>- <i>Parent/Teacher Conferencing</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Informal Observations (by both mentor and mentee)</i></p>
<b>Time Allotted for Mentoring</b>	<i>The mentor and the mentoring coordinator will plan for release time when the mentor may observe the teacher and assist in classroom/curriculum planning. This shall not conflict with the mentor's lunch and prep periods.</i>

## **Provisions for School Violence Prevention and Intervention Training**

Avoca Central School District is committed to hiring teachers who have fulfilled the requirements of certification, including participation in workshops covering school prevention and intervention. Such workshops shall consist of at least two clock hours of training that includes, but is not limited to, study in the warning signs within a developmental and social context that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors in children; the statutes, regulations, and policies relating to a safe nonviolent school climate; effective classroom management techniques and other academic supports that promote a nonviolent school climate and enhance learning; the integration of social and problem solving skill development for students within the regular curriculum; intervention techniques designed to address a school violence situation; and how to participate in an effective school/community referral process for students exhibiting violent behavior.

Upon request or determination of necessity, Avoca Central School District will provide refreshers on school violence prevention and intervention.

In instructional settings, Avoca Central School District will also utilize the interpersonal violence prevention education package provided by the State Education Department. These materials may be incorporated as part of the health or other related curricula or programs for students in grades K through 12.

## **Provisions for Teachers Certified in Bilingual and English Language Learners (ELL) Education**

Teachers possessing a Professional certificate in the certificate title of English to speakers of other languages (all grades) or a holder of a bilingual extension under section 80-4.3 of this Title must complete their CTLE hours with a minimum of 50 percent in language acquisition aligned with the core content area of instruction taught, including a focus on best practices for co-teaching strategies, and integrating language and content instruction for English language learners.

Avoca Central School District teachers will utilize the expertise and training provided by the Regional Bilingual Education-Resource Network to fulfill these requirements.

Avoca Central School meets the qualifications for exemption from the professional development requirements in language acquisition for ELLs based on our student population\*. The District will apply for the professional development ELL waiver, which exempts faculty and staff from professional development requirements in language acquisition for ELLs for the 2020-2021 school year.

*\*There are fewer than 30 English language learners enrolled or English learners make up less than five percent of the Avoca Central School District's total student population as of such date as established by the Commissioner.*

## **Appendix A**

Below is a list of anticipated workshop topics, trainings, and consultants to be offered and/or utilized during the 2025-2026 school year which will be available across the Avoca Central School District where CTLE credit will be awarded.

Topic / Training / Consultant	Offered By/Provider
Teacher Center	GST BOCES
Hot Off the Press! 2025 NYS 3-8 ELA & Math Assessment Review Item Analysis & Released Questions	SIP
Hot Off the Press! June 2025 Regents Review Item Analysis Questions	SIP
Content Area Literacy: Strategies for Secondary Educators	SIP
Integrating Writing Practices in Secondary Classrooms	SIP
Elementary Math Collaborative Learning Community (CLC)	SIP
Secondary Math Collaborative Learning Community (CLC)	SIP
Scaffolding Math Success: Measured Adaptations for Meaningful Progress	SIP
Special Education for the General Education Teacher	SIP
Book Study: <i>Take Control of the Noisy Class-Chaos to Calm in 15 Seconds</i> by Rob Plevins	SIP
Power of Play in the Classroom	SIP
Using Kinesthetics to Engage Learners	SIP
Cultivating Classroom Connections: Strategies for Building Strong Relationships in Primary Education	SIP
Cultivating Classroom Connections: Strategies for Building Strong Relationships in Secondary Education	SIP
Trauma Responsive Informed Care Workshop	SIP

Book Study: The Anxious Generation-Understanding and Supporting Students in the Digital Age	SIP
For the Strained and Drained Teacher	SIP
Supporting Emotional Growth in the Classroom- <i>Tiny Humans, Big Emotions</i>	SIP
Thrive with the First Five-Edtomorrow	SIP
New Administrator Mentoring Program	LEAF