**Insights on Teacher Professional Learning**

There is a continuum spanning *professional development* and *teacher learning*. The former may be mandated and is generally formal, with a fixed duration, curriculum, and instructional strategy and expected outcomes. The latter, by contrast, is typically begun by an educator as a voluntary activity and may be informal, with duration, content, form of learning, and eventual impact uncertain at its inception. The richest forms of learning lie toward the middle, combining theoretical and research-based insights with the wisdom of practice. And today’s mobile infrastructure allows educators to access professional learning experiences life-wide, regardless of place and time, using ubiquitous devices that enable a broad range of peer-based capabilities for sharing artifacts, thinking together, and co-creating learning resources.

**–*Christopher Dede & Arthur Eisenkraft (2016)***

Active learning engages teachers directly in designing and trying out teaching strategies, providing them an opportunity to engage in the same style of learning they are designing for their students. And feedback and reflection both help teachers to thoughtfully move toward expert visions of practice. By working collaboratively, teachers can create communities that positively change the culture and instruction of their entire grade level, department, school and/or district. To facilitate this, policymakers and administrators can redesign the use of time and school schedules to increase opportunities for learning and collaboration, including participation in professional learning communities, peer coaching and observations across classrooms, and collaboration within and across schools.   
**–*Linda Darling-Hammond and colleagues (2017)***

Effective learning systems create schools where collaborative inquiry, continuous improvement, and shared responsibility for all students to guide the work of every professional. In these learning and improvement systems, states and districts establish the conditions — a shared vision, qualified leadership, aligned resources, measures to learn and improve from, and effective change management—that promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

**–*Learning Forward (2017)***

Under the **ESSA law** the definition of teacher professional development has been revised to ensure that such federally-funded activities are “*sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused*.”