



CLASSICAL

CHARTER SCHOOLS

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AT CLASSICAL CHARTER SCHOOLS

Overview

To its core, Classical Charter Schools zealously pursues the professional development of its faculty. Exemplary teachers are critical to achieving our mission of preparing K-8th grade scholars to excel in college-preparatory high schools. The interaction between the teacher and scholars is key. Therefore, our schools are committed to maximizing this interaction by preparing teachers to sensitively and skillfully execute rigorous, well-planned lessons that promote student engagement and lead scholars to academic mastery. This requires training teachers to manage their classrooms as well as to have command of content; to be able to apply educational theories; teach content in sequence; and strategically use data to inform and improve their instruction.

To maximize a teacher's skills and impact across all these areas of responsibility, CCS has adopted a year-long, school-wide, Professional Development program, which takes several forms. Through summer onboarding, weekly Grade Team meetings, monthly Professional Development sessions, and ongoing individual coaching, teachers benefit from over 100 hours of training annually. Onboarding and monthly Professional Development sessions are designed to introduce and provide examples of best practices. Additionally, teachers receive individualized training via ongoing feedback from their Instructional Coach (IC) and Grade Team Leader (GTL). Through weekly observations and debriefs, ICs and GTLs aim to target specific areas where growth is needed to ensure a teacher is improving their craft and consistently delivering quality instruction to scholars.

School-Wide Professional Development

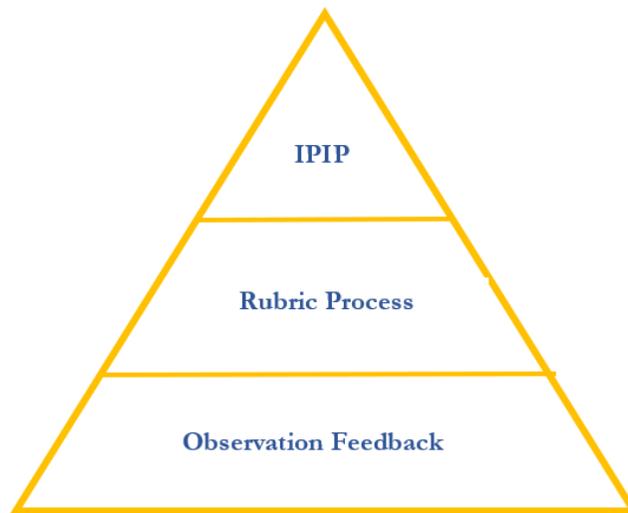
School-wide Professional Development (PD) sessions take place for two weeks over the summer and during full-staff meetings held on the first Friday of every month. Staff can select sessions from a menu of options, with one of their selections pertaining to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. Occasionally, sessions will be recommended based on an individual's need or role. The goal of these PD sessions is to provide teachers with specific strategies for improving their practice in a range of areas including, but not limited to:

- Classroom Culture/Management
- Instructional Execution
- Data Analysis
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Professionalism
- Leadership

These professional development sessions are designed to have immediate impact in the classroom. To facilitate adoption by teachers into their grade and content-specific lessons, sessions include time for reflection, whole or small group discussion and practice implementation. Following PD, teachers submit feedback on the sessions they attended and set concrete goals for implementation. Progress towards these goals is measured and supported through observation and debrief cycles.

Individualized Teacher Development

Classical Charter Schools provides three tiers of individualized teacher support to ensure that each teacher continues to make measureable growth throughout the year. Teacher development allows the specific needs of each teacher to be identified and addressed while also providing a format to highlight each teacher’s areas of strength. Through this process, all teachers, from a novice first year teacher to an experienced Grade Team Leader, receive feedback and goal setting guidance on an ongoing basis. Teacher development includes weekly observation feedback and debriefs, the Teacher Rubric process, and the Individual Professional Improvement Plan (IPIP).



Observation Feedback is provided by the teacher’s Instructional Coach (IC) and Grade Team Leader (GTLs) on a weekly basis. Grade Team Leaders themselves are given observation feedback from their IC as well as support with the leadership component of their role. Instructional feedback is focused on actionable “next steps” to be of direct practical use resulting in immediate improvements in the classroom. Observations are also used to track improvement and serve as weekly checkpoints for teachers’ individual goals as set forth in the IPIP. Teachers are observed and debriefed at least once per week for the duration of the school year.

The Rubric Process is used to assess staff performance across a range of responsibilities and characteristics. Below are the categories measured by the Teacher Rubric:

Professional Responsibilities	Classroom Management	Execution	Culture of Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Reliability • Dress • Professionalism • Collaborative Leadership • Growth • Parental Expectations • Homework • Urgency • Mission Fit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations • Culture • Routines • Efficiency • Prevention • Incentive • Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations • Connections • Clarity • Differentiation • Engagement • Checking for Understanding • Application • Preparation (Scripted) • Preparation (Unscripted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholar Feedback • Tracker Design and Data Entry • Data Analysis • Accountability • Curricular Reflection

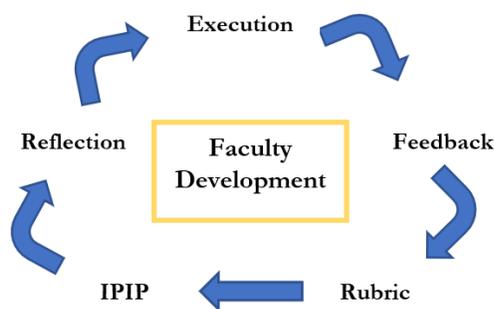
Because Grade Team Leaders are also teachers, they are assessed on the same categories listed above, as well as criteria tied to leadership and managing a team.

This rubric is utilized twice a year for all staff, in early December and late April to encourage and measure improvement throughout the school year. It is completed using substantive feedback collected from the staff member's Grade Team Leader and Instructional Coach. Rubric scoring uses the following scale:

Score	Definition
4	Mastery; teacher fully internalizes the skill and can provide high-quality Professional Development
3	Proficient; if all teachers exhibited that level of ability, the school would just achieve its mission
2	Needs Improvement; the characteristic should be addressed urgently
1	Urgent Need of Immediate Improvement Required

Individual Professional Improvement Plans (IPIP) call for staff members to set individualized SMART goals based on the feedback they receive across the school year and during the Rubric process. Each goal must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound. IPIPs are mission-aligned, historically consistent, and are developed collaboratively after Rubric meetings. The IPIP allows for personal reflection and ensures that the multiple forms of feedback align to create specific, measurable, and actionable change.

All staff complete the IPIP, regardless of their scores on their Rubric or years of experience. Goals set in the IPIP are used to inform future supports and progress toward IPIP goals are discussed at weekly debriefs and assessed at the staff member's next Rubric meeting.



New Teacher Professional Development

In addition to the support all teachers receive through school-wide and individualized Professional Development structures, new teachers also benefit from additional support systems to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive within the organization. New teacher Professional Development sessions are provided starting in June for ClassiCorps fellows while they begin their in-classroom training and in August for all other new hires starting at Classical. The additional days of training ahead of the school year help new staff familiarize themselves with the school's procedures, expectations, and mission. Importantly, all new teachers are assigned a mentor, who is an experienced colleague who can provide informal support. Mentors serve as a sounding board for questions and ideas and work to ensure a smooth transition into our community.

Summary

Classical Charter Schools has evolved through the years, and we continue to strive toward excellence through our organizational intelligence and the steadfast belief that the work we do requires continuous reflection and growth. The three tiers of Teacher Development complement each other and work synergistically to provide training and feedback with the end goal of improving teacher performance and advancing the school's mission.

To ensure equity across staff, CCS has begun providing non-instructional staff with professional development opportunities and performance review feedback facilitated by their direct manager or Department Head. While the feedback cycle looks different within other departments, especially those that are non-instructional, all staff receive some form of feedback to aid growth, Rubrics to assess progress, and opportunities to set goals (IPIP) to further achieve excellence. The paradigm for Classical's teacher development has expanded to all faculty, thus creating equity across our Network and ensuring all staff are provided with opportunities to grow and develop, and ultimately help us achieve our shared mission.