

# Learning Reps News

## Looking Forward to PRD / PU

Edinburgh Local Association

One thing for sure in teaching is just how quickly the year rattles by! So here we are again looking forward to what we traditionally regard as 'PRD Time'. As one of your recently appointed EIS Learning Reps I just wanted to introduce myself, and my colleague Martyn Cheung, and let you know that we are here to help support you in your Professional Learning aspirations.

I also wanted to 'talk out loud' a little about PRD and in doing so encourage us all to think about this fast approaching time before school improvement planning overtakes us. Firstly, to provide a bit of context please accept my apologies for just quickly referring to some of the GTCS documentation where the following guidance is provided (for anyone who wants to take a 'deeper dive' at this time I have included a link to the GTCS website):

- Professional Review and Development (PRD) is an essential part of Professional Update (PU) and professional learning;
- PRD provides teachers with ongoing opportunities to reflect on their practice and personal learning through professional learning conversations supported by an annual review meeting;
- This engagement helps teachers to meet their own learning needs, the needs of their learners and contribute to school improvement;
- Professional Review and Development is Key to Teacher Professionalism;
- Positively engaging with PRD, using Professional Standards to scaffold and support, empowers teachers to be critical of their thinking and practice, and enhances teacher professionalism to ultimately best serve our children and young people across Scotland;
- Explicit connections between PRD, the Professional Standards, the school improvement planning cycle and collegiate activities should be clearly visible and transparent for all.

In the interest of transparency I want to be up front in saying that I haven't always found the complexities of the PRD / PU process totally straight forward. With this in mind, Martyn and I are currently building upon the good work of our Learning Rep predecessors, and we would like to share some information and advice in the very near future (In the meantime if you have any queries, concerns, challenges please don't hesitate to contact us).

Professional Learning is your entitlement and to be clear the EIS is very firmly of the belief that members should decide their own PL priorities. These will ultimately be supportively discussed through your professional learning conversations and in your annual PRD meeting. Because this is an ongoing process we are all able to contribute to whole school (and faculty) improvement planning so ultimately it does make some sense that our own PL needs are to some extent aligned with our establishment improvement priorities.

With all of the above in mind I'd just like to encourage us all at this point, prior to the whole PRD annual meeting kick-off, to make a bit of room to reflect upon all that has been, and all that we are still going through. In doing this I am rather hoping that you might just forgive my rather shameful plug for what I personally think are two exceptionally important PL and school improvement priorities for the year ahead. On a personal level, and with the greatest respect to yourself and your professional autonomy, it would be deeply gratifying if you could at least consider dedicating a proportion of your own PL entitlement time to caring for yourself, and for the planet.

## Caring for the planet

As many you will have read in the April 22 edition of the SEJ, I firmly believe that Learning for Sustainability (Lfs) is the most important idea of our time and that it is simply the right thing to do for people and the planet. It therefore gives me great pleasure to raise awareness of a new GTCS / Lfs Scotland initiative that seeks to catalyse our engagement with the relaunched GTCS Lfs standards. I am currently supporting the development of the new GTCS Lfs Hub and I am really impressed with the PL opportunities on offer there. Currently the first introductory module is available, but this will be followed later this year by two more which aim to support a deeper dive into Lfs practice and those leading learning in Lfs through a whole setting approach.



As the GTCS say: *‘Through engaging with the resources in the Hub, teachers can increase their understanding of Lfs and the way in which it underpins what it means to be a teacher in Scotland. The Hub supports teachers to evaluate their practice and enhance the skills, values and knowledge needed to enact and embed Lfs across their day-to-day activity and that of their setting and learning community’.*

## Caring for yourself

As you will all no doubt concur, our own health and well-being is, and continues to be a top priority, and should be absolutely central to our ongoing plans for Covid recovery. Many of you may already know our colleague Claire Young (formerly of Liberton High School, now Drummond Community HS) and have benefited from her exceptional experience and skills in the mental health field. She has kindly offered us all a taster Mental health PL opportunity in May with a view to gauging levels of interest for the forthcoming year. In her own inspirational words Claire explains:



*‘Our wellbeing is central to successful teaching practice and deserves our attention as part of our holistic professional learning. This session will be an opportunity to tune in to key findings from current research into what supports our wellbeing at work. It will also offer a chance to reflect on the values, skills and practices we can develop and strengthen based on this, helping us to get into focus the reasons why we care about our work and the ways we can be as energised and engaged as possible. Values and purpose, tools for protecting and promoting our mental and emotional health and practices to support clear boundaries will be explored alongside ways to cultivate joy and meaning as we work. The session will be practical and interactive (with you able to choose how you interact), sharing strategies to use individually, with your team and/or in your classroom’.*

Lastly, just to reiterate, your own Professional Learning is yours to own, but hopefully I have given you something to think about as we plan for the year ahead. And of course should you wish to discuss any of this with me, or indeed have any other PL type query, please drop me an email. In the meantime I’ll leave you with the relevant links for the GTCS Lfs Hub, the GTCS Professional Review and Development page, and my article in the SEJ.

Best wishes

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[Learning for Sustainability - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://gtcs.org.uk)

[Professional Review and Development - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://gtcs.org.uk)

[Exploring Learning for Sustainability in the GTCS Standards – Scottish Educational Journal \(sej.org.uk\)](https://sej.org.uk)