

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



— September 2024 Education Bulletin —

Welcome to the September 2024 edition of the **Luzerne Intermediate Unit (LIU) Office of Professional Learning's (OPL)** monthly education bulletin. This special edition of the OPL Education Bulletin will focus on the numerous networking events we have for job-alike educators.

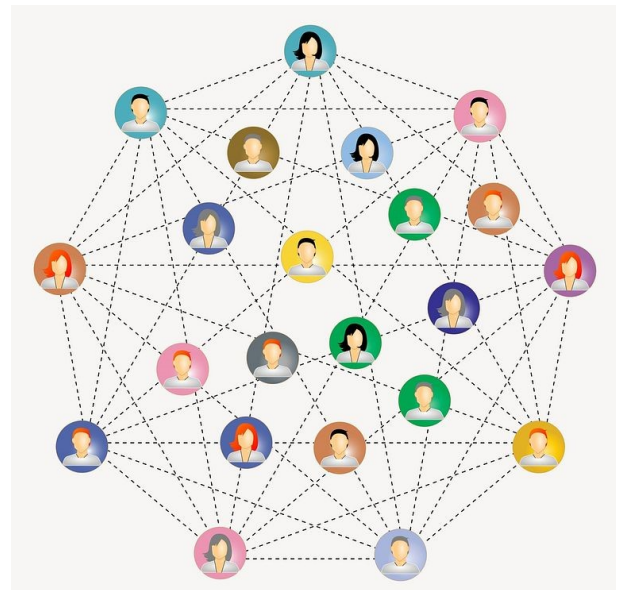
OPL NETWORK MEETINGS

WHAT TO EXPECT...

Based on feedback from participants in training workshops, after the content and practices presented, the most beneficial aspect of workshops held at the LIU office are the opportunities for educators to network with their colleagues from across the region. For this reason, many of the professional experiences encountered at the LIU this year will have an intentional focus on sharing ideas and practices across schools. Doing so provides:

Skill Enhancement: By exchanging ideas and best practices, teachers can expand their pedagogical toolkit and improve their classroom effectiveness.

- ⇒ **Mentorship Connections:** Experienced teachers can connect with and mentor early-career educators, facilitating professional growth and support for new teachers.
- ⇒ **Resource Sharing:** This collaborative approach can significantly reduce preparation time and enhance the quality of teaching materials.
- ⇒ **Emotional and Professional Support:** Teaching can sometimes be isolating, but networking creates support systems where educators can find emotional, social, and professional assistance when needed .
- ⇒ **Problem-Solving Opportunities:** Collaborative problem-solving can lead to innovative approaches to educational issues.



Participation in network-based opportunities also provides visibility and recognition to educators that are approaching their craft through a lens of innovation. By providing a space where ideas can incubate, fly, and cross-pollinate our hope is to elevate the practices of educators across all disciplines.

LIU NETWORKS

WHICH NETWORKS MEET AT THE LIU?

The LIU Office of Professional Learning (OPL) network meetings can be categorized into three groupings:

- **OPL Networks for School Administrators:** Let's face it...The position of an education administrator is wrought with an ever growing litany of complex tasks and frequent changes. Balancing teaching and learning, site safety, supervising staff, and managing a positive learning environment for students is a challenging and sometimes solitary task. We hope to share your successes and challenges in these areas and learn from one another.
- **OPL Networks for School Specialists:** Educators that specialize in a particular area of education often have limited access to resources and only a few colleagues to rely upon for advice.
- **OPL Network for Content Area Educators:** Sometimes its just nice to chat about the content we hold dear. Content area networks are meant for any educator passionate about sharing their successes and leverage the power of a support group to help them solve challenges.



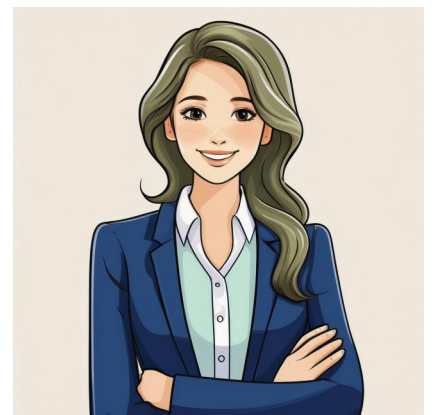
OPL Network meetings are not just for educators that need help. This support opportunity only works when educators that are experts in their field are willing to listen and share. While some meetings will contain formal training opportunities, participants are asked to attend with the perspective of learning from one another.

OPL NETWORKS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

TELL ME MORE...!

The OPL Networks for School Administrators provide various aspects of school leadership to learn and share from their colleagues. Below are the administrative networks that are facilitated by OPL followed by the email address of the LIU lead organizer:

- **Curriculum Coordinator's Network:** School leadership with high levels of interest in professional development for their staff and policy guidance at an instructional level. Frequency: Monthly | Format: Both face-to-face and virtual | Contact: Dr. Mackrell @ rmackrell@liu18.org.
- **Principals' Academy:** Building-level leaders are welcome to attend quarterly networking opportunities specific to the needs of a building principal. Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: Dr. Mennig @ dmennig@liu18.org.
- **ATSI/TSI School Improvement Network:** District leaders from designated schools are asked to attend these brief check-ins to share best practices and learn from one another. Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Virtual | Contact: Dr. Mennig @ dmennig@liu18.org.



- **Safe Schools Network:** Any School Safety and Security Coordinator, Principal, Assistant Principal, SRO, SPO, etc., who is interested in Safe Schools topics and updates. Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: Ty Yost @ tyost@liu18.org.
- **Technology Coordinators:** District Technology Directors, Coordinators, and Staff Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face and virtual | Contact: Ty Yost @ tyost@liu18.org.

OPL NETWORKS FOR SCHOOL SPECIALISTS

TELL ME MORE...!

The OPL Networks for School Specialists provide targeted professional development and networking opportunities for specific job-alike categories. Below are the specialist networks that are facilitated by OPL followed by the email address of the LIU lead organizer:

- **School Nurses Network:** School Nurses are welcome to join us to review any school health-related topics and updates. Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face or virtual | Contact: Tina Gelso @ tgelso@liu18.org.
- **Reading Specialists Network:** This network is for K-12 reading specialists and literacy coaches. Frequency: Every other month face-to-face with participation in a book study during months there is no formal meeting. | Contact: Loriann Hoffman @ lhoffman@liu18.org.
- **School Counselor Network:** School counselors in grades K-12 are welcome to join us for updates and discussion related to their professional interests. Frequency: Two times per year | Format: Face-to-Face | Contact: Susan Kuhl @ skuhl@liu18.org.
- **Intermediate Teachers' Network:** Grades 3, 4, and 5 teachers, building coaches, interventionists, and special education teachers who want to share best practices around behavior management, instruction, engagement, differentiation, and family engagement. Frequency: 3 x per year | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: George Butwin @ gbutwin@liu18.org.
- **Instructional Coaches Network:** District Coaches in a variety of push-in and support roles from K-12. Frequency: 3 x per year | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: Dr. Jessica Jacobs @ jjacobs@liu18.org.
- **Gifted Network:** Gifted teachers from all IU regional schools are welcome to attend this network to learn about improving student goal development, updates in related best practices, and learn about activities meant to support the growth of the students they support. Frequency: Annually | Format: Face-to-face | Dr. Bruza @ tbruza@liu18.org.
- **English as a Second Language Council:** School ESL Coordinators will meet quarterly to discuss supportive resources and updates in teaching ELLs. | Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face | Dr. Tara Bruza @ tbruza@liu18.org.



- **OT/PT Network:** Occupational and Physical Therapists from any district K-12. Frequency: 2 x per year | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: Tina Gelso @ tgelso@liu18.org.
- **Speech Language Pathology (SLP Network):** Speech Therapists from any district K-12 Frequency: Quarterly | Format: Face-to-face | Contact: Stacey Raijski @ sraijski@liu18.org.

OPL NETWORKS FOR TEACHERS

TELL ME MORE...!

While the content area networks listed below are meant for instructional staff, any school administrator that supervises teachers is welcome to attend. Understanding good teaching practices specific to specific grade levels and content is an excellent tool in the administrator's toolbox to support the growth of their staff. For any questions about the content area networks, please reach out to Dr. Rich Mackrell (rmackrell@liu18.org). Most networks meet monthly and can be found in MyLearningPlan.

Mathematics Teachers Networks

- **Grades K-2:** This year this group will focus on making abstract mathematical concepts more concrete for struggling learners. Frequency: monthly during the Fall and Spring months | Format: Face-to-face
- **Grades 3-5:** The focal topic for this groups will include fluency, problem-solving, and preparing students for middle school content related to ratios/proportions/rates of change. Frequency: monthly during the Fall and Spring months | Format: Face-to-face
- **Grades 6-8:** With a schedule forthcoming, this network will meet once per month after school to conduct a book study on math teaching practices deemed as effective in support student mathematical thinking. Format: Virtual



Science Teacher Networks: This year training related to the adoption of the STEELS standards will focus on the Technology & Engineering (T&E) Standards. With dates forthcoming, the current plan is to meet with related T&E grade bands and include tools educators can use to teach these standards. Format: Face-to-face.

Health and Physical Education Network: Lead by the PA Department of Education, this networks will continue the work accomplished by this group in previous years. Frequency: Twice per year | Format: Face-to-face.



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