



# Alignment of **Texas Rising Star Standards** to ITSN Professional Learning Communities for Teachers

## **About ITSN Teacher PLCs**

ITSN professional learning communities (PLCs) for teachers are an opportunity to connect early learning programs to quality training that is highly aligned to the Texas Rising Star Category 2 standards. PLCs are:

- Focused heavily on classroom practice, using exemplar videos to explore strong teacher-child interactions
- Facilitated in small groups of practitioners to encourage engagement and peer-to-peer exchange
- Designed to deepen understanding after completion of self-paced courses (courses required for some PLCs)
- Hosted virtually with multiple scheduling options
- Approximately one hour each
- Provided at no cost to participants or boards

## **Using This Document**

We have created this alignment document to help center directors identify the most appropriate PLCs for their infant and toddler teachers, depending on teachers' individual needs.

The ITSN highly recommends three PLC series because of their strong alignment to Category 2 standards: *Connect with Me: Promoting Social-Emotional Development*; *Talk with Me: Promoting Early Language Development*; and *Learn with Me: Promoting Cognitive Development*.

In Table 1 on page 2, you can find the specific classroom strategies that are explored within each PLC in these three series. The far right column describes the areas of the Texas Rising Star standards that are most aligned to the PLC series.

On page 3, you can see how Texas Rising Star standards across four sub-categories are aligned to individual PLCs. Often, multiple PLCs will reinforce a specific standard.

When assigning PLCs to teachers, **we strongly recommend that directors encourage teachers to participate in all PLCs within a given series**, as strategies across PLCs build on each other.

Additional PLCs that may be of interest to teachers and directors can be found on page 4.

## **Incorporating PLCs into Continuous Quality Improvement Plans (CQIPs)**

ITSN PLCs can be incorporated into Texas Rising Star CQIPs to support professional learning for practitioners who have goals set in related Texas Rising Star standards. Center directors can collaborate with their Texas Rising Star mentors to ensure ITSN PLCs are represented in the CQIP, if appropriate.

Contact [Melissa.V.Bailey@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Melissa.V.Bailey@uth.tmc.edu) if you have any questions!



**Table 1. PLC Strategies and Alignment to Texas Rising Star**

Connect with Me: Promoting Social-Emotional Development PLC series			
<b>Part 1 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express warmth and affection</li> <li>Use praise</li> <li>Label feelings</li> <li>Comfort children in distress</li> <li>Encourage back-and-forth play</li> </ul>	<b>Part 2 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be predictable</li> <li>Redirect</li> <li>Follow consistent daily routines</li> <li>Help children share space</li> <li>Support turn-taking</li> </ul>	<b>Part 3 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage talk about feelings</li> <li>Talk about connections between feelings/events</li> <li>Build emotional understanding</li> <li>Promote peer interactions</li> </ul>	<p>The <i>Connect with Me</i> series supports classroom skills across Category 2 standards, particularly the sub-categories of <b>Warmth and Responsiveness, Play-Based Interactions and Guidance, and Support for Children’s Regulation.</b></p>
<b>Part 4 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model prosocial behaviors</li> <li>Explain what comes next</li> <li>Provide cues for self-control</li> <li>Offer opportunities to make choices</li> <li>Help resolve conflicts</li> </ul>	<b>Part 5A PLC, <i>Navigating Challenging Behaviors</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying causes</li> <li>Prevention strategies</li> <li>Response strategies</li> </ul>	<b>Part 5B PLC, <i>Navigating Challenging Behaviors, continued</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying causes</li> <li>Prevention strategies</li> <li>Response strategies</li> </ul>	
Talk with Me: Promoting Early Language Development PLC series			
<b>Part 1 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labeling</li> <li>Describing</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Explaining</li> </ul>	<b>Part 2 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linking</li> <li>Narrating</li> <li>Thinking Aloud</li> <li>Rephrasing</li> <li>Extending</li> </ul>	<b>Part 3 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking Questions</li> <li>Pacing</li> <li>Encouraging Conversations</li> <li>Inviting Participation</li> <li>Scaffolding</li> </ul>	<p>The <i>Talk with Me</i> series primarily supports items in the <b>Language Facilitation and Support</b> subcategory.</p>
Learn with Me: Promoting Cognitive Development PLC series			
<b>Part 1 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote sensory exploration</li> <li>Encourage observation</li> <li>Encourage effort and persistence</li> <li>Maintain children’s attention</li> <li>Encourage imitation</li> </ul>	<b>Part 2 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how things work</li> <li>Talk about sequence</li> <li>Engage children in math activities</li> <li>Model/join in pretend play</li> </ul>	<b>Part 3 PLC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote flexibility in thinking</li> <li>Model problem solving aloud</li> <li>Scaffold by simplifying</li> <li>Scaffold by adding challenge</li> </ul>	<p>The <i>Learn with Me</i> series supports items in <b>Play-Based Interactions and Guidance and Language Facilitation and Support.</b> It is perfect for teachers who are ready to use more sophisticated language and play strategies.</p>

**Course Completion:** Please note that these PLCs require course completion prior to participation. Instructions for accessing the courses can be found [here](#). A CLI Engage account is required, but signup is free.

**Table 2. Detailed Alignment View**

Texas Rising Star Standard <i>Note: Names of standards are abbreviated for readability</i>		Social-Emotional Series						Language Series			Cognitive Series		
		Pt. 1	Pt. 2	Pt. 3	Pt. 4	Pt. 5A	Pt.5B	Pt. 1	Pt. 2	Pt. 3	Pt. 1	Pt. 2	Pt. 3
<b>Warmth and Responsiveness</b>													
P-WRS-01	Warm, safe, and nurturing environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
P-WRS-02	Frequent positive nonverbal behaviors	✓			✓								
P-WRS-03	Patient, relaxed style	✓			✓	✓	✓						
P-WRS-04	Attends to children’s signals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			
P-WRS-05	Responds promptly and sensitively	✓		✓	✓								✓
P-WRS-06	Adjust one’s own behavior	✓				✓	✓						✓
<b>Language Facilitation and Support</b>													
P-LFS-01	Listens and responds									✓			✓
P-LFS-02	Positive verbal responses	✓											
P-LFS-03	Uses language to add meaning								✓		✓	✓	✓
P-LFS-04	Communicates throughout the day							✓	✓	✓			
P-LFS-05	Uses descriptive language							✓			✓	✓	✓
P-LFS-06	Provides frequent opportunities to talk							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
P-LFS-07	Allows time to respond									✓			
P-LFS-08	Engages children in conversations								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
P-LFS-09	Expands on children’s understanding								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
P-LFS-10	Extends children’s language								✓	✓			
<b>Play-Based Interactions and Guidance</b>													
P-PBIG-01	Supports a playful attitude	✓		✓	✓						✓	✓	
P-PBIG-02	Expands on play	✓		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
P-PBIG-03	Provides guidance when children are working									✓	✓	✓	✓
P-PBIG-04	Facilitates social interactions with peers	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	
<b>Support for Children’s Regulation</b>													
P-SCR-01	Models/encourages emotional expression	✓		✓									
P-SCR-02	Provides explanations about feelings			✓									
P-SCR-03	Explains logical consequences				✓	✓	✓						
P-SCR-04	Encourages self-regulation with rules/routines		✓										
P-SCR-05	Demonstrates flexibility and tolerance for mishaps		✓		✓								
P-SCR-06	Recognizes rising tensions			✓	✓	✓	✓						
P-SCR-07	Assists in communication with peers	✓	✓	✓	✓								
P-SCR-08	Encourages children to assist with routines												

### Table 3. Additional PLCs of Interest

In addition to the PLCs described above, the ITSN offers several PLCs that reinforce quality practices related to Texas Rising Star standards. These PLCs can be used to support directors' development of individualized staff trainings plans for their staff and support overall training hours for teachers.

PLC Series	PLC topics	Texas Rising Star Alignment
<b>Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines (4 PLCs)</b>	The ITSN provides four PLCs that correspond to the domains of the ITELGs: Physical, Social Emotional, Language, and Cognitive. Completion of each related course is required (Texas Infant Toddler and Three-Year-Old Guidelines Training).	These PLCs are a great way to engage teachers in facilitated discussion around the ITELG training, which is required for directors and recommended for teachers.
<b>Grow With Me: Using Developmental Assessments (1 PLC)</b>	This PLC supports best practices in developmental screening and referral for infants and toddlers using content from the Grow with Me course and CLI's Developmental Milestones Checklists. Completion of the related course is required. The course is part of the CIRCLE Infant and Toddler Teacher Training: "Play with Me" series.	The Grow with Me PLC may be helpful for teachers who need support understanding and using assessment tools, particularly if they are using developmental milestone checklists (P-PM-05).
<b>Read with Me: Promoting Early Literacy Development (2 PLCs)</b>	Part 1 PLC covers five strategies to promote children's early literacy skills: Read with Enthusiasm, Share Control, Invite Interest, Talk about Pictures, and Encourage Active Participation. Part 2 covers six additional strategies: Practice Fine Motor Skills, Point Out Print and Alphabet, Model Writing, Use Rhythm and Rhyme, Use Props and Extenders, and Link to Experiences. Completion of each related course is required. The courses are part of the CIRCLE Infant and Toddler Teacher Training: "Play with Me" series.	Although we do not explicitly align the Read with Me strategies to Category 2 standards, early literacy activities are an excellent way to facilitate language, vary instructional formats, extend playful learning, and foster warm relationships between teachers and children.
<b>CIRCLE Activity Collection: Infant and Toddler (1 PLC)</b>	The activity collection is a free online resource that provides a wide range of activities and video demonstrations across domains. This PLC discusses the importance of play-based learning and helps teachers become familiar with navigating the activity collection and selecting activities to incorporate into lesson plans. There is no related course for this PLC.	Using the activity collection may help teachers implement skills within <i>Category 2: Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning</i> . For example, the collection includes ideas for both teacher- and child-directed play and how to use routines and transition times for incidental learning.
<b>Family Engagement Series (2 PLCs currently, 2 more coming soon)</b>	Part 1, Partnering with Families, explores broad-based partnership and communication strategies. Part 2, Play-Based Learning, is focused on promoting play-based learning at home through incorporating home-based activities into lesson plans. Completion of each related course is required. The courses are part of the Family Engagement Series on CLI Engage.	The Part 1 PLC strategies may support implementation of many family education and involvement components, and may be particularly useful for strategies to facilitate parent feedback (P-FI-01). The Part 2 PLC's focus on play-based learning aligns well with providing families with resources on growth and development (P-FE-02).