

Collaborative Conversation Log (CCL) Guide

**“Face-to-face conversation is the most human – and humanizing – thing we do.
Fully present to one another, we learn to listen. It’s where we develop the capacity for empathy.
It’s where we experience the joy of being heard, of being understood.”
~ Cal Newport**

Why?

The Collaborative Conversation Log (CCL) provides a consistent structure and continuity for weekly mentoring conversations. It is intended to cultivate reflective and productive habits of mind that promote continuous professional growth by:

- Reinforcing what’s working and celebrate successes
- Identifying and prioritizing challenges and growth opportunities
- Strategically address problems of practice
- Promoting progress and accountability through clearly documented next steps

What?

The CCL is a **documentation** and **reflection** tool designed to **guide weekly learning-focused mentoring conversations**. It serves as:

- A record of the teacher’s professional growth in relation to the **California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)**
- **Evidence of the required weekly hour of individualized support**

Weekly Support Requirement:

- Candidates must receive an **average of one hour per week** of individualized mentoring support. This support can be directly provided by the mentor or coordinated through the mentor as part of a broader **system of support**. Activities can include planning, observing, modeling, problem-solving, and collaborating with other experienced educators.

Documenting Each Meeting (Required)

Mentors are responsible for documenting weekly conversations on the CCL. Each meeting entry must include:

- **Date**
- **Duration** (in minutes)

While only the date and duration are required, including **brief notes is considered a best practice** to support ongoing reflection and professional growth. Utilize the CCL to identify patterns, surface insights, highlight progress, and inform future mentoring conversations.

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Important Note:

- Every school week must be documented. Be sure to note holidays and any missed meetings.
- If **4 consecutive weeks are missed**, a formal [Request for Extension/Modification](#) is required.

How?

1. Acknowledge What's Working

- **Invite the Candidate to share recent successes**
 - New teachers may find it difficult to recognize their accomplishments—starting here helps shift the focus toward growth and reinforces a positive mindset.
- **Build the habit** of recognizing progress and naming successes
 - Highlights growth since the last meeting
- **Prompt reflective thinking:**
 - Ask clarifying questions to explore *what is working and why*
 - Use **CSTP-aligned language** to build a shared professional vocabulary
 - Offer your own observations to help spark reflection and deepen insight

Grounding conversations in **evidence of growth** helps to ensure each session feels **purposeful, affirming, and focused**—supporting the Candidate's **confidence** and their capacity to take meaningful **next steps**.

2. Identify, Prioritize, and Discuss Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

- **Support new teachers in identifying areas of need - both “just-in-time” and long-term areas for growth**
 - Normalize the overwhelm- Acknowledge that new teachers often face many simultaneous challenges (e.g., classroom management, instructional planning, assessment).
- **Guide prioritization and focus setting**
 - Cluster or prioritize challenges to reduce overload/overwhelm
 - Support the selection of a **clear, manageable focus** for each session.
 - Use **CSTP-aligned language** to frame challenges as opportunities for professional growth.
 - Refer back to the candidate's ILP goal during weekly meetings when it aligns with current needs, helping to keep long-term growth connected to day-to-day practice.
- **Mentor's role in focus-setting**

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- Facilitate the Candidate's exploration of what matters most to them, allowing them to drive the conversation. Draw from ongoing goals, observations, and previous conversations.
- Use **paraphrasing** and **clarifying questions** and other coaching strategies to support thinking and focus.
- Support the **habit of reflection**—critical for transferring and applying learning.
- As trust builds, mentors may gently suggest areas of focus when appropriate.
- **Centering equity, inclusion, and belonging**
 - Intentionally surface less visible challenges related to equitable student outcomes and inclusive practices

Example mentor prompts:

- “You’ve surfaced a few different instructional challenges. As you think about those, what feels most pressing or relevant to explore together today?”
- Time management has come up in a few of our recent conversations. What connections do you see between that and how routines are playing out in your classroom?

Possible Topics For Exploration Include:

● Routines, procedures, classroom management ○ Classroom set-up and organization ● Relationships with and amongst students ○ Establishing equitable and inclusive learning environment/culture ● Quality, Cognitive Demand , and Relevance of lessons ○ Unit and lesson planning ○ Differentiation/Universal Design for Learning ○ Culturally responsive pedagogy	● Assessment as/for/of learning practices ○ Analyzing student learning/work ● Relationships with Colleagues, Families/Community ● Cultivating resilience ○ Work-life balance (personal well-being) ○ Managing non-classroom duties ● Preparing for an observation or evaluation ● Preparing for conferences, report cards, IEPs, SSTs ● Professional Development opportunities
Note: Many novice teachers benefit from targeted support aligned to CSTP 2 – Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning	

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3. Specify Next Steps (Candidate and Mentor)

- **Co-create clear, manageable next steps** for both the Candidate and mentor. This helps:
 - Encourage action and experimentation
 - Build momentum and confidence
 - Establish mutual accountability
- **Aim for short-term, achievable goals**
 - Increases the likelihood of implementation
 - Promotes a sense of progress and empowerment
 - Strengthens teacher efficacy

Examples of next steps might include:

- The Candidate tries out a new instructional strategy
- The mentor gathers resources, models a strategy, or arranges an observation opportunity

4. Bring Closure by Organizing, Integrating, and Asking for Feedback

- **Consolidate learning, clarify next steps**, dedicate the last 5-10 minutes of each meeting to:
 - **Summarize Key Takeaways:** Ask the Candidate to reflect on the session and summarize their key learning.
 - **Review and confirm next steps:** Ensures clarity and shared understanding
 - **Invite feedback** to enhance future sessions
 - Ask open-ended questions like:
 - What worked well for you today?
 - How might we adjust our time together to better support your needs?

This process helps reinforce learning, supports clarity, and provides valuable formative data to enhance future mentoring conversations.

Success Tips:

- **Capture brief, meaningful notes** that reflect key insights, not a transcript. Focus on the heart of the conversation rather than trying to type everything. Think bullets and short phrases
- **Review the CCL:** Create a habit of reviewing the previous CCL entry before each meeting to recall the focus and next steps
- **Plan ahead:** Consider paraphrasing, open-ended questions, or other coaching strategies you'd like to try.
- **Use the CCL as your Induction hub:** Consider linking ILP docs, resources, photos, student work, and more.

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ILP Completion Criteria

Document Naming Convention for Canvas Uploads:

Date.LastName.FirstInitial.TaskAbbreviation **Example:** 25.11.12.Smithy.T.CCL

Resources

- ★ [Resource for Building a Learning-focused Relationship](#)
- ★ [California Standards for the Teaching Profession](#)
- ★ [See Mentor Site \(Getting Started\)](#)