

# Supporting ESP Professional Excellence

NEA is leading and strengthening efforts to elevate Education Support Professionals (ESPs) as respected professionals essential to the success of all students, educators, school communities, and unions through relevant ESP-led programs, advocacy, and supports.

Learn more at [nea.org/esppd](https://nea.org/esppd)



“Many of us work with students who have diverse needs and that’s why it’s so important that we have access to quality professional learning. We must expand our knowledge so we can implement new techniques and approaches to benefit all our students.”

– Jen Bramson, 2024 NEA ESP of the Year, Specialized Paraeducator, Utah

“After the first year of our ESP mentoring program, we saw a 100% retention rate of new hires. Our mentors and mentees feel empowered and supported by each other and are passionate about retaining high-quality ESPs.”

– Diandra Western, Teaching Assistant, Mentor Coordinator New York

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### ESPs: Supporting Our Own Through Peer Mentoring

Design and build impactful and sustainable ESP peer mentoring programs to support ESP professional excellence. Available formats include independent online learning path courses, in-person events, and a manual to guide program development.

[nea.org/espmentoring](https://nea.org/espmentoring)

### ESP Professional Growth Continuum (PGC)

Grounded in eight universal standards of what ESPs need to know and be able to do, the PGC provides a clear pathway for professional growth throughout ESP careers. Learn more about strengthening your skills and gaining recognition through PGC-aligned independent study courses and micro-credentials.

[nea.org/pgc](https://nea.org/pgc)

### ESP Learning Network Webinars

Join ESP colleagues from across the country in monthly professional development webinars on a variety of topics designed to support your professional growth. Missed a webinar? No problem! View past webinar recordings online.

[nea.org/esppdwebinars](https://nea.org/esppdwebinars)

### Building Winning Teams: Effective Paraeducator-Teacher Teams

Develop strong paraeducator-teacher partnerships critical for student learning and success by engaging in this eight-session in-person professional learning opportunity.

[nea.org/bwt](https://nea.org/bwt)

### NEA ESP National Conference

Attend the largest national conference for ESPs to develop the skills and knowledge to support student and school success, strengthen your educator voice through the union, and network with the largest community of ESPs.

[nea.org/espconference](https://nea.org/espconference)

## WHY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR ESPs?

Everyone who works in public education plays a critical role in supporting student success. Learning occurs throughout the school day, whether in the cafeteria, hallways, and admissions office, or on playgrounds, athletic fields, and school buses. ESPs create experiences and conditions for healthy, safe, supported, engaged, and challenged students.





### ESP Leadership Institute (ESPLI)

Join the next generation of ESP leaders to develop leadership attitudes, skills, and knowledge that will enhance your ability to be visible, vocal, and influential advocates in your worksites, communities, and at the local, state, and national levels of the union.

[nea.org/espli](http://nea.org/espli)

### NEA Micro-credentials

Amplify your practice, boost your résumé, and show your district and school that you are a skilled professional. Micro-credentials are competency-based recognitions that can be earned through independent and group professional learning experiences.

[nea.certificationbank.com/ESP](http://nea.certificationbank.com/ESP)

[nea.org/micro-credentials](http://nea.org/micro-credentials)

“ESPLI gave me the opportunity to grow as a leader and the skills to continue advocating for racial, social, and economic justice. It not only helped me professionally, but it also gave me the best union family.”

– Yahaira Rodriguez  
Paraeducator, Massachusetts

### Student and Educator Mental Health

Learn how to support the mental well-being of your school community through blended-learning courses, webinars, and resources on social emotional learning, grief, and trauma-informed education.

[nea.org/sel](http://nea.org/sel)

[nea.org/grief](http://nea.org/grief)

[nea.org/trauma](http://nea.org/trauma)

### Professional Development Offerings in Spanish

The ESP Professional Growth Continuum and the ESP Learning Network include Spanish language options. Learn more at [nea.org/pgc](http://nea.org/pgc) and [nea.org/esppdwebinars](http://nea.org/esppdwebinars)

## ESP ADVOCACY

### NEA ESP Bill of Rights

Pledge your support for the ESP Bill of Rights and learn how to build strategic campaigns to advocate for a living wage, fairness, and respect for ESPs all across the country.

[nea.org/ESPBillofRights](http://nea.org/ESPBillofRights)

### Protect Against the Privatization of ESP Jobs

Fight to keep public education and ESP professions out of the hands of profiteers! Learn how NEA is preventing the privatization of ESP jobs and protecting the future of public education.

[nea.org/espjobsecurity](http://nea.org/espjobsecurity)

## ESP CELEBRATION

### ESP of the Year Award Program

Recognize ESPs for their contributions to student and educator success in their worksites, unions, and communities! Check out the awards program, view your state's nominee, and learn how the ESP of the Year is leading and advocating for ESPs across the country.

[nea.org/espoty](http://nea.org/espoty)

### NATIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS DAY

Celebrate ESPs across the country! While NEA recognizes ESPs all year long, we dedicate a special day each year to celebrating ESPs and the important work they do. ESP Day falls on the Wednesday of American Education Week in November.

[www.nea.org/aew](http://www.nea.org/aew)



**SCAN ME!**

