

A HANDBOOK FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: Research, Resources, and Strategies for Implementation



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This Handbook is a tool for schools to support professional learning for pedagogical staff. The Handbook contains suggestions and best practices for schools and does not represent DOE policy or contractual obligations. Principals and other supervisors may utilize this Handbook in their discretion. The Department reserves the right to make changes to this Handbook at any point in time.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: From Professional Development to Professional Learning	3
NYSED STANDARDS	5
LEARNING FORWARD STANDARDS	7
NYCDOE CRITERIA FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	8

“LEARNING
NEVER EXHAUSTS
THE MIND.”

Leonardo Da Vinci

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

■ Why does professional learning matter?	11
■ What is a culture of professional learning?	11
■ What is the role of the school leader in planning professional learning?	13
■ What does the Professional Development/Professional Learning Committee do?	14
■ Why and how are needs assessments used?	15
■ What are learning teams?	16
■ What is in a Professional Learning plan?	17
■ What are the structures of professional learning to consider?	19
- Professional Learning Communities	19
- Job-embedded Professional Development	21
- Differentiated Professional Development	23
- Technology and Digital Ways of Learning	25
■ What are considerations for planning?	26
■ What is the value of professional learning to students' families?	29

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

■ What is important to know about implementing new learning?	33
■ Why is time so essential?	34
■ What makes implementation successful?	35
- Why is coaching so important?	37
- How can coaching work in schools?	37
- How does peer coaching work?	39
■ What is the cycle of implementation?	43
■ How is professional learning sustained?	44
■ What role does teacher satisfaction play in implementation and sustainability?	45

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

■ What does it mean to evaluate a professional learning opportunity?	49
■ What is the highest priority professional learning to evaluate?	50
■ How does professional learning evaluation work?	50
■ How is student learning assessed after a teacher's experience of PL?	55
■ What is formative evaluation of professional learning?	56
■ What is summative evaluation of professional learning?	58
■ Teacher Professional Learning Logic Model	59
■ What guides revision of a professional learning plan?	61
- Relationships of Professional Learning and Evaluation	63

APPENDICES

■ Section I	71
■ Section II	95
■ Section III	101

RESOURCES

Introduction

From Professional Development to Professional Learning

“Professional development as a term and as a strategy has run its course. The future of improvement, indeed of the profession itself, depends on a radical shift in how we conceive learning and the conditions under which teachers and students work.” Michael Fullan

The recent adoption of the Common Core Learning Standards signaled a departure from traditional, well-known styles of instruction. The standards speak to teaching that is focused on critical thinking and problem-solving. For this kind of work, teachers will need to think in new ways and employ many new practices. This presents us with both an opportunity and a challenge. A challenge because researchers found that while 90 percent of teachers report participating in professional development, most of them also believed it was not helpful (Darling-Hammond et al, 2009). The opportunity presented is that we can now explore avenues of professional learning intended to directly help teachers make the necessary shifts in classroom practice that will lead to improved student outcomes.

One important way to meet the challenges presented by the Common Core Learning Standards is to change the concept of professional development to one of professional learning. We must reimagine professional learning so we begin to understand it as the routine work of a highly engaged group of educators who come together to better their practice and in the process, improve outcomes for students. These educators come together because of their desire to improve their teaching and student learning. (The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, January 2013; TNTP, July 2012; Cherry, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2012). They recognize that people who are in a learning profession never stop learning themselves. They ask questions and problem-solve by interacting with real work - work that is relevant and connected to their day-to-day teaching and learning lives.

The questions and problem-solving expected by rigorous standards motivate us to move away from a traditional model of professional development that has generally referred to a series of “workshops” available to education personnel through their state, districts or schools. While we can all agree that professional development is vital to school success and teacher retention, this traditional model has been criticized. All too often when educators hear the words “professional development,” they imagine a disengaged group of educators sitting in a large room being talked at about a new district or state initiative that they are now required to implement. It has come to connote something that is done to you by someone else. We are well-positioned now to change this perception and to move toward a more holistic, participatory, and relevant understanding.

This is not new thinking. During the 1990s, research began to support an alternative model of professional development. This model stresses that for teacher learning to be effective and to stick, it should take place in an active and coherent intellectual environment where ideas are exchanged and connections made to the real work of schools. In this model, professional development is sustained, coherent, focused on student outcomes and part of a teacher’s professional responsibilities (Wei, et al, 2009).

With all the complex challenges facing schools today, the need for teachers to build on their instructional knowledge and pedagogy is more important than ever. It is time then to engage in “professional learning” - an authentic process which all stakeholders in an educational system engage in often to become smarter and more capable in doing our work. This concept of professional learning is an opportunity for continuous learning; and we all know that continuous learning takes time (Wei, et al., 2009). Planning for and integrating all of the pieces - including enough time - is a real challenge, but the results - more skilled and knowledgeable teachers and subsequently, students who learn more - are well worth the effort.

While direct causality on how professional learning models lead to better teaching are difficult to substantiate, it is clear that highly effective teachers make all the difference to student success and student learning. Therefore, a viable professional learning program must offer teachers many opportunities to obtain needed knowledge and skills that can then lead to highly effective teaching.

This document outlines the sources of information and inspiration such as the current NYSED Standards for Professional Development, the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning and New York City Department of Education-developed criteria for effective professional learning. Readers will quickly see how the NYSED standards, the Learning Forward Standards and the New York City Department of Education Criteria for Effective Professional Learning are connected to each other and to the larger body of research presented herein.

We hope you use the contents of this handbook as an interactive workbook, a place to do your thinking, wondering and planning. The resources and appendices (templates) are included to support the development of your professional learning plans, ways to implement and sustain those plans as well as options for evaluating and revising them.

Anna Commitante

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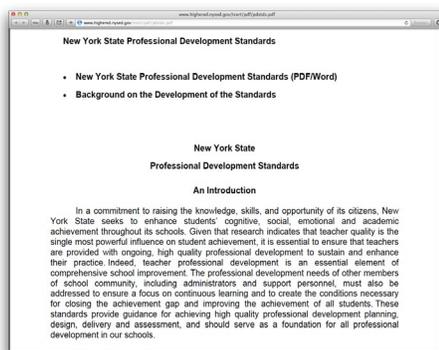
The New York State Department of Education Professional Development Standards

In a commitment to raising the knowledge, skills, and opportunity of its citizens, New York State seeks to enhance students' cognitive, social, emotional and academic achievement throughout its schools. Given that research indicates that teacher quality is the single most powerful influence on student achievement, it is essential to ensure that teachers are provided with ongoing, high quality professional development to sustain and enhance their practice. Indeed, teacher professional development is an essential element of comprehensive school improvement. The professional development needs of other members of school community, including administrators and support personnel, must also be addressed to ensure a focus on continuous learning and to create the conditions necessary for closing the achievement gap and improving the achievement of all students. These standards provide guidance for achieving high quality professional development planning, design, delivery and assessment, and should serve as a foundation for all professional development in our schools.

- 1. Designing Professional Development:** Professional development design is based on data; is derived from the experience, expertise and needs of the recipients; reflects best practices in sustained job-embedded learning; and incorporates knowledge of how adults learn.
- 2. Content Knowledge and Quality Teaching:** Professional development expands educators' content knowledge and the knowledge and skills necessary to provide developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and assess student progress.
- 3. Research-based Professional Learning:** Professional development is research-based and provides educators with opportunities to analyze, apply and engage in research.
- 4. Collaboration:** Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment.
- 5. Diverse Learning:** Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge and skill to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
- 6. Student Learning Environments:** Professional development ensures that educators are able to create safe, secure, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students.
- 7. Parent, Family and Community Engagement:** Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill, and opportunity to engage and collaborate with parents, families, and other community members as active partners in children's education.
- 8. Data-driven Professional Practice:** Professional development uses disaggregated student data and other evidence of student learning to determine professional development learning needs and priorities, to monitor student progress, and to help sustain continuous professional growth.

- 9. Technology:** Professional development promotes technological literacy and facilitates the effective use of all appropriate technology.
- 10. Evaluation:** Professional development is evaluated using multiple sources of information to assess its effectiveness in improving professional practice and student learning.

<http://tinyurl.com/nsbmtuj>



Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning

(formerly the National Staff Development Council)

- 1. Learning Communities:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- 2. Leadership:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- 3. Resources:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
- 4. Data:** Professional development ensures that educators have the knowledge, skill and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment. Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
- 5. Learning Designs:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
- 6. Implementations:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change.
- 7. Outcomes:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

<http://tinyurl.com/msqde2p>



New York City DOE Criteria for Effective Professional Learning

Department of Education leadership believes strongly that internal stakeholders, as well as research, should drive the City's plans for professional learning.

These ten criteria for effective professional learning were developed by citywide constituents in the spring of 2014. Participants engaged in an activity that yielded these ten priorities - the most essential factors for effective professional learning.

Effective and high quality professional learning is:

- 1.** purposeful
- 2.** evaluated and tied to educator and student outcomes
- 3.** data-driven and research-based
- 4.** relevant to participants and the current educational landscape
- 5.** provided in a safe environment for learning and risk-taking
- 6.** collaborative
- 7.** experiential
- 8.** differentiated and addresses varying adult learning needs
- 9.** ongoing and sustainable with opportunities for reflection
- 10.** supported through dedicated time, resources, and structure



IRINA
BONELLI BONDINI
VISITOR



HOME

SECTION I: PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

Why does professional learning matter?

Professional learning (PL) “enables teachers to work regularly together to improve their practice and implement strategies to meet the needs of their students” (Wei et al., 2010, p. ii). In addition to those outlined in the introduction to this handbook, there are two implicit differences between common conceptions of professional development and professional learning that are called out by this definition. The first is **ongoing collaboration**, and the second is the **cyclical nature of improving instructional practice**. While much of the research used for this document refers to professional development (PD), reading this handbook with those two lenses—of collaboration and the cyclical nature of improving teaching—will lead to a deep understanding of what it means to engage in professional learning at your school.

PL is more important than ever because of the rapidly growing knowledge base in every subject and discipline (Ball, 2000; Schulman, 1986). Educators need to be constantly learning so that they can teach their students based on the latest research in the profession. In addition, standards are changing - or have already changed - teachers’ practice; therefore, teachers need to be prepared to bring those changes into their classrooms. A strong plan for PL can drive these necessary changes so that teachers and administrators can succeed in implementing them.

What is a culture of professional learning?

Professional learning can bring out the best in schools and teachers. It can create a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and shared accountability - a culture in which teacher voices are heard, in which they are included in the decision-making so they feel a greater sense of ownership of student achievement. “School culture must be conducive to critical enquiry, and provide opportunities for professional dialogue” (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, M W., 1995). The more supportive the culture, the stronger the effectiveness of the professional learning.

Trust is another essential part of the culture of professional learning (Learning Forward, 2014). Trust is especially important during times of change, and since increased professional learning time represents a significant change in schools, particular attention must be paid to building and maintaining trust throughout the collaboration so that professional learning can flourish. Teachers will be working more collaboratively than ever before, and will be held accountable to one another for their collective growth. In order for collaboration to happen successfully - for trust to build - **teaching has to be deprivatized**.

Consider your role in the Professional Learning culture of the school

(adapted from Guskey, 2000)

- Am I an active and enthusiastic learner?
- Do I encourage others to learn and participate in new programs and activities?
- Am I an attentive participant in PD activities?
- Do I regularly review information on student learning progress?
- Do I encourage involvement in school-wide decision making?
- Am I open to new ideas and suggestions?
- Do I work with teachers to improve instructional practices?
- Do I encourage teachers to plan collaboratively?
- Do I encourage peer coaching and mentoring relationships?
- Do I honor and value teachers' perspectives?
- Do I facilitate regular follow-up sessions and activities?
- Do I share the results of new strategies with all teachers?

In its [Framework for Capacity Building \(2012\)](#), the Literacy Learning Exchange (part of the National Center for Literacy Education) lists deprivatizing practice as the first of six domains of building capacity in schools. Along with enacting shared agreements, creating a collaborative culture, maintaining an inquiry stance, using evidence effectively, and supporting collaboration systematically, deprivatizing practice is a way to shape school culture.

Everything you will read in this handbook speaks to the necessity of deprivatizing practice so professional learning can reach its capacity.

Traditionally, teaching has been considered a private act and teachers are often wary about inviting even the most well-intentioned of colleagues into their classrooms. Deprivatizing practice opens the classroom doors wide. It makes a statement about transparent and shared responsibility. Consider the following characteristics of a deprivatized school environment as an introduction to, and framing for, everything in this handbook, its appendices, and its related resources. When a school culture is one of deprivatization, the following things happen: peer observations occur regularly; everyone is accountable to each other for success and for student learning; adult learning is a shared responsibility; evidence is routinely collected and comfortably discussed with others; and the learning that occurs through collaboration is collected and shared.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

What is the role of the school leader in planning PL?

Even though one of the hallmarks of PL is the collaborative planning offered by the PD/PL committee (in addition to collaborative learning), planning starts with reflection on the part of the principal. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2007), a principal has two roles when it comes to PL: instructional leader and transformative leader. As an instructional leader, the principal aims to improve practices directly. As a transformative leader, the principal aims to change the organizational culture in order to support widespread learning.

Because of its emphasis on cultural and organizational change, transformative leadership implies collaborative decision-making so that teachers feel a vested interest in their learning. Within this context PL has more impact when teachers' voices are heard, respected, and considered in instructional decision-making (Ross et al., 2011). When teachers feel empowered and autonomous, and when they play a substantive role in decision-making, their energy for continuous experimentation and learning (to reflect on and adapt their teaching practices) is fueled (Schmoker, 2004, in Ross et al., 2011).

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do both of these roles (instructional and transformative leadership) impact my professional learning planning in my school?

What does the PD/PL committee do?

After a school leader has reflected upon his or her role in creating a culture for PL, a core planning committee is established. This committee, made up of various members of the school community, plans the PL for the school. While the principal plays an important role in developing the PL plan, it is not just the principal who is accountable for making the learning deep and meaningful; rather, it is a collective responsibility shared by everyone. A strong PL community calls upon the talents of your assistant principals, coaches, and teacher leaders. The planning committee has to be guided by the question: “Is what we are doing working to improve student learning?” This needs to be the lens through which planning occurs. The PD/PL committee will establish a year-long plan, **but should continue to meet throughout the year to assess progress towards long-term goals, and make any necessary revisions based on need, feedback, or findings.**

The PD/PL committee should also use its analysis of student achievement data to plan relevant PL ([Mizell, 2010](#)), including differentiated learning options, for the staff. There will be more discussion about needs assessments and differentiated PL, but first it is important to note the central role research plays in developing meaningful and outcomes-based PL. While creating a PL plan, it is recommended that committee members conduct research so they are developing PL opportunities with the most up-to-date scholarly and practitioner knowledge.



See the appendix for the research the PD committee should do as part of the planning process, and ways they should use that research.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What is the impact of my role on the PD/PL committee and on my school community?

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

Types of data for needs assessment:

- Formal and informal assessments
- Assessment results
- Teacher or student portfolios
- Peer review
- Parent surveys
- Student surveys/self-reporting
- Teacher discussions/focus group
- Analysis of school-wide classroom data
- Observations
- Teacher surveys/self-reporting

Why and how are needs assessments used?

Planning for PL should begin with a thorough needs assessment (Guskey, 2010; Hassel, 1999). Needs assessments are essential as they surface specific areas for work and improvement. They can be conducted with student or teacher data. When a needs assessment survey is administered to teachers, questions should be asked in a way that identifies authentic problems, rather than specific PL activities (Jones, 1976; Jones and Hayes, 1990, in Guskey, 2000). For example, a question about difficulties teaching students with diverse abilities and interests may be more useful than one that asks about the need for a workshop on learning centers or multiple intelligences.

Needs assessment can be undertaken using a variety of student data. Examining the larger pieces of student data (e.g., state tests) makes sense when looking at whole-school PL efforts. The smaller pieces of student data, such as individual examples of student work, are appropriate to analyze when grade or subject-specific teams are working together.



See the appendix for an example of a needs assessment and the planning trajectory it offers.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What data do I think will be most meaningful in determining the needs of my school? Why?

What are learning teams?

Once the core PD planning committee is established, temporary learning teams can be formed. (Mizell, 2010). These teams will vary based on the kind of PL being implemented. Some of the strengths of a team-based approach to PL is its responsiveness, ability to differentiate, and flexibility, which means that **teams can form and re-form in a series of different professional learning cycles**, according to the school's and teachers' needs and interests. There will be more about the importance of learning teams further in this section, options for PL in the appendix, and in Section II (Implementing and Sustaining Professional Learning).

Learning teams can form around role, content, or grade level, as well as special interest groups. A teacher may be part of more than one learning team at a time, depending on the PL he/she is involved in. One learning team, for example, might engage in a professional book study and meet for 30 minutes every other week to discuss and analyze evidence of how the members have implemented ideas from the book in their classrooms. This discussion would include coaching one another other based on the peer observations they conducted during the week, because each teacher would have had a chance to see one another implement a new strategy. A second learning group could be an elementary curriculum planning team. A third group could be teachers who do not normally work together holistically examining student work. The groups could shift after engaging in a professional learning cycle for a period of time - depending on the needs of the school and the learning teams. There should also be many opportunities for reflection on a PL team's evaluation results as this could impact the nature of the group(s) the teacher would be a part of during the next cycle. The goal is not to have teachers feel pulled in too many different directions, but to feel stimulated, immersed in diverse professional learning, and to be held accountable for enacting their new knowledge. Learning teams can be engaged in professional learning cycles that vary in duration. For example, one PL cycle could be six weeks, one six months, and one could meet over the course of a year.

-  See the appendix for more information on developing learning plans, and how they help you enact the instructional focus of your school.
-  See the appendix for sample cycles of professional learning.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What data do I think will be most meaningful in determining the needs of the professional learning teams at my school? What PL cycle duration will best serve each of those needs? Why?

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

What is in a PL plan?

Like a good unit plan, professional learning plans **begin with the outcomes in mind**. The summative evaluation is built from those outcomes, and then formative evaluations, yielding information that will allow adjustments to ensure those outcomes are reached, are developed based on these outcomes. The entirety of Section III (Evaluating and Revising Professional Learning) is devoted to evaluating the impact of professional learning experiences, but **it is essential as we begin to talk about developing a professional learning plan to be cognizant that every step stems from a clear articulation of the intended impact and how the PD/PL committee will know if it is achieving that impact**. The PD/PL committee may start the process of developing evaluations by asking questions such as: How does the evaluation demonstrate that a transfer of new practice has occurred? How does the evaluation show whether or not teacher practice has improved or that student achievement has been positively affected? (Zepeda, 2012)

The next step is establishing goals for PL ([see checklist below](#)). Goals can be written to initiate a desired change within many different areas - student achievement or implementation of new teaching strategies based on subject matter standards, for example.

Evaluation and goal-setting help establish **coherence**, which is another essential element in a PL plan. It impacts how teachers make sense of the work, and how seamlessly they incorporate it into their instructional practices, as well as the results they get ([Hassel, 1999](#)).

The plan should also include a detailed, sequential, and public document of the **PL content, process, and activities**. Research that supports the activities is also important, and is part of the work of the PD committee.

Checklist for Establishing PL Goals:

- Based on desire to see a change in student behavior
- Focus on what a teacher needs to know/do to move the learner
- Begin with clear statement of purpose in terms of classroom or school practice the PD/PL committee hopes to see implemented, and the results you would like to see in student learning
- Ensure goals are worthwhile - one idea is to relate to goals of district, or mission of school
- Assessable - likely by multiple indicators, learning teams will want to look at both intended and unintended consequences (Hassel)
- Engender collaborative professional learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**How in the past have my PL goals matched the goals in the checklist?
What adjustments can I make for this year?**

PRIOR YEARS

THIS YEAR

-  See the appendix for a checklist for developing a PL plan.
-  See the appendix for a template a PL Committee could use to plan its PL cycles across a year.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

What are the structures of professional learning to consider?

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Although there is no universal definition of a PLC (Stoll et al., 2006; Williams, Brien, Sprague, & Sullivan, 2008), generally a PLC is a group of educators engaged in a process that develops teacher leadership and that is explicitly focused on building and sustaining improvement efforts. PLCs are usually composed of teachers, although administrators and support staff do participate (Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, & Wallace, 2005; Huffman, 2000). Through participation in PLCs, teachers enhance their leadership capacity while they work as members of collaborative teams that focus on improving their teaching and student learning. PLCs have at their core a belief in teacher leadership and in the importance of teacher involvement in school improvement efforts. PLC activities are driven by the understanding that improving classroom instruction is a major factor in improving student achievement results. Teachers and administrators work collaboratively to explore common problems, share learning, engage in new learning, and, ultimately act on that learning to improve their effectiveness as professionals.

The PLC idea is relatively new and grew out of attempts to reshape school culture by examining school structures and organization, how teachers work within that organization, and particularly their commitment to student achievement. PLC studies indicate that **when teachers regularly learn from one another, it leads to greater job satisfaction and a heightened responsibility for student learning** (Little, 1989; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1994). This sense of fulfillment results in not only improved teacher well-being, but also makes a difference in student achievement (Annenberg Institute for School Reform).

PLCs demand **a school culture that understands and embraces teacher leadership and collaboration**. Team members who regularly collaborate with the goal of continuous improvement share an instructionally focused vision aimed towards school improvement. In a PLC structure, educators share, question their practices using a critical lens, reflect, collaborate, and commit to inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006).

A PLC is not a prescription, a program, a model, or an innovation to be implemented. Instead, a PLC is a specific approach to working together that, when practiced well, results in school improvement.

What are barriers to change in schools?

(Bason and Crandall in Zepeda, 2012)

- Interrupted sequence of leadership
- Change is viewed as unmanageable - too many educators do not believe change can be accomplished
- Poor preparation - the complex nature of change, including conflict management and organizational behaviors are new and forbidding to many
- Underrepresentation in the decision-making process
- Tradition - deep attachment to the way things have been done in the past
- Competing needs and visions - teachers and administrators have difficulty agreeing on what changes need to be made
- Insufficient resources

Some characteristics of an effective PLC include:

- Teachers and administrators share a vision focused on student learning and a commitment to improvement.
- Collaborative culture and the belief that through collaboration, professionals achieve more than they could alone (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).
- A focus on analyzing outcomes to improve student learning (DuFour, 2004; Feger & Arruda, 2008). The focus goes beyond a team getting together to look at data. In PLCs, teachers respond to data that require mutual accountability and changing classroom practices.
- Supportive and shared leadership. PLCs often are viewed as a foundation for developing teacher leaders (Caine & Caine, 2000). Administrators are committed to sharing decision-making with teachers and providing opportunities for them to serve as leaders (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; McRel, 2003).
- Shared practice. A major focus of PLCs is on professional learning in which teachers work and learn together as they continually evaluate the effectiveness of their practices and the needs, interests, and skills of their students (McRel, 2003).

To learn more about PLCs, read *Learning by Doing, second edition* (2006), by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Thomas Many or download [*Professional Learning Communities: Professional Development Strategies that Improve Instruction, by the Annenberg Institute*](#).

NOTE:

Earlier in the handbook we referenced learning teams; PLCs and learning teams can be thought of as synonymous.



See the appendix for a template a PLC can use to plan its work throughout a learning cycle.



See the appendix for a template a PLC can use to plan its **instructional** work during a learning cycle.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

Job-Embedded Professional Development (JEPD)

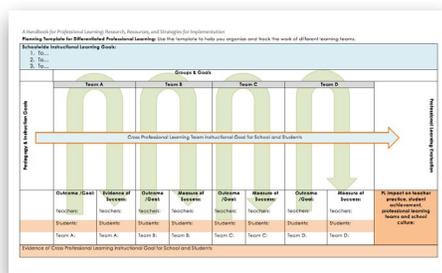
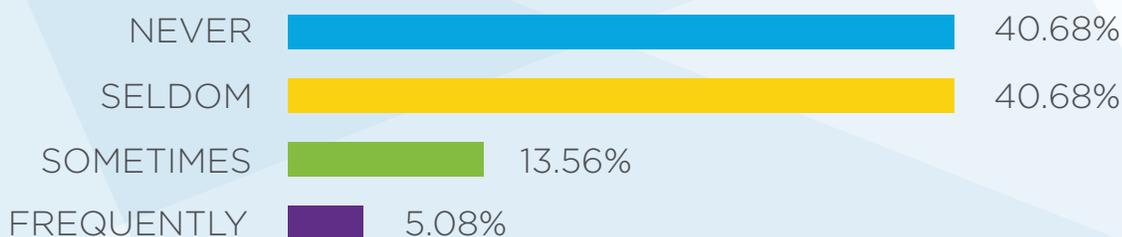
JEPD refers to **teacher learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and is designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the goal of improving student learning** (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hirsh, 2009 in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). JEPD is almost always school or classroom-based and is integrated into the workday. In a JEPD context, teachers assess and find solutions for authentic and immediate problems as part of a cycle of ongoing improvement (Hawley & Valli, 1999 in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). Because it is locally rooted and makes a direct connection between learning and application in daily practice, teachers are required to be actively involved in cooperative, inquiry-based work. High-quality JEPD is aligned with standards for student achievement and any related school improvement goals.

Although JEPD can be the work of an individual teacher, a view of professional knowledge as “social, situated, and distributed among colleagues” is the foundation of JEPD (Putnam & Borko, 2000, in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). If implemented and supported effectively, JEPD can impact the development of all teachers within a school by generating authentic conversations among teachers about concrete acts of teaching and student learning (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009, in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). In addition to the actual PD being local, JEPD draws primarily on the professional knowledge that exists in a teacher's own school and among their colleagues (Wei et al., 2009, in [Croft et al., 2010](#)) which is informed by other PD opportunities that help teachers learn research-based practices. JEPD may consist of departmental, cross-departmental, grade-level, or vertical **teams of teachers engaging in “interactive, integrative, practical, and results oriented work”** (Fogarty & Pete, 2009, pg. 32, in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). Activities include designs such as mentoring, coaching, lesson study, action research, peer observation, examining student work, and virtual coaching (which consists of teachers using real-time, virtual “bug-in-ear” technology for a coach to give real-time feedback (Rock, Gregg, Gabel, & Zigmond, 2009, in [Croft et al., 2010](#)). PLCs (see section above) can be forums for JEPD. Read [*Job-Embedded Professional development: What It Is, Who Is Responsible, and How To Get It Done Well*](#) for more information on JEPD.

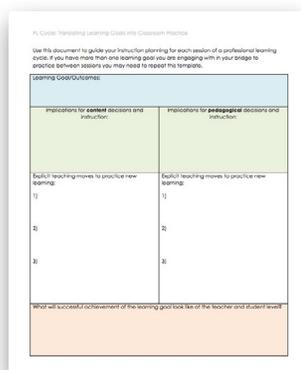
Among other types of professional learning detailed in the appendix, peer observation is a highly effective (Newman & Schwartzstein, 2012) but under-used technique.

With increased time for PL, colleagues can observe each other during the week, and debrief and coach each other when they meet in learning teams.

From National Center for Literacy Education (NCLE): How often do educators at your school observe each other's classroom instruction as one way to improve teaching?



This template in the appendix can help you plan learning cycles for your PLCs.



This template in the appendix can help PLCs plan their work together.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

Questions to Consider for Differentiating Professional Learning

1. How can you connect theories and practices of differentiation for students to that of PL for teachers?
2. How will participants' needs have been identified?
3. How will participants' needs be identified?
4. Do participants' needs reveal patterns or trends?
5. **Are there a variety of ways that participants' needs can be met?**
6. How can learning teams and cycles of PL support a differentiated approach?
7. How will participants be given the autonomy to expand their knowledge/skills?
8. What kinds of structures already exist to support differentiated PL?
9. What new structures or models might you need to consider?
10. What role will choice play in planning differentiated PL?
11. What resources will you need to support differentiated PL?
12. How can teacher leadership be leveraged?
13. How does differentiated PL connect with collaborative learning?
14. How will you incorporate opportunities for deep, meaningful reflection?

Differentiated Professional Development

Differentiated Professional Learning is tightly connected to PLCs and JEPD. Planning for differentiated professional learning need not be difficult. Just as differentiated teaching meets the needs of learners, differentiated PL can meet the needs of teacher-learners. Differentiated teaching of adults recognizes that one size does not always fit all. When planning differentiated PL, it is important to consider that there will be different processes, timelines and content, all based on the learners' need, knowledge, skills and expectations. **The research of Joyce and Showers (2002) has revealed that collaborative, job-embedded, and differentiated PL focuses on: targeting the learning, varying formats for the learning, coaching the learning, sharing the learning, and celebrating progress.**

Differentiated PL does not indicate support of an individual's personal interests and/or agenda that is disconnected from the larger goal of improving student achievement. **Effective differentiated PL will allow teachers to work collaboratively and interdependently on improving their own practice so that it results in improved student outcomes.**

Differentiation and flexibility in professional development focuses on teachers being able to improve their individual practice. It can provide teachers with options to select individualized, grade-level, subject-area, or team-based opportunities to ensure professional development opportunities are relevant and useful. Options need not be mutually exclusive (e.g., school-wide training, smaller team development, mentoring, and/or individually guided activities). Consider including a variety of options for job-embedded professional development such as: action research, case discussion, coaching, critical friends groups, data teams/assessment development, examining student work/tuning protocol, implementing individual professional growth/

learning plans, lesson study, mentoring, portfolios, and study groups. Differentiation at its most basic level involves not just the how of teaching but the context in which the teaching takes place. When professional learning is successfully differentiated, teachers can engage in

experiences that can ultimately change the way they approach teaching. Within the support structure of collaborative teams, they can slowly begin to do things that they have never done before (Schlechty, 2005).

Differentiated PL promotes accountability in that individuals in the self-selected groups are accountable to each other. Coming together as a result of similar needs and goals and working toward common ends, fosters commitment to the group/team and builds trust, community and sense of purpose.

Professional Learning Opportunities for Study and Research

- Problem of practice study group
- Action research
- Studying student work
- Analyzing teacher feedback
- Research & professional reading
- Professional book study
- Online courses
- Webinars
- Seminars/trainings & conferences

Professional Learning Opportunities for Collaborative Planning for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

- Analysis of curricula across grades
- Integrated curriculum planning
- Curriculum adaptation planning
- Planning specific instructional strategies across the curriculum
- Planning common assessments
- Lesson study

Professional Learning Opportunities for Coaching and Peer Observations to Refine and Sustain Learning

- Peer or collegial mentoring
- intervisitation and intravisitation
- Challenge coaching
- Video sharing of lessons
- Mentoring student teachers/graduate students

Professional Learning Opportunities for Making Learning Public

- Writing & publishing reports on learning through blogs and other platforms
- Presenting work to internal & external groups
- Creating & analyzing portfolios
- Designing & implementing PL workshops
- Applying for grants & scholarships to support continuing work
- Developing video learning communities with other educators
- Sharing adult learning with students' families



See the appendix for complete descriptions of each of these differentiated professional learning opportunities, and reasons you might consider using them.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

Technology and digital ways of learning

Just as personalized learning is on the rise for students, a new era of personalized professional learning for teachers is here. Online or digital PL opportunities can support how teachers engage with colleagues, can help them learn or find support for content or strategies, and can offer means by which to measure how new learning impacts classroom practice. To even further personalize PL, some schools are combining platforms which is also referred to as “middleware.” A combined platform allows a teacher to integrate multiple learning systems into one dashboard. For example, a teacher could have Google+ for a discussion forum, Pinterest to pin useful sites for professional learning, Coursera for teacher development, and NCTM for new research on math. To access all this information, a teacher need log on to only one site. (e.g., www.edsurge.com).

Reputable PL providers offer a rich array of online learning. Well-established publishers of educational resources are also meeting the new need of educators for differentiated, online PL options including webinars and workshops.

The acronym that has traditionally applied to students - MOOC (massive open online courses) now applies to educators as well (MOOC-Ed). In September 2013, The Alliance for Excellent Education and the Friday Institute released a report: [*The Digital Learning Transition: MOOC for Educators: Exploring a Scalable Approach to Professional Development*](#), that analyzes results from the first course it offered, which focused on the transition to digital learning. A glance through the report gives a preview of the future of online courses. It is impossible to mention MOOCs without mentioning [Coursera](#), which offers academic courses on a huge variety of topics - Coursera is a particularly good option for teachers seeking to enhance their content knowledge.

Sites that once just offered resources for teachers, now offer PL options as well. There are multiple sites of video repositories, which offer teachers the chance to view and learn from other teachers’ practice. For educational community-building, [Edmodo](#), [Facebook](#) and [Google Communities](#) have robust online options, and [Schoolology](#) is another excellent option to explore.

These are just a few examples of how the internet is a viable, and ever-growing, forum for both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous professional development, demonstrating the capacity to meet multiple needs and purposes according to the school’s professional learning needs.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What are the elements of effective PL planning I want to focus on?

What are considerations for planning?

The National Staff Development Council (now Learning Forward) recommends three major considerations for planning PL (Guskey, 2000).

- 1. Content**, or the what. The content includes the new knowledge, skills, and understandings that form the basis of the PL. This may include: a deeper understanding of a particular academic discipline, specific pedagogical practices, or new roles and responsibilities. The content should come directly from the needs assessment that identified gaps in teacher knowledge that will enhance student learning and achievement. Also included in the content are aspects relating to the “magnitude, scope, credibility, and practicality of the change required to implement” (Guskey, 2000, pg. 74). In other words, content has to take into consideration all of the factors related to implementation. (Implementation is Section II of this document). As Guskey says, **the kind of PL you plan is dependent on the content of the PL** (Guskey, 2000). The preceding pages and the resources section will provide more information about the kind of PL you can plan based on the school’s goals.
- 2. The process**, or the “how,” of the PL. This includes not only the types and forms of the PL, but how they are planned, organized, carried out, followed-up, and evaluated. This involves the work of the PD/PL committee including conducting and analyzing its needs assessments, planning PL opportunities, doing research, forming groups, and planning formative and summative evaluations.
- 3. Context**, includes the “who,” “when,” “where,” and “why” of the PL. The context takes into account the organizational system, or culture, in which the PL takes place, and where the new understandings are to be implemented. The unique characteristics of the context impact the content and processes of the PL.

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What are my goals for the year when I consider PL planning through the lens of content, process, and context? How do these align to each other?

CONTENT

PROCESS

CONTEXT

In addition to these three categories, it is important to keep the principles of adult learning in mind during planning. In 1998, Malcom Knowles published the sixth edition of his original 1973 book: *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*. In it, he affirmed six core adult learning principles, and characteristics of each one (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998).

Core Adult Learning Principles (Knowles et al., 1998)

1. Learner's need to know why, what, how
2. Self-concept of the learner - autonomous, self-directing
3. Prior experience of the learner - resource, mental models
4. Readiness to learn - life-related, developmental task
5. Orientation to learning - problem-centered, contextual
6. Motivation to learn - intrinsic value, personal payoff

Keeping in mind the principles of adult learning and the emphasis on content, process, and context, it is also essential to consider that **planning for PL is a highly reflective process**. It doesn't work unless both the PD/PL planning committee and the learners are willing to, or expected to, engage in thinking that causes them to consistently check-in with themselves and their colleagues on how the process is working for them, what new questions are developing, what ideas they have for follow-up, and what kinds of results they are seeing in their classrooms.

PL should be intensive, ongoing and connected to practice. Teachers should feel immersed in work that has **high expectations and accountability** (again, evaluation is its own section in this handbook). PL doesn't take hold unless it is rooted in the real-life work of teachers, and unless teachers can gauge for themselves, or through conversations with observers, its efficacy. Teachers measure efficacy by seeing changes in their students. To this end, PL should **focus on student learning at all times, and address the teaching of specific content**. Teachers should also be intellectually challenged by material that will help them do their jobs better. **Another guiding principle for PL design is that it should be aligned with school improvements and goals**. Finally, **PL should build strong working relationships amongst teachers**. While there is certainly a time and a place for independent PL, as a whole, PL is meant to be about a community of learners committed to improving their practice in a collegial way. **Even "one-off" PL experiences, for example when an expert gives a talk, should have collaborative follow-up**. It should not be left alone as an isolated PL experience. Rather, it should be held to the same standards of any other type of PL. **Flexibility and responsiveness** are further considerations for a successful PL plan. It should also be data-driven, never losing sight of the needs assessments, which can be ongoing. Finally, plans must always be cognizant of resources so that they are realistic and sustainable.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How might I extend a large group or expert PL presentation based on what I have learned about effective planning? What would accountability and follow-up look like for me?

SECTION I: Planning Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What guided my PL planning in the past? What new things will I consider this year?

LAST YEAR

THIS YEAR

What is the value of professional learning to students' families?

Families too need to understand the importance of increase in PL time by recognizing how essential professional learning is and its positive impact on their children. If parents are truly partners in this work, they need support in understanding the role and impact of PL. The message that effective teaching is the result of ongoing study, reflection, practice, and hard work should be made clear to families. Principals and teachers can help with this messaging and transparency about the work of the school throughout the year.

Additional time for family communication will help teachers keep families up-to-date on what is going on in their classrooms and the school at large, but families should also know that the school is heavily invested in making sure that its teachers are continually learning the best ways to teach their students. Families should understand that improved practice leads to improved student outcomes, and that schools themselves improve when teaching and learning improves. Families should come to see school improvement as directly correlated with professional learning. Just as they are kept informed about any other school news, families should know what the teachers are learning. It will be gratifying to hear that teachers are continually improving their content knowledge, are working together to plan curriculum, are studying innovative ways to develop assessments, and/or are engaged in ongoing series with experts on a given topic.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do we engage our families in understanding our plan for professional learning? What can we do to support families' understanding of the connection between teacher learning and student outcomes? In what ways can we include families in our professional learning plans?



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HOME

SECTION II: IMPLEMENTING & SUSTAINING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

What is important to know about implementing new learning?

Once efforts at putting together a cohesive, differentiated, relevant, and purposeful PL plan are completed, the real work begins. Research on new learning indicates that most attempts at using new strategies and practices are the most challenging during the implementation phase. However, this does not have to be discouraging, as an awareness of this phenomenon means school leaders and PD/PL committees can be prepared. Practice is central to all new learning and the data shows that when we don't plan for, pay close attention to, and support teachers during this stage of the learning process, the majority of new learning acquired through professional learning experiences may have little to no impact on teacher practice and subsequently, student achievement ([Gulamhussein, 2013](#)). This phenomenon is referred to as the "implementation dip," ([Fuller, 2011 in Gulamhussein, 2013](#)). This dip is a result of the fact that teachers become frustrated and can even give up if their efforts are not continually supported throughout the implementation phase. Also, the motivation to alter their underlying beliefs (and these are tightly connected to how educators work) can only occur after they begin to see positive changes in student outcomes ([Guskey, 2002, in Gulamhussien, 2013](#)). It is still important to remember that change happens incrementally and not always smoothly, so all members of the learning community need to be patient, responsive, and recognize and acknowledge the gains teachers are making in demonstrating new learning during the time it takes to reach the final goal. Ultimately, **new learning won't take hold, and teachers won't buy into it, until they see what it looks like in terms of their work with students and how that work affects achievement.**

There is an inherent glitch with this problem; teachers only internalize and change their beliefs when they see success with their students, **but student success is hard to achieve initially, since new skills and teaching strategies take time to master.** But, being armed with this information at the outset can help Leadership and the PD/PL committee better prepare and **make sure that teachers have the time, space and conditions to implement change.**

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**How do I motivate teachers to begin implementing new knowledge, skills or strategies?
How can I plan to strategically support teachers through an "implementation dip?"**

Why is time so essential?

In evaluating best practices in professional development, time is probably the most essential element of success. To bridge the knowing-doing gap and integrate new ideas into practice, however, educators need three to five years of ongoing implementation support that includes opportunities to deepen their understanding and address problems associated with practice ([Learning Forward](#)).

Researchers Darling-Hammond and Richardson present findings in a timeline that is more in keeping with the day-to-day work of schools.

“Teachers who had 80 or more hours of professional development in inquiry-based science during the previous year were significantly more likely to use this type of science instruction than teachers who had experienced fewer hours [...] Studies of professional development lasting 14 or fewer hours showed no effects on student learning [...] The largest effects were found for programs offering between 30 and 100 hours spread out over 6-12 months” (Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009, in Reeves, 2010).

These findings may seem daunting, but with increased time for PL, and the extension of PL into the workday—into teachers’ classrooms and planning periods, and into their work with their learning teams—there is more time than ever to help teachers learn.

These two findings, one from a multi-year perspective, and one examining the impact of professional learning in a single school year both recognize the **role of sustained change**. For any new learning to take hold, teachers need time to plan, practice these new skills, try out new ideas, collaborate, reflect and continue practicing. Under these conditions, teachers will have time to learn from each other and time to process the new learning. Schools can also make use of a variety of creative ideas, new time structures, and strategies to provide additional professional learning time.

It is also important to **recognize that when teachers are trying to use new tools, skills or strategies in their classrooms they will most likely encounter bumps and difficulties**. When this happens they will need timely help, feedback, and additional support. Otherwise, the odds that the new learning will become part of their regular practice are lessened. Avoiding extreme frustration during the implementation stage will help prevent teachers from abandoning their efforts and thus returning to known, comfortable ways of teaching. If the problems they encounter during implementation cannot be solved quickly and efficiently, the motivation to continue with the new learning can be lost. A lot of time and energy go into new learning and the initial stages of implementation. Change, though, often stalls if leaders neglect to follow through and support teachers when implementation presents challenges and teachers become frustrated by early attempts at change. Yet all the evidence suggests that only with deep and sincere implementation (and this means working through the hard parts) can there be an effect on student results (Reeves, 2010). Leaders, therefore, have a vested interest in providing timely support and guidance during implementation.

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

What makes implementation successful?

Often PL that results in new knowledge is adopted as “policy,” and this comes with an implicit expectation that teachers have already made changes to their practice, but if no structured and systematic implementation plan is put in place, no real change can occur. Successful Implementation is not the superficial adoption of a practice or skill but represents a true change embedded with practice. Research suggests there are **five key components to successful implementation** that will help teachers change their practice with greater success and ease ([Gulamhussien, 2013](#)).

1. **Duration.** Teachers need time to take on a new strategy, practice it, get feedback, and practice it some more.

In nine different experimental research studies on professional learning, all found that programs of greater duration were positively associated with teacher change and improvement in student learning ([Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009](#)).

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**How do I ensure successful implementation of new learning for my school?
What duration of time can I commit to ensuring its success?**

2. The ongoing, cyclical approach suggested by duration leads to the second factor for success—**support**.

Teachers need support during implementation to address the specific challenges they face in their own particular classroom. That’s not to say that more general challenges can’t be addressed in a larger forum, but there is a difference between attending a workshop or participating in a study group and being coached through implementation of what a teacher learned in his/her specific school context.

According to a 2003 study, teachers who were coached transferred newly learned teaching practices, but teachers who only participated in the workshop lost interest in the skill and didn’t use it in classrooms. Further, in a study of 50 teachers, those who had coaching along with introductory workshops were significantly more likely to use the new teaching practice than were those who were exposed only through the workshop (Knight & Cornett, 2009).

Figure 8: A Summary of a Meta-analysis of Effects of Training and Coaching on Teachers' Implementation in the Classroom (Joyce & Showers, 2002)

OUTCOMES: (% of participants who demonstrate knowledge, demonstrate new skills in a training setting, and use new skills in the classroom based on several years of systematic research on training teachers in public schools)

TRAINING COMPONENTS	KNOWLEDGE	SKILL DEMONSTRATION	USE IN THE CLASSROOM
Theory and Discussion	10%	5%	0%
Demonstration in Training	30%	20%	0%
Practice and Feedback in Training	60%	60%	5%
Coaching in Clinical Setting	95%	95%	95%



REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**What kind of coaching do I offer my teachers while they are implementing new skills? How will I see that support manifested in classroom practice?
What new kinds of support can I consider to avoid the “implementation dip?”**

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

The sub-sections below focus on component #2: support.

Why is coaching so important?

Formal knowledge, which teachers learn in a PL opportunity, needs to be translated into “craft” knowledge (Spouse, 2001, in Fixsen et al., 2005). Practitioners need to see the relevance of what they have learned to the situation at hand. Coaches are that bridge. The professional learning experience can be used to develop “entry-level” skills (Fixsen et al., 2005) and then the coach can support practitioners in putting the pieces of new knowledge to work in the classroom context. Coaches can also help teachers see how their own personal beliefs and attitudes can be integrated with the new learning and expectations. However, it is critical that the coaching be “work-based, opportunistic, readily available, and reflective” (Fixsen et al, 2005).

Spouse (2001) described four main roles of coaching: supervision; teaching while engaged in practice activities; assessment and feedback; and provision of emotional support. After multiple decades of studying coaching, researchers Joyce and Showers began to think of **“training and coaching as one continuous set of operations designed to produce actual changes in the classroom behavior of teachers. One without the other is insufficient”** (Joyce and Showers, 2002, in Fixen et al., 2005). Note that the term “coach” is being used in the most inclusive way- to mean a colleague who is supporting another colleague through new learning, and this can take multiple forms. In addition, since coaches may be implementing the same new knowledge in their own classrooms, coaching itself is part of the PL experience.

The support of a coach who shares their craft knowledge as he or she observes and offers feedback to the teacher helps a teacher grow and gain confidence and comfort with the coach, the coached teacher is able to adapt the new learning to his or her personal style of teaching with support, giving the coached teacher a much stronger chance of successfully weaving changes into his or her own practice.

Not every desired change comes immediately and easily. Knowing that a teacher’s early efforts at trying new strategies and skills in the classroom will often not be as successful as hoped for can lessen the sense of disappointment. A knowledgeable and supportive coach can prepare the teacher for this eventuality and prevent any reactions that might deter the teacher from continuing to try. A strong coach encourages the teacher to persist in their implementation and to engage in the new behavior until they reach proficiency in their practice.

How can coaching work in schools?

The successful model of coaching is embedded, visible and attempts to respond to student and teacher needs in “ongoing, consistent, dedicated ways” (Annenberg Institute, *Instructional Coaching*). **The likelihood of using new learning and sharing responsibility rises when colleagues, guided by a coach, work together and hold each other accountable for improved teaching and learning** (Barr, Simmons, and Zarrow, 2003; Coggins, Stoddard, and Cutler, 2003; WestEd 2000, in Annenberg Institute, *Instructional Coaching*). When instructional coaching takes place in the classroom context, not as a separate pull-out experience, observation, learning, and experimentation can occur in real situations (Neufeld and Roper, 2003 in *Annenberg Institute, Instructional Coaching*).

These framing questions outline and extend the role of coaching in PL.

1. Why are you considering coaching?
2. What questions or needs are you trying to address through coaching?
3. What evidence do you have that you are asking the right questions?
4. What are the content areas (subjects or roles) for which you are considering coaching?
5. How do you frame or establish a school culture where coaching is mutually owned in your building?
6. What are your ideas for sharing responsibility, leadership, development, and credit?
7. How do you imagine coaching might address issues of collaboration, culture, and collective capacity in your school?

(Annenberg Institute, [Instructional Coaching](#))

This kind of coaching **uses the relationships between coaches, principals, assistant principals and teachers to facilitate conversations that lead to sustained pedagogical change.** In addition, effective coaching distributes leadership, supporting the goals of effective principals by keeping the focus on teaching and learning, and more specifically, on the new knowledge teachers are exploring and practicing in their classrooms.

Research indicates that effective coaching structures promote a strong collaborative culture **where increasing numbers of school personnel feel ownership and responsibility for leading improvement efforts in teaching and learning.** Coaching attends to the “social infrastructure” issues of schools and systems ([Payne, 1998, in Annenberg Institute, Instructional Coaching](#)) that can determine whether or not changes in school-wide practice take hold. These issues include school climate, teacher isolation, insufficient support, and limited instructional and leadership capacity. **A primary reason that the increased role of coaching holds significant promise towards improving teaching and learning in urban schools is because coaching attempts to address these critical elements (school climate, teacher**

isolation, insufficient support, and limited instructional and leadership capacity) of school culture by incorporating new understandings of effective professional learning ([Neufeld and Roper, 2003, in Annenberg Institute, Instructional Coaching](#)).

There are multiple structures for coaching to take advantage of in our schools. School leaders, school-based coaches and external coaches can all be involved in successful implementation of a PL experience, but **collegial, or peer, coaching is essential, in order to embed deprivatized practices within a schools’ culture.**

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

How does peer coaching work?

No doubt teachers may balk at the idea of coaching one another because observation, feedback and coaching are often associated with evaluation or supervision. A strong and thoughtful plan for professional learning, however, can reframe this perception and nurture deep learning among professionals in their school contexts. Coaching as part of professional learning isn't summative. It doesn't come at the end of what the PL group is working on; rather it is part of the implementation. **Coaching in this context is formative, applies to everyone, and has a shared goal-** to support each other in the successful implementation of new practices.

Another component of job-embedded coaching is inter-visitation, which can be a powerful learning tool for teachers. Inter-visitation is essential if we are to truly deprivatize classroom instruction. It differs from peer coaching because inter-visitation is frequently focused on a specific instructional practice, requires feedback, and is focused on a pre-determined outcome. This actually takes much of the onus of deciding what feedback to give, and how to frame it, off the teachers. Most importantly, it is shared. Colleagues are coaching one another and no one teacher is singled out. So while inter-visitation is a practice that often refers to peer coaching, the two are not mutually exclusive.

One of the most fundamental aspects of peer coaching is partnership (Kise, 2006). In order to be highly successful, members of a PLC must form the partnerships that are integral to success. If teachers are already partners in professional learning, the coaching becomes an extension of that evolving partnership. Another powerful benefit of peer coaching is how responsive it can be to a particular teacher's context. If an ultimate goal of professional learning is to change teachers' beliefs and attitudes to positively impact student learning, it makes sense that this transformation should take root in the classroom, in the teacher's own environment. Peer coaching, or any kind of coaching for that matter, doesn't try to change these contextual factors, it capitalizes on them.

Since a professional learning group may be in place for an extended period of time, **coaching aligned to a PL goal can be ongoing, build relationships and create space for the group to practice and change together. The clear goals of the learning group and the shared idea of what success will look like (improved student learning) will help teachers focus their peer coaching feedback.**

The hardest part of peer coaching may be helping teachers decide how to give coaching feedback, and there are templates in the appendix to support teachers in providing peer-to-peer feedback. However, in order for peer-to-peer feedback to become successful school practice, **the PL committee and leadership should first establish a school learning culture where peer coaching, feedback and reflection are part of everyone's learning process.** Because learning groups will be formed with a specific purpose, and groups will have a hand in goal-setting, the feedback is already framed.

If, it has been established, teachers need to see changes in student achievement to alter their beliefs and attitudes about a particular strategy or implementation, self-reflection is an important part of any coaching relationship. Self-reflection makes developing instructional next steps much easier than a coach determining what they should be. **If self-reflection is an expectation for any PL opportunity, next steps emerge naturally from both the coach and the teacher.**

-  See the appendix for a template a school leader might use to work on an individual teacher's professional learning goals.
-  See the appendix for guidelines to peer coaching.
-  See the appendix for sample pre and post-visit questions.
-  See the appendix for a sample teacher professional learning plan.
-  See the appendix for a peer observation template.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How can I make peer-to-peer coaching successful at my school?

Successful implementation also has to acknowledge that teachers play dual roles in their practice. **Teachers are technicians.** They implement particular skills or strategies that are backed by research and those that they have seen have an impact in their classrooms. The ways this aspect of their professional identity is developed is often through workshops and coaching.

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do I structure PL in my building to address teachers as technicians?

Teachers are also intellectuals. They examine broad research on learning and developing innovative classroom strategies to achieve goals. Much of the intellectual work that teachers do takes place in their Professional Learning Community. It is easy to see the power and value of different PL forums when we consider these two parts of a teacher's identity. Both need to be taken into account when planning the PL for teachers in school.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do I structure PL in my building to address teachers as intellectuals?

3. Duration and support have already been discussed as two key components to successful implementation of professional learning. The third piece of the implementation puzzle is planning for the powerful influence of a teacher's initial **exposure** to a new strategy or intervention.

While exposure is not enough to impact classroom practice, how a new learning is introduced affects how motivated and interested a teacher is, and how much he or she can see themselves enacting the new knowledge. Because exposure will influence implementation, introduction cannot be passive; teachers need to learn through varied approaches so they can actively participate in sense-making. The more sense something makes to a teacher, the more likely he

or she is to implement it. The importance of active learning and sense-making holds true even for single-event or large-group PL. A presentation has to introduce the complexities of the topic, and give teachers every opportunity to consider how it will look in their classroom. PD sessions which aim to make teachers aware of a concept have been shown to be more successful when they allow teachers to learn the new concept in varied, active ways ([Richardson, 2008](#); [Roy, 2005](#), in [Gulamhussien, 2013](#)).

4. Research by [Gulamhussien, 2013](#), speaks to the fourth element of successful implementation: **modeling**.

PL has to show teachers what success looks like, even if it cannot be representative of each teachers' classroom; at least they can see it in action so that they have a lead to follow and an end in mind. Seeing new learning being enacted helps practitioners implement it themselves.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How can I ensure that modeling is a part of planned opportunities for new learning?

5. Lastly, and connected to modeling, is **specificity**. The content presented to teachers should not be generic, but **grounded in the teacher's discipline, role, or grade-level**. Their exposure to new learning has to make sense in their own practice. While maintaining specificity, PL must be varied, collaborative, flexible, and must hold teachers accountable to themselves and one another. Implementation has to support these characteristics.

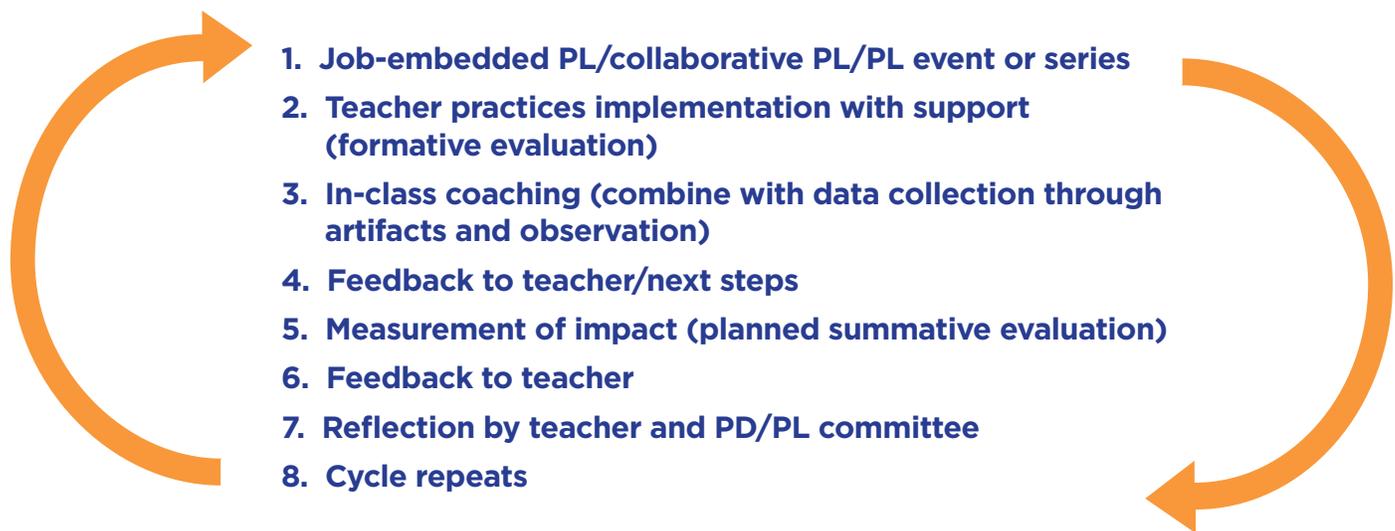
SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How can I integrate these five criteria for successful implementation (duration, support, exposure, modeling, and specificity) into my plans for PL?

What is the cycle of implementation?

Implementation of a PL plan follows a recursive, non-linear cycle, pictured below. Sections I and II of this handbook covered steps 1-4, and the next section, on evaluating and revising PL, will address steps 5-7. Step 8, indicating the ongoing and reflexive nature of PL, returns to the planning process outlined in Section I. It is important to note, however, that even though steps are shown in sequence, they are not meant to demonstrate a linear progression but to provide context and to approximate how each step might flow. **It is entirely possible for movement to occur within the steps shown and not necessarily at the end of a cycle.** For example, if teachers are having major difficulties with implementation, one may need to go back and provide additional or different learning experiences.



REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do I use the reflection phase to return to the beginning of the cycle?

How is professional learning sustained?

Sustaining a yearly professional learning can be a challenge. Maintaining energy and commitment for continued learning requires not only focus and determination, but also a substantial enough goal to drive a school's focus all year. A school culture that values continuous PL can sustain innovations in teaching, and increase the likelihood that those innovations will result in achievement for students. Considering how adults work together to create more effective working environments in schools is known as a "soft focus" on social capacity for change and improvement. The "soft focus" is often compared to the emphasis by state and national policy makers on mandates and system changes (Louis, in Coles and Blankenstein (Eds.), 2008); both are extremely important.

Strategies to share and sustain improvement, nurture knowledge gained and new practices learned should be built into the original plan for professional learning. When implementation is effective, and change takes hold, the entire school community needs to know about it. The role of leadership is crucial when it comes to sustaining what works for a school community.

Below are some key elements to keep in mind in terms of sustainability:

- 1. Flexibility** - the ability to pursue learning over an extended period of time with the freedom to confront new issues/interests that arise; some teams might be better suited for long-term problem solving, and others for more focused, task-specific projects.
- 2. Critical Reflection** - implementation of new learning must include thoughtful and continuous reflection and assessment aligned to school, teacher and student-based evidence.
- 3. Structures** - strategic and recurring time to meet and plan, opportunities for feedback on performance and ensuring places and spaces for teacher leadership, lend themselves to sustained PL throughout a school year.

SECTION II: Implementing & Sustaining Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How can I build these key elements of sustainability into my PL plan?

What role does teacher satisfaction play in implementation and sustainability?

It is of paramount importance to keep in mind that professional learning should drive teacher satisfaction and learning as well as increased student outcomes. School leaders and planners need to remember that education professionals want to grow in their work and capacity. They want to see students achieve. There are three key components to job satisfaction that can be worked into any PL plan.

- 1. Autonomy** - Teachers want to have control over their work. PL needs to give teachers choice about their professional learning.
- 2. Mastery** - PL should align with intended performance outcomes and move teachers forward. Teachers have a vested interest in wanting to get better at what they do.
- 3. Purpose** - Teachers want to be part of something larger than themselves as individuals. A school community that shares and celebrates successes, is consistent, focused, and keeps in mind that the broader purpose of PL can result in both teacher and student success.

Paying attention to these three components can make the implementation of PL plans smoother, more successful, and give teachers a greater sense of fulfillment and satisfaction ([Kennedy, Jacqueline, 2012](#)).





Essential Questions
What are a nation's responsibilities to its citizens after major conflict?

Relevant/Academic Vocabulary
Reconstruction
Freedman
Amendments
13th, 14th, 15th
Ku Klux Klan
Jim Crow

Focus Questions

- Was Reconstruction inevitable?
- Did Reconstruction truly advance or impede the abolitionist movement?
- Was the Civil War worth its costs?
- What were the successes of rewriting the nation following the Civil War?
- What were the failures of Reconstruction?
- What was the impact of Reconstruction on the nation?
- What was the Reconstruction Era?

Student Outcomes

- Read and interpret primary and secondary sources to gather information.
- Articulate the major political, social and economic causes of the Civil War.
- Analyze the impact of Reconstruction on the nation.



HOME

SECTION III:

EVALUATING & REVISING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

Guidelines for planning an evaluation

(adapted from Guskey, 2000)

- Clarify the intended goals
- Assess the value of the goals
- Analyze the context
- Estimate the program's potential to meet the goals
- Determine how the goals can be assessed
- Outline strategies for gathering evidence
- Gather and analyze evidence of participants' reactions
- Gather and analyze data of participants' learning
- Use formative assessments to make mid-course corrections
- Gather and analyze evidence of organizational support and change
- Gather and analyze evidence of participants' use of new knowledge and skills
- Gather and analyze evidence of student learning outcomes
- Conduct summative evaluations
- Make revisions to PL opportunities

What does it mean to evaluate a professional learning opportunity?

Evaluation is a thread that should run consistently throughout any professional learning opportunity. Before the specifics of a PL plan are developed, outcomes and evaluation plans should be included so the designers clearly know what they want teachers to learn, how they want their practice to change, or what changes in student outcomes they are working towards, as well as how they will know if they have achieved those outcomes. Of course evaluation occurs during implementation as well as after. During implementation is when formative evaluations are most useful in assessing the progress being made and making mid-course revisions and corrections if needed.

Summative evaluations, on the other hand, are used to make decisions about the impact of the entire scope of the PL experiences compared to the outcomes that were established at the onset, and whether and how it should be revised.

Evaluation is defined as the “systematic investigation of merit or worth” (Guskey, 2000). This seemingly simplistic definition has far-reaching implications for what it means to evaluate a PL program. Essentially the evaluation determines if the actions produced the desired result and to what degree. Evaluation of PL serves to determine if educators learned new knowledge and skills because of their participation in a PL opportunity, and hopefully what they learned as well. It also surfaces whether or not educators can apply and use what they have learned

to improve their teaching, and whether this use of new knowledge has led to gains in student achievement—the ultimate goal of any PL.

Professional learning plans need to be thoroughly evaluated so that those with greatest efficacy are identified, revised (if necessary) and sustained. Those that do not show results can be discontinued. School time is valuable and schools cannot spend time or resources on PL that doesn't lead to instructional change and positive impact on student achievement. Therefore, evaluation of PL will best serve a school community when it demonstrates consistent impact. The important thing is to have systems in place that check for success during and at the end of a PL plan's implementation.



See the appendix for sample formative and summative evaluations of PL.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How have I determined the success of professional learning in the past? How have I made decisions about developing, continuing, revising, or discontinuing certain PL opportunities? How did I evaluate their impact on my school?

What is the highest priority of PL to evaluate?

The following are some examples of the types of PL experiences that could be evaluated ([Haslam, 2010](#)).

- Large-scale PL (that include large numbers of teachers over long periods of time, and/or representing significant use of resources)
- PL “pilots” that can be taken to scale if initial evaluation results are positive or present a clear path for improvement
- PL that has direct classroom impact
- PL that is delivered in a series

How does PL evaluation work?

Guskey (2000) breaks evaluation down into five levels.

1. The first level may seem simple, yet it is still important. Evaluations at this level **explain participants’ reactions**, and seek to answer questions about whether participants liked the new learning, whether they felt their time was well spent, and whether the material made sense. Responses get at how the participants experienced the PL in terms of their comfort, enjoyment, and relevance of the content presented. Often these responses are collected through questionnaires, focus groups, reflective logs, or interviews. Participants’ responses can be used as a basic indication of their reactions to the content of the PL activity. They can also guide improvements in the design of future PL and activities, especially with regard to process and context issues. In addition, the information gathered at this first level can be the foundation for all subsequent levels of evaluation.

Participant reaction can be measured by: feedback forms/questionnaires, focus groups, interviews and personal reflections.



See the appendix for a sample level 1 evaluation.

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What evaluation measures do I employ to measure participants' reactions to a PL opportunity, activity, or experience? How can this information systematically inform my PL planning?

2. The second level of evaluation addresses participants' actual learning. **Did they learn what was intended?** To effectively measure this, the PL opportunity needs to have clearly defined goals—the establishment of which is an integral part of the PL planning process (see Section I). Since this is a more nuanced and deeper level of evaluation, so are the means of collecting data. These can include observing teachers as they demonstrate the new knowledge, having them reflect orally or in writing, and collecting participant work samples which can document their understanding of the content. All of these types of evaluations can be considered part of the work of the PLC that can be used as a formative measure of the quality and impact of PL.

There are three important reasons for gathering evidence of participants' learning. The first is that **it validates the relationship between what was intended and what was achieved.** Observing or measuring how a teacher implements or understands new practices gives information about the intended (or unintended) consequences of PL that leads to planned or unplanned changes in practice. The second reason for assessing participants' learning is that **these data are a primary indicator of the effectiveness of a PL experience.** If only a few teachers' knowledge improved, the learning opportunity might require rethinking. Lastly, information about participants' learning is collected because it is **vital to a teacher's practice.** Effectively using new ideas or practices typically requires deep conceptual understanding. Teachers must know which aspects of a new approach or innovative methodology are most crucial to their success, and must develop the skills necessary to make appropriate adaptations to their own particular contexts (McLaughlin, 1990; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978, in Guskey, 2000). Once again, the way the PLCs structure peer coaching and feedback can help formatively measure the relationship between intended and achieved outcomes. If the coaching component of a PLC consists of tracking, sharing, and improving a teacher's new learning, this data can be used to evaluate what a teacher learned from participating in the PL experience or activity.

Participant learning can be measured by: surveys, teaching demonstrations, reflections, and portfolios.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How do I know what your teachers know and don't know as a result of a PL opportunity? How can you use that information to adjust my professional learning plans?

3. **The third level of evaluation recognizes that teachers and students are not the only ones impacted by PL opportunities; the school itself is impacted in several ways.** By answering questions about the impact on the organization as a whole, whether or not the PL affected organizational climate and procedures, and whether implementation was facilitated and supported, this third level focuses on organizational support and change. Data collection for this level may involve school or district records, minutes from follow-up meetings, and structured interviews with participants and school leaders. Within the context of systemic reform, capacity is the “ability of the education system to help the educators who work within the system do whatever is necessary to have all students learn at high levels” (Guskey, 2000, pg. 173). This idea of capacity implies an interdependence of organizational and individual efforts. Research by O’Day et al. (1995) suggests that organizational capacity has five critical elements, each of which has significant impact on planning, implementing, and evaluating PL:

■ **VISION AND LEADERSHIP:**

- **Planning Questions:** How does leadership of the PD/PL committee and entire staff support development and implementation of meaningful PL? How is the culture of public collaboration built?
- **Evaluation Questions:** To what extent did the school community support new learning?

■ **COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT AND CULTURAL NORMS:**

- **Planning Questions:** How do staff become invested in the work of PLCs and how is the culture of deprivatization one that they respect and contribute to?
- **Evaluation Questions:** To what extent did teachers become invested? To what extent did the PL contribute to a culture of deprivatization?

■ **KNOWLEDGE OR ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE:**

- **Planning Questions:** How are PLCs organized to offer the most learning possible? How do workshops or series introduce new ideas to staff? What research is used to make sure the most relevant PL is facilitated?



SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

- **Evaluation Questions:** To what extent did the PLC contribute to changes in knowledge? How did the workshop(s) contribute to professional growth?

■ ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND MANAGEMENT:

- **Planning Questions:** How does the PL committee function? How are leadership and faculty structures used to support PL efforts? What scheduling decisions have been made to optimize the time teachers have to work together and be in one another's classrooms?
- **Evaluation Questions:** To what extent did the PD/PL committee meet the needs of the learners? What conditions made that possible?

■ RESOURCES:

- **Planning Questions:** What budgetary decisions were made to ensure the most effective PL experiences possible? What resources do staff have access to? What people exist as resources (in the school or experts in the field)? How can their knowledge be leveraged?
- **Evaluation Questions:** To what extent did leadership provide the resources needed to support the implementation of the new learning?

Organizational impact can be measured by: district and school records, structured interviews with administrators and participants, policy reviews, environmental surveys.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What kind of PL would yield organizational change? How would I plan for it? How would I evaluate for its intended impact?

4. While the second level determined whether participants learned the intended knowledge and skills, **the fourth level gets at whether or not teachers effectively use that new knowledge in classroom practice.** The separation of these levels is a clear indication that attention needs to be paid to both goals of a PL experience—to teach new content and to facilitate change in the classroom. One way of assessing this is different from means of evaluating the other levels—**direct observation and review of teacher work** (for example: a progressive list of improved questions from a sequence of lesson plans, conferring notes, and tasks). This is where peer observation, coaching, and feedback from PLC members play their most vital roles because it is through this work that issues come to the surface and can be analyzed, both by colleagues and by leadership.

Gathering information of participants' use of new knowledge can include observations, interviews/conversations, or samples of work. **Formatively, this data can be used to facilitate better and higher quality implementation of new or more effective practices.** It is particularly helpful in identifying implementation problems and then taking action to correct and improve results. An administrator can conduct observations for formative purposes for two reasons: to bring information back to the PD/PL committee to inform future plans and to coach the teacher.

Information on participants' use of new knowledge and skills helps document implementation efforts. When this information is analyzed it provides evidence on current levels of use, and helps restructure future programs and activities to facilitate better and more consistent implementation.

Participant use of new knowledge and skills can be measured by: questionnaires, structured interviews with participants and their supervisors, reflections, participant work samples, and direct or video observations by peers or school leaders.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

What supports can I put in place to support teachers in evaluating their own new learning?

- The final level of evaluation is both the most important and the hardest to determine: was there a change in student learning outcomes?** To measure this, evaluators can look at student work and records, give student questionnaires, conduct structured interviews with students, parents, teachers, and/or administrators, collect participant work samples as well as student work that reflects learning from the implementation of new knowledge.

It is extremely difficult to establish clear and direct causal relationships between changes to teacher practice (from participation in PL) to changes in student learning (Haslam, 2010). This fact is especially true if these changes are measured by standardized assessments. To begin with, only the most ambitious, long-term PL efforts aim to improve teacher knowledge and skills across the entire scope of content covered by the standardized assessments. Next, it is important to remember that there are many factors that affect student learning and therefore, results on standardized assessments that can be ascribed to the PL are not easily substantiated. For these reasons, evaluations should focus on “outcomes for

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

teachers and proximal learning outcomes for students...” (Haslam, 2010, pg. 17). In this example “proximal” indicates data as close to being indicative of teacher practice as one can get—such as student work samples and the results achieved on locally developed benchmark assessments and/or end-of-course assessments.

Suggestions for Measuring Changes in Student Knowledge:

(adapted from Guskey, 2000)

COGNITIVE INFORMATION

What does my student know that they didn't know before I taught using my new learning?

- Assess students at entry point and some later point
- Teacher developed classroom assessments
- Group tasks
- Portfolios/collections of students' work
- Grades
- Questionnaires and interviews
- School records
- Standardized achievement assessments
- Standardized performance assessments

AFFECTIVE INFORMATION

How did implementing my new learning affect how students feel about their own learning?

- Questionnaires
- Interviews

PSYCHOMOTOR INFORMATION

What new behaviors or practices did my new learning bring about in my students?

- Observations
- Questionnaires
- School records

How is student learning assessed after teachers' experience of PL?

Three types of student learning are assessed in evaluations of student learning.

1. **Students' cognitive, or learning, outcomes are related to students' academic achievements and accomplishments** as described by the knowledge, skills, or understanding that students are expected to acquire.

2. **Affective outcomes are the attitudes, beliefs, feelings, or dispositions that students are expected to develop.** They may involve the acquisition of new attitudes or beliefs, or simply the alteration of older ones. Affective outcomes may relate to students’ interests, aspirations, personal goals, or perceptions about learning or school in general. Improvements in affective learning outcomes typically follow improvements in cognitive learning. Information on affective change is best gathered well after measures of cognitive learning have been collected because affective outcomes may not be evident as quickly as cognitive outcomes (Guskey, 2000).
3. **Psychomotor outcomes describe the behaviors, actions, or practices we want students to demonstrate.** Often, they relate to what students are able to do with what they learn. Many PL programs and activities are designed to affect a combination of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor student learning outcomes. Those that are must be sure to prioritize their goals to maintain a clear focus (Guskey, 2000).

Student Learning Outcomes can be measured by: student work; school records; questionnaires; structured interviews with teachers, students, or parents; participant portfolios and focus groups with students.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS
How do I expand my evaluation methods to make sure I address the levels of evaluation: participant reaction, participant learning, impact of PL on the school as a whole, teachers’ use of new knowledge, and student learning outcomes?



What is formative evaluation of PL?

“Formative assessment is designed to promote learning, not merely to render an evaluation. It is a reciprocal process, influencing both the teacher [PL planner] and the learner [teacher]” (Reeves, 2010, pg. 90).

This means that evaluation is ongoing and happens authentically throughout the learning process. Information can be collected about whether the implementation is

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

going as planned, and whether the expected progress is being made (Guskey, 2000; Scriven, 1991 in Guskey, 2000). Scriven (1991) calls these “early warning” evaluations. They are early versions of the final, overall evaluation, and as implementation moves forward, formative evaluation can consider intermediate benchmarks of success to determine what is working and what challenges need to be addressed. Gathering formative assessment data through forms, which usually address single-event PL, and teacher work, are just two methods. Formative evaluation data can also be gathered through feedback from coaches and PLCs.

During implementation of PL, formative feedback can offer information about how an implementation plan should be modified so that it is ultimately successful.

For example, observations of PL might indicate that:

- a PL plan may need to include more coaching and PLC members might participate in ten-minute intervisitations to record the quality of each other’s questioning, student engagement, or the participation of ELL students.
- study groups should meet more often. A PLC may have finished redesigning a science unit, but classroom visits are revealing pre-assessment data that is going to require teachers to rewrite introductory lessons.
- teachers have each decided to implement a strategy from a book they are reading, and in debriefing in the PLC, find that only one teacher felt successful. To address the challenges they faced, teachers can visit the classroom where the strategy worked.

REFLECTION QUESTION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

How can the work of my PLCs be used to provide formative evaluation data?

When should formative evaluation begin?

The issue of time matters not only in terms of implementation, but in evaluation too. Unfortunately, most evaluations in education are only summative, and often occur when the time for mid-course corrections has passed, so they come too late to be of help in implementation (Guskey, 2000). On the other hand, (Fixsen et al., 2005) there are warnings against doing an outcomes evaluation too early in the course of PL. It is best to begin to evaluate well after quality and participation have been maximized. Otherwise, evaluations of newly implemented practices may result in poor results, not necessarily because they are ineffective, but because the results of implementation were assessed too soon, before the PL was completely implemented and fully operational.



See the appendix for a sample formative evaluation of a PL opportunity.

Results of program evaluation can answer the following questions

(adapted from Zepeda, 2012)

- What programs are working well, and why?
- Which are not working well, and why?
- Which intended results have been realized? Which have not?
- Which parts of programs have been contributing more than others?
- What additional PL is needed?
- What changes in supervision are needed?
- What changes in coaching are needed?
- Can a program have mixed success? How do you use this knowledge?

What is summative evaluation of PL?

Summative evaluation takes into account all of the levels of evaluation and provides an overall account of whether or not the desired outcomes were reached; an understanding of what, if any, were the unintended outcomes; and information on how to revise the PL activity or opportunity.

To return to a couple of the examples in the formative evaluation section, the summative evaluation of ELL participation could include reaching a goal the principal or PLC set of a 20% increase in ELL students making contributions to class discussions.

A summative evaluation of a teacher whose PLC focused on questioning could look at the questions her students asked before the implementation of the new learning, versus after. This kind of tracking speaks to the **necessity of having outcomes created at the beginning of any PL**. Otherwise, teachers would not know to monitor student questioning in this way.

Reaching the outcome, however, does not tell the whole story necessitated by a summative evaluation, because in order to perform its function, to provide PL developers and decision-makers with judgments about a plan's overall value (Guskey, 2000), **summative evaluation has to describe what was accomplished, evidence for the accomplishment and how that evidence holds up against the original goals.**

A summative evaluation also has to **yield information that details the positive and negative consequence of the PL, and the final results**, those both intended and unintended. In addition, summative evaluations have to **reveal the “how” and the “why,”** to make replication or revision possible. Cumulatively, summative evaluations provide evidence of how the new knowledge is currently being used, and can help form or reform future programs or activities.



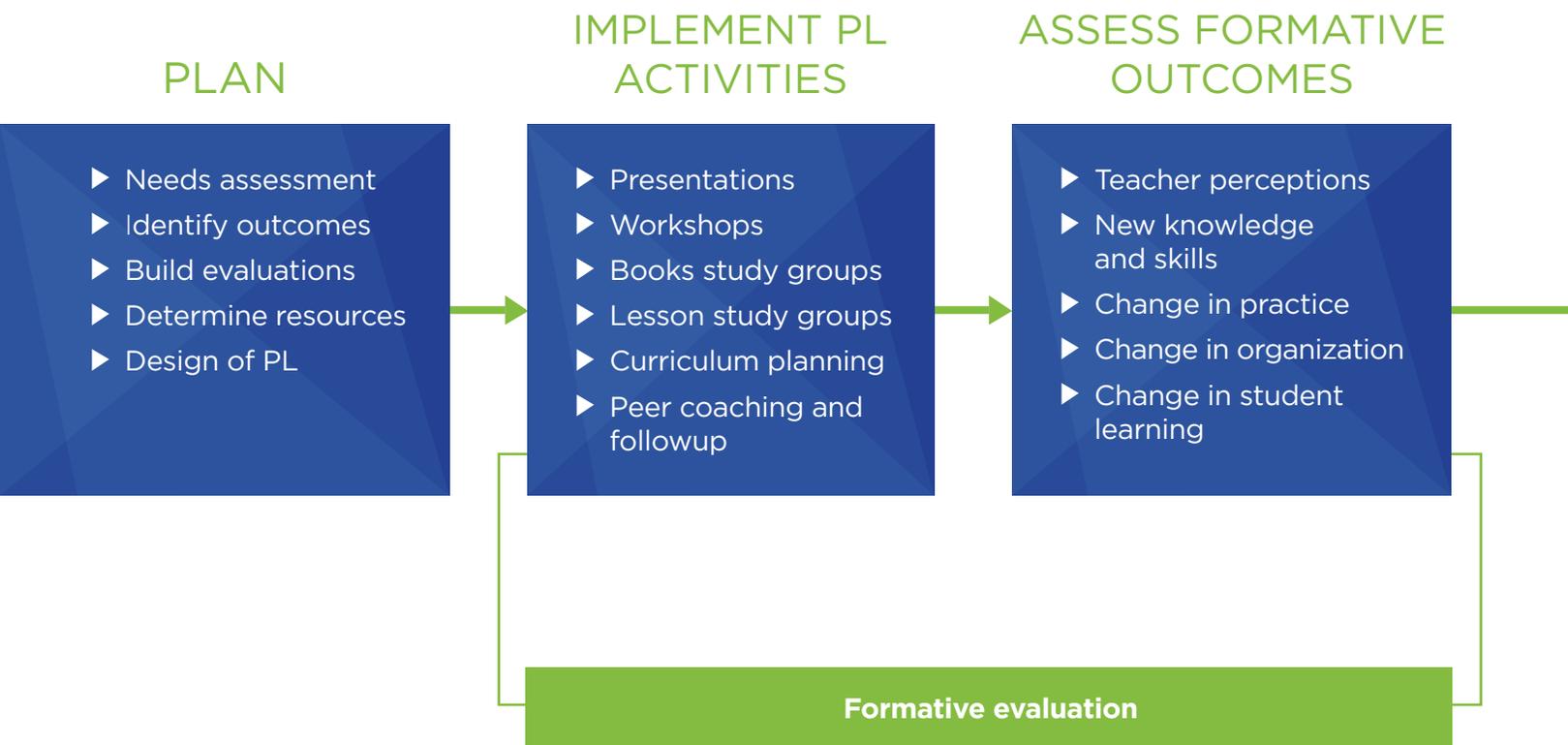
See the appendix for a sample summative evaluation of a PL opportunity.

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

Teacher Professional Learning Logic Model

Timeline in months, marking periods, etc.

Adapted from Haslam, Bruce. [Teacher Professional Evaluation Guide \(2010\)](#)



IMPLEMENT PL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Presentations
- ▶ Workshops
- ▶ Books study groups
- ▶ Lesson study groups
- ▶ Curriculum planning
- ▶ Peer coaching and followup

- Responsive adjustments
- Attending to audience
- Continuing new learning

ASSESS SUMMATIVE OUTCOMES

- ▶ Teacher perceptions
- ▶ New knowledge and skills
- ▶ Deeper change in practice
- ▶ Deeper change in organization
- ▶ More substantive change in student learning
- ▶ Changes in teachers' beliefs and attitudes
- ▶ Changes in student learning

Summative evaluation

SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

What guides revision of a professional learning plan?

Use the five levels of evaluation (adapted from Guskey, 2000) to consider what to revise, and to plan your revisions.

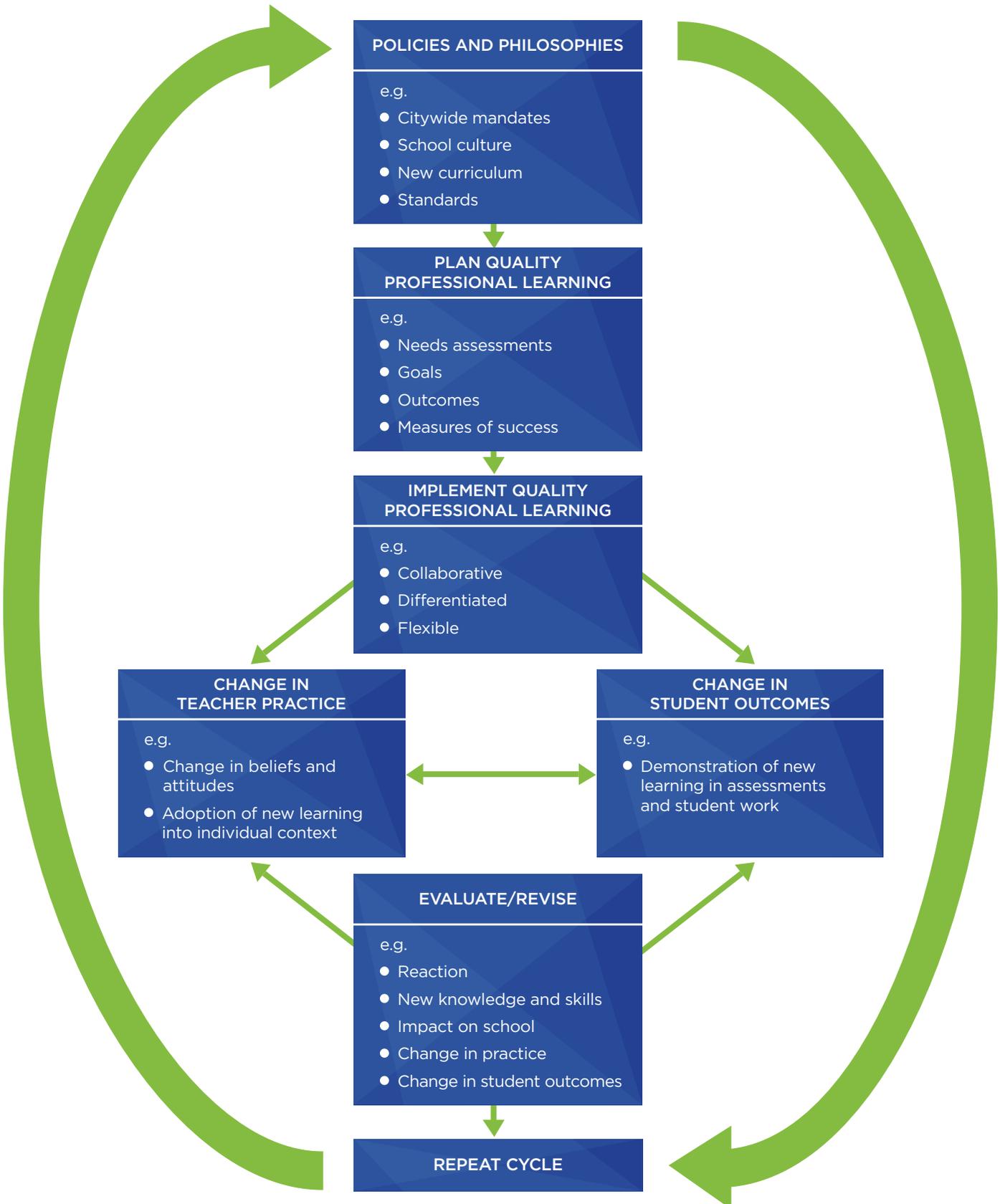
Level of evaluation	How the data yields information for revision
<p>1. How will you use information about participants' reaction to revise your PL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Indicates how participants viewed the content of a PL event, therefore offering planners insight into perceived value. Also helps identify follow-up activities and additional topics to explore■ Guides improvements in the design of PL programs and activities, especially regarding process and context issues■ Establishes a basis for improving format, design, and conduct of future sessions■ Provides foundation for all subsequent levels of PL evaluation because each level builds upon the one that precedes it. Collecting evidence on participants' reactions helps explain what happened, and why
<p>2. How will you use information about participants' learning to revise your PL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Used to guide improvements in the content, format, and organization of the PL experience<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For example, if a participant did not acquire the intended knowledge or skills, then changes need to be made in the structure of the experience to improve the success of future programs or activities- Perhaps the format needs to be changed so there is more active involvement, or maybe more structure during collegial sharing is necessary■ Can be used to disaggregate data<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Answers questions: Was something more effective for experienced teachers rather than new teachers? For secondary teachers rather than elementary?- Disaggregated data allows for more specific and better targeted revisions■ Shows both intended and unintended consequences of the PL

Level of evaluation	How the data yields information for revision
<p>3. How will you use information about organization support and change to revise your PL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Used to document and improve all aspects of organizational support activities and additional topics to explore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicates any kind of cultural change after a PL - Allows PL committee to change PL opportunities across a school - Gives insight into the function and structure of PLCs - Directs strategic coaching across a school
<p>4. How will you use information about use of new knowledge and skills to revise your PL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides essential information for both formative and summative purposes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In formative evaluations: can be used to facilitate better and higher quality implementation and more effective practices - Offers particularly helpful data to diagnose problems with implementation and provide corrective measures - In summative evaluations: helps document implementation effort; analysis provides evidence on current levels of use and can help (re)structure future programs and activities to lead to better and more consistent implementation ■ Used to examine intended and unintended consequences of the PL
<p>5. How will you use information about student learning outcomes to revise your PL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Used to compare the results of one PL activity to another, which can be useful for many purposes among various stakeholders: resource investment, interest in whether stated goals were met, direct estimates of merit or worth ■ Considers both intended and unintended consequences of the PL ■ Allows for reflection on change in teacher practice ■ Explains evaluation results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of significant improvement in student outcomes can be traced back to problems in implementation



SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

Relationships of Professional Learning and Evaluation





SECTION III: Evaluating & Revising Professional Learning

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5th Grade Team

Groups of regional experts of the early people of the Western Hemisphere create tableaux and geographic topography.

A simulation that assesses student "know-how with knowledge" and gives students a meaningful platform to "put it all together."



HOME

APPENDICES

SECTION I

SECTION II

SECTION III

PL COMMITTEE: RESEARCH FOR PLANNING PL

What is the PL need we are trying to address?	
What does the research say about the validity of this goal?	
What strategies or interventions does the research talk about and what does it say about them?	
What recommendations does the research make?	
What results should we expect?	

PL COMMITTEE: PUTTING THE RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

What about these recommendations make sense for our school?	
What PL opportunity should we develop?	
What would success look like for our teachers?	
What coaching do we predict our teachers will need?	
What would success look like for our students?	
What are our next steps?	

NEEDS ASSESSMENT DATA SOURCE _____

Data Source	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the data telling us? • What other sources of data do I need to triangulate? • What level of differentiated intervention does this data call for? • How big in scope is the data? 	
Students/school/teacher learning gap	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What outcomes do we want for our students? • Where are the gaps between the data and the outcomes? • Where are the gaps in what they need to know (content)? • Where are the gaps in what students need to be able to do (skills/processes)? • What related interventions or supports do they need? 	
Teacher skills/competencies needed to address gap	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do teachers need to know and be able to do to address the gaps? • What additional content knowledge do teachers need? • What supports do teachers need to better provide strategy and skill instruction? 	
Trajectory of professional learning support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What PD is needed? • What professional learning structures are needed? • What are the most effective ways to meet their needs? • What sequence makes the most sense? What content? • Who should teachers be working with, when, and toward what end? • Have I encouraged peer support? • How will we know if we are meeting our goals? How will we evaluate our success? 	
How will I revisit this throughout the year to inform revisions and updates?	

INTEGRATING THE INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS IN PL PLANNING

Working Instructional Focus:

An instructional focus will help establish professional learning plans. Since the instructional focus is a comprehensive year-long goal that requires whole-school commitment, professional learning should be flexible and responsive to meet the needs that arise. This in turn requires flexible and responsive grouping. Knowing that learning teams will change throughout the year, consider the following ways of grouping them:

By Grade	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For what learning purposes might teachers be grouped by grade level? What kind of planning could grade teams engage in? What are effective strategies/topics for grade teams to learn? What kind of peer-coaching can grade-level teams provide one another? 	
By Content Area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What kinds of learning make sense for content learning groups? How can content area teachers support one another's learning? What kind of peer-coaching can content area teachers, potentially from different grades, provide one another? What are the best ways to teach a certain strategy or topic? 	
By Role (e.g., new teachers, veteran teachers, cluster teachers, ICT teachers, paraprofessionals)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When should professional learning be role-specific? What are the best kinds of learning opportunities for different roles in the school community? What peer-coaching model is most effective among staff that holds similar roles? 	

SAMPLE CYCLES OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Learning Team	6th grade math teachers
Topic	RtI for math
Duration	4 weeks
PL activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional book study • Meet with RtI specialist • Meet with math coach • Lesson plan revision • Plan specific instructional strategies • Examine student work
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation/peer coaching and feedback • Coach visitation

Learning Team	Representative CTT pairs from multiple grades
Topic	Effective CTT models
Duration	5 weeks
PL activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of professional experiences • Presentation by Special Education expert • Group study of different research-based models • Co-plan by grade and/or subject • Publish handbook for other CTT teams
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation/peer coaching and feedback • Visitation by expert • Follow up meetings to share new practices

Learning Team	Cross-grade social studies teachers
Topic	Integrating disciplinary literacy in social studies
Duration	6 weeks
PL activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read articles and/or book on disciplinary literacy • Share perceptions of disciplinary literacy • Identify reading and writing skills necessary for social studies • Analyze student work for evidence of those skills • Analyze lesson plans for instruction in those skills • Co-plan lessons for explicit instruction in disciplinary literacy; focus on not detracting from content
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation/coaching with focus on teaching of disciplinary literacy skills • Continue planning lessons with focus on explicit instruction • Follow-up meetings to share new practices and resources

CHECKLIST FOR PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

<input type="checkbox"/> Need	
<input type="checkbox"/> Outcome(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Team/PLC members and rationale	
<input type="checkbox"/> PL opportunity, including practice and coaching	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reason for choosing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Duration	
<input type="checkbox"/> Formative evaluation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Summative Evaluations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ways to make learning public	
<input type="checkbox"/> Next steps	

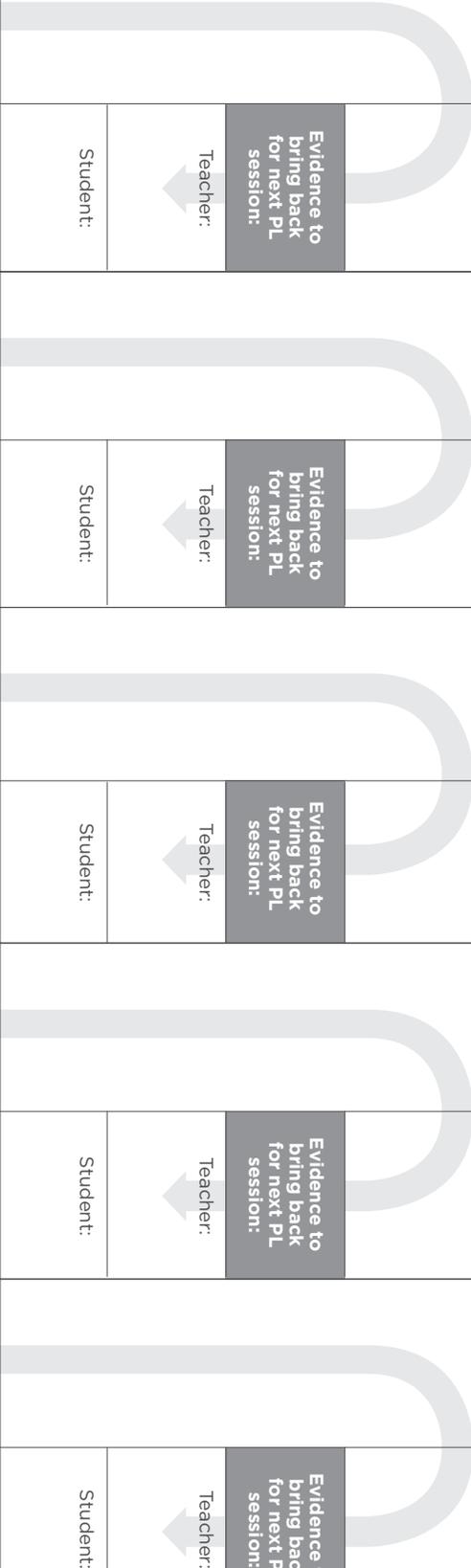


PLANNING TEMPLATE FOR DIFFERENTIATED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:
 Use the template to help you organize and track the work of different learning teams.

- Schoolwide Instructional Learning Goals**
1. To...
 2. To...
 3. To...

		Groups & Goals							
		Team A		Team B		Team C		Team D	
Pedogogy & Instructional Goals		Cross Professional Learning Team Instructional Goal for School and Students							
	Outcome/ Goal:	Measure of success:	Outcome/ Goal:	Measure of success:	Outcome/ Goal:	Measure of success:	Outcome/ Goal:	Measure of success:	
	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	Teachers:	
	Students:	Students:	Students:	Students:	Students:	Students:	Students:	Students:	
	Team A:	Team A:	Team B:	Team B:	Team C:	Team C:	Team D:	Team D:	
Evidence of Cross Professional Learning Instructional Goal for School and Students:									
									PL Impact on teacher practice, student achievement, professional learning teams and school culture:

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TEAM CYCLE PLANNING GUIDE:

Professional Learning Cycle Goals:		Mid-Cycle Formative Benchmarks:		End of Cycle Summative Benchmarks:					
									
Session 1 (Date)		Session 2 (Date)		Session 3 (Date)		Session 4 (Date)		Session 5 (Date)	
Session Goals	Bridge to Practice for Week	Session Goals	Bridge to Practice for Week	Session Goals	Bridge to Practice for Week	Session Goals	Bridge to Practice for Week	Session Goals	Bridge to Practice for Week
Evidence to bring back for next PL session:		Evidence to bring back for next PL session:		Evidence to bring back for next PL session:		Evidence to bring back for next PL session:		Evidence to bring back for next PL session:	
Teacher: 		Teacher: 		Teacher: 		Teacher: 		Teacher: 	
Student:		Student:		Student:		Student:		Student:	

APPENDIX: Section I

PL CYCLE: TRANSLATING LEARNING GOALS INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Use this document to guide your instruction planning for each session of a professional learning cycle. If you have more than one learning goal you are engaging with in your bridge to practice between sessions you may need to repeat this template.

Learning Goal/Outcomes:	
Implications for content decisions and instruction:	Implications for pedagogical decisions and instruction:
Explicit teaching moves to practice new content learning: 1. 2. 3.	Explicit teaching moves to practice new pedagogical learning: 1. 2. 3.
What will successful achievement of the learning goal look like? Teacher: Student:	

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

What to consider prior to selecting professional learning opportunities:

- What type of needs assessment will learning teams need to engage in to establish goals?
- What type of research and study will learning teams need to engage in to inform their instructional practices?
- What types of resources will learning teams need access to in order to engage in various professional learning opportunities?
- What systems and structures need to be in place to support learning teams in engaging in various professional learning opportunities?
- How will learning teams document, assess, refine and make their learning public?
- How will learning teams set new goals or restructure based on findings?

To best ensure positive outcomes from professional learning opportunities, it is highly recommended that prior to implementation, all members of learning teams have participated to some degree in activities which:

- begin to establish a culture for professional learning by building trust and distributive leadership
- focus on reflection of practice, beliefs, assumptions and values
- engage participants in an initial needs assessment, focused on gaining knowledge of students
- focus on creating instructional priorities based on the needs assessment and the school's instructional focus
- support the development of goals, reflective of observable measures of student learning and action plans
- create a system and structure for documenting professional learning and assessing the success of the PLC in improving student outcomes

APPENDIX: Section I

As part of any professional development plan, it is recommended that learning teams revisit culture building, reflection and assessment activities often in order to ensure that their commitment and focus remains on their common goal of increasing student achievement.

Samples of Professional Learning Opportunities:

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Problem of Practice Study Group	A group of teachers who are experiencing similar challenges in their teaching come together with a mutual problem and a commitment to create a plan of action. The team builds in time to observe one another, give feedback, reflect on experiences in the classroom, examine student work and refine instruction based on findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants should engage in a needs assessment prior to selecting a challenge. Additionally, the problem of practice selected should not have a clear and definitive answer or be a technical problem, such as scheduling. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Action Research	Also known as cycle of inquiry and often includes a group of educators that work together to develop and answer questions relating to instructional practice. As part of the reflexive cycle, the team will at various times: work to identify a problem to be studied; collect and analyze data, often gathered through classroom observations; develop an action plan to address the problem, and then work together to implement and evaluate the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to a problem of practice study group, action research should be implemented to empower educators in identifying and finding answers to adaptive challenges, not technical challenges. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Studying student work	A group of teachers come together to study student work for specific purposes. A group might teach the same content and be interested in understanding and analyzing how instruction and learning opportunities impact student outcomes. Alternatively, a group may teach different content and decide to study a select group of students' work across courses, in an effort to identify themes and patterns in students' abilities to demonstrate skills and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In studying student work, it is critical that the team has a specific focus to anchor feedback. It is highly recommended that the group use a protocol or structured format for presenting, reviewing and providing feedback on student work. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Analyzing teacher feedback	<p>Similar to studying student work, a group may decide to specifically focus on the analysis of teacher feedback to students. Teams might consider focusing on oral feedback provided during instruction and/ or written feedback on student work. The purpose of engaging in this opportunity is to better understand the impact of teacher feedback on student learning and to identify highly effective feedback techniques to increase student performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is highly recommended that a series of feedback samples be used to help the group analyze the impact of teacher feedback over time and to identify trends and themes in student work based on teacher feedback. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Research & Professional Reading	<p>A group of educators working to answer a common question may engage in collaborative or independent research on a specific topic to inform pedagogy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual or group research and reading should be included as part of group's larger focus and be coupled with planning and coaching activities to support implementation of research based practices. Individuals or groups engaging in research and professional reading can plan to share findings with the school community at large, with a specific focus on instructional implications. Independent research may be especially useful for teachers of very specific content or student population and are not part of a traditional content or grade level team. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Professional book study	<p>A group of teachers with a common interest and goal choose an appropriate book to learn from and meet regularly.</p> <p>Depending on the goal of the group, texts relating to content, instructional practices, coaching or adult learning, among other topics, might be selected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In between meetings, PLC members may engage in a type of collaborative planning and then ideally, participate in a coaching activity focused on incorporating research based practices into pedagogy. • Teams engaging in a professional book study can plan to share relevant findings with other teams. • See <i>Resources to Support Professional Learning</i> book list in the Resources section of this handbook for suggested titles <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Online courses	<p>Online courses are available through a variety of internal and external providers, including and reputable free online sources, such as Coursera. Additionally, online courses may be offered through universities and may provide “hard to access” or unique topics for diverse teaching staffs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of online courses selected should align with the established goal of the PLC and be coupled with collaborative planning and coaching. • Individuals engaging in online courses should plan to share their learning with colleagues. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Webinars	<p>Webinars are live online educational presentations during which participants can submit questions and comments, in order to receive answers and feedback in real time. Recorded webinars also provide viewers access to content and can be helpful when orientating someone to a new tool or resource. This type of web-based opportunity makes it possible for participants to access learning regardless of their location.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While webinars on various content topics are readily available online, schools might consider creating and sharing professional learning with one another via this platform. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Seminars/ training & conferences	<p>These professional development activities are categorized as short term learning opportunities intended to support teachers with learning about specific content, instructional strategies or initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to support and sustain the implementation of new learning, collaborative planning and coaching should be paired with these types of PD activities. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FOR CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Analysis of curricula across grades	<p>A cross-functional team may review and provide feedback on curriculum maps of specific content areas across grade levels. This analysis and feedback should focus on identifying themes and trends, which could answer some questions about student learning and help to identify specific gaps and/ or unnecessary overlap in curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This type of analysis should be coupled with additional support to improve curriculum and coaching to ensure changes are successfully implemented into instruction. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Integrated curriculum planning	<p>Integrated curriculum is a way to teach students that attempts to break down barriers between subjects and make learning more meaningful to students. Various team structures can engage in this type of planning to support student learning of content and skills and support instructional shifts aligned to the CCLS. Some examples of integrated curriculum planning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> multidisciplinary- standards of the disciplines organized around a theme interdisciplinary- interdisciplinary skills and concepts embedded in disciplinary standards transdisciplinary- real-life context and student questions are focus of unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is suggested that teams participate in some type of professional reading or study prior to engaging in this type of complex planning to ensure there is a common understanding of the specific type of curriculum the team wishes to create. While some teacher teams may be able to successfully engage in this type of planning with little support, it is suggested that a coach participate in this type of planning if possible. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FOR CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Curriculum adaptation planning	<p>Teams with established curriculum work together to make strategic adaptations to existing curriculum, considering alignment to the CCLS, the school’s instructional focus and students’ interests, needs and strengths.</p> <p>This collaborative planning can help ensure that implementation across classrooms is consistent and coherent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that teachers engage in backwards planning when engaging in this work • While some teacher teams may be able to successfully engage in this type of planning with little support, it is suggested that a coach participate in this type of planning. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Planning specific instructional strategies across the curriculum e.g. writing strategies across the curriculum, student engagement, “checks for understanding” or formative assessment, student led discussions	<p>Teacher teams which have identified a problem or practice or gap in instruction across the curriculum collaboratively plan for the implementation of a specific instructional strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams looking to plan for specific instructional strategies should engage in some form of research or study to ensure their planning is based on researched-based practices. • Teams should create plans for observation of implementation, review of student work, reflection, and adaptation as necessary. • Teams should carefully consider how instructional strategies best support student learning in specific content areas. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FOR CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Planning common assessments	<p>A group of teachers, teaching the same content, engage in a process of creating or revising assessments. This planning may be the first step in aligning curriculum and instruction to CCLS and content-specific frameworks. As part of the process, teachers will review or write tasks and assessment questions, as well as rubrics, to ensure assessments are accessible to students and align to the CCLS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that prior to creating or revising assessments, teams engage in some study of assessment design and the CCLS. • Teams engaging in planning common assessments should also norm around the implementation and scoring of these common assessments to ensure consistency. • As teams implement the assessments, it is critical that they collaboratively score student work and analyze results to inform future instruction and assessments. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Lesson Study	<p>Based on the Japanese P.D. model of collaboratively planning, teaching, observing and analyzing lessons, teachers engage in the “study” of lessons. As teams in engage in lesson study, they establish a common goal and related research question they wish to explore. Throughout each cycle of study, together group members create a detailed lesson plan and take turns implementing it, while other team members observe. There are thorough debriefs of these observations, and the group revises the plan as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with any type of observation and feedback activity, it is recommended that teams have ensured that there is a professional and respectful culture established. • Teams may wish to research the purpose and history of lesson study prior to engaging in this work. • It is recommended that team members study and develop a normed understanding of the essential elements of an effective lesson prior to starting lesson study. • Teams may also benefit from engaging in professional development work around taking notes during an observation and providing feedback, prior to starting this work. • After a cycle of lesson study, a team should make their work “public” identifying key learnings to share with the school at large. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COACHING AND PEER OBSERVATIONS TO REFINE AND SUSTAIN LEARNING

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Peer or collegial mentoring	<p>Partners or a small group of teachers engage in supportive rounds of pre-conferences, observations and reflective debriefs. It is also important to note that this type of mentoring places peers as equals, with each teacher taking turns as the observee, whom identifies the focus of the observation and leads the reflective post observation conference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants engaging in peer mentoring activities should engage in team building activities prior to implementation, in order to ensure a positive, respectful and professional relationship exists between participants. • This type of mentoring relies heavily on the reflection of what happened in the observed lesson and an analysis of its impact on student learning and should never be used for evaluative purposes. • It is recommended that this type of mentoring be coupled with a research and study and common planning to support alignment between the observations and the PLC's goal. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COACHING AND PEER OBSERVATIONS TO REFINE AND SUSTAIN LEARNING

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Intervisitation and Intra-visititation	<p>While components of coaching may be included in various types of classroom visitation, this type of observation may also be part of a study component of a PLC, as teams work to identify inquiry questions and establish goals. Teams may also select to observe one another in the initial stages of forming a team to better understand one another's pedagogical style and trends that exist among classrooms. Alternatively, teams may also choose to observe instruction a grade below or above to better align practices to support student development. Teams may also select to observe teachers at another school who teach the same grade and content when making curricula or instructional decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that prior to creating or revising assessments, teams engage in some study of assessment design and the CCLS. • Teams engaging in planning common assessments should also norm around the implementation and scoring of these common assessments to ensure consistency. • As teams implement the assessments, it is critical that they collaboratively score student work and analyze results to inform future instruction and assessments. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Challenge Coaching	<p>Similar to collegial mentoring, teams that have identified a problem of practice may decide to engage in observations which focus on gathering data on a specific challenge, documenting trends and/or strong practices which are occurring in instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that teachers engaging in this type of coaching also include a research and study component and engage in collaborative planning based on their observations. • It is recommended that participants in this type of coaching take turns being observed and providing feedback. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COACHING AND PEER OBSERVATIONS TO REFINE AND SUSTAIN LEARNING

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Video sharing of lessons	<p>The use of video can provide a team access to one another's classrooms when schedules or location can be restrictive. Teachers may opt to focus video on specific portions of the lesson such as transitions between components or closure. Teachers may also decide to focus on student led discussions and collaborative work in order to understand students' independence levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is highly recommended that the sharing of lessons be connected to a team's specific goal. • It is also recommended that the teacher sharing the video of their instruction lead the meeting where the lesson is viewed and debriefed. • Schools might want to consider establishing inter-school partnerships so that teachers can share videos, which may be especially helpful for individuals who are the sole instructors for a grade or course. • Permission from students' parents should be obtained prior to recording students and footage should only be shared on secure sites. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Mentoring student teachers/ graduate students	<p>Teams of teachers who are hosting student teachers may decide to work collaboratively to provide support, instructional opportunities and feedback to these individuals.</p> <p>By providing these students opportunities to observe and/ or teach in multiple classrooms, the team of teachers can also benefit from receiving feedback from multiple perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups may combine this type of mentoring with lesson study or challenge coaching, where the group picks a very specific component of instruction to focus on, for example, pacing of lessons, group checks for understanding or on-task student behavior. • Teams should always consult the students' advisors and educational institution to ensure that the student is meeting all requirements of his her placement. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAKING LEARNING PUBLIC

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Writing & publishing reports on learning through blogs and other platforms	<p>In addition to documenting professional learning throughout the process, teams may select to write a more formal report on their findings to share both internally and externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is critical that a specific audience and purpose has been identified prior to teams engaging in the writing of a report, in order provide an authentic and meaningful opportunity for participants to assess, reflect and refine their practice. • Teams choosing to write reports, may require additional support in the publishing phase. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Presenting work to internal & external groups	<p>Similar to writing and publishing reports on learning, teams may opt to create summaries of the research and findings to share with a variety of audiences. Teams may opt to create webinars, power-points or summary documents with key findings, which allows the team a structure to share their assessment of the work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams may consider using a tuning protocol in this sharing process, which allows the team to present their findings and a question for the audience to help them explore. • Presenting work should be a process which helps a team to identify next steps in their work. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Creating & analyzing portfolios	<p>The process of creating portfolios of learning is highly flexible and its structure should be considered when a PLC identifies a goal and is seeking a process to document and assess learning. Portfolios are not limited to, but may include, teacher notes on research, student work samples, video, lesson and unit plans, or samples of assessments which reflect the team's implementation of new knowledge to improve pedagogy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school may want to consider providing support to teams in terms of flexible structures to create and share portfolios of learning, including digital platforms. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAKING LEARNING PUBLIC

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Designing & implementing PD workshops	<p>Rather than simply providing a summary of the team's work and learning, PLCs may opt to design and present a PD workshop to colleagues based on their findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A school may want to consider creating a system for teams to create and present workshops for one another and including an element of choice of which workshops teachers select to attend. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Applying for grants & scholarships to support continuing work	<p>For PLCs which have a deep interest in furthering their study around a specific problem of practice or topic, the team may wish to use their learning as a springboard to apply for grants or scholarships which can provide additional resources and support to continue the team's efforts in improving student outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams seeking grants or scholarships may need support in the application process. Additionally, teams should be encouraged to remain focused on their goals and seek out opportunities that support that work, rather than distract from it. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>
Developing video learning communities with other educators	<p>A growing number of educators are developing video learning communities, which allow teachers to efficiently share best practices between schools, without the restraints of geography.</p> <p>Teams may select to engage in such a community throughout professional learning cycles in order to support and formatively assess progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should consider what type of guidelines PLCs should follow if they wish to engage in an online video learning community, including ensuring all video footage is shared on a secure site. Anytime students are photographed or video recorded, it is critical that official parent permission is obtained. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAKING LEARNING PUBLIC

Type of PL	Description	Considerations and Use
Sharing adult learning with students' families	<p>In addition to sharing work with colleagues, PLCs should consider creating opportunities to engage students' families in the process.</p> <p>Teams may opt to use a variety of methods to share work with families as deemed appropriate by the administration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Professional Learning Committees should consider if they would like PLCs to share work with families and if so, what types of guidance teams will need. • It is important to consider student/teacher privacy when balancing the need to keep parents informed of the work of the school. <p>How might your school use this learning opportunity?</p>

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SAMPLE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLAN


Teacher name	Grade/subject	ADVANCE feedback	Plan begin/end dates

Areas identified for development		Rationale/sources of evidence	

GUIDELINES FOR PEER COACHING

To become a reliable source of classroom coaching, peer coaching has to be:

- Based on a common language
- Focused
- Based on hard evidence in discussion
- Interactive/two-directional
- Predictable and reliable
- Reciprocal
- Reciprocal

The collaborative learning stance of peer coaching:

- It is about exploration, not criticism
- It is based on self-identified, often shared, goals and outcomes
- Both teacher and coach can learn something from experience
- Reflection by teacher and coach leads to natural next steps
- It is the implementation of the new knowledge from your shared professional learning that you are coaching, not the teacher

Talking during peer coaching:

- Be specific and evidence-based
- Be positive
- Be reflective
- Make it conversational
- Learn from one another
- Stay focused on what you and your colleague decided you would be looking for
- Make sure you are communicating clearly (check for understanding)

SAMPLE PRE AND POST-VISIT QUESTIONS

Pre-visit questions

1. How can I be of help to you?
2. What are you working on?
3. What background do I need to know coming into your classroom?
4. Is there something particular you would like me to watch (A group? A student? Response to something you are teaching?)
5. What are your objectives and expectations for the lesson?
6. What kind of feedback will be most helpful?

Post-visit questions

1. What are your thoughts about the lesson?
2. How was the implementation of the new learning?
3. Where was implementation successful and how do you know?
4. Where do you need more support? What steps can we take?
5. Did students respond the way you expected them to?
6. Was there anything that was surprising?
7. What observations of mine would be most helpful to hear?

SAMPLE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLAN**Instructional goal based on work with learning team:**

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**Classroom teacher lens and predictions
about implementation****Peer coach observations**

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SAMPLE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLAN

Reflections of classroom teacher		Reflections of peer coach	
<p>Next steps as teacher</p>		<p>Next steps as peer coach</p>	
Teacher		Coach	
<p>What to share with Learning Team</p>			

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PEER SUPPORT

Professional Goal	Steps I plan to take

Instructions for Peer Observer:

Please review the actions I've written down that I think will lead to my goal, and note evidence or write a description when you see me implement one.

Actions connected to my Goal	Peer Observation— evidence/description of actions

EVALUATION LEVEL 1: SAMPLE PARTICIPANT REACTION

(FOR WORKSHOP, PRESENTATION OR STRUCTURED PLC ACTIVITY)

1. Was the information clearly presented?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Very clear Somewhat clear Not clear </div>
2. Did the facilitator or source convey appropriate knowledge?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Very knowledgeable Somewhat knowledgeable Not knowledgeable </div>
3. Do you feel the PL will have a positive impact on your practice?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Yes Not certain No </div>
4. Explain your answer to #3.	
5. Do you feel the PL will have a positive impact on your students?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Yes Not certain No </div>
6. Explain your answer to #5.	
Additional feedback or comments	

SAMPLE FORMATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVALUATION FORM

Description of PL	
Are you implementing the new practice in your classroom? How?	
How are you making the new practice fit within the context of your classroom?	
How is the new practice affecting your teaching?	
Are you seeing the new practice positively affecting your students?	
Are you receiving the appropriate amount of support (coaching, feedback, sharing?)	
What do you see as your next steps in implementing the practice?	
Overall comments and feedback	

SAMPLE SUMMATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVALUATION FORM

Description of PL	
Were your expectations met?	
How, specifically, were they met or not met?	
What is the evidence in your practice?	
What is the evidence in your students' learning?	
What next steps do you need from the PD committee?	
What next steps do you plan to take personally?	
Overall comments and feedback	

Fourth Grade. By year-end, students will be able to...

- Understanding Texts - Analyzing
- Non-fiction skills (with a focus on argument & comparison) ←
- Identifying Main Idea & Supporting Details ←
- Analyzing Structure ←
- Writing Skills (using a 5-Paragraph structure with introduction, body, and conclusion) ←
- Research Skills (Internet to their reading level) ←
- And presentation skills ←

Skills

- First Peoples (How they lived here - why + how)
- NYS Geography + Why they came here - why + how
- European Explorers (NYS) + Reason they came
- Dutch Influence - 3 Wars
- British Economics
- Economic behind civil war → Revolutionary War
- New Nation (Causes, rights)
- Shift from Rural to Emerging Industrialized

Content

Standards



RESOURCES

Resources to Support Professional Learning

1. *The Power of Teacher Rounds. A Guide for Facilitators, Principals and Department Chairs* by Vivian Troen and Katherine Boles. (2014)

- This new book with a forward by Richard Elmore is about a unique form of professional learning. It provides a strong rationale for the process as well as usable templates and protocols that enable the successful implementation of teacher rounds.

2. *The Transparent Teacher: Taking Charge of Your Instruction with Peer-Collected Classroom Data*, by Trent Kaufman and Emily Grimm (2013)

- This book tackles teaching as an isolated profession. While some schools do encourage intervisitation, the usual pattern is for new teachers to watch the veteran, exemplary educators. The authors make the argument that those less experienced educators could benefit immensely from having peers observe them in action. In Teacher-Driven Observation, the observed teacher is the leader of the work—they identify an area for develop, engage their colleagues in the collection of classroom artifacts, and uses that data to inform their instruction.

3. *The Art of Coaching: Effective Strategies for School Transformation* by Elena Aguilar (2013)

- This is a practical resource that offers foundational skills and tools that new coaching educators need. It also presents an overview of the knowledge and theory base behind coaching practices. This model for transformational coaching could be implemented as professional learning in schools or districts. While her audience is adult learners, her model is student-centered, with a specific emphasis on equity issues in schools.

4. *Building a Better Teacher (and How to Teach it to Everyone)* by Elizabeth Green (2014)

- This is a journalistic account about how the country's leading educational researchers are asking and trying to answer the questions of what makes for an effective classroom teacher, and how they can improve upon their instructional practices.

5. Learning Forward www.learningforward.org

- Learning Forward is the only association devoted exclusively to advancing professional learning for student success. Their vision is ensuring that every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves. This site provides free resources as well as resources that can be purchased.

6. *Living the Questions: A Guide for Teacher-Researcher (second edition)*

by Ruth Shagoury and Brenda Miller Power (2012).

- This book presents a framework for teacher research, which it posits as an extension of good teaching, since it is about observing students closely, analyzing their needs, and adjusting the curriculum to fit the needs of all. In addition to the research framework, the authors include an extensive collection of narratives from teachers engaged in the research process. The book has three main components: chapters written by the authors explaining key elements of the research process, research activities for teacher researchers to try out, and teacher-researcher essays in which teachers share the details of completed projects and discuss the impact they have had on their classrooms.

7. *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*

by John Hattie (2011)

- This book takes evidence-based research on what works in schools to improve student learning that Hattie first synthesized in 2008 and brings them to students, pre-service, and in-service teachers. There is concise and user-friendly summaries of the most successful interventions and practical guidance to successfully making thinking and learning visible in the classroom.

8. *Classroom Assessment: What Teachers Need to Know (7th Edition)*

by W. James Popham (2013)

- Through this book's attention to the instructional implications of educational assessment, teachers will become assessment literate, understanding the fundamental concepts and processes of educational testing that will include their hour-to-hour instructional decisions.

9. *Choice Words* by Peter H. Johnston (2004)

- The book about how teachers can carefully use language to teach the whole student. It is grounded in a research study by accomplished literacy teachers, and demonstrates how the things teachers do, and don't, say have important consequences for what students learn and for who they become as literate people. It is language that makes students strategic thinkers, it not merely learning the literacy strategies.

10. *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*

by Susan A. Ambrose, Michael W. Bridges, Michele Di Pietro and Marsha C. Lovett (2010)

- This book distills the research literature and translates the scientific approach to present seven general principals of how student learn in a way that meets the needs of a classroom teacher. The authors draw from multiple perspectives, including anthropology, cognitive, developmental, and social psychology, as well as educational research, demographics, and organizational behavior to identify a key set of principles underlying learning. This book integrates theory with real classroom examples, and helps faculty apply cognitive science advances in their own instructional practices.

11. *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*

by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana (2011)

- The authors argue that the single most important skill we can teach our students is to formulate their own questions. They also argue it should be taught in the simplest way possible, and present the Question Formulation Technique, a protocol that enables learners to produce, improve upon, and strategize how to use their own questions. It is written for an audience across grade levels and subject areas, and applicable to all learners.

RESOURCES

12. *Teaching Interpretation: Using Text-Based Evidence to Construct Meaning*

by Sonja Cherry-Paul and Dana Johansen (2014)

- Through the lens of the Common Core Learning Standards, this book asks the questions: “What does interpretation really look like?” “How can we effectively teach students of all reading levels to be successful at constructing interpretations?” The lessons about showing students how to construct, revise, and test their interpretations work with any curriculum, and offer a framework that makes the process transparent to teacher and student. The text has lesson ideas, text recommendations, templates, and suggestions for how to differentiate.

13. *Teaching with Intention*, by Debbie Miller (2008)

- Debbie Miller shares her process of defining beliefs, aligning practice, and taking action to ensure that children are the true beneficiaries of her teaching. *Teaching with Intention* brings us into classrooms of teachers and children she has met over the last five years in her work as a literacy consultant, and covers topics ranging from setting a classroom environment, to comprehension instruction, to lesson design. She is explicit describing and justifying each decision she makes. As she coaches, she encourages teachers to develop their own belief statements about teaching and learning, and guides them with key questions.

13. *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn*, by John Hattie and Greg Yates (2013)

- John Hattie, known for *Visible Learning* which was the biggest collection ever of research into what actually works in schools, has written a new book with cognitive psychologist Greg Yates to build on the original data. The book explains the major principles of learning, including why it can be so hard sometimes, and easy at others. It is aimed at teachers and students and structured into three parts: “learning within classrooms,” “learning foundations,” and “know thyself.” The sections cover topics such as: teacher personality, expertise and teacher-student relationships, how knowledge is stored and the impact of cognitive load, thinking fast and slow, the psychology of self-control, the role of conversation at home and at school, digital native theory, and myths and misinformation about how people learn.

For New Teachers

1. *An Introduction to Student-Involved Assessment FOR Learning (6th Edition)*

by Rick J. Stiggins and Jan Chappuis (2011)

- This book is written for beginning teachers, and focuses on preparing them to assess students in their classrooms. It talks about the challenges of monitoring and assessing student learning and teaches them how to gather dependable evidence of student learning using quality assessments, and how to use those assessments to support student learning. The book also focuses on integrating assessment with instruction through involving students in the assessment process.

2. **Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College (K-12)**

by Doug Lemov and Norman Atkins (2010)

- Especially geared to help beginning teachers become “champions” in the classroom, this book offers concrete and specific techniques that are easy to put into action. There are training activities at the end of each chapter for readers to further reflect on the implications of the new ideas for their own classroom practice.

Frameworks, Protocols, and Standards

1. **Best Practice, Fourth Edition: Bringing Standards to Life in America’s Classrooms**

by Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels and Arthur Hyde (2012)

- Regardless of the challenge, Best Practices supports teaching excellence. It offers a framework of seven Best Practice Structures, and implementation strategies that cut across them. It creates common ground across grades, subjects, teachers, leaders, and principals by recommending practices that stem from the latest scientific research, professional consensus, and the innovative classrooms of exemplary teachers.

2. **Pathways to the Common Core: Accelerating Achievement** by Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth, and Christopher Lehman (2010).

- This book takes the time to break the standards down into what they really mean, and shows what they could look like in real teacher’s classroom. It takes a close look at each Reading Standard, and all the writing genres covered by the CCLS.

3. **Teaching for Understanding** by Tina Blythe (1997)

- The Teaching for Understanding Guide (Jossey-Bass, 1998) is a practical, hands-on book that explains the teaching for understanding framework and provides examples of how teachers can use the framework in their planning and teaching. Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice explains how and why the framework was developed.

4. **The Power of Protocols: An Educator’s Guide to Better Practice (second edition)**, by Joseph P. McDonald (2007)

- The second edition of this teaching and professional development tool features seven new protocols. They are useful to any educator working on structures from school improvement, to curriculum development, to teacher education.

RESOURCES

Lesson Study

1. **Leading Lesson Study** by Jennifer Stepanek, Gary Appel, Melinda Leong, Michelle Turner Mangan, and Mark Mitchell (2006)
 - This is a “how to” guide that brings a beginning team through the lesson study cycle and provides an experienced team with new perspectives. It uses examples from U.S. classrooms, and: encourages educators to generate and share knowledge, inspire a teacher-researcher stance, illustrates the process and substance of lesson study, encourages collaboration, and provides guidance for avoiding common pitfalls.
2. **Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College (K-12)** by Doug Lemov and Norman Atkins (2010)
 - Especially geared to help beginning teachers become “champions” in the classroom, this book offers concrete and specific techniques that are easy to put into action. There are training activities at the end of each chapter for readers to further reflect on the implications of the new ideas for their own classroom practice.

Content-Specific Resources

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. **Reading Like A Historian**, by Sam Wineburg, Daisy Martin, and Chauncey Monte-Sano (2012)
 - Reading Like a Historian is an approach to teaching, and this book shows middle and school teachers how to implement it in order to increase academic literacy and spark students’ curiosity. Each chapter begins with an essay about a key moment in American history, which is followed by primary documents, charts, graphs, graphic organizers, visual images, and political cartoons, and ends with guidance for assessing student understanding of core historical ideas.
2. **Why Won’t You Just Tell Us the Answer? Teaching Historical Thinking in Grades 7-12** by Bruce A. Lesh (2011)
 - This book is an introduction to Lesh’s method for teaching history that parallels the process used by actual historians, in which students ask questions about evidence and develop historical explanations. This book shows teachers how to implement his methodology in the classroom.

ELA/LITERACY: K-3

- 1. On Solid Ground: Strategies for Teaching Reading K-3**, by Sharon Taberski and Shelley Harwayne (2000)
 - In this book, the author takes you into her classroom and gives you a comprehensive guide to creating an environment for teaching reading effectively and achieving success for all students. She does not have a prescribed method of teaching, but rather a trajectory of interactions – assessment, demonstration, practice, and response, that she uses to understand the reading needs of each of her students and design instruction to meet their needs. Taberski offers book recommendations, reproducibles, genuine advice and samples of student work that she shares with the reader in a way that just makes sense.
- 2. Comprehension from the Ground Up: Simplified, Sensible Instruction for the K-3 Reading Workshop**, by Sharon Taberski (2010)
 - In her second book, Taberski builds on the work of her first, *On Solid Ground*, to include reading and writing workshop practices for students in grades K-3. She shares how to create a literacy block that engages all children in authentic and sustainable reading and writing practices. Taberski offers book recommendations, reproducibles, genuine advice and samples of student work that she shares with the reader in a way that just makes sense.

ELA/LITERACY: 3-6

- 1. How's It Going? A Practical Guide to Conferring with Student Writers**, by Carl Anderson (2000)
 - This book shows teachers how to have one-on-one authentic conversations with students about their writing and to figure out what each student needs to grow as a writer. Carl teaches us how to integrate these conversations in a practical way in order to lift the level of writing for all students. It provides the reader with advice, strategies, lessons for both conferring and mini-lessons, and above all how to develop effective techniques for writing and how to confer well.
- 2. Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement**, by Stephanie Harvey, Anne Goudvis (2007)
 - This book helps teachers explicitly teach thinking strategies to improve their students' reading. This is a revised and updated version, and contains 22 new comprehension lessons, and extends the central theme of the book, which is exploring background knowledge. Another major addition is a section on content area literacy. The four parts highlight what comprehension is and how to teach it; contain lessons and practices on teaching comprehension; offer "comprehension across the curriculum;" and contain an updated appendix that illustrates books that can motivate and engage students, as well as providing information on why students need those times of books.

RESOURCES

3. **When Kids Can't Read: What Teachers Can Do: A Guide for Teachers 6-12**

by Kyrene Beers (2002)

- The central question of this book is “how do we help middle and high school students who can't read?” This practical, comprehensive text shows how teachers can intervene with comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, word recognition, and motivation.

ELA/LITERACY: 6-12

1. **Time for Meaning: Crafting Literate Lives in Middle and High School,**

by Randy Bomer (1995)

- This book shares strategies that assist middle and high school teachers teach writing in a meaningful way for their students. He shows the reader how to set up an effective and engaging writing workshop in middle and high school classroom and uses strategies to help students become proficient writers.

2. **Book Love: Developing Depth, Stamina, and Passion in Adolescent Readers**

by Penny Kittle (2012)

- This book confronts the fact that too many kids don't read the assigned texts, and that some slip by without having read a single book by the time they graduate. The author takes student apathy head-on, first by talking about why students don't read, and then by showing us that if students have the right book in front of them, along with the time to read and to write regularly in response to their reading, we can create conditions that lead to greater success and eventually, a love of reading.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION

1. **Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching (What Works for Special Needs Learners)** by Dr. Anita Archer, Charles A. Hughes (2010)

- This book can be used with all teachers, both new and old, and in any grade level, to learn how to effectively incorporate explicit instruction where it is needed in the classroom. Explicit instruction is systematic, direct, engaging, and success oriented—and has been shown to promote achievement for all students. This resource gives special and general education teachers the tools to implement explicit instruction in any grade level or content area.

2. **Bringing Words to Life, Second Edition: Robust Vocabulary Instruction,** by Isabel L. Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, and Linda Kucan (2013)

- The second edition of this books builds upon the solid foundation that author's created in the first and have updated it with important research validated information that supports the need for teachers to explicitly teach vocabulary to all students starting as early as kindergarten. It also offers a wealth of practical applications and ideas that can be quickly and easily implemented in the classroom.

3. **Solving for Why**, by John Tapper (2012)

- Through this book teachers will gain the tools and guidance they need to understand and “solve” why students are struggling with math. This is an RTI-like book, with approaches focused on assessment and communication with students, and helps teachers gain insight into student understanding without assuming that one solution applies to all struggling students.

4. **The IRIS (IDEA and Research for Inclusive Settings) Center for Faculty Enhancement** [The Iris Center for Faculty Enhancement \[K-12\]](#)

- This site operates to ensure that general and special education teachers, school administrators, and clinical staff are well prepared to work with students who have disabilities and with their families. IRIS is the nation’s only faculty enhancement center established for this purpose. To visit its website, go to iris@vanderbilt.edu for tutorials on a range of topics. This site is an excellent resource for professional learning communities within schools.

5. **National Center on Intensive Interventions** www.intensiveintervention.org

- The National Center on Intensive Interventions is housed at the American Institutes for Research, and works in conjunction with many of our nation’s most distinguished data-based individualization experts. Its mission is to build district and school capacity to support implementation of data-based individualization in reading, mathematics, and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning and/or behavioral needs. This site offers webinars, ‘ask the expert’ videos, toolkits and other resources.

6. **RtI Action Network** www.rtinetwork.org

- The RTI Action Network provides resources for the effective implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI) in school districts nationwide. A range of resources, including implementation checklists, guide educators and families in the large-scale implementation of RTI so that each child has access to quality instruction and that struggling students – including those with learning disabilities – are identified early and receive the necessary supports to be successful. The RTI Action Network is a program of the [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#), funded by the Cisco Foundation and in partnership with the nation’s leading education associations and top RTI experts.

7. **New York State Education Department:**

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/guidance-oct10.pdf>

- A range of resources and compliance documents related to response to intervention and academic intervention services, including their RtI Guidance Document.

RESOURCES

8. Clearinghouses

To determine how effective programs and protocols being used for literacy rate in the research literature, consult these research clearinghouses:

- Florida Center for Reading Research Find teacher resources at the site: www.fcrr.org
- What Works Clearinghouse: www.whatworks.ed.gov/
- Best Evidence Encyclopedia: www.bestevidence.org

SCIENCE

1. **Model Based Science Teaching**, by Steven W. Gilbert (2011)

- This book shares strategies that assist middle and high school teachers teach writing in a meaningful way for their students. He shows the reader how to set up an effective and engaging writing workshop in middle and high school classroom and uses strategies to help students become proficient writers.

2. **Science for English Language Learners K-12 Classroom Strategies** by Ann K. Fathman and David T. Crowther, Editors (2006)

- Science for ELLs is focused on expanding teachers' expertise in teaching science content and processes, in language development and literacy, and in inquiry-based teaching. It is divided into four sections: an overview of the major themes, principles and practices that science and English teaching share; practical classroom strategies for planning, teaching, assessing, and extending learning; models for lesson and curriculum development from both language and science educators; helpful context, including an overview of science and English-as-a-second-language standards, research and instructional practices, and ways to integrate science, language, and literacy.

3. **Science Formative Assessment - 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction and Learning**, by Paige Keeley (2008)

- This book contains 75 techniques that help K-12 science teachers determine students' understanding of key concepts and design learning opportunities that will deepen students' master of content and standards. The flexible assessments can be used with any curriculum. The author describes: how each technique promotes student learning; considerations for design and implementation, such as materials, timing, modeling, and grouping students; modifications for different types of students or purposes; ways the techniques can be used in other content areas

4. **Rubrics for Assessing Student Achievement in Science Grades K-12**, by Hays B. Lantz, Jr. (2004)

- The authors offer more than 100 ready-to-use performance lists, holistic rubrics, and analytic rubrics for K-12 science programs

5. Teaching Secondary School Science – Strategies for Developing Scientific Literacy – 9th Edition by Rodger W. Bybee , Janet Carlson Powell , and Leslie W. Towbridge (2007)

- This book is grounded by the National Science Education Standards and offers teaching guidance and strategies for physical, biological, and earth science courses for middle and high school. The text has a practical focus, as well as covering the theory and research behind the strategies they present. There is a underlying theme of constructivism in science and the connection between science and society, including technological development.

5. Citizen Science: 15 Lessons That Bring Biology to Life,
by Nancy Trautmann (2013)

- This book of “citizen science projects” gather data through public collaboration in scientific research, also known as citizen science. The book is designed to get teachers comfortable using citizen science to support students’ independent inquiry through which they learn both content and process skills. Citizen Science offers real life case studies, and can be used in a classroom with or without access to field or lab facilities.

MATH

1. 5 Practices for Orchestrating Productive Mathematics Discussions
by Margaret S. Smith and Mary Kay (2001)

- This text presents and discusses a framework for facilitating mathematically productive discussions that are grounded in student thinking. The framework identifies five practices (anticipating, monitoring, selecting, sequencing and connecting) that will help teachers to use students’ responses to support mathematical understanding of the entire class by helping teachers to manage the content that will be discussed and how it will be discussed. The five practices allow teachers to minimize the “in the moment” decisions that need to be made and frees them up to carefully plan connections between different approaches to solving problems.

2. Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All,
by National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2014)

- This book provides a research-based description of eight essential Mathematics Teaching Practices to bring the Common Core into every classroom. It then describes the conditions, structures, and policies that need to be in place to support the Teaching Practices.

3. Lesson Study: A Japanese Approach to Improving Mathematics Teaching and Learning by Clea Fernandez and Makoto Yoshida (2004)

- Lesson study is a popular PD approach in Japan whereby teachers collaborate to study content, instruction, and how students solve problems and reach for understanding. This book examines Lesson Study in elementary mathematics instruction.

RESOURCES

4. **Classroom Discussions: Using Math Talk to Help Students Learn, Grades K-6 (second edition)**, by Chapin, Suzanne H., O'Connor, Catherine, & Anderson, Nancy Canavan
 - Including end-of-chapter discussion questions for those reading this book in a study group, Classroom Discussions offers insight into the significant role that classroom discussions can play in the mathematics classroom. It is based on a four-year research project that was funded by the U.S. Department of Education. This edition features more examples of classroom talk focusing on pre-algebra and early grade levels, more vignettes, connections to NCTM's Principles and Standards for School Mathematics; and an index of every mathematical example used, classified by grade level and mathematical emphasis. instruction.
5. **Number Talk: Helping Children Build Mental Math and Computation Strategies Grades K-5. Updated with Common Core Connections**, by Sherry Parrish (2014).
 - This is a multi-media resource that supports teachers in building mental math skills in their students. The author explains what classroom number talk is, how to follow students' thinking and follow-up on their understandings, how to design and prepare for number talks, and how to develop grade-level specific thinking strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Number Talk supports the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
6. **Solving for Why**, by John Tapper (2012)
 - Through this book teachers will gain the tools and guidance they need to understand and "solve" why students are struggling with math. This is an RTI-like book, with approaches focused on assessment and communication with students, and helps teachers gain insight into student understanding without assuming that one solution applies to all struggling students.

Content-Area Literacy/Disciplinary Literacy

1. **Texts and Lessons for Content-Area Reading: With More Than 75 Articles from The New York Times, Rolling Stone** by Harvey Daniels and Nancy Steineke (2011)
 - This book offers support for content area and ELA teachers by pairing more than 75 short, kid-tested reproducible nonfiction texts with 33 ready-to-go lessons that deepen comprehension and support effective collaboration, in an effort to meet the expectations of the Common Core State Standards.
2. **Adolescent Literacy in the Academic Disciplines**, by Tamara L. Jetton and Cynthia Shanahan (2012)
 - This book focuses on the major literacy challenges in each of the academic subjects. Different chapters help teachers of ELA, science, math, history, and arts. The book emphasizes that students need processing strategies for each distinct subject and its typical tasks or problems. The book contains vignettes from exemplary classrooms that illustrate research-based ways to build content-area knowledge.

3. **Disciplinary Literacy: Redefining Deep Understanding and Leadership for 21st Century Demands**, by Thomasina Piercy and William Piercy (2011)

- This book is a practical guide for teachers to think about how to engage in creativity, communication, and critical thinking while also acknowledging the rigors of academic disciplines. The authors offer specific literacy approaches to increase connections between mathematics, history, science, ELA, music, and students' own lives. Included in the book are instructional, Common Core-aligned modules that teachers can use in their own classrooms.

4. **Inside Words**, by Janet Allen (2007)

- This book focuses on vocabulary instruction in the content areas. The author combines recent research and key content-area teaching strategies to help teachers understand how to teach students academic vocabulary. Each instructional tool is listed alphabetically with its purpose: building background knowledge; teaching words that are critical to comprehension; providing support during reading and writing; developing a conceptual framework; and assessing students' understanding of words and concepts.

5. **Academic Conversations: Classroom Talk that Fosters Critical Thinking and Content Understandings** by Jeff Zwiers and Marie Crawford (2011)

- The authors define academic conversations as “back-and-forth dialogues in which students focus on a topic and explore it by building, challenging, and negotiating relevant ideas.” Unfortunately, they say, academic conversations happen too rarely. To address the challenges that impact the frequency and depth of academic conversations, Zwiers and Crawford have identified five core communication skills to help students hold academic conversations across the content areas: elaborating and clarifying, supporting ideas with evidence, building on and/or challenging ideas, paraphrasing, and synthesizing. The book shows teachers how to build the skills and conversations in their current teaching approaches.

6. **Word Wise & Content Rich, Grades 7-12: Five Essential Steps to Teaching Academic Vocabulary**, by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2008)

- This book offers a five-part framework for teaching vocabulary that is matched to the needs of adolescent learners and bears in mind the demands facing content-area teachers. In the model, teachers learn how to “make it intentional, make it transparent, make it useable, make it personal, and make it a priority.”

English Language Learners

- 1. Teaching Vocabulary to English Language Learners**, by Michael F. Graves, Diane August, and Jeannette Mancilla-Martinez (2012)
 - This is a K-12 resource that is broad enough in scope to include instruction for students just building their vocabularies, to students who are approaching the level of native speakers. The authors offer a four-pronged approach that follow the following key components: rich and varied language experiences, teaching individual words, teaching word-learning strategies, and fostering word consciousness. It integrates up-to-date research on best practices, with vignettes, classroom activities, sample lessons, and lists of children's literature.
- 2. Word Wise & Content Rich, Grades 7-12: Five Essential Steps to Teaching Academic Vocabulary**, by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2008)
 - This book offers a five-part framework for teaching vocabulary that is matched to the needs of adolescent learners and bears in mind the demands facing content-area teachers. In the model, teachers learn how to "make it intentional, make it transparent, make it useable, make it personal, and make it a priority.
- 3. Text Complexity Raising Rigor in Reading**, by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Diane Lapp (2012)
 - This book acknowledges the difficulty of, and focuses on selecting appropriate reading materials for students. It focuses on the qualitative and quantitative factors of text complexity, now even more important because of the Common Core. The book also examines the ways readers can be matched with texts and tasks, and how close reading of complex texts scaffold students' understanding and helps them develop essential reading skills.
- 4. Scaffolding the Academic Success of Adolescent English Language Learners: A Pedagogy of Practice**, by Aida Walqui and Leo van Lier (2010)
 - This book is the result of ten years of research and is about raising the bar and increasing engagement of English Language Learners. It includes classroom vignettes, transcripts of student interactions, and detailed examples of challenging and engaging middle and high school lessons. There are three strands of instructional theory that undergird the QTEL approach, which this book illustrates: cognitive psychology, sociolinguistics, and sociocultural learning theory. The book lays out what these theories have to offer the classroom teacher, particularly the teacher of English Language Learners.

Special Education

- 1. Effective Inclusive Schools**, by Thomas Hehir (2012)
 - In this book, the authors focus on the positive: what the most effective inclusive schools are doing and how their leaders and teachers work together to ensure success for all kids, with or without disabilities. The exemplary schools highlighted inspire a path for anyone striving to improve special education services in their classroom, school, or district.

- 2. Inclusion: A Service, Not a Place**, by Dorothy Kerzner Lipsky (2012)
 - This book supports the implementation of inclusive practices by presenting a definition and description of inclusive practice, the relationship of inclusion to IDEA and NCLB best practices, and responsibilities of various school personnel, including administrators, related services providers, and clinicians. Designed to serve as a hands-on, stand-alone resource, the book is complimented by a companion video which covers topics including IEP development, collaboration, differentiated classrooms, curricular adaptations, supplementary aids and services, and more.
- 3. Joyful Learning: Active Collaboration Learning in Inclusive Classrooms**, by Alice Udvari-Solner Paula Kluth (2008)
 - This book is focused on developing and implementing team-based support plans for the 1-5% of students who require intensive, individualized behavioral assessment and intervention. A much-needed resource and text, the book features illustrative case examples, figures, and charts. Also included are reproducible assessment instruments, parent and teacher forms, sample meeting agendas, and other useful materials.
- 4. Building Positive Behavior Support Systems in Schools**, by Deanne A. Crone and Robert H. Horner (2003)
 - This book is focused on developing and implementing team-based support plans for the 1-5% of students who require intensive, individualized behavioral assessment and intervention. A much-needed resource and text, the book features illustrative case examples, figures, and charts. Also included are reproducible assessment instruments, parent and teacher forms, sample meeting agendas, and other useful materials.
- 5. Special Education Law: A Guide for Practitioners**, by Allan G. Osborne Charles Russo (2007)
 - Authored by two past presidents of the Educational Law Association, this essential guide translates legalese into your language and allows you to focus on your core competency: providing excellent education for students with special needs.
- 6. What Every Principal Needs to Know to Create Equitable and Excellent Schools** by George Theoharis and Jeffrey S. Brooks (2012)
 - This book provides a solid foundation in special education for principals by providing critical information that administrators need to understand as they navigate through special education policies and procedures. In addition, administrators will discover a practical process for not only improving the quality of special education services, but also for transforming the teaching/learning cycle for all students.



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor