



Utah Professional Learning Standards Toolkit

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Utah Professional Learning Standards Toolkit



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Utah Professional Learning Standards Toolkit

OVERVIEW

This guide is intended to help educators in schools and districts charged with developing and facilitating professional learning (PL) as an easy reference for implementing the Utah Professional Learning Standards into the courses, workshops, and coaching provided for faculty and staff. These standards are known to be effective practice for all learners (adults and students) and are good exemplars for teacher practice in the classroom.

Professional Learning Defined:

Professional Learning means a **comprehensive, sustained, and evidence-based** approach to improving teachers' and principals' **effectiveness in raising student achievement**.

The Utah Professional Learning Standards include:

- **Learning Communities.** Professional learning occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, individual and collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- **Skillful Leaders.** Professional learning requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- **Resources.** Professional learning requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning to advance student learning.
- **Outcomes.** Professional learning aligns with performance standards for teachers and school administrators; and performance standards for students as described in the Utah Core standards.
- **Learning Design.** Professional learning integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
- **Implementation.** Professional learning applies research on improving practice and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
- **Data.** Professional learning uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
- **Technology.** Professional learning both incorporates the use of technology in the design, implementation, and evaluation of high quality professional learning practices and includes targeted professional learning on the use of technology devices to enhance the teaching and learning environment and the integration of technology in content delivery.

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As per Utah Code 53G-11-303 Professional learning standards, these 8 standards [should be woven into all professional learning for our educators](#). These research-based standards, if implemented, will increase the impact of educator effectiveness and ensure that this growth will reach the students of Utah, raising their achievement.

2023 Updates to the Professional Learning Toolkit

This guide also includes alignment of the [USBE Framework for Personalized Competency Based Learning \(PCBL\)](#) to each standard. PCBL is not something that should only be available for students in classrooms, but generalized to the professional learning of educators throughout the system. With this idea in mind, the design team has engaged these critical components in the application of the Professional Learning Standards.

Additionally, in an effort to connect the work of high-quality professional learning to the [2022 Utah Effective Teaching Standards \(UETS\)](#), the alignment to these standards is found for each section of this toolkit. Educators who are effectively engaged in relevant and rigorous professional learning will be able to build their capacity for teaching through this experience. For this reason, USBE has included these standards to help them be reinforced by effective professional learning designs.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Professional learning occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, individual and collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Why is this standard important?

“Professional learning within communities requires continuous improvement, promotes collective responsibility, and supports alignment of individual, team, school, and school system goals” to advance student learning.

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Learning Communities:

- Promotes collective responsibility and shared purpose
- Cultivates mutual accountability and trust among members
- Incorporates sense of belonging with supportive conditions
- Encourages the focus to be on learning

Examples of Learning Communities:

- **Teachers:** Professional learning communities (PLC) teams who work together to analyze data, discuss solutions, reflect on practice, and have shared ownership of student achievement for all students taught by the educators on the team.
- **District Leaders/Mentors/Teachers:** A reading endorsement cohort where group projects have enabled educators to collaborate on building an understanding of best practices for increasing student literacy in middle school and increasing capacity to support colleagues in their respective schools.
- **Teachers:** A group of teachers are attending a technology course with teachers from several

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schools within the district and are collaborating on building lessons within the technology platform for the upcoming science unit. They will share their lessons with one another and discuss with each other throughout the unit their experience and work together to implement strategies that provide student learning targets and success criteria as they become comfortable with the engaging tool.

- **Instructional Coaches:** Within a professional learning workshop at the district office, instructional coaches are given the opportunity to work together in groups to explore ways they can support specific learning goals at each campus through classroom coaching cycles. They share ideas, establish goals, and identify the data to collect in order to measure intended outcomes related to goals. The coaches contribute to ongoing weekly discussions in Canvas. The groups convene via video chat to discuss the progress of goals, learn from each other, adjust plans based on data, and work together to overcome obstacles one another may experience.
- **School Administrators:** Administrators come together for a professional learning opportunity to target the needs from the high school to the middle schools that feed into it, and the elementary schools that feed into the middle school. Based on collected data, they are seeing a need for increased focus on social emotional learning and digital citizenship. The administrators from each school work together to ensure that these topics are woven into their schools' vision and mission statements and are an important part of communication with the entire school community. They are in regular communication and frequently support one another as students from many families span the schools in this region. The social emotional learning lessons become more embraced by the community as the parents are seeing an alignment of effort to ensure that the students have clear and consistent expectations and strategies for becoming successful regardless of their academic grade level.

Tools for Building Learning Communities into Professional Learning:

- **Communication and Collaboration:** Provide space and time for educators to communicate and plan for further integration of the PL into their teaching that includes a follow-up expectation and/or accountability measure e.g., a project to finalize the credit that provides evidence of student learning; a peer-reviewed reflection of a learning project that allows for collaboration through the use of email or other virtual communication tools such as Canvas collaborations to coordinate their efforts.
- **Data:** Data is needed to drive the discussion and focus attention on improving student learning.

- **Resource materials:** Provide agendas and documents that support intention and focus of PLCs e.g., core standards; data templates to guide discussions; other identified materials needed to ensure successful implementation of PLCs.
- **Norms:** Create and implement norms that are agreed upon by all members of the group to foster mutual accountability, creative collaboration, and a focus on learning e.g., discussion norms that support promoting the voice of all members for equitable access to share ideas and opinions throughout the professional learning; for online learning, leverage virtual learning discussions and other collaboration tools to give feedback and support one another.
- **Shared ownership of the PL outcomes:** Work together to explore solutions and strategies to meet the needs of students as it pertains to the concepts discussed in the PL experience.
- **Technology:** Use technology to support learning communities including learning management systems (LMS) e.g., Canvas; Google Drive (G-Suite for Education); Nearpod; virtual sharing platforms e.g., Microsoft Teams, WebEx, Zoom, Google Hangout

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Culture of Learning:** Build capacity for students to engage with one another to support personalized learning, educators must have opportunities to engage in these learning community opportunities to build collective efficacy for applying professional learning. Engaging in learning together fosters this idea.
- **Social/Emotional Learning:** Provide space for teachers to engage together. This allows those who participate together to foster empathy for others and provide supports for learners to maintain positive relationships that lead to the confidence to ultimately be able to self-advocate for the conditions and resources to apply the learning in a personalized way.

UETS Alignment:

- **Standard 1.2 Building Relationships**
 - Engaging in Learning Communities as an adult learner builds capacity for creating a classroom culture where this standard is nurtured in students.
- **Standard 5.2 Continuous Professional Learning**
 - This standard supports the collective efficacy that results when educators come together to foster school-wide improvement. When educators have the opportunity to grow together in learning communities, the greater system benefits and students are supported by educators committed to learning together how to better meet the needs of learners in the classroom.

SKILLFUL LEADERS

Professional learning requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Why is this standard important?

“Whether they lead from classrooms, schools, school systems, technical assistance agencies, professional associations, universities, or public agencies, learners develop their own and others’ capacity to learn and lead professional learning, advocate for it, provide support systems, and distribute leadership and responsibility for its effectiveness and results.”

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Skillful Leaders:

- Develop capacity of others
- Identify potential leaders
- Mentor and support colleagues
- Recognize and acknowledge the voice of others

Examples of Being and Building Skillful Leaders:

- **Teachers:** A first-year teacher shared a technology resource she learned about in her teacher preparation program with her school administrator and instructional coach. The school administrator was impressed with how well it aligned to the instructional goals the school leadership team wrote into the school improvement plan. The teacher was asked to build and present a professional learning session, in collaboration with the instructional coach, to share the program and how it supports some of the research-based practices incorporated in the school and district goals with the rest of the

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school. After the learning session, teachers within the school meet together after using the resource and the supported research-based practices to provide evidence of how the use of the technology resource has increased student motivation and student self-regulation.

- **Teachers:** A district offers a USBE Level 2 Reading Endorsement program that will meet the requirements to obtain the endorsement. One expectation for teachers who are completing the program is to facilitate a professional learning session with teachers in an upcoming faculty meeting to share how the strategies they are learning support the instructional goals of their school improvement plan. In their PLC meetings, they are also responsible for helping their colleagues increase achievement in literacy through the implementation of the strategies and practices they are learning in their endorsement courses. Teachers select and implement one of the strategies and work with students to improve reading. Students track their progress and share individual progress in student-led parent-teacher conferences. The PLC examines the reading data to determine instructional next steps.
- **Teachers:** A special education teacher has observed that a promising paraprofessional who works with his class has an exceptionally positive rapport with a student who has historically struggled with behavior problems with teachers and has had difficulty engaging in academics. The special education teacher has been asked to provide a professional learning session with the faculty focused on successful Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) strategies. He has asked this paraprofessional to share her experience with the student and how she has used some specific strategies to both connect with this student and to help to engage the student in learning.
- **Teachers:** A Career and Technical Education(CTE) Health Science teacher has explored and researched how to use a virtual reality tool in their classroom to teach and allow students to practice CPR skills. The CTE teacher has been asked to demonstrate and share how they use this tool in their CTE health science classrooms at a CTE Health Science Summer conference.
- **District Leaders/Mentors/Teachers:** A district leader is providing a year-long professional learning experience that focuses on building the leadership capacity of teachers which also includes how to identify and support future teacher leaders. She selects several teachers to co-design and facilitate the course. Throughout the year, the district leader mentors the facilitators and provides opportunities for them to collaborate and learn from each other throughout the process. The teacher leaders gain skills in leadership and in building the capacity of colleagues and learn how to identify and support future teacher leaders.

- **District Leaders/Mentors/Instructional Coaches/Teachers:** A year-long district professional learning focuses on building the capacity of teacher leaders in schools to support local professional learning teams. The professional learning focuses on content and pedagogy in science education to help the teachers build their individual instructional practices. It also focuses on coaching and how to share effective practice with other teachers that includes teachers that are enthusiastic adopters and others who may be reluctant to change. The teacher leaders gain confidence and the capacity to become instructional leaders who provide support to their school administration and other teachers.
- **School Leadership/Administrators/Teachers:** A school leadership team works together to develop and implement a coherent process for teacher-to-teacher observations that focus on how teachers and students are using learning targets in daily lessons.

Tools for Supporting the Development of Leaders Through Professional Learning:

- **Research on Leadership:** cultivating a culture of learning about leadership e.g., reading literature about leadership and building teams; other resources that support the growth of leaders
- **Facilitation Guide:** providing documents that outline the professional learning plan and support the implementation so that the intended goals are explicit and the outcomes are measurable
- **Mentors:** including support for school administrators and teacher leaders
- **Empowerment:** learning to delegate responsibilities and provide support for follow through; have explicit action plans and timelines that foster growth and support the accountability of others.
- **Technology:** including technology-based resources that support leadership development e.g. Canvas courses through district and Utah Education Network (UEN); virtual communication tools; observation and feedback tools

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Culture of Learning:** Build capacity in all staff to effectively teach and support students in their learning to engage with one another to support personalized learning, educators must have opportunities to engage in these learning community opportunities to build collective efficacy for applying professional learning. Engaging in learning together fosters this idea.
- **Demonstrated Competency and Assessment:** Lead, assist, and support staff in their development of specific, relevant, and measurable assessment

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strategies to assess learner growth, progress, advancement and achievement based on high expectations for each learner.

UETS Alignment:

A skillful leader is constantly and consistently building capacity, competency and confidence in each teacher to meet or exceed:

■ Standard 4 Growth-Oriented Classroom Climate

- 4.1 Skillful leaders model and support staff in fostering respectful communication with students while appreciating differences of opinion and facilitating respectful classroom discussion.
- 4.4 Skillful leaders model and support teachers in cultivating classroom cultures that encourage rigorous learning, perseverance and promotes critical thinking.

RESOURCES

Professional learning requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

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Why is this standard important?

“Effective professional learning requires time as well as human, fiscal, material, and technological resources to achieve student learning goals. How resources are allocated for professional learning can overcome inequities and achieve results for educators and students.”

While it is important that professional learning include the necessary resources, as the instructional leader in the school, **it is the role of the administrator to ensure that effective, targeted professional learning occurs and that teachers have access to ongoing, effective professional learning.** School administrators must prioritize funding and time to ensure that all teachers have access to personalized professional learning that meet their individual needs (e.g., classroom management, improving content knowledge, learning new strategies or technologies).

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Resources:

- Maintain access to information that removes barriers, promotes equity, and moves the learning forward
- Implement technology and technological infrastructure
- Identify experts to provide specialized professional learning support.
- Use funds appropriately and effectively to prioritize professional learning

- Schedule appropriate time to allow participants to experience and implement what is being learned

Examples of Resources Needed for High Quality Professional Learning:

- **School Administrators/Teachers:** A school administrator creates a school schedule to provide teachers in PLC teams regular opportunities to plan for instruction using the professional learning objectives learned in a recent workshop to help support English Language Learners in their classrooms. In PLC teams, teachers work together to discuss strategies and analyze data to improve practice implementing the processes taught in the workshop. They are also building and curating materials together to support these students.
- **School Administration:** Teachers will be learning more about the Nearpod platform in an upcoming professional learning experience. In order for this learning to translate into classroom practice, teachers will need to have access to devices and to wifi bandwidth that can facilitate the kind of instruction shared in the professional learning. The leadership in the school and district ensure that accounts are set up and that the infrastructure can support the immediate use of this technology platform with students. This means that funds will need to be dedicated to purchasing more devices and ensuring that all students have equitable access to these resources and to a teacher who can confidently utilize them to promote success in the classroom.
- **Instructional Coaches/Teachers:** Teachers attended a professional learning session after school that helped them understand the practice of “Structured Classroom Discussions”. They have time to practice in the session with one another using sentence frames to conceptualize what a Structured Classroom Discussion is and what it feels like in a classroom setting. The instructional coach will work with each teacher throughout the coming weeks to model, co-teach, and observe teachers as they integrate this approach into their teaching. The coach will provide support after each lesson with a reflective discussion that focuses on what was observed and experienced by students as the practice is used. Teachers will be given time to observe one another to help support this practice, focusing on how this strategy improved student participation, motivation, and learning
- **District Leaders/School Administrators/Teachers:** Many CTE teachers are the only ones in their school that teach a given subject. A district CTE coordinator/specialist arranges and coordinates an online PLC with other teachers in their district or region to allow these teachers to collaborate with others who teach the same subject. The principal of each CTE teacher provides the

hardware, software, and internet capability required for this online collaboration. The school technology specialist at the school of each participant helps to ensure that the CTE teacher can connect and participate in the online PLC meeting. The CTE teachers can then use the information gathered from their colleagues and implement new strategies in their own classrooms/labs/shops.

- **School Administrators/Teachers:** In an effort to help teachers to feel supported in developing innovative learning practices and have the opportunity to grow their professional learning network, a school administrator allocates funds to send the teachers from the building leadership team to a conference focused on building the coaching capacity of teachers to mentor others and support the growth of their school. Following the conference, those in attendance share the strategies they have learned with the administrator. The building leadership team then narrows the focus to a few targeted strategies that align with the school's vision and goals and will positively impact student learning. The teacher-mentors use these targeted strategies to provide effective coaching with their assigned teachers and staff. Designated time is scheduled in all subsequent building leadership team meetings to review the impact coaching and the targeted strategies has had on teacher instruction and student learning.

Tools for Supporting Access to Resources:

- **Time:** Schedule and provide the appropriate and essential time needed to apply and reflect on implementation of professional learning that will lead to improved practice and impact student growth.
- **Funding:** Allocate monetary resources to support professional learning e.g. review budgets and include descriptions that include examples of how the funding can be used; apply for and use grants to allow teachers to participate in PL
- **Technology:** Provide and encourage effective use of technology using platforms that support communication over time and sustain professional learning.

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Learner Agency:** Within professional learning, provide educators with a wide variety of resources from which they can choose what will best fit their needs as they strive to improve their practice.
- **Customized Supports:** Ensure learners have coaching beyond the session, access to materials that support their growth, and personalized application opportunities and reflection.

UETS Alignment:

■ Standard 2.3 Instructional Planning

- This standard supports the need for planning professional learning opportunities with appropriate resources to help educators be able to effectively learn and implement new skills into their practice.

■ Standard 3.4 Innovation and Technology

- This standard supports professional learning designed with intentional use of technological and non-technological resources. Designers and facilitators assess available resources and select the tools that will best achieve the desired outcomes of their learners.

OUTCOMES

Professional learning aligns with performance standards for teachers and school administrators; and performance standards for students as described in the Utah core content standards.

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Why is this standard important?

“When the content of professional learning integrates student curriculum and educator performance standards, the link between educator learning and student learning becomes explicit, increasing the likelihood that professional learning contributes to increased student learning.”

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Outcomes:

- Align content to Utah Core standards
- Focus on increasing student learning
- Identify and use data to measure learning and instructional goals
- Increase collaboration between school instructional leaders and educators

Examples of Alignment of Outcomes with Utah Core Standards:

- **School Administrators/Instructional Coaches/Teachers:** An administrator and instructional coach at an elementary school are seeing that many students across the grade levels need improvement in writing. The assessments from students throughout the first quarter are reflecting this need. The teachers agree this is an area they would like more support. In order to facilitate a relevant professional learning experience for the whole faculty, the principal provides a [Writing Anchor Standard](#) to each grade-level group that shows the vertical alignment of the specific Utah Core standards to each group. The professional

learning experience includes in depth analysis of this standard and engaging discussion. The teachers are then charged with identifying opportunities in their next ELA lesson to integrate their grade-level standard tied to the anchor standard into practice. A subsequent professional learning session will provide analysis of the data following this focus.

- **District Leaders/Mentors/Teachers:** A group of new educators and their mentors in a district participate in a day-long professional learning event where they learn about PLCs and how to best use this time. They use some of the benchmark assessment data they have compiled to discuss in groups as part of this experience. They practice using the PLC questions, analyze and interpret the data, and the development of learning progressions to adjust instruction based on the data they are seeing. Together these educators learn not only how to record and report data, but are guided toward strategies that would best impact improved student outcomes by setting learning intentions that build on learning progressions and creating success criteria that support those learning intentions.
- **Teachers:** A special educator leads a professional learning course in Canvas where teachers are taught specific, effective strategies to accommodate and differentiate for the needs of students who have an IEP and are integrated into Core courses. In order to complete the course, participants need to compare data on an assessment conducted prior to the course to one conducted following after the strategies were implemented. They will also reflect on the quantitative results of this data as well as the formative assessment process conducted organically in lessons using feedback loops and other instructional strategies that include student self-monitoring to increase student motivation..
- **School Administrators/Teachers:** An administrator and a CTE teacher are reviewing the Proctor Standard Report from a Skill Certification exam the CTE teacher recently gave to their students for a given CTE course. In looking at the testing data, a couple of strands/standards are showing outcomes lower than the rest. The CTE teacher can compare the summative assessment data with their formative assessment data to determine the aspects of the strand/standard for which student understanding is lacking. The CTE teacher can also collaborate with colleagues to find additional teaching strategies that could help improve the outcomes the next time the Skill Certification exam is given.
- **Teachers:** A nursing assistant instructor gives the Utah Nurse Assisting Registry state certification exam to the nurse assisting students in their class. This is a two-part assessment – written and skills. Students passing both portions of the UNAR exam receive state certification to work as a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA). Those students who are unable to pass on the first attempt can retest after remediation/review.

- **Instructional Coaches/Teachers:** A middle school has been charged with piloting a 1:1 technology initiative in the district. In order to ensure that teachers understand how to ground the use of these devices as instructional tools, the instructional coach will be facilitating a series of classes on building courses in Canvas and providing the students access to their coursework beyond the school walls. These classes will include the process of building course content in a way that has consistent navigation from teacher to teacher. They will also include the building of benchmark assessments that can be used to inform instruction in PLC team meetings and in IEP discussions. The mastery of specific outcomes will be the goal of the use of these devices and the extended series of classes will enable the reflection and adjustment of instruction based on the outcome data.

Tools for Supporting Outcomes Alignment:

- **Resource Material:** Create PLC questions and protocols for analyzing data in a group to collaborate on meeting the needs of students.; Utah Core Curriculum Standards
- **Technology:** Provide and encourage use of technology e.g., using Nearpod to engage learners with devices; Canvas and/or access to virtual platforms to communicate processes for using tools; proved adequate wifi bandwidth and devices; Canvas or other learning management systems (LMS) to build ways for teachers to submit data as part of their learning
- **Communication:** Use multiple methods to allow for feedback from teachers and students e.g., Google or Microsoft Forms
- **Data:** Review reports and apply student learning data using multiple measures e.g., content-based measurements and assessments (AimsWeb, Acadience, RISE, etc.); classroom-based assessments; formative assessment process; student work products

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Demonstrated Competency and Assessment:** Provide educators the ability to demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities they have gained through professional learning. This will reinforce the learning for the educators and provide administrators the ability to see the impact of this opportunity to grow. Take time to discuss and reflect with the educators as they express how the learning has impacted their practice and evaluate relevance. This practice, developed as professional learners, can be transferred to classroom practice as educators work to develop these skills as students take ownership of their learning.

- **Customized Supports:** Give educators access to supports needed in the form of coaching beyond the session, access to materials that support their growth, and personalized application opportunities and reflection. By understanding the importance and necessity of customized supports as learners themselves, educators will have better schema about the importance of providing these in their classrooms, which will lead to better learning outcomes for students.

UETS Alignment:

- **Standard 1.4 Fostering Student Self-Awareness**

- Professional learning should include multiple ways for participants to reflect and respond to the content being presented, including providing feedback to other learners and to presenters. By actively participating in self-assessment, and being provided with multiple strategies for developing self-assessment, educators will be able to plan for and apply this essential knowledge to their classroom practice.

- **Standard 2.3 Instructional Planning**

- Providing educators with the professional learning opportunities to plan and determine how to measure student progress allows for improved teacher clarity and leads to better student learning outcomes. In professional learning settings, determining and communicating desired outcomes allows adult learners to connect their experience to how they will design learning experiences for students, and supports adults' intrinsic motivation to better meet student needs as the result of the professional learning.

LEARNING DESIGN

Professional learning integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Why is this standard important?

“Integrating theories, research, and models of human learning into the planning and design of professional learning contributes to its effectiveness.”

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Effective Learning Design:

- Ensure and include follow-up and feedback to support and monitor the practice promoted in the professional learning beyond the professional learning course or session.
- Connect the new learning to prior learning and/or experience that allows the educators participating in the professional learning to bring their knowledge to the course or session to benefit all attendees.
- Provide explicit, job-embedded application opportunities for the topic or practice shared in the professional learning experience to ensure that the practice of participating educators is improved and promotes positive student outcomes.
- Design with an optimal balance for new information and its connection to familiar information e.g., material is challenging and impactful, but is sequenced in such a way that participants can engage meaningfully throughout the course or session.
- Set learning goals for immediate, short-term, and long-term implementation of the topic or practice to positively impact student outcomes.

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Examples of Effective Learning Design

- **Instructional Coaches:** A high school instructional coach is working on building a professional learning plan for the upcoming school year. Before the current school year ends, she has individual discussions with several members of the faculty in several different departments about the instructional needs they have seen from their students this year. She uses this data to inform the topics and strategies for the next school year as she develops the professional learning sessions. She utilizes the input from the teachers to ensure that she is designing professional learning that includes the stated needs of the adult learners.
- **Teachers:** A teacher leader has been appointed to work with a group of teachers who are part of the dual-language immersion program offered at the school. He shares some targeted research-based strategies in a professional learning session and helps the teachers design a plan to implement the strategies with their students. Because job-embedded professional learning is an effective approach that supports teacher implementation, a teacher leader in the school has been assigned to complete follow-up observations and debrief sessions with each teacher following the formal professional learning workshop.
- **Teachers:** A professional learning session focuses on engaging teachers in a learning experience where teachers have the opportunity to engage as students in investigating and making sense of a scientific phenomenon to model expectations in effective classroom instruction and discourse. Following the learning experience, participants journal independently and then share in small group discussions about their learning from the student perspective to identify how the experience engages students equitably in higher order thinking. They are then given another chance to independently journal and later discuss the same learning experience through a teacher lens to identify their role as a facilitator in classroom investigations and discourse.
- **Teachers:** At the beginning of a professional learning workshop, participants are assigned a card that describes a fictional student in a classroom. The card describes the student's personal/familial history; possible learning disabilities; academic history; the student's self-identified strengths and weaknesses; two things supportive teachers have told them; and two negative things teachers have told them. With this lens they engage in a set of learning tasks to identify how their assigned fictional student might thrive or struggle in the classroom. Teachers share their findings to identify equitable learning strategies that are accessible by all students in a classroom and remove barriers to learning.
- **Teachers:** A CTE teacher collaborates with an industry partner to design "hands-on" labs and/or learning activities that are based upon updated or new

processes currently used in industry. This planning includes step-by-step process instructions, materials needed, safety procedures, and expected level of proficiency for student success.

Tools for Effective Learning Design:

- **Focused Objective:** Share the overall objective for the professional learning session with participants to ensure that the learners fully understand the focus of the session and anchor the content to that objective(s). Sharing expectations and the purpose for the learning gives the learning community a focus to accomplish these objectives. This increases the effectiveness of how they will implement the professional learning with students following the session.
- **Utah Core Standards:** Give time for educators to connect the concept/topic of the professional learning to their specific grade and subject area through the Utah Core Standards to ensure that the practice is implemented in such a way that it meaningfully impacts student learning.
- **[Definition of Andragogy \(Adult Learning\)](#)**
- **Accountability and Follow-up:** Build a way for participation and the intended effects on student outcomes to be demonstrated through knowledge, skills, disposition, and practice e.g., using a Canvas component for assignments, quizzes, or discussions.
- **Educator Voice:** allow regular opportunities to share educator voice throughout the professional learning e.g. collaborative projects, discussions, and/or voice in the desired path of learning.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement:** provide a variety of ways for learners to engage throughout the professional learning session, e.g. multimedia, guest speakers, participants sharing experience, turn and talk, etc.
- **Explicit Application Expectations:** share expectations and provide concrete examples to help learners translate the concepts from the professional learning into action. Use rubrics to share how artifacts are assessed so that learners know what is expected and have the scaffolds needed to engage in the risk of trying an unfamiliar and potentially uncomfortable practice that will ultimately benefit students.
- **Utah Effective Teaching Standards:** integrate these standards in the design to ensure that effective application of the professional learning is recognized in teacher performance assessments.
- **Utah Effective Leadership Standards:** integrate these standards in the design to ensure that effective application of the professional learning is recognized in school administrator performance assessments.

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Culture of Learning:** Create learning designs that honor the individuals engaging in professional learning, the experience benefits from the wisdom of the group and their experiences. Adult learners need the opportunity to apply concepts that support the increased capacity to fulfill their role and contribute to others' capacity building. The learning design supports the environment for educators to build collective efficacy to connect their learning to the growth of students.
- **Learner Agency:** Honor the adults' desire to be self-directed and give space to synthesize the learning in a way that is meaningful and reflects what is relevant for each learner. The ability to represent learning in a variety of ways, for example, is one way that learners can use their own metacognition to apply the learning most effectively.

UETS Alignment:

- **Standard 2.3 Instructional Planning**
 - By building a professional learning design that supports individual learners' needs, educators engaged in these opportunities can connect their experience to how they will design learning experiences for students, and supports adults' intrinsic motivation to better meet student needs as the result of the professional learning. The design should include opportunities to share understanding and be responsive to needs as they are revealed through frequent engagement from the learners. This model not only benefits those participating in professional learning, but should be connected to classroom practice for those learners to engage students meaningfully.
- **Standard 2.4 Engagement**
 - The learning design should include frequent opportunities to engage learners in meaningful ways. This challenges learners to become actively involved in the session(s) and requires frequent connections to the relevancy of the learning to the role of those participating. The design should include opportunities for learners to engage with one another as individuals and the whole group to ensure that connection is made between the facilitator, the content, and the learning community.

IMPLEMENTATION

Professional learning applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

Why is this standard important?

“Those responsible for professional learning apply findings from change process research to support long-term change in practice by extending learning over time. They integrate a variety of supports for individuals, teams, and schools. Finally, they integrate constructive feedback and reflection to support continuous improvement in practice that allows educators to move along a continuum from novice to expert through application of their professional learning.”

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Effective Implementation

- Create accountability and evidence of ongoing implementation.
- Support risk-taking as new instructional strategies are introduced into practice.
- Provide sufficient time and opportunity for effective professional learning.

Examples of Effective Implementation

- **School Administrators/Teachers:** A middle school administrator is about to begin the school year with 15 first-year teachers. This challenge is seen as an opportunity to engage the existing staff in helping to mentor this new group of inexperienced educators. The mentor teachers attend targeted professional learning sessions with their mentees throughout the year. In order to plan for the professional learning sessions, the school administrator meets with the

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instructional coach who will be facilitating these sessions. They create a reflective observation and feedback method that allows both mentor teachers and their mentees to collaborate after implementing the strategies learned in their professional learning sessions, with a focus on the impact on student learning in their classrooms.

- **District/LEA Leadership:** A group of charter schools work together to organize an online professional learning session every four weeks of the school year for their teacher “singletons” (teachers that are the only ones to teach a specific course in the school and therefore have no one with which to collaborate). Following their professional learning in each meeting, the participants decide on a group implementation task that all participants integrate into their instruction for the next four weeks. A shared Google document allows participants to reflect on their practice by writing their experiences, successes, and challenges with each other to celebrate victories and brainstorm possible solutions. At the beginning of the next meeting they share with each other their successes and what instructional adjustments they made that impacted student learning.
- **Teachers:** During a professional learning workshop, participants are given opportunities to reflect on their experiences following each task with the specific instruction to write 2 or more adjustments they would make to strengthen their classroom instruction. After following this format for multiple days of the professional learning workshop, the teachers are given a chance to sum up and prioritize all their ideas and then create learning goals for the school year, including when they would implement their most prioritized learning goals throughout the year to help the adjustments become permanent in their teaching.

Tools for Supporting Effective Implementation:

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Give teachers the time and place to collaborate and implement learning.
- **Facilitation Guide:** Provide documents that outline the professional Learning plan and support the implementation so that the intended goals are explicit and the outcomes are measurable.
- **Empowerment:** Delegate responsibilities and provide supports for follow through; have explicit action plans and timelines that foster growth and support the accountability of others.
- **Technology:** Provide and encourage use of technology e.g., using Nearpod to engage learners with devices; Canvas and/or access to virtual platforms to communicate processes for using tools; proved adequate wifi bandwidth and devices; observation and feedback tools.

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Learner Agency:** Provide relevant choices for learners to select meaningful paths for their learning. Share with educators ways this practice can be generalized to the classroom with their students. Leverage the professional learning experience to build capacity for more learner agency in both educators and ultimately, students.
- **Customized Supports:** Ensure that educators participating in the professional learning have supportive structures in place through the school leadership, professional learning communities, and support staff to sustain the professional learning beyond the sessions to apply the practices and build capacity for student learning.

UETS Alignment

- **Standard 3.1 Instructional Strategies**
 - Teachers implement a variety of instructional strategies into their classrooms wherein the impact on student learning can be measured and analyzed.
- **Standard 5.2 Continuous Professional Learning**
 - Teachers work with their professional learning communities and instructional coaches to implement, receive feedback, and be reflective about the principles and skills acquired in professional learning opportunities.

Professional learning uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Why is this standard important?

“Data from multiple sources enrich decisions about professional learning that leads to increased results for every student. Multiple sources include both quantitative and qualitative data, such as formative and summative assessments, performance assessments, observations, work samples, performance metrics, portfolios, and self-reports. The use of multiple sources of data offers a balanced and more comprehensive analysis of student, educator, and system performance than any single type or source of data can.”

Learning Forward. (2011). Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH

Attributes of Data

- Identify data needed in advance
- Use data to make informed decisions
- Access multiple data sources to provide a more robust picture
- Use aggregate and disaggregate data to provide a holistic view
- Use current and historical data to inform trends, successes and challenges

Examples of Effective Use of Data in Professional Learning

- **Teachers:** A professional learning (PL) focused on supporting teachers in implementing new content standards begins with a pre survey for teachers to measure their level of confidence and readiness in the 5 main objectives of the PL.

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At the end of the multi day PL, the same questions are given on an exit survey with a space to list the items they learned the most, and questions they still have. Four months following the PL, the participants are sent a similar survey to assess long term effects of the PL. These data can work to show growth and retention and support this group of teachers in future professional learning experiences and others teachers in future iterations of this PL.

- **School Administrators/Teachers:** A school looks at state and LEA assessment data to become aware of student needs in specific English Language Arts Standards focused on literacy skills. Using these data and available research on the effective practices they design professional learning to help their teachers make instructional shifts that support students.
- **School Administrators/Teachers:** A group of new teachers with one to two years of experience in the classroom request help in improving their classroom management. School administrators use a teacher observation tool to collect data on two different lessons from each of these teachers and use that data to design a set of afterschool professional learning experiences that focus on the areas of classroom management where these teachers need support.
- **Teachers:** A CTE teacher uses pre-assessment/post-assessment on student skills data to determine if student understanding is at a sufficient level to move on to the next concept. The teacher can re-teach/review the information if deficiencies are identified.

Tools for Effective Use of Data in Professional Learning

- Data Gateway
- Data templates created for use in PLC's.
- Formal and informal assessments
- Formative assessment process data
- Achievement data
- Gap analysis
- Productivity software and apps
- Utah Multi-Tiered System of Supports (UMTSS)

PCBL Component Alignment

- **Learner Agency:** Allow educators to leverage data from their own district, school, and/or classroom to prioritize their professional learning goals. Build their data literacy so that they can recognize student growth as well as growth in their own capacity for facilitating student learning.
- **Demonstrated Competency & Assessment:** Allow opportunities throughout the professional learning for feedback and reflection. Include discussion

about formative data and how it can not only support the educator in providing meaningful instruction, but increase student ownership in the learning. Support building capacity for assessment literacy — the ability to know what, when and how to assess — as this is an essential component for developing competency when using data to inform instruction.

UETS Alignment

■ Standard 2.3 Instructional Planning

- Planning high quality, personalized instructional activities that are informed by student progress data, provide multiple opportunities for students to reflect upon and assess their own growth and allow multiple opportunities and means for demonstration of competency.
- Within the design of the professional learning, facilitators should prepare frequent engagement opportunities that provide real-time feedback that informs the remainder of the session and follow-up activities. They should share this data with the participating educators so that they can evaluate their own growth and assess their needs moving forward. Providing this example of preparing these opportunities will build the capacity of the educators to create these meaningful opportunities for their students.

■ Standard 3.2 Assessment Practices: Critically analyzing evidence from both formative and summative assessments to inform and adjust instruction and provide feedback to students to support learning and growth.

- Participating in data reviews and reflection that utilize multiple types of student learning, is an essential component of instructional planning. Educators learn how to apply evidence-based practices in their classrooms by using data to inform and reflect on instructional practice, including the ways students are provided with the opportunities to reflect upon and assess their own growth.

TECHNOLOGY

Professional learning both incorporates the use of technology in the design, implementation, and evaluation of high-quality professional learning practices; and includes targeted professional learning on the use of technology devices to enhance the teaching and learning environment and the integration of technology in content delivery.

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Why is this standard important?

“Technology offers the opportunity for teachers to become more collaborative and extend learning beyond the classroom. Educators can create learning communities composed of students; fellow educators in schools, museums, libraries, and after-school programs; experts in various disciplines around the world; members of community organizations; and families. This enhanced collaboration, enabled by technology, offers access to instructional materials as well as the resources and tools to create, manage, and assess their quality and usefulness.

To enact this vision, schools need to support teachers in accessing needed technology and in learning how to use it effectively. Educators need continuous, just-in-time support that includes professional development, mentors, and informal collaborations.”

See: <https://tech.ed.gov/professional-learning/>

Attributes of Effective Technology Use

- Actively engages educators in the professional learning
- Enables teachers to share their voice throughout the professional learning
- Provides access to the professional learning beyond specific hours and specific locations
- Promotes the implementation of professional learning in classroom practice through follow-up and providing feedback
- Allows the professional learning to be personalized to the needs of each educator participating

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Examples of Effective Use of Technology in Professional Learning:

- **District Leaders/Mentors/Instructional Coaches/School Administrators/Teachers:** In order to assess understanding in a professional learning session, the facilitator uses a link to a Padlet board to help the group of teachers to organize their thoughts and ensure that everyone has an orderly way to contribute to the learning. Using this tool, teachers can bring their experiences to benefit one another and ensure that the practice is understood in the context of regular practice.
- **District Leaders/Mentors/Instructional Coaches/School Administrators/Teachers:** Instead of using a Powerpoint to deliver a needed professional learning session about how to hold constructive PLC meetings, the facilitator asks the teachers to bring their laptops and participate in the training using the Nearpod platform. Throughout the session, the teachers respond to questions and map their thinking using the various interactive activities found within the tool. The facilitator holds each teacher accountable for participation and expects frequent engagement through the opportunities to respond through the interactive activities. At the end of the session, the teachers share through an open-ended question activity how they hope to improve their practice in PLC meetings to increase student achievement. This data is then used by the facilitator and school administration to provide individualized support to ensure that teachers have what they need to hold high-yielding PLC meetings.
- **Instructional Coaches/Teachers:** Teachers are working with an instructional coach in a year-long professional learning course that addresses the school improvement goal to increase active engagement with students who are learning English as a second language. The coach has designed the course to be a blended learning model where teachers are to participate in a short module in the Canvas LMS before a monthly in-person session where the background shared in the module will be used to support the live learning. The teachers are then expected to share evidence of the monthly instructional practice being used with students following the in-person session. The targeted use of Canvas is to support the teachers with resources, expectations, and a way to demonstrate their learning throughout the school year.

Tools and strategies for Effective Use of Technology in Professional Learning

- **Canvas:** to curate content and provide feedback for follow-up assignments to ensure good implementation.
- **Nearpod:** to engage educators in participation in live instruction or distance learning. This tool ensures that all participants can respond to questions, view

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the media provided in your professional learning on their own devices, and use the “notes” feature to retain a copy of the professional learning session along with their own observations throughout the experience.

- **Back channel communication options:** This means providing a means for learners to communicate learning during the professional learning session. Allowing learners to ask questions, share thoughts, and participate throughout the session with a backchannel option will really enable active engagement with the content. This practice encourages forming connections to previous knowledge, learner voice, and provides context for a learning community within the session.
- **Collaborative documents using the G-Suite for Education or OneDrive:** These are online work spaces/storage where educators can collaborate on plans to apply the professional learning in their teaching as well as opportunities to synthesize learning with previous experiences.
- **Content for professional learning courses and sessions:**
 - [Utah Education Network Professional Development offerings and resources](#)
 - [Edutopia.org](#) - This site has videos, articles, and other multi-media on many topics relevant to the professional learning needed for educators.

PCBL Component Alignment:

- **Customized Supports:** Help teachers work with school administrators and IT staff to receive the support they need to implement technology tools, skills and strategies acquired in professional learning to sustain it beyond the session and apply the practice to build capacity for student learning.
- **Demonstrated Competency and Assessment:** Model the use of technology to provide timely, effective feedback throughout the professional learning. Provide the educators in the professional learning opportunities to learn about the specific tools and practices that provide the data needed to personalize the learning for their own students.

UETS Alignment

- **Standard 3.4 Innovations and Technology**
 - Professional learning designer/facilitators can integrate technology within their sessions, courses, coaching, and other follow-up activities to gain feedback from participants, engage learners, and most importantly model the best practices for technology use in a learning experience. Explicitly calling out the technology being used and the rationale for using it supports

the educators in leveraging the tools for their own students. The technology should support the learning intentions and help learners meet the success criteria. Professional learning is a great opportunity for educators to be exposed to meaningful implementation of technology for collaboration, engagement, feedback, and access to the learning.

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