



National  
Staff  
Development  
Council

# Georgia Standards for Professional Learning Resource Guide

## DISTRICT-BASED

**PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING  
THAT IMPROVES  
STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT**

Produced by the Georgia State Department of Education  
in collaboration with the National Staff Development Council.



**GEORGIA STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING  
RESOURCE GUIDE – DISTRICT-BASED**

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# The NSDC Standards for Staff Development

## **CONTEXT STANDARDS**

**LEARNING COMMUNITIES:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

**LEADERSHIP:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.

**RESOURCES:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

## **PROCESS STANDARDS**

**DATA-DRIVEN:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.

**EVALUATION:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.

**RESEARCH-BASED:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.

**DESIGN:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.

**LEARNING:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.

**COLLABORATION:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

## **CONTENT STANDARDS**

**EQUITY:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.

**QUALITY TEACHING:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

# Overview:

## Professional Learning that Improves Student Achievement

Improving the educational system is not a new goal in the United States. Beginning with Sputnik in the 50s and school restructuring in the 80s, schools have reexamined, refocused, and realigned their efforts to increase the number of students who achieve at high levels. In the early nineties, the development of performance standards became a central focus for educational reform. Student performance standards, prepared by national associations, state agencies, and/or local districts, identified what **all** students should know and be able to do. These new standards expect high achievement not only for students but also for the teachers who worked daily with them in their classrooms. The performance standards do not describe minimal understandings and competencies but challenging levels of knowledge and application of skills. Student mastery of performance standards depends, primarily, on how well teachers understand the standards, accurately assess student learning, select appropriate instructional techniques, and adjust instruction as needed. Yet, the National Center for Education Statistics (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2002) reports that only 41 percent of teachers felt very well prepared to implement new teaching methods, 36 percent to implement state or district curriculum and performance standards, and 28 percent to use student performance assessment techniques.

Without high-quality teachers, our efforts to improve student achievement are destined to fail. Research has shown again and again that teachers make the critical difference in whether or not a student succeeds. We know that if students are to meet high expectations, they must have superbly prepared teachers equal to the task. And while we know other changes must be made in schools and their administration, we recognize that this one—the quality of teaching—is paramount (Business Roundtable, 2001).

This reality calls for a deliberate focus on planning, designing, and implementing quality professional development that helps educators to develop content expertise and use appropriate strategies. National standards exist that describe the kind of professional development required to enhance the knowledge, skills, and commitment of teachers and to improve student achievement. The National Staff Development Council, in cooperation with eighteen national organizations and associations, identified the twelve standards that address the characteristics of professional development that improves student achievement. After extensive study by the Georgia Professional Development Advisory Committee and feedback across the state, these standards were adopted by the Georgia State Board of Education as the “Georgia Standards for Professional Learning.” (See Appendix, p. 278).

### A NEW VIEW OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Yet, “for too long professional development practices of too many school systems and schools have led nowhere. . . and have amounted to little more than a disparate set of adult learning activities with few demonstrable results” (Mizell, 2002, p. 1). A survey of the United States would quickly show that the workshop remains the predominant model of professional development. Workshops typically include a passive audience listening to an

outside expert who extols the values of a new curricular or instructional approach. While workshops may increase participant knowledge, there is little evidence that they change classroom practice or impact student learning. This was also one of the major findings of Georgia’s 2002 evaluation of the Professional Development Program.

An expanded view of professional development has emerged. This definition includes teachers discussing issues with colleagues; problem-solving; developing new lessons and instructional units; and thinking about, experimenting, and perfecting new classroom practices (Lieberman, 1995). This new vision of professional learning includes ongoing and sustained experiences that enhance the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors of teachers as well as school and central office administrators. It alters the organizational culture and structure in which educators work. Most educators understand that school **and** district culture can either encourage and enhance teaching and learning **or** discourage and damage the pursuit of better classroom practices and leadership activities.

In Georgia, the term “professional learning” has replaced professional development because it more closely describes the desired outcomes of these activities: *an enhanced set of professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will improve student learning*. In addition, the term “professional learning” places the focus on two key ideas. The term “professional” emphasizes the educator’s responsibility to their own learning. The term “learning” emphasizes the on-going nature of the commitment and the emphasis on the behavioral changes brought about by learning.

High-quality, school-based professional learning should affect all teachers virtually every day. In schools that use job-embedded practices to accomplish professional learning:

- Teachers hold challenging goals for all students and continuously reflect on various forms of evidence regarding student learning.
- Teachers share planning and learning time that promotes meaningful collaboration. Teachers participate in one or more learning teams within which they are mutually accountable for student learning within the broad context of a professional learning community.
- The organization’s culture fosters mutual respect, high levels of trust, and innovative solutions to problems. Teachers experience the emotional and social support such communities provide.
- Teachers are intellectually stimulated by their work. Their interactions with peers and with outside resource people deepen their understanding of the content they teach and broaden the range of instructional strategies they bring to their classrooms.
- Methods such as classroom coaching, demonstration lessons, lesson study, the examination of student work, and action research ground professional learning in daily practice and its influence on student learning (Sparks, *in publication*).

## EVIDENCE OF THE LINK BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND QUALITY TEACHING

When asked to describe professional development experiences with a simile, one educator portrayed professional development as a rainstorm in the desert—*it either rains too little and hardly wets the soil or rains too much and runs off before it can sink in*. Unfortunately, this teacher’s experience is not uncommon. Yet, there is growing

evidence that when high-quality professional learning is thoughtfully designed and implemented, it improves the quality of instruction and teachers' content knowledge and assessment practices.

Professional development that is grounded in the curriculum that students study; professional development that is connected to several elements of instruction (for example, curriculum and assessment); and professional development that is extended in time influence teachers to change the ways they teach, and their students perform better on curriculum-based assessments. (CPRE, 1998, p.1).

A number of studies have examined the link between professional learning and quality teaching. A summary of those findings follows below.

- Investments in teacher knowledge and skills net greater increases in student achievement than other uses of an education dollar, according to the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future Research (1996).
- Lower-achieving schools viewed professional development as disconnected from classroom practices and results. Higher-achieving schools had more shared decision-making regarding professional development, a greater focus on student achievement and classroom instruction, the use of more effective professional learning processes, more support from school leadership, and greater excitement about working together to find ways to increase student learning (Georgia's Council for School Performance, 1999).
- The depth of teachers' knowledge and skill impacts student learning. Of particular importance is the development of teachers' *conceptual* understanding of content, content-specific instructional strategies, and deeper understanding of how students learn. When teachers use this new knowledge in the classroom, student achievement increases. Professional development that helps teachers to develop new conceptual understandings and use new strategies in the classroom will impact student learning (Killion, 2002).
- Professional learning activities that use hands-on learning and higher-order thinking skills improve student performance. Educators who engaged in rich and sustained professional learning that focused on higher-order thinking skills and concrete activities were also more likely to implement desired classroom practices (Wenglinsky, 2000).
- The components of professional development that affect educator learning included: 1) sustained, long-term collaboration of teachers, 2) a clear goal of improving student achievement, 3) a focus on content knowledge, instructional strategies, and student thinking, 4) the use of active learning such as reciprocal observations with colleagues, planning for classroom implementation, and examining student work, 5) a whole school or grade level focus, and 6) the use of less traditional forms of professional development such as networks and study groups (Garet, 2001). "Professional development can support teachers' effectiveness" (AERA News, 2002, p. 2) when it employs these characteristics. Yet the researchers also found that "much professional development currently offered lacks the six features" (AERA News, 2002, p. 2).

- The **content** of professional learning is an important predictor of student achievement. Professional development that focused on how students learn versus a focus on generic or routine instructional behaviors had a greater impact on student learning. The more successful professional development programs focused on “what to teach and how students learn subject matter” rather than prescriptions of classroom practice that gave teachers little latitude in what to do and when to do them (Kennedy, 1999, p. 6).

This research has some clear implications. Enhancing educators’ professional knowledge and skills can be accomplished through *high-quality* professional learning. But not all professional learning has an equal impact on educators’ behaviors and skills. The design, content, duration, and participants determine whether professional learning will impact teacher knowledge and skills **or** whether it wastes the time, money, and energy of the educators involved. As a result, it is essential that system and school leaders adhere to the standards when planning, implementing, and evaluating professional learning.

#### WHAT IS HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING?

High-quality professional learning is outlined in the National Staff Development Council’s Standards for Staff Development, Revised (2001). These standards were adopted by Georgia’s State Board of Education in November 2003. In Georgia, the words *professional learning* replaced *staff development* in each of the standards.

Three assumptions undergird the twelve standards of professional learning in Georgia—high-quality professional learning is standards-based, results-driven, and focused on the daily work of educators (job-embedded).

#### Standards-Based

Standards, according to Webster’s dictionary, are established to show a level of excellence or attainment; standards are regarded as a measure of adequacy. High-quality professional learning determines content and outcomes based on current best practice and knowledge in four areas: student performance standards, leadership standards, teaching standards, and professional learning standards. Student performance standards delineate expectations for student learning as well as the content of professional learning activities. Leadership and teaching standards highlight performance expectations and focus attention on the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that should be developed through professional learning.

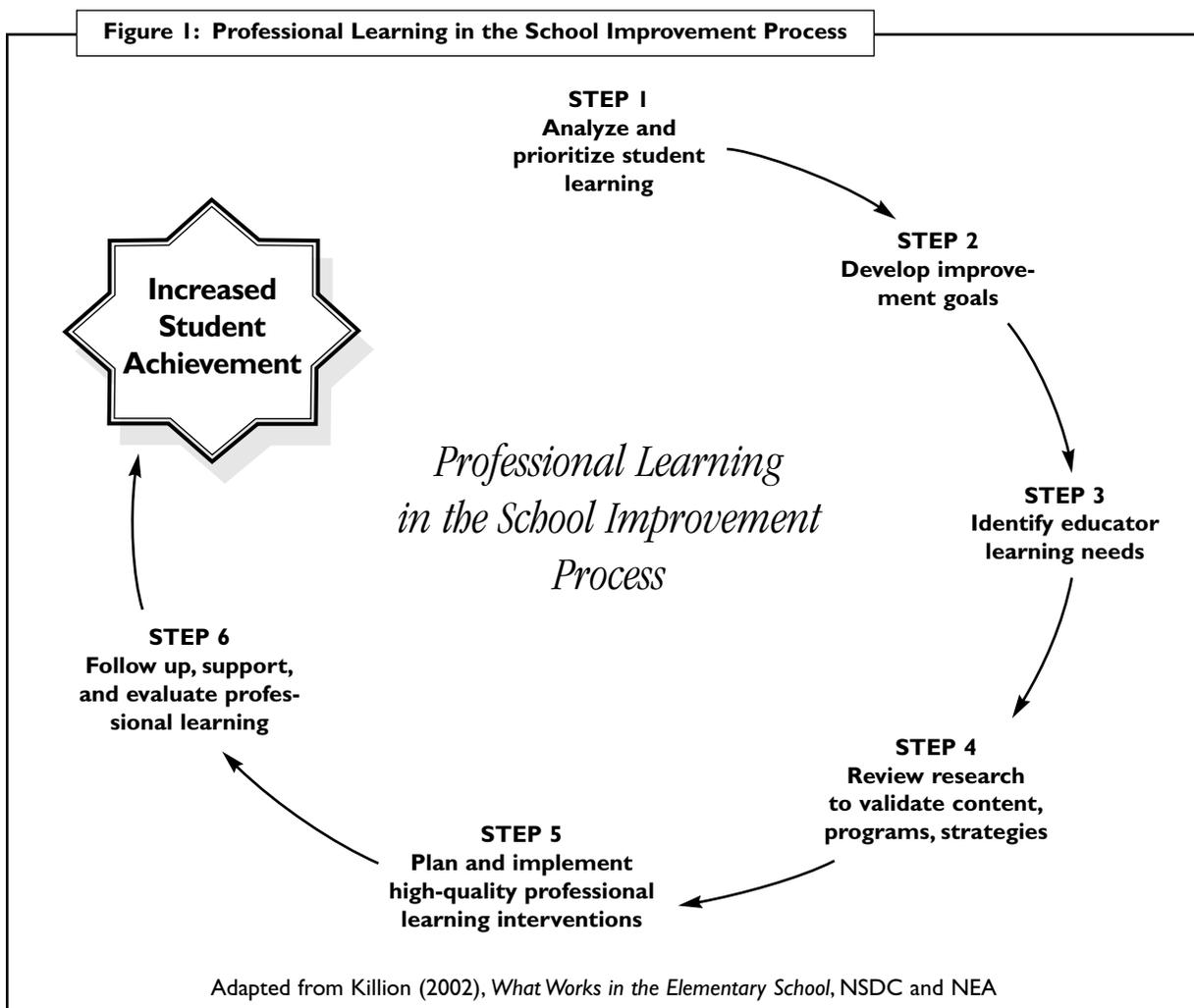
The professional learning standards guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning that improves the learning of educators and students. While these standards do not dictate actions, they provide clear guidelines for developing the content and outcomes of professional learning. In Georgia, these standards are also used as a diagnostic tool. Schools’ use of the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI), validated by the National Staff Development Council, has established baseline data on the level of implementation of Georgia’s Standards for Professional Learning. This tool will then be used each year to measure progress of implementation in Georgia schools.

## Results-Driven

Results-driven professional learning focuses on the desired outcomes for both teachers and students. As Covey (1989) reminds us, we need to start our planning with a clear end in mind. This point is where the crucial connection between professional learning and school improvement must be forged. Unfortunately, that connection is not obvious to many educators because professional development has been treated as a separate activity used to fill a few days within the school calendar. However, successful school improvement focuses primarily on increasing student achievement by making changes to school organization, educator knowledge and skills, and curriculum.

The most effective school improvement processes typically include the analysis of disaggregated student achievement data as well as other data sources such as attendance, discipline, graduation rates, district or school performance assessments, and parent surveys. Measurable student goals are established and plans created to address those goals. Then, professional learning is developed, designed, and implemented to improve educator knowledge and skills. Professional learning is one of the tools to accomplish school improvement goals.

Figure 1 represents the steps in the school improvement/professional learning process that result in increased



student learning. Initial steps in the process include establishing student improvement goals based on the analysis of data. Once improvement goals have been established, there is an additional analysis to determine educator learning needs: *What are the new or enhanced knowledge and skills that educators need to accomplish student results?* When both student and educator learning needs have been established, teachers and administrators review research to determine whether there are validated programs, activities, and issues that could be implemented to accomplish the desired results. Using this information, professional learning activities, programs, and follow-up are designed and implemented. Planning for evaluation also occurs during this stage. In order for implementation of new practices to occur, adequate time and support need to be available. Lastly, an evaluation is conducted—based on the planning for evaluation that started as soon as student and educator learning needs were established. School improvement and professional learning planning are interwoven to accomplish the same goal: *improved student learning*.

Even the best school improvement efforts can be stymied by the use of low-quality, ineffective professional learning activities. Conversely, high-quality, effective professional learning can be rendered meaningless unless it is done within a context of school improvement that targets improvement in student learning. Each can be implemented separately, but the most powerful impact will result when school improvement and professional learning are aligned and coherent.

### **Focused on Daily Work (Job-Embedded)**

The predominant model of professional development remains the *one-shot* workshop despite years of research and experience that has shown this model to be ineffective in producing changes in practice—whether in the classroom or in school leadership. According to NSDC’s Deputy Director Stephanie Hirsh, most professional development operates like an *adult pull-out program* where educators are provided information far removed from their work setting. Yet, the most current research suggests that a more powerful model of professional learning exists when whole schools work together to study student data and *collectively* identify what they need to learn to improve student learning (Renyi, 1998). According to Darling-Hammond, high-quality professional learning requires a restructuring of the teachers’ work week so that they have time for preparation, consultation with peers, and collaboration time with colleagues (McRobbie, 2000). These may include team learning, classroom observations, peer coaching, examination of student work, collaborative development of lesson and unit plans, problem-solving, and classroom-based coaching conducted by a mentor or master teacher. In a job-embedded system of professional learning, daily access to necessary materials, knowledge, and assistance are readily available.

## Standards for Professional Learning

The twelve NSDC Standards for Staff Development and the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning have been organized into three major areas: Context, Process, and Content. The *context standards* address organizational support for professional learning.

Professional learning that improves student learning

- Develops a **learning community** within the school and district that focuses efforts on continuous learning while providing structures and opportunities to support that learning.
- Develops **instructional leadership** that distributes leadership responsibilities throughout the school and district and focuses on continuous improvement.
- Uses **resources** wisely to support new professional learning formats and activities such as time within the workday for professional learning.

The *process standards* focus on how professional development topics are identified, designed, and delivered—the “how” of professional learning.

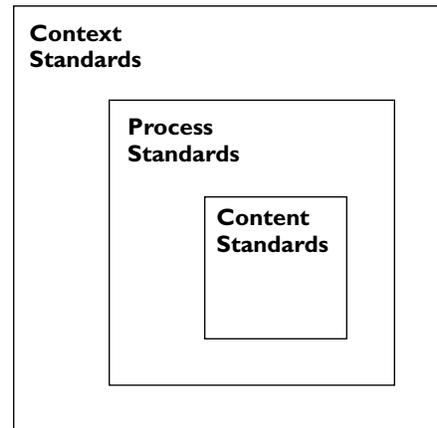
Professional learning that improves student learning

- Uses **data** to determine what educators should be learning, to monitor progress of efforts, and to sustain continuous improvement.
- **Evaluates** professional learning in order to demonstrate the impact on student learning as well as to improve programming.
- Uses **research** to determine the content of professional learning.
- **Designs** professional learning using a variety of professional development formats and activities that will accomplish the intended goals.
- Applies the knowledge of adult **learning** when designing professional learning activities.
- Develops **collaboration** skills so that team members can effectively work together to improve their skills and knowledge.

The *content standards* identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to attain high levels of achievement for **all** students—the “what” of professional learning.

Professional learning that improves student learning

- Focuses on **equity** so that all students are understood, supportive learning environments exist, and high expectations are upheld for all students.
- Uses high **quality teaching**, which includes deep knowledge of content, research-based instructional strategies, and a variety of classroom assessments.
- Focuses on strategies that **involve families** in the education of their children.



High-quality professional learning must attend to all three areas simultaneously in order to attain the desired results for students. Good content can be compromised by poor process decisions, and effective process can be overwhelmed by poor organizational support.

The rationale for each of these standards is included in the Resource Guide in the Innovation Configuration section. The rationale provides the research base and description of the standard.

### SCHOOL AS THE CENTER OF CHANGE

In the *New Meaning of Educational Change*, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) state that when it comes to educational reform, schools are the “center of change” (p. 203). In other words, the school—not the district—needs to be in control of the change process. Marzano (2003) agrees and advocates that “the school (as opposed to the district) is the proper focus for reform. Indeed, this is a consistent conclusion in the research literature (Scheerens & Bosker, 1997; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000; Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1993)” (p.10). Chubb and Moe (1990) found that school-level reforms were sometimes neutralized by district-level controls and constraints—especially those dealing with personnel.

Yet, this finding should not be misinterpreted to mean that district-level staff perform no role in school-level change. Fullan and Stiegelbauer believe that the “district administrator’s task is to increase the basic capacity of the system to manage change effectively” (p. 191). Similarly, they found that neither *top-down* nor *bottom-up* strategies were adequate to leverage changes in schools and classrooms. Centralized (top-down) change seems not to work because it uses a uniform or one-size-fits-all approach “that is inappropriate and ineffective except for the narrowest of goals” (p. 200). Decentralized (bottom-up) change can be difficult because of the “lack of capacity to manage change” (p. 200). These findings suggest that a combined effort will most likely result in increased learning for students. The most effective change strategy includes “co-management, with coordination and joint planning enhanced through the development of consensus between staff members at all levels about desired goals for education” (Louis, 1998, p. 161). Only districts with this kind of collaborative change strategy will successfully implement school improvement projects.

Advice for central office staff concerning their support of effective school improvement/professional learning activities includes the following guidelines:

1. Develop the management capabilities of administrators—other district administrators and principals—to lead change.
2. Directly and indirectly (e.g., through principals) provide resources, training, and the clear expectation that schools (teachers, principals, etc.) are the main centers of change.
3. Focus on instruction, teaching, learning, and changes in the culture of schools.
4. Recognize that implementing any strategy for improvement is in itself a fundamental implementation problem.
5. Monitor the improvement efforts.
6. Above all, work on becoming an expert in the change process (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1990, pp. 212-213).

The authors recommend that the district administrator’s goal is not to install a specific program but to “build the capacity of the district and the schools to handle any and all innovations” (p. 214).

## COMPONENTS OF THE DISTRICT RESOURCE GUIDE

The components of the District Resource Guide for Professional Learning include:

1. *Overview: **Professional Learning that Improves Student Achievement.***

The overview summarizes the research that supports a new vision of professional learning, the link between professional learning and teaching quality, components of high-quality professional learning as defined by the standards, and a rationale for the school as the center of change.

2. *Implementation Guide: **Quality Professional Development for School Improvement.***

The Implementation Guide section provides activities, conversations, and strategies that will assist school staff in their implementation of Georgia Standards for Professional Learning/NSDC Standards for Staff Development.

3. *I.C. Maps: **The innovation configurations for the NSDC standards are included.***

A full set of Innovation Configurations for the NSDC Standards is included. An innovation configuration is a description of an innovation—in operation. In the Guide, there are five innovation configuration matrices that describe what teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents, and school board members should be doing to fully implement the professional learning standards. A Cross Walk, which correlates all the Desired Outcomes for each role group, is also included in this section.

4. *Assessment Tool:* A self-assessment instrument is included to assist schools in clarifying their current level of implementation of the NSDC Staff Development Standards. Strategies for analyzing the self-assessment tool are included in the Implementation Strategies section.

5. *Standards for Staff Development Video:* This video provides an overview of the twelve standards for professional learning as well as a discussion guide. A Discussion Guide for the video is included in this section.

6. *Readings:* Key articles are included in this section of the Guide to provide additional information about the topics addressed.

7. *Bibliography:* References for the research mentioned in the Guide are provided in this section.

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# Implementation Guide: Quality Professional Learning for School Improvement

## INTRODUCTION

*Implement: to carry into effect; fulfill; accomplish* (New World Dictionary)

Effective and appropriate professional development is one of the most promising strategies for improving student learning (NSDC, 2001). But not all professional development is created equal. In Georgia, as well as nationally, educators are examining their professional development strategies and activities in order to improve student achievement. This is not a simple task. It means more than creating a better workshop or finding an enthusiastic and competent presenter. A comprehensive system of professional learning involves

- creating a district and school context that supports and encourages adult learning
- using processes that develop commitment to and ownership of new strategies and designs that support changes in daily practice
- learning about and using new behaviors that address equity, quality teaching, and family involvement.

These tasks will take the concerted effort of everyone within the system.

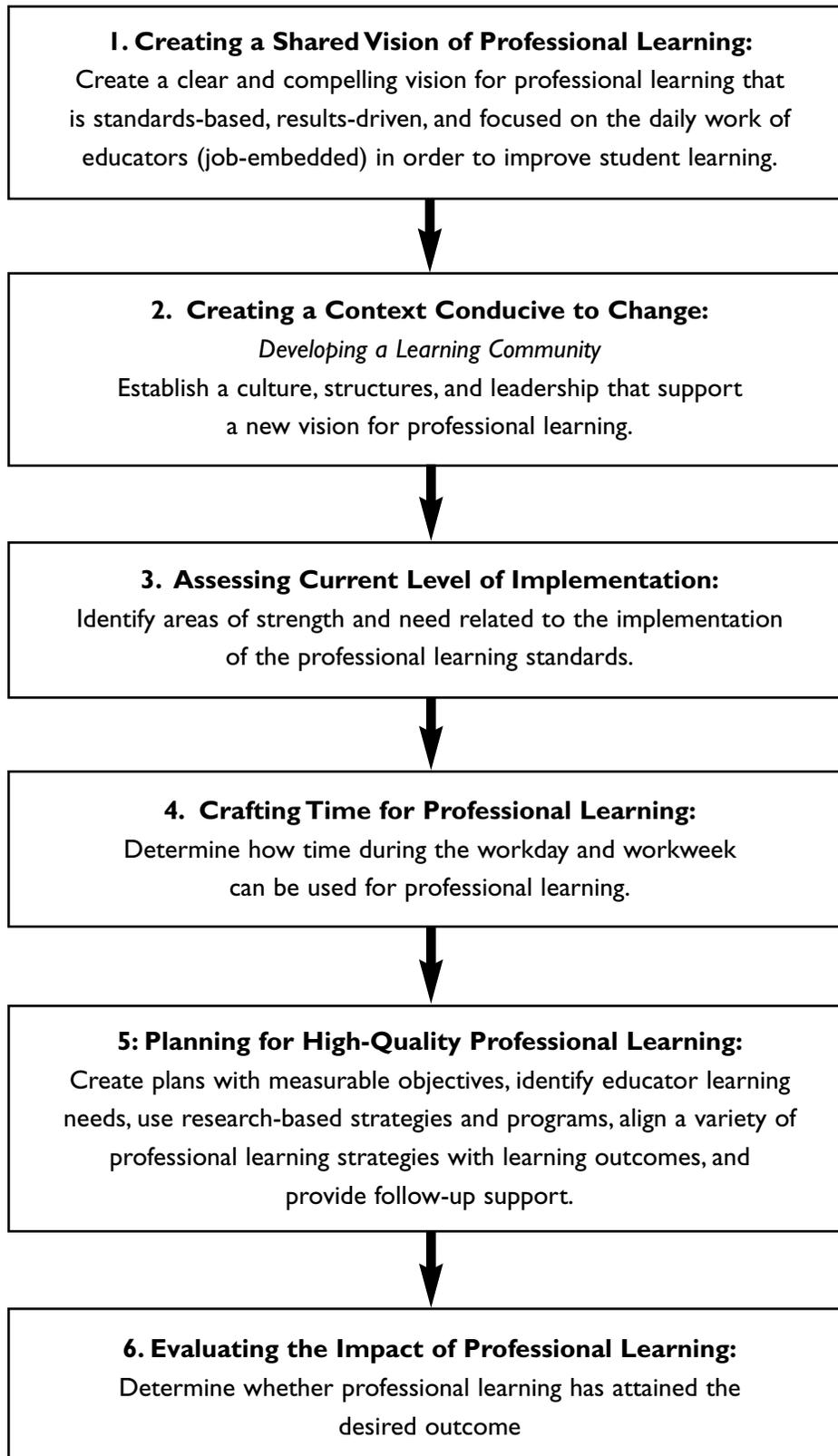
This Implementation Guide focuses on the initial steps of transforming staff development events into professional learning programs. The Implementation Guide does **not** review each of the 12 Professional Learning standards but does focus on conversations, data-collection, readings, and activities that will help your school redefine professional development and identify new skills and behaviors that need to be developed to support professional learning.<sup>1</sup>

This Implementation Guide was designed also to support schools' implementation of Georgia's new Standards for Professional Learning. Grounded in research on change and the experiences of successful districts and schools in Georgia and others around the country, this Implementation Guide focuses on six areas:

- 1. Creating a Shared Vision of Professional Learning:** Creating a clear and compelling vision for professional learning that is standards-based, results-driven, and focused on the daily work of educators (job-embedded). This new vision of professional learning is necessary for improving student learning. This section provides activities and resources for creating a new vision of professional learning and understanding the standards of professional learning.
- 2. Creating a Context Conducive to Change: Developing a Learning Community:** Establishing a culture, structures, and leadership to support a new vision for professional learning. This section provides tools for assessing the district's current culture and collegiality and defining the qualities of a professional learning community.

<sup>1</sup> For a thorough study of each of the 12 Professional Learning Standards individually, introduce your staff to the book, *NSDC Standards for Staff Development*. This book not only includes rationales for each standard but also a real life example, study questions, and the research that supports each standard. The book can be purchased at [www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org).

- 3. Assessing Current Level of Implementation:** Identifying areas of strength and need related to the implementation of the professional learning standards. This section includes two tools for assessing the current use of the standards of professional learning: NSDC’s Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) and the Innovation Configurations.
- 4. Crafting Time for Professional Learning:** Determining how time during the workday and workweek can be used for professional learning. This section provides information about realigning time and an activity to help district and school staff identify appropriate strategies for creating time for professional learning.
- 5. Planning for High-Quality Professional Learning:** Creating plans with measurable objectives, identifying educator learning needs, using research-based strategies and programs, aligning a variety of professional learning strategies with learning outcomes, and providing follow-up support. This section provides worksheets for planning, implementing, and supporting effective professional learning.
- 6. Evaluating the Impact of Professional Learning:** Determining whether professional learning has attained the desired outcome. This section provides information about the five levels of evaluation.



# 1. Creating a Shared Vision of Professional Learning

The central office staff serve a vital role in creating a shared vision of what professional learning can and should be. Central office staff should help build an understanding of the standards for professional learning and create readiness for the change at the district level. They can also build capacity at the district and school level for high-quality professional learning and secure or re-evaluate resources to support the change.

The new central office staff roles in connection to the standards for professional learning are described in the Innovation Configuration materials found in other sections of the Resource Guide. For example, the desired outcomes for central office staff related to the Learning Communities standard include

- 1.1: Prepare administrators and teachers to be skillful members of learning teams.
- 1.2: Maintain and support learning teams.
- 1.3: Participate with others as a member of a learning team.
- 1.4: Support learning team’s use of technology.

Central office staff need to understand the professional learning standards so that they can

- build programs that model these standards at the district level
- assist school-based staff to understand and use the standards at the building level
- create an understanding of quality professional learning with the superintendent and school board
- build capacity so that schools can implement and sustain high-quality professional learning.

This section of the Implementation Guide provides information, activities, and discussions that can help districts create a new vision of professional learning through understanding the standards for professional learning.

The first step in the process of transforming staff development into professional learning is to create a shared vision of what professional learning could be. A clear vision of the change is necessary in order to provide an image of what new practices would look like in operation. This outcome means more than providing goals and objectives. It means painting a vivid picture of what professional learning will look like within the school and district.

In order to create a shared vision among the central office staff and the superintendent, the standards must be studied and understood. This section offers several resources and accompanying activities to help you create your vision of improvement through studying the standards.

- In the first activity, “A Vision of the Standards in Practice” the chapter from Spark’s *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals* (2002) can help you begin to study the standards by looking at what professional learning looks like for teachers at each level of schooling.
- The second activity “Study the Standards to Enhance the Vision” leads you through an excellent rationale for each standard. Examining the rationales and discussing these with colleagues can deepen understanding.
- The third activity introduces you to the “Innovation Configurations.” This is perhaps the most useful tool available for understanding the standards because it breaks each standard down into day-to-day roles and responsibilities of teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents and school board members.
- The fourth activity “Create a Vision of the District’s Role in Building Capacity for High-Quality Professional Learning, helps central office staff to understand their roles in encouraging and supporting school level practice of the standards.

### **Activity: A Vision of the Standards in Practice**

This activity clarifies what the professional learning standards look like *in practice*. It involves reading a set of scenarios from Dennis Sparks' online book, **Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals** (2002). This chapter from the Sparks' book provides an image of what professional learning would look like for an elementary, middle, and high school teacher. It is also important for faculty members and the principal to discuss the barriers that exist to implementing this change and what they could do to eliminate those barriers.

**Purpose:** To create a shared image of what professional learning would look like for elementary, middle and high school teachers.

**Group Size:** 3

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

**Materials:** Make copies of Chapter 3: *A Compelling Vision for Professional Learning* (<http://www.nsd.org/library/leaders/sparksbook.cfm>), one per person. Make one copy of the Task Directions for each group (see HO 1.1 in this section).

#### **Directions:**

1. Ask group members to divide the chapter so that each person reads one of the scenarios—one person reads the elementary version, one the middle school version, and the last reads the high school version. While reading, they should highlight examples of *professional learning* that occur during the school day. **Professional learning, for this exercise, is any activity, interaction, or experience that increases the skills and knowledge of the educators within the school.**
2. Have group members create a list of all the professional learning examples from the reading (see HO 1.2 in this section). They should use a Round Robin format—start by having one member share one idea from the reading. Then, the next person adds a new idea. They do not need to repeat another person's idea. They continue around the group until all the examples have been shared.
3. When the list is complete, direct the group to discuss and reflect on the implications of this information for the school and the district. They can record their reflections on the *Implications* page (see HO 1.3 in this section).
4. Ask groups to share their implications and decide what actions may need to be taken in order to encourage this kind of professional learning within your system.

The implications identified can include school and district policies and culture issues. A common implication identified by many schools is rearranging schedules and times so that job-embedded professional learning can occur during the regular workday. Section 4: Crafting Time for Professional Learning addresses this issue and provides strategies that other schools have found to address the issue of time.

## Task Directions

### A Vision of Professional Learning

1. Form groups of three.
2. Divide the scenarios of the three schools among group members.
3. Each person reads one of the scenarios and highlights examples of *professional learning* that occur during the school day. Remember these are any activities, interactions, and experiences that increase the skills and knowledge of the educators within the school.
4. Make a list of all the professional learning examples from the readings. Use a Round Robin format—start by having one person share one idea. Then, the next person adds a new idea. Don't repeat another person's idea. Keep going around the group until all the examples have been shared. **Everyone should have a completed list by the end of the sharing.**
5. Use the page entitled *Implications* to discuss and reflect on the implications of this information to your school, district, or setting.
6. Prepare to share the implications with the larger group.

# Professional Learning Opportunities

Professional Learning: Any activity, interaction, or experience that increases the skills and knowledge of educators within the school.

List the strategies that you and your team found in the scenarios:

- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| 1.  | 19. | 37. |
| 2.  | 20. | 38. |
| 3.  | 21. | 39. |
| 4.  | 22. | 40. |
| 5.  | 23. | 41. |
| 6.  | 24. | 42. |
| 7.  | 25. | 43. |
| 8.  | 26. | 44. |
| 9.  | 27. | 45. |
| 10. | 28. | 46. |
| 11. | 29. | 47. |
| 12. | 30. | 48. |
| 13. | 31. | 49. |
| 14. | 32. | 50. |
| 15. | 33. | 51. |
| 16. | 34. | 52. |
| 17. | 35. | 53. |
| 18. | 36. | 54. |

Discuss and record the implications of this information for your school.

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IMPLICATIONS—  
Vision for Professional Learning

### **Activity: Study the Standards to Enhance the Vision**

When planning for more effective professional learning, it is important to ensure that teachers and administrators understand the proposed changes. There are a number of ways to initiate this process. One strategy involves showing and discussing the video, “Designing and Evaluating Professional Development for Increased Student Learning,” which is included in this Resource Guide. Please refer to Section 5 tab of the Resource Guide for more information about the video and a discussion guide. A second strategy involves a series of readings and discussions held during staff meetings or professional learning opportunities.

Schools should conduct these activities with the entire faculty to create a shared understanding of the professional learning standards. But central office staff can assist this process by conducting the same activities with principals and lead teachers so that they feel more comfortable and confident to conduct the same activities at their own site.

**Purpose:** As a result of this activity, participants will be able to explain the relationship between each standard and improved staff and student performance.

**Group Size:** 4-5 people

**Time:** 45-60 minutes for each standard.

**Materials:** a) copy of standard rationale for each person, b) copy of discussion questions for each small group, c) chart paper and markers.

#### **Directions:**

1. The time allotted to this activity and the timing of this activity may vary depending upon how quickly your system or school wishes to pursue the standards and your implementation plans. This could range from one standard at each staff meeting over a period of a year to two full days to cover them all.
2. The rationale for each of the twelve Georgia Professional Learning standards/National Staff Development Council standards can be downloaded from the NSDC website: [www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org). Make copies of the rationale statement for each member of the group. Ask them to read the rationale prior to the discussion and highlight key features of the rationale statement.
3. During the staff meeting or professional learning session, create small groups of four-five people. Small groups allow for greater participation and discussion.
4. Have the group appoint a facilitator who will keep the discussion moving and everyone involved. Also, have the group appoint a scribe who will record the group’s responses to the questions. A set of norms for these discussions has been included in this section (HO 1.4). The facilitator should post the norms and go over them with the group first.
5. Provide each small group with a set of discussion questions for the standards. (see HO 1.5-1 – 1.5-3 below) Ask the groups to discuss the questions and prepare to share their ideas with the larger group. Discussion questions follow.

## Norms for Discussion

1. The purpose of this discussion is to gain new ideas and to deepen understanding.
2. Speaking briefly from personal experience is welcomed but refrain from telling “war stories”!
3. Speak without raising your hand.
4. Speak to each other not to the facilitator.
5. Monitor your own airtime (especially the extroverts)—leave room for all to speak.
6. If you want to depart from the current topic, you must say so. If others do not want to follow the departure you suggest, they can return to the previous discussion by saying so.

## Discussion Questions

### **Context Standard: Learning Community**

1. What is the role of the district's vision, mission, and goals in relationship to this standard?
2. What factors and/or structures at the district support continuous learning and development, collaboration, and shared purpose of learning communities? What inhibits them?
3. What kinds of teams are administrators and teachers assigned to? What are some of the current strengths and weaknesses of each team?
4. How would implementing a learning community increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the school?

### **Context Standard: Leadership**

1. What professional development is provided and what is needed to support principals as leaders in the development of the necessary knowledge and skills outlined in this standard?
2. How is teacher leadership nurtured, developed, and utilized in the school and in the district? Are there additional ways it could be tapped to advance student learning?
3. What have been some positive results and challenges of working with electronic tools to support leadership?
4. Who are potential advocates for professional learning? What information and help do they need?
5. How would shared leadership increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

### **Context Standard: Resources**

1. How can time be organized and used to best influence educator and student learning?
2. What arguments and data might be provided to increase the time for job-embedded educator learning?
3. What is an estimate of the current expenditures for professional development? What expenses are charged to professional development? What kinds of changes might be considered in the use of financial resources to support professional learning in this district?
4. How well has professional learning supported the effective implementation of technology?
5. What kind of resources would increase the effectiveness of professional learning in this district?

### **Process Standard: Data-Driven**

1. What various forms of data are available in this district to assist with professional development and instructional decision-making? Are some forms more useful than others? Why?
2. What are the benefits and potential costs of disaggregating data in the way suggested by the standard?
3. What strengths and weaknesses do educators in this district have with regard to using data in the way recommended by the standard?
4. How would the use of disaggregated data increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Process Standard: Evaluation**

1. What are the five levels of professional learning evaluation mentioned in the standards? How many levels are regularly applied in your district? [see Section 6 of the Implementation Guide].
2. What kinds of data need to be collected to address the critical questions posed at each level of evaluation?
3. Consider all the people in a district that make professional learning decisions and the kinds of questions they have regarding professional learning impact and the kinds of data that must be collected to satisfy their questions. For example:

Decision Makers	Typical Questions	Data Sources for Responses
School Board		
Superintendent		
Principals		
Teacher Leaders		
Parents		
Business Partners		

4. How would a comprehensive evaluation increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the school?

**Process Standard: Research-Based**

1. What kinds of decisions do educators regularly make that require a more thorough examination of research?
2. What kinds of challenges in this district could benefit from an action research effort?
3. What does the phrase “critical consumer of research” mean to you?
4. What are options to consider when a program lacks an adequate research base to support its adoption?
5. How would the use of research increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Process Standard: Design**

1. What potential learning designs are appropriate to address specific district goals?
2. What are some benefits and concerns associated with providing professional learning “choices” to adults?
3. What are some benefits and concerns associated with applying technology in the delivery of professional learning?
4. How would implementing different professional learning designs, beyond a workshop, increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Process Standard: Learning**

1. How well does your district address the key ideas outlined in this rationale?
2. Michael Fullan writes about the “implementation dip.” During change, things get worse before they get better. How does this idea relate to your experiences with school and classroom change?
3. How does the district and the school accommodate different needs among educators?
4. How would the use of information about the change process increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Process Standard: Collaboration**

1. Consider your past experiences with various groups. What were the characteristics of productive and non-productive groups?
2. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes need to be developed to facilitate a collaborative work culture?
3. What kinds of outcomes are best achieved through collaboration?
4. How would effective collaboration among staff increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Content Standard: Equity**

1. What support can be accessed to ensure all students achieve at high levels?
2. What are strengths of teaching and learning in diverse situations?
3. How can technology be used to support the implementation of this standard?
4. Do all students in this school have access to a rigorous curriculum that requires them to use their minds well? If not, what opportunities can professional learning provide in the development and implementation of a rigorous curriculum for all students?
5. How would an emphasis on equity increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Content Standard: Quality Teaching**

1. Why is it important that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are tied together in a single standard?
2. When is it appropriate for educators to study curriculum, instruction, or assessment issues in isolation?
3. How can technology be used to assist with implementation of this standard?
4. How can team meetings be restructured to focus on this standard?
5. How can professional development be restructured to focus on this standard?
6. How would an emphasis on quality teaching increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

**Content Standard: Family Involvement**

1. Why do you suppose community and family involvement is a content standard?
2. Study the research by Joyce Epstein cited in the annotated bibliography and discuss Epstein's six ways for engaging families. Discuss the outcomes you can achieve with each family involvement strategy.
3. When it comes to successful student learning, what are the most essential knowledge and skills we want educators to possess in relation to this standard?
4. How can professional development be restructured to include families and communities?
5. How would an emphasis on family involvement increase the effectiveness of professional learning in the district?

At the conclusion of the discussions, ask each small group to identify “What Professional Learning **Is**” and “What Professional Learning **Is Not**.” These characteristics can be combined into a large chart reflecting all the small group's ideas. This chart can be posted in the teachers' workroom or other common area of the school to remind faculty members of their discussions and debates. This debriefing will represent a shared vision of professional learning.

**Activity: Use the Innovation Configurations to Understand the Standards for Professional Learning**

A new tool has been developed to describe the NSDC standards in operation; it is called an Innovation Configuration (IC). An Innovation Configuration creates a word picture of a new practice—*in operation*. The major components of the new practice, in this case professional learning, are identified and a continuum of behaviors is provided. The continuum describes ideal implementation (Level 1) to non-implementation (Level 5 or 6). The ICs include descriptions of responsibilities for five roles within the school system: teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents, and school boards. To achieve full implementation of these standards, everyone should understand his/her responsibilities in developing a comprehensive system of professional learning. The IC can be used to help create a vision of what each standard looks like in full operation. The following activity uses the IC maps to assist district staff see what it means to fully implement the standards.

**Purpose:** To create a vision of full implementation of a specific professional learning standard

**Group Size:** 6

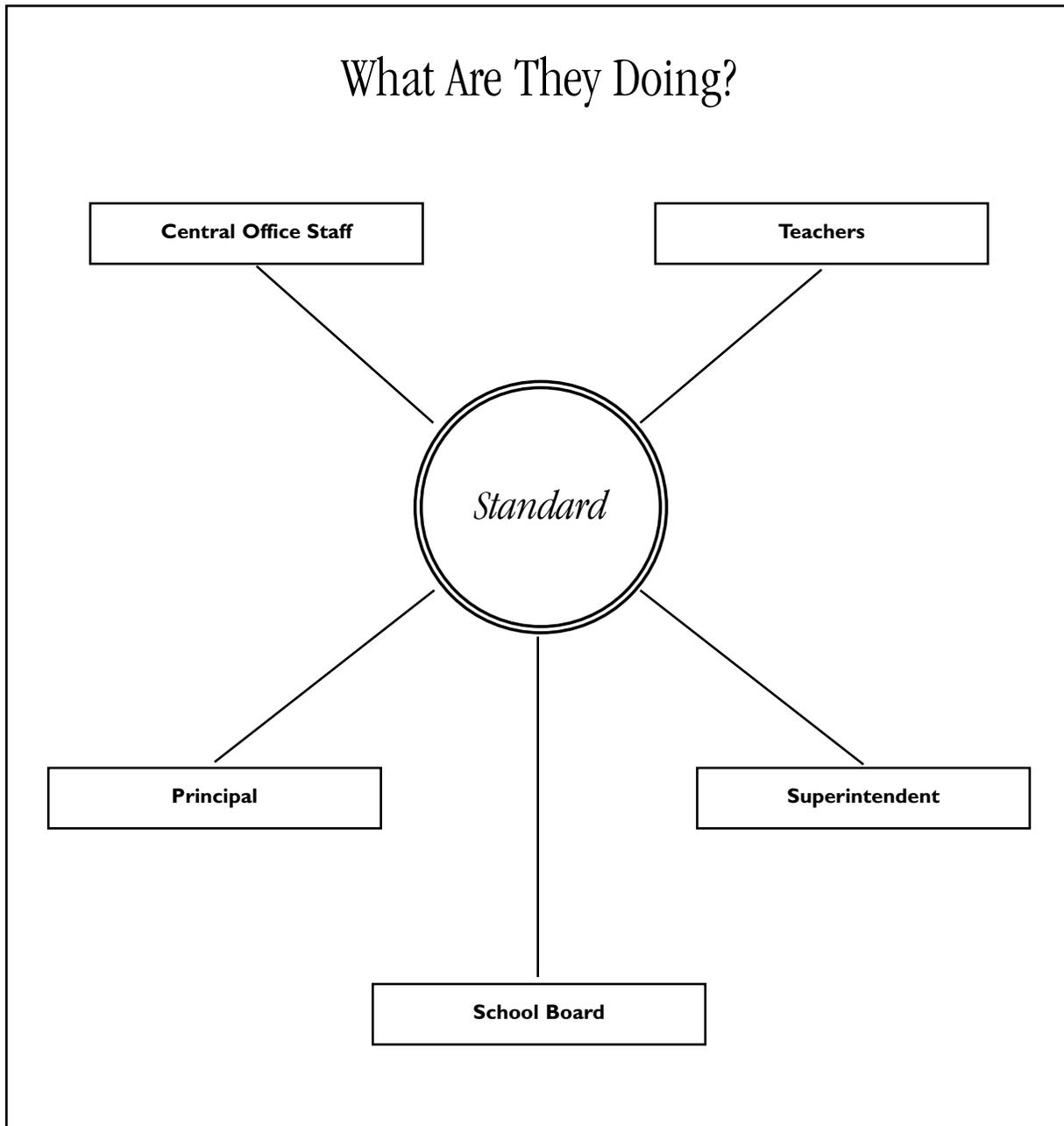
**Time:** 60-75 minutes

**Materials:** Copies of the Innovation Configuration (IC) for a single standard for each role group—teachers, principals, central office, superintendent, and school board.

**Directions:**

1. Form groups of six.
2. Using the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) results, identify three-four professional learning standards that are considered in need of improvement. (See tab Section 4 “Assessment Tool” for the SAI and suggestions for analyzing the results.) Assign one of these standards to each small group.
3. Ask group members to divide and read the IC maps for **all** of the role groups, as well as the rationale for the specific standard.
4. Divide the IC maps among group members. For example: if developing a Learning Community was an area of need, one member would take Teacher IC maps for Learning Community, a second would take the Principal IC map for Learning Community, etc. and the sixth member reads the rationale.
  - Teacher IC map—Learning Community
  - Principal IC map—Learning Community
  - Central Office IC map—Learning Community
  - Superintendent IC map—Learning Community
  - School Board IC map—Learning Community
  - Rationale—Learning Community
5. Each person reads the material *silently* and prepares an explanation of the tasks and responsibilities required of this role group.

6. Each member shares his/her information within the group of six. The information can be summarized on the handout (HO 1.6) provided in this section.
7. The group should discuss the implications of this information for the district organization.
  - Which of these behaviors are currently being practiced? Which are not being practiced or are being practiced to an insufficient degree?
  - What supports are there for using these behaviors?
  - What barriers exist that might prevent a change in behavior or practice?
  - What changes do we need to make to improve our practices in these standard areas?



The standards of professional learning have implications not only for teachers and principals but the entire district system including central office staff, the superintendent, and school board members. The vision for professional learning requires that teachers, principals, and central office administration change some of their practices as well. The professional learning standards describe a comprehensive system of professional learning that necessitates the support and involvement of the whole system. This exercise provides a beginning for further discussion and clarification by staff members of their new responsibilities related to professional learning.

## **Activity: Create a Vision of the District’s Role in Building Capacity for High-Quality Professional Learning**

The role of the central office may change substantially to ensure that schools have the capacity to plan, design, and implement high quality professional learning. The professional learning standards are based on research that demonstrates that schools are the center of change. This does not mean that the central office has no responsibility in these areas but that their responsibilities change to ensure there are adequate knowledge and skills among school personnel to sustain effective professional learning strategies.

In the Readings section of the Resource Guide, you will find Chapter 5 of *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals* by Dennis Sparks. In that chapter, Sparks describes the role and responsibilities of central office staff in relationship to professional learning.

**Purpose:** To create a vision of the new role and responsibilities of central office staff in creating high-quality school-based professional learning

**Group Size:** 3

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

**Materials:**

- One copy per person of Chapter 5: *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals* by Dennis Sparks (Readings Section)
- Highlighters
- Discussion Format: Save the Last Word for Me (Handout 2.1)

**Directions:**

1. This activity involves reading Chapter 5 in the Sparks book and holding a conversation among all central office staff that provide professional learning (*superintendent, curriculum specialists, instructional specialists, induction programs, federal and title programs, special education*).
2. Have each person read the chapter and highlight three statements they would like to discuss with others.
3. Form groups of three. Ask one member to read one of the highlighted statements. The other two people in the group respond to the statement in turn. Each person has one minute.
4. The person who provided the statement then has three minutes to explain why he/she highlighted the statement.
5. The next person reads one of the highlighted statements and other members respond. Keep up the process until finished or time runs out.
6. After each triad has completed their discussion, have the central office staff members discuss the implications of this chapter for the district. Ask staff to discuss how this exercise has broadened/deepened the group’s vision of professional learning in general and their vision of the role of the central office in particular. It would be important to discuss what new actions central office staff would need to assume and also what actions could be abandoned.

The standards of professional learning have implications not only for teachers and principals but the entire district system including central office staff, the superintendent, and school board members. The vision for professional learning requires that central office administration change some of their practices as well. The professional learning standards describe a comprehensive system of professional learning that necessitates the support and involvement of the whole system. This exercise provides a beginning for further discussion and clarification by central office members of their new responsibilities related to professional learning.

## 2. Creating a Context Conducive to Change: *Developing a Learning Community*

The school is the center of change—especially where professional learning is concerned. What does this statement mean to the superintendent and central office staff? While schools need flexibility to analyze student data and make decisions about how to address their students’ needs, the central office staff also plays an essential role. The central office provides service, support, and assistance to schools and builds the capacity of school staff so that effective change is possible at the building level. The vision of professional learning, described by the Georgia standards, focuses on all educators working within a learning community. For this goal to be accomplished system-wide, the central office, led by the superintendent, must create a context in which goals, policies, procedures, and interactions support and sustain these kinds of changes within the school. It will be difficult, if not impossible, for schools to become learning communities unless the central office staff, superintendent, and board of education understand and actualize the three context standards.

Organizational context is the focus of the first three professional learning standards. Context includes organizational policies, procedures, norms, values, beliefs, and structures. In other words—it’s the way we do things around here. The first standard focuses on the development of a learning community:

*Professional learning that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and the district.*

Why would context factors be included in standards for professional learning? The district and school organization and structure, leadership, and use of resources provide the support needed to nourish the new vision of professional learning. A learning community values and stimulates collaboration among colleagues and structures time to allow for daily team learning. The learning community supports changes in classroom practice and provides opportunities for staff to serve as instructional leaders. Many researchers have concluded that the workplace culture has enormous impact on teachers’ commitment, effectiveness, and professional endeavors (Hall & Hord, 2001). Aligning the organization’s context and culture to ensure it supports professional learning among colleagues is an important action for district leadership and school faculty to undertake.

Some districts and schools have begun the journey toward becoming learning organizations that support educator **and** student learning. According to Hord (1997), professional learning communities result in a decreased student dropout rate; lower absenteeism; increased student learning; greater achievement gains in math, science, history and reading; and smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds.

When schools are seen as learning organizations and professional communities, attention is focused on teachers’ work as a key instrument of reform. By emphasizing needed changes in the culture of schools and the daily practice of professionals, the reform movement can concentrate on the heart of the school—teaching and learning process (Louis, Kruse, Raywid, 1996, p. 4).

Hord (1997) delineates five attributes of the professional learning community:

1. **Supportive and Shared Leadership**—sharing leadership, power, and decision-making among staff members and the principal.
2. **Collective Creativity**—encouraging the staff to engage in problem solving about educational issues through the use of inquiry.
3. **Shared Values and Vision**—agreeing and acting upon a goal of student achievement supported by a common set of values.
4. **Supportive Conditions**—building organizational structures that provide opportunities for communication and collaboration and staff skills that include trust, respect, conflict resolution, and inquiry.
5. **Shared Personal Practice**—allowing personal practice to become public and providing opportunities for shared, reciprocal observation of classroom practice.

The district plays a role in building the capacity of schools to become learning organizations. The district must also become a learning organization with similar qualities of supportive and shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice. Schools will be unlikely to develop into learning organizations if the district does not operate in a similar fashion.

The district can assess its readiness for a change in professional development by conducting the following activities included in this section of the Implementation Guide:

- What is a Learning Community? Learn about the characteristics of a learning community.
- Conducting a Policy Audit: Review policies and regulations to assure that schools pursuing professional learning communities are supported—and not blocked--by district procedures.
- Assessing District Practices: Conduct a self-assessment to determine the level of support the district provides to school improvement/professional learning activities that help schools become professional learning communities.

## What Is a Learning Community?

An important activity to conduct with central office staff members is a discussion of the attributes of a productive culture. These discussions will not only help staff understand the issues connected to the school culture but also clarify their feelings and create deeper levels of understanding. A professional learning community is a specific school culture identified by research that has been linked with improved student learning and teacher commitment and motivation (Hord, 1997). This culture includes more than high “morale.” The culture of a professional learning community focuses on student learning and growing the skills and knowledge needed to accomplish that goal.

There are two options presented for creating awareness of the structure and practices of a Learning Community. Option A is a single session activity. Option B involves multiple sessions and the use of an Expert Jigsaw format.

### Activity: Option A

**Purpose:** To understand the attributes of a Learning Community

**Group Size:** 3

**Time:** 30–45 minutes

**Materials:** Make copies of one of the articles about school climate for each staff member. [*Pull out negativity by its roots*, DuFour and Burnette; *Positive or negative*, Peterson; *The principal as staff developer*, DuFour & Berkey; *Moving toward the school as a learning community*, DuFour; Chapter 6: *Designing powerful professional development for teachers and principals*, Sparks]. Download the articles from the NSDC website ([www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org)). Web addresses are provided at the end of this section.

#### Directions:

1. Distribute the articles and request that the staff members read the article **prior** to the meeting or professional learning session. Ask them to highlight at least three statements in the article that they would like to discuss.
2. Review the directions for a discussion format called “Save the Last Word for Me” (HO 2.1). To vary the procedure, another discussion protocol, Soap Box, is also provided (HO 2.2).
3. Ask groups to reflect on their discussions.
4. Ask groups to share their reflections with the whole group.

## Save The Last Word For Me\*

- Read the article.
- Highlight three significant ideas from the article that you would like to discuss or make a comment about.
- Form triads and sit facing each other.
- One person begins by reading the quotation from the article (allow one minute).
- The other two people in the group each have 1 minute to respond.
- The person who began then has the final word (two-three minutes) to respond to what has been said by members of the triad.
- The process begins again with another person sharing an idea from the article and other people reacting.

(\*Coalition of Essential Schools)

## Soap Box

- Everyone reads the same article silently. Everyone highlights two ideas from the article that they would like to share with others in the group.
- Create groups of five-six people.
- One at a time, each person in the group shares an idea from the text and takes about 2 minutes to comment on the issue. There is no discussion during this sharing.
- Continue this sharing; if time allows, begin a second round of sharing.

Organizing reading and discussion experiences in ways like this helps to ensure that all group members are engaged and participate. Simple organizations like this also help to prevent “bird walking” (discussions off the subject) that is common with open-ended discussions.

**Activity: Option B**

**Purpose:** To understand the attributes of a Learning Community

**Groups Size:** 5 people in Base Group

**Time:** 2.5-3 hours (could also take place over 2-3 staff meetings)

**Materials:** Duplicate one set of articles (listed in Option A) for each small group.

**Directions:**

1. Create small Base groups. Ask members to divide the articles so that each person takes responsibility for one reading.
2. Ask each person to read their article and highlight important aspects of the article.
3. An Expert Jigsaw format will be used in this option. This group's task is to become an expert on the article. Form **new** groups of people who have read the same article. This new group will discuss their common article and decide what the most important information is to share with their original group. Group members should share passages that they highlighted and come to consensus about what information to share with others. Note: Large expert groups (10 or more people) can be sub-divided into groups of 5-6 people.
4. Reconvene Base Groups. Have each member take turns and share the information from his or her article.
5. Ask Base Groups to complete a chart that identifies What is a Learning Community—What is **Not** a Learning Community. Ask them to record this information on a large piece of chart paper.

What is a Learning Community	What is <b>Not</b> a Learning Community

6. Post the charts and have the whole group review the information.

**Materials:**

- Sparks, Chapter 6: Designing powerful professional development for teachers and principals, <http://www.nsd.org/library/leaders/sparksbook.cfm>
- DuFour, R. & Burnette, B. (Summer, 2002). Pull out negativity by its roots, *Journal of Staff Development*, 23(3). <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/burnette233.cfm>
- Peterson, K. (Summer, 2002). Positive or negative, *Journal of Staff Development*, 23(3). [www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/peterson233.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/peterson233.cfm)
- DuFour, R. & Berkey, T. (Fall, 1995) The principal as staff developer. *Journal of Staff Development*, 16(4). <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/dufour164.cfm>
- DuFour, R. (Winter, 1997). Moving toward the school as a learning community, *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(1). <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/dufour181.cfm>

## District Policy Audit

Expecting schools to become professional learning communities and implement the other professional learning standards requires changes in district operations, policies, and procedures. As the district develops the capacity of school staff to plan, design, and implement professional learning, it must also determine whether its policies, procedures, and actions support these changes. An audit of current policies and practices will help central office staff to determine whether they are supporting the desired changes at the school level. In addition to the NSDC Standards Assessment Inventory (mentioned in the Introduction and found in Section 3 of the Resource Guide) administered in each of your schools each year and aggregated to the system level, the following tool can help you gather additional information about the current status of the quality of professional learning in our system and the commitments you have made or need to make.

### Activity: Policy Audit

**Purpose:** Answering the policy audit questions can help districts determine any policy changes needed to reinforce changes at the school level.

**Group Size:** Superintendent, Central Office Staff and Representatives from School Administration and Faculty  
**Time:** 5-6 hours

**Materials:**

- *Helping Teachers Teach Well: Transforming Professional Development*, Corcoran, CPRE Policy Brief, June 1995 [<http://www.cpre.org/Publications/rb16.pdf>]
- District Policy Audit Questions (HO 2.2)
- Copy of District Policy Manual

**Directions:**

1. Ask group members to read the CPRE Policy Brief before the discussion for background information about the relationship between policy and professional development.
2. Using the District Policy Audit Questions, hold a discussion with a team of central office members. The purpose is to determine whether current district policies enhance or deter schools from adopting the professional learning standards.
3. As the group discusses the questions, they should cite one of their own district's policies that address the question and decide if their existing policy supports or does not support professional learning.
  - A “+” indicates that the district **currently** has policies that will help schools make the desired changes in professional learning
  - A “—” indicates the current district policies will make it more difficult for schools to make the desired changes in professional learning
  - An “X” indicates that there are no current district policies related to the issue.
4. Review the codes for each answer. Determine which policies will require revision or what new policies may need to be created in order to attain high-quality, school-based professional learning.

## Policy Audit Questions

### 1. How is professional learning defined by teachers, district administrators, and school board members? How is it defined in law and regulation?

(See pertinent State Board Rules with references to the Georgia Code at [http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/\\_documents/doe/legalservices/160-3-3-.04.pdf](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-3-3-.04.pdf) and at [http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/\\_documents/doe/legalservices/160-3-3-.10.pdf](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-3-3-.10.pdf))

- What professional learning activities fall within these definitions? What professional learning activities fall outside of them?
- Are prevailing definitions within the district consistent with Georgia's Standards for Professional Learning?
- Do teams of teachers write annual professional learning plans that include evaluation of results?

### 2. What growth opportunities are provided for teachers?

- Is support provided for beginning teachers?
- Are growth opportunities built into teachers' workday?
- Do teachers have regular opportunities to work together?

### 3. What are the incentives for teachers to participate in professional learning and to improve their practices?

- Do pay incentives and recognition programs support teachers' competency in the classroom?
- Are salary increments linked to evidence of professional learning rather than hours of participation?

### 4. How is professional learning evaluated?

- Are evaluations conducted that go beyond initial reaction surveys provided at the end of specific activities and include the development of knowledge and skills, level and quality of implementation, and impact on student learning?
- Is the content and quality of the activities evaluated against Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)? Against Georgia Professional Learning Standards?
- Is evidence collected about the impact of professional learning on school improvement?
- Do school and system evaluations include use of the NSDC's Standards Assessment Inventory and the Marzano survey to establish base-line data and for formative and summative evaluation each year?

### 5. How is professional learning planned and coordinated?

- Has the district established a district plan and district priorities?
- Do schools have to develop plans? If so, what are the criteria for approving the plans? Are the criteria based on the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning?
- How do the plans incorporate the Georgia Performance Standards?
- How are the schools' professional learning activities tied to school improvement?
- Does the district provide technical assistance for professional development planning to low-performing schools?

**6. What is regarded as “good practice” in professional learning?**

- Has the district adopted the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning?
- Does all district administrative staff know, understand, and use the Standards for Professional Learning?

**7. How is professional learning funded?**

- Is there time allotted within the school day for collaborative professional learning? Are there any policies that are a barrier to finding this time during the day?
- How much is allocated for school expenditures on professional learning? How much on district expenditures?
- Do professional learning funds focus on high-priority areas based on the analysis of student data?

**8. To what extent are current activities consistent with Georgia’s Standards for Professional Learning?**

- Does the district build programs on the research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?
- Does the district provide sufficient time and follow-up support for teachers to master new strategies and content and integrate them into their classroom practice?
- Does the district provide sufficient time and follow-up support for principals to master new strategies for building a learning community and to integrate those strategies into their leadership role at the school?

## Assessment of District Practices

A predominant theme found in this Resource Guide is central office support and development of staff capacity at the school level. To determine your current level of support as viewed by school staff, the following survey can be used.

### Activity: District Practices

**Purpose:** To determine the current level of district support as viewed by school staff and administration

**Group Size:** Large representative sample from all schools within the district

**Time:** 10 minutes for survey – 1 hour to discuss and reflect on results

**Materials:**

- Duplicate one per person: Self-Assessment—District Support and Capacity Building (HO 2.3)
- Definition of Dialogue (HO 2.4)

**Directions:**

1. Create a large sample of school-based staff, including principals, teachers, and other staff. Administer the survey. Also ask the central office staff, including the superintendent, to respond to the survey and compare perceptions at the Central Office and school levels.
2. Collect results, tally the scores, and compute the average for each item. Either post the results (with the number of responses in each level, 0-4, for each question) on chart paper or make a copy of the results for each discussion member.
3. Assemble teams of central office staff, principals, and teachers to analyze the results. For reference during the discussion, either post the questions on chart paper for the whole group or hand out copies of the survey. Handing out copies of the survey with space for notes after each question might aid the dialogue. To ensure that this data is used well, it may be important to ask the assistance of an outside facilitator—possibly a RSEA staff member or another member of your Regional Support Team could be asked to assist the analysis team with examining the results of the survey.
4. **Note:** If securing an outside facilitator is not possible, it would be important to establish that the analysis take place using a dialogue format. The purpose of dialogue is to understand another person’s point of view rather than defending your own position. Dialogue leads to shared understanding and shared meaning. A handout (HO 2.4) with the definition of Dialogue along with sample statements has been included at the end of this section. Each participant should have one of these for reference during the dialogue.

5. Direct the analysis team first to examine the distribution of scores. Ask them to consider whether there is general agreement or disagreement of opinions. For example, an average of 2.0 could occur because all Zparticipants responded “Satisfactory” (2.0). But the statement could also average 2.0 if half of the group responded “Exemplary” (4.0) and the other half responded “Needs Improvement” (1.0). Wide distribution indicates disagreement concerning the statement. This kind of distribution would require further conversation and clarification because there was no generalized response to the statement.
6. Have the analysis team members discuss these items to determine the reasons behind the scoring or identify strategies to gather more information about these items.
7. Create a list that ranks the statements from highest average to lowest average.
8. Have the analysis team discuss and determine answers to the following questions. Have them record their answers on newsprint as a public record of their thinking.
  - Identify the three-four areas that represent **strengths** in the district’s support of school-based programs.
  - Which two-three items represent the greatest area of **need**?
  - What areas should be the highest priority for improving district capacity building of school staff?

## Self-Assessment—District Support and Capacity Building\*

*(Knudson and Woods, 1998)*

Rate how well the central office currently supports school-based programs, using the following scoring method.

- Exemplary . . . . .4
- Proficient . . . . .3
- Satisfactory . . . . .2
- Needs Improvement . . . .1
- Don't Know . . . . .0

### Central Office

1. Establishes school-based decision making in district policy and procedures. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Models shared decision-making throughout the district. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Models facilitative behavior in school-level interactions. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Models professional learning practices and behaviors in the central office. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Establishes or expands a district wide professional learning unit responsible for training personnel in school improvement/professional learning topics. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Provides at least one trained facilitator in each school to guide school faculty through the school improvement/professional learning process. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Establishes professional learning opportunities for central office administrators that prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement/professional learning. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Establishes professional learning opportunities for principals which prepare and support them in their new roles and responsibilities in school improvement/professional learning. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Prepares school board members so they understand and can carry out their roles in supporting school-based improvement and professional learning. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Trains district personnel as trainers or “coaches” to support school-based programs. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Informs teachers and administrators of new research and scientifically-based educational programs \_\_\_\_\_

\*Based on research by Knudson and Woods (1998, Spring). Support from above. *Journal of Staff Development*, 19(3).

## Analysis Sheet

Record the average score for the following items:

Policies and Procedures

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Capacity Building

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

School Improvement

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

### Analysis Questions

- Which practices are the most important for improving school-based professional learning programs?
- Do the ratings of these items suggest any areas of improvement that the district should investigate further?
- In what items does the district rate the highest? The lowest?
- Which practices, if improved, will have the most impact on school-based professional learning as well as student learning?
- What are the next steps that the district can take to support school-based professional learning?
- What are the strengths and limitations of the data that is generated from this self-assessment?

## Dialogue

- “. . . free and creative exploration of complex and subtle issues, a deep ‘listening’ to one another, and suspending of one’s own views” (p. 237).
- “In dialogue, a group explores complex difficult issues from many points of view. Individuals suspend their assumptions, but they communicate their assumptions freely” (p. 241).
- The purpose of a dialogue is to understand other people’s thoughts, not to ‘win’ people over to your thinking. It is not about argument or debate but exploration and openness.

Fifth Discipline, Senge, 1990

### Sounds like:

- *Help me understand . . .*
- *Your reasons for that idea. . .*
- *Tell me more. . .*
- *I take it you’re basing that opinion on an assumption that. . .*
- *I’m really confused, explain to me again*
- *This is what I hear you saying. . .*
- *You are saying. . .*

The Implementation Guide is intended to support the initial steps in creating a comprehensive system of professional learning. This involves changes in practice at the classroom, school, and district level. Any of these changes will take considerable effort and time. They require changing patterns of behaviors that have been ingrained in school systems for a very long time—especially when considering the development of professional learning communities. The best research in this area confirms that systems need to think about change in terms of years—not months or weeks. The best research suggests 3-5 years are necessary for a single school to change once there is commitment and about 10 years for district wide changes to occur. These beginning activities will create awareness of what is needed to support changes in professional learning. Once awareness has been developed, the district and school can decide which topics will need additional time, effort, research, reflection, and action.

### 3. Assessing the Current Level of Implementation

What does it mean to implement the standards of professional learning? Some educators have said, after examining descriptions of job-embedded learning strategies, that they already do many of these activities but not during formal professional development activities. Many schools are already organized to provide daily time for teams to work together. School districts have created study groups or encouraged the examination of student work in connection with the study of specific content areas. Numerous districts have vibrant mentor teacher programs, including classroom coaching for new faculty. These are all *elements* of professional learning, but the standards describe a **comprehensive** system of professional learning that involves responsibilities for every component of the school system from school board members to teachers. A comprehensive system means that all the standards are addressed by all parts of the system.

Assessing the current level of implementation of the standards for professional learning is one of the district's initial tasks. The purpose of the activities suggested in this section of the Implementation Guide is to help districts determine current strengths, as well as areas of need. These activities can also create a baseline of data and performance that can be drawn on later during summative evaluation to help staff members see how much progress has been made.

The suggested activities for this section include administering and analyzing the NSDC 's Standards Assessment Inventory and using the Innovation Configurations to identify necessary behaviors connected with powerful professional learning. The analysis of each of these instruments will suggest that the school or district focus on a few high priority areas. Experience in schools and districts suggests that it is impossible to implement all the standards at once—especially over a short period of time. Instead, high priority areas can be used to leverage the system. Leverage is like a rudder on a boat; small changes in the rudder can cause huge shifts in the boat's direction. This Resource Guide will focus on getting started with implementation of the professional learning standards. It will focus on ways to implement six of the professional learning standards (Learning Communities, Resources, Data-Driven, Research-Based, Evaluation, and Design).

## Assessment Inventory for the NSDC Standards

It is appropriate for districts to begin the process of adopting Georgia’s Standards for Professional Learning by taking stock of how their current professional development program aligns with these new standards. A majority of districts will find that they have many strengths, as well as areas for improvement.

Districts can assess how well they are implementing the twelve professional learning standards by administering and analyzing the new self-assessment instrument, the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI), recently completed by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin, Texas. The new instrument has been rigorously designed and tested to ensure reliability and validity. Hundreds of educators in over 60 schools participated in the pilot and field testing process. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement—similar to the idea of whether your car starts every time you turn the key. Is there a consistency between the scores in similar districts? Validity refers to the ability of the instrument to measure the concepts described in the standards. The instrument, therefore, was designed to measure the degree to which a school’s professional development program corresponds to the NSDC standards. Analysis of the survey results should focus both on areas of **strength** and areas of **need**.

This instrument was designed to focus primarily on school-based professional development. The instrument will also be valid at the district level if

- A **substantial** number of staff is surveyed.
- Staff members are **randomly** selected to participate.

In other words, acquiring valid and reliable results that describe district level implementation of the standards will require more than requesting members of the Professional Development or District Improvement Committee to complete the survey. Respondents should be randomly selected from every school so that all schools are represented. The selection should also be relative to the size of the school; more respondents randomly selected from large schools as compared to small schools.

The Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI), directions for administering it, scoring guides, and analysis questions are in Section 4 of the Resource Guide. This section can be used for paper-and-pencil administration and analysis of the instrument by schools or systems. Your school or system can use this as often as you are willing to collect the data and analyze it, either formatively or summatively. Georgia schools and systems also have the instrument available online once a year. The online version will be taken by all Georgia schools in the spring of each year as a statewide assessment. You will automatically receive three reports for each school and for the district—Indicator Averages (with five most in need of attention identified), Frequency Counts by Indicator and Basic Frequency Counts. These should be very useful to schools and school systems in measuring progress since the last spring application and in making plans for the coming year. See the Georgia DOE web site (<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/>) for further details.

## Using the Innovation Configuration to Assess Current Level of Implementation

Another type of assessment tool that can be used to assess current level of practices required for full implementation of the professional learning standards is the Innovation Configuration (IC). An innovation configuration identifies and describes the major components of new practice *in operation*— in this case, the new practice is the implementation of the professional learning standards. One of the many uses of an Innovation Configuration is as a formative assessment tool—to determine current level of practice and plan next steps. Section 3 of the Resource Guide contains five sets of Innovation Configuration maps as well as a CrossWalk that shows the relationship between and among the desired outcomes.

Studies of the implementation of policies, programs, and processes have shown that innovations are typically implemented in a variety of ways and with varying levels of quality. Just because authorities mandate, experts request, or colleagues agree to adopt innovations does not guarantee fidelity of implementation. A simple answer of “yes” or “no” cannot answer the question, “Has Georgia Professional Learning Standard # 1 been implemented?” The answer lies somewhere along a continuum that describes varying degrees of use of the innovation.

Because individual users adapt or modify the components of new practices as they implement them, the concept of innovation configuration (IC) was born. IC maps identify the major components of the innovation and describe, on a continuum, the variations of use ranging from ideal implementation to non-use of the innovation. The innovation configuration answers two questions: “What does the innovation look like in practice?” and “Has *quality* implementation occurred?” This description helps to create a mental image of the innovation that we can carry in our minds. It provides the “vision” toward which the system can move.

The IC map is also a way to precisely identify quality and to measure fidelity. By describing the variations in practice, the IC map can help us determine how close our current actions are to ideal implementation. The IC map can be used to measure fidelity, the degree to which implementation approaches the ideal by being faithful to the desired outcomes.

The structure of the IC map includes the major components (or desired outcomes) for the professional learning standards. For each desired outcome, a continuum of behaviors is developed. The most desirable behaviors are located at the left end of the continuum. The behaviors located at the right end describe non-implementation of the standard. Scores at the right end require support and assistance to move practice out of these categories. For example, find the IC map that describes the central office actions related to Standards 2: Leadership. The first desired outcome is to provide professional learning experiences to enable principals to function as instructional leaders. The highest quality implementation of the desired outcome is stated at the left end of the continuum (Level One: Create facilitated learning teams for principals in which they problem solve and learn together. Provide extensive, ongoing learning activities that include hands-on, problem-based, and multiple practice experiences. Provide time to explore and practice specific behaviors and strategies and receive feedback on the implementation of new skills). Decreasingly desirable variations are along the continuum to the right (Level 5: Do not provide professional learning experiences for principals as instructional leaders).

The Innovation Configurations can be used to determine current levels of implementation of the standards. It would be appropriate to assess only a small number of standards based on the results of the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI). For example, through the analysis of the SAI, 3-4 areas of need should have been identified. The Innovation Configuration can provide descriptions of these standards in practice and allow staff members to identify at what level they are operating. A dialogue/discussion format could be used to identify current practices and plan for next steps (see readings--Hirsh, December, 2003, *Results*, p.3 and Alabama Best Practices Center, 2003).

### **Activity: Assess Specific Standards**

**Purpose:** Assess current level of practices related to a specific professional learning standard.

**Group Size:** 8-10 people

**Time:** 30 minutes per standard

**Materials:** Innovation Configuration maps

**Directions:**

1. Identify a cross-section of the staff to participate in the process. This would include staff that represent any programs that provide professional development to district and administrative staff members including special education, technology, curriculum, and assessment.
2. Review with participants that they will be engaged in both dialogue and discussion. Dialogue differs from discussion. The intent of dialogue is to fully understand another person's perspective on a topic. Discussion is used to come to agreement or arrive at a final answer. During discussion, arguing your point of view is necessary. Both dialogue and discussion are useful during this self-assessment process. (See HO 3.1 in this section for more descriptions).
3. Ask participants to review individually each desired outcome and read each of the levels for the standards being studied. Each person should determine, based on his/her experience, the level that most closely describes current practice within the district.
4. Ask participants to indicate their initial rating for the item. The highest ranking administrator is asked to wait and vote after the staff to avoid influencing the decision.
5. Based on the initial vote, a dialogue among members begins that allows each member to explain his/her vote.
6. Once all views have been shared, the group uses discussion to come to consensus on a rating. The process continues until the assessment is complete.
7. Participants reflect on the scores and decide what actions to take to improve implementation of this standard.

## Dialogue

- “. . . free and creative exploration of complex and subtle issues, a deep ‘listening’ to one another, and suspending of one’s own views” (p. 237).
- “In dialogue, a group explores complex difficult issues from many points of view. Individuals suspend their assumptions, but they communicate their assumptions freely” (p. 241).
- The purpose of a dialogue is to understand other people’s thoughts, not to ‘win’ people over to your thinking. It is not about argument or debate but exploration and openness.

Fifth Discipline, Senge, 1990

### Sounds like:

- *Help me understand . . . .*
- *Your reasons for that idea . . .*
- *Tell me more . . .*
- *I take it you’re basing that opinion on an assumption that . . .*
- *I’m really confused, explain to me again*
- *This is what I hear you saying . . .*
- *You are saying . . .*

## Discussion

- “In discussion, different points of view are presented and defended and there is a search for the best view to support decisions that must be made” (p.237).
- Discussion shares the same root as percussion and concussion. It suggests something like a ‘ping-pong’ game where we hit the ball back and forth. The subject of the discussion is analyzed and dissected from many points of view. But it also shares another commonality with a game: it involves competition and trying to win others over to your point of view.
- “Discussion is a necessary counterpoint to dialogue” (p. 247). The goal of discussion is decision-making. The goal of dialogue is understanding different points of view. Most groups understand discussion and need to understand and use dialogue as a counterpoint when making group decisions.

Fifth Discipline, Senge, 1990

### Sounds Like

- *I disagree because . . .*
- *I think we should . . . because . . .*
- *I understand your point of view but . . .*
- *I think another way because . . .*
- *I see it another way, let me explain*
- *So, what idea can we all live with . . .*

These self-assessment tools were included to provide a vehicle for school staff to determine how closely their current practices are to ideal implementation of the professional learning standards. In the beginning, these tools can establish baseline data and be used later to mark progress and movement toward implementing the standards. Later, the self-assessment tools can be used to identify areas of strength and barriers to success. The Innovation Configuration map can also identify next steps in the change process. Because full implementation of the standards will take a considerable amount of time and effort, it is important that schools periodically monitor their progress.

## 4. Crafting Time for Professional Learning

One of the underlying assumptions of the standards is that the most powerful forms of professional learning are job-embedded. Job-embedded professional learning happens during the work day in the work place, is supported by team learning, and includes all the teachers all the time.

Learning teams

- Meet every day.
- Assume collective responsibility for all students served by the team.
- Study content embedded in standards.
- Develop powerful lessons and common assessments.
- Critique student work.
- Observe and coach in each others' classrooms.
- Determine needs for additional learning.

A visitor to a school that has fully implemented job-embedded professional learning would clearly see and hear the differences. Teachers would have both formal and informal opportunities each day to learn how to achieve higher levels of learning for their students. Small groups of teachers analyzing data and making decisions about areas of improvement or new strategies would be commonplace. Workroom conversations would include problem-solving discussions for persistent problems.

One of the context standards for professional learning addresses the use of resources to support professional learning. Time is considered one of the most important resources, especially given the need for job-embedded strategies.

*Resources: Professional learning that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.*

This standard for professional learning calls for time for

- Daily individual planning of lessons, review of student work, and preparation of materials.
- Team learning occurs three to four days a week and includes analyzing student work, identifying student needs, developing lessons to increase student learning, and reflecting on classroom practice.
- School improvement committee meets once a week to analyze student achievement data, determine school improvement goals, plan for professional learning related to student learning needs, and review progress on goals.
- Whole school learning occurs once or twice a month to analyze student achievement data, prioritize goals, celebrate progress, recognize accomplishments, share successes, and build collaborative relationships.

The organizational structure of most districts and schools provides little time during the workday for these kinds of productive, collegial discussions and activities. **One of the first barriers to overcome when implementing professional learning strategies will be to find time for these activities.**

Common strategies for crafting time for professional learning include buying time through the use of skillful substitute teachers, creating common planning time within the existing schedule, adding professional development days to the school year (when the learning team needs a block of time to learn), and freeing teachers from instructional time. A list of common strategies that schools and districts have used to find time has been summarized in a *Tools for Schools* newsletter produced by NSDC (August/September, 2002). This list identifies what schools across the country have done to find time for productive professional learning. The newsletter has been included in the Readings section of Resource Guide.

Additional articles provided in the Readings section explore a variety of ways to find time for professional learning. In order to assist schools, central office staff should read these articles and identify possible strategies for finding time that could be done within the district. It is understood that some of these strategies may not be possible given state and district regulations. In those cases, a viable strategy for the superintendent and central office staff is to get state and local regulations that inhibit progress changed. (See District Policy Audit and Assessment of District Practices in Section 2 of this Implementation Guide).

As with other activities provided in the Implementation Guide, the central office could model this activity for principals so that they feel more comfortable conducting the same activity with their faculties.

## Crafting Time for Professional Learning

The following activity can be used to explore possible options for providing time for professional learning. Central office administration and staff who are involved in supervising principals would benefit from participating in this activity.

**Activity: Professional Learning Time**

**Purpose:** Identify possible options for identifying strategies for additional time for professional learning

**Group Size:** 4

**Time:** 60-75 minutes

**Materials:** Prepare copies of the articles on time for professional development. For longer articles, two people can be assigned to read the same article. Web addresses are provided below.

**Directions:**

1. Create groups of four people.
2. Ask each person to read an article and highlight strategies used to find time for professional learning.
3. Have each group create a shared list of strategies from the readings on chart paper. This allows each person to see the list. Use a Round Robin format—start by having one member share one strategy from his/her article. Then, the next person adds a new idea. They should not repeat another person’s strategy. Continue around the group until all the strategies have been shared.
4. To create a large group list, begin with a list from one of the groups. Ask other groups to add strategies they found that are not already listed.
5. Identify the strategies that seem plausible and probable within your setting. This task can be accomplished by using the **Rule of One-Third** (see full activity description below). Count the total number of strategies and divide by three. That number is the number of votes each person can make. For example, if there were 15 strategies, everyone in the group could vote for five strategies, which he/she felt were plausible and possible.
6. Of the strategies prioritized by the Rule of One-Third, ask group members to **rank order** the smaller list of strategies—from most preferred to least preferred.
7. Be aware that some of the strategies will require working with parents and other community organizations. A system of early dismissals, for example, if not explained in advance to parents, is not always viewed positively. Some strategies require involving community organizations (such as the YMCA or Boys & Girls Clubs or churches) to ensure students have a safe place to go.

**Articles**

- Barkley, S. (Fall, 1999). Time: It’s made, not found. *Journal of Staff Development*, 20(4).  
<http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/barkley204.cfm>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (Spring, 1999). Target time toward teachers. *Journal of Staff Development*, 20(2).  
<http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/darling202.cfm>
- Peterson, K. (Spring, 1999). Time use flows from school culture. *Journal of Staff Development*, 20(2).  
<http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/peterson202.cfm>
- Pardini, P. (Spring, 1999). Making time for adult learning. *Journal of Staff Development*, 20(2).  
<http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/pardini202.cfm>

### **Activity: Rule of One-Third**

**Purpose:** This technique is used to obtain a quick and reliable high, medium, and low ranking determined by individual and group perception of needs or interest in pursuing an action with a stated objective.

**Group Size:** Whole group

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials:** Butcher paper and markers

**Directions:**

1. Write all goals, objectives, and actions to be considered on butcher paper and number each item in the list.
2. Divide the total number of statements by three to determine how many each participant may choose (21 divided by 3=7).
3. Ask the participants to select seven statements and record their choices (numbers) on scratch paper.
4. Ask participants to indicate their choice for each statement with a show of hands and record the total for each statement. (In cases where some degree of anonymity may elicit a more heartfelt response, allowing the group to put checks or sticky dots on their choices all at once may be advisable.)
5. A few items will rise to the top with the most votes. You do not necessarily have to identify seven items.

## 5. Planning for High-Quality Professional Learning

Strategies provided in the beginning sections of this Implementation Guide addressed creating a shared vision, developing learning communities, assessing current levels of implementation, and creating time for professional learning. These sections concentrated on the Context Standards, particularly Professional Learning Communities and Resources. The intent of this section of the Implementation Guide is to focus on initial steps in adopting and implementing Georgia's Standards for Professional Learning. It highlights specific standards that experience has shown are the beginning issues for schools and districts.

In this section you will:

- Explore the Design Standard.
- Examine strategies that involve stakeholders in the analysis of disaggregated student data.
- Learn how to develop measurable improvement goals in the initial phases of planning effective professional learning by skillfully identifying educator learning needs and reviewing research.
- Explore the wide variety of professional learning models and strategies.
- Understand the importance and impact of follow-up support.

This section begins work on the Process Standards. One of the process standards for professional learning focuses on planning and designing professional learning.

*Design: Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.*

Understanding and using this standard requires the knowledge and skillful use of a variety of adult learning strategies. Strategies are implemented not just because they are different but also because they attain the school's learning goals. Professional learning is not merely a better workshop but the skillful use of job-embedded strategies that focus on the daily work of teachers. The characteristics of high-quality professional learning have been defined by federal legislation as

... "high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom." The legislation also says quite clearly that professional development activities are not "one-day or short-term workshops or conferences." (Richardson, 2002) ([www.nsd.org/library/publications/results/res9-02rich](http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/results/res9-02rich))

This federal and matching state legislation provides an impetus for districts to re-examine and revise their approach to professional learning. Districts can use the new definitions and the newly adopted Georgia Standards for Professional Learning to reexamine district structures, policies, procedures, and resources. Forms included in this section represent one district's initial steps in implementing the new expectations. The forms represent the bridge that a district can make between the more traditional forms of professional development to newer forms of job-embedded professional learning.

In addition, central office staff should build the capacity of schools to plan, design, and implement new professional learning strategies. Some skills that school staff will need include

- Analyzing multiple forms of student data to determine student needs.
- Developing clear and specific improvement goals.
- Identifying educator learning needs including changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors.
- Reviewing research to validate content, programs, and strategies.
- Designing professional learning to match intended goals and purposes.
- Designing follow-up activities and strategies to provide long-term assistance and support to implementation.



Quality Learning and Superior Performance for All

# Staff and Professional Learning Program Proposal for \_\_\_\_\_

(fiscal year)

**CONTENT**

**Program Title** \_\_\_\_\_ **# of PLUs** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Submitted by** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Advertise in **Bulletin\*?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If advertised, a "Register By" date: \_\_\_\_\_ Priority\*\* # \_\_\_\_\_

\*Attach a brief course description to be used in the **BULLETIN** publication. \*\*Please indicate **PRIORITY** number using scale of 1 - 3.

Program Resources/Materials: \_\_\_ Please order (requisition attached). \_\_\_ Arranged by provider.

### Alignment ~ Needs Addressed (Source: Thomas Guskey)

1. Include a statement indicating how this program, activity, or professional learning project relates to a district standard.
- OR
1. Include a statement indicating how this program, activity, or professional learning project relates to your school or department's improvement goal(s).
2. Provide a list of the intended outcomes for the program.
3. Describe how the attainment of those outcomes will be documented or assessed.
4. Research on effective professional learning indicates that only 5 to 10% of learning is retained, used or implemented unless there is adequate follow-up provided. What activities or processes are planned for follow-up?

**Design Qualities include:** (1) content and substance, (2) organization of knowledge, (3) product focus, (4) clear and compelling product standards, (5) protection from adverse consequences for initial failures, (6) affirmation of performance, (7) affiliation, (8) novelty and variety, (9) choice, and (10) authenticity. (Source: Schlechty/WOW)

**CONTEXT**

Need(s) Addressed District Standard or School/Department Improvement Goal(s)	Goal(s) Objective(s) Intended Program Outcomes	Evaluation Measurement of Program Outcomes	Follow-up Activities or Processes to ensure successful implementation

Target Audience \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum # of Participants \_\_\_\_\_  
**Private** (for local school or dept. only) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ **Open** to other system or out-of-system staff Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Date(s) & Time(s) [Timeline] \_\_\_\_\_

Program Location \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor(s)/Facilitator(s) [Name(s)] \_\_\_\_\_

**PROCESS**

### Type of Activity

Course (PLU credit) \_\_\_\_\_ Workshop (no credit) \_\_\_\_\_ Conference \_\_\_\_\_ Release Time \_\_\_\_\_ Other (describe below) \_\_\_\_\_

**Major models of professional learning** include (1) training, (2) observation/assessment, (3) involvement in a development/improvement process, (4) study groups, (5) inquiry/action research, (6) individually guided activities, and (7) mentoring.

Please attach a copy of the program agenda or syllabus & course description. Submit to Lynn Seay, Professional Learning.

<b>INDIVIDUAL LEARNING LOG for:</b>		<b>School/Department:</b>	
<b>Social Security Number:</b>		<b>Date Submitted:</b>	
This log allows you to capture reflections and evidence from learning experiences that do not fit into the typical PLU course format. <i>Using this log is OPTIONAL.</i> You may NOT submit any learning experience that has been or will be submitted on a sign-in roster for PLU credit.			
<b>Learning Experience</b> - Describe the learning experience. Include the title or topic of the activity and pertinent details.			
<b>Purpose</b> - Why did you participate in this learning experience? How does it align with your Professional Appraisal Cycle (PAC) goal(s), School or Department Improvement Plan, our district standards, and/or your area of certification? (GaPSC)			
<b>Reflections ~ Results</b>			
There are 5 levels of professional learning evaluation: <span style="float: right;">(Source: Thomas Guskey)</span>			
1. Participant Reaction	2. Participant Learning	3. Organization Change(s) & Support of Participant Learning	4. Participant Use
			5. Student Learning
Answer EACH of the following questions when responding:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you learn from this experience?</li> <li>• What did you not learn that you wish you had learned?</li> <li>• How will you use the information?</li> <li>• How will your learning affect your school, grade level or department?</li> <li>• How will your learning impact student learning?</li> <li>• Did the experience meet your expectations? Why or Why not?</li> </ul>			
<b>Time Devoted to the Learning Experience - Detailed Dates and Times</b> (10 contact hours = 1 Professional Learning Unit or PLU) <i>Please provide the TOTAL number of contact hours.</i>		<b>List Attached Evidence</b> - You <u>must</u> attach evidence and documentation including an agenda or program <u>AND</u> lesson plans or student work samples, etc.	
<b>Learner's Signature</b> - I understand that PLU credit is not issued until log is reviewed and approved by my administrator and the Professional Learning Director.		<b>Approval Verification</b> - Administrator or Supervisor Approval (Principal, AP, etc.)	
<b>Professional Learning Director's Signature</b>		<b>Approval Date/Number of PLU Credits Awarded</b>	

Use the **Standard Form** above (acceptable either electronic or handwritten). Time must be tallied for determining PLU credit. Logs will NOT be accepted or approved WITHOUT attached evidence and documentation including an agenda or program AND lesson plans or student work samples, etc. After receiving administrator or supervisor approval, turn in completed logs to PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. (Do not send logs to Human Resources, as PLU credit is not valid for certification renewal until log is reviewed and approved by the Professional Learning Director. PLU credit will be available to the Human Resources Department for certification renewal purposes after approval and posting to your transcript.)

**Logs may be submitted *quarterly* to Lynn Seay, Director of Professional Learning, (October 1, February 1, June 1) or *once* at Year End - June 1.**

Professional Learning Department, April 2004



## Forsyth County Schools Professional Learning Feedback Form

Program Title \_\_\_\_\_ Presenter \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_ School/Location \_\_\_\_\_

Position:  Primary  Elementary  Middle  High  Administrator  Support Staff  Classified Staff

**Overall Evaluation**  Poor  Fair  Good  Very Good  Excellent

**Quality of Engagement (Source: Schlechty Center for Leadership in School Reform)**

Circle one of the following that best indicates your level of involvement throughout most of this experience.

- |  |   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Authentic</b><br/> <i>I was very involved in this learning experience most of the time. The activities were designed in ways that appealed to the various ways that I best learn such content. The content will be valuable to me and to my school or department or school system.</i></p> | <p><b>Strategic Compliance</b><br/> <i>I participated in this learning experience throughout the time allotted. I believe attendance at this seminar/workshop/course is part of what others expect of me.</i></p> | <p><b>Ritual Compliance</b><br/> <i>I was in attendance throughout the session(s). I have made some contributions, but nothing significant.</i></p> | <p><b>Retreatism</b><br/> <i>Although I was present during the learning experience, I did not always clearly focus on the content, presentations or discussions. Most of the time, my attention was on other matters.</i></p> | <p><b>Rebellion</b><br/> <i>Throughout this learning experience I found ways, other than the planned activities, to occupy my time and attention. I chose to derail some of the work during the seminar/workshop/course.</i></p> |
|--|---|---|---|--|

<b>General Comments &amp; Feedback:</b>	
What did you expect to learn from this session?	What did you learn from this session?
What do you value most from this experience?	What will you use or do next?

What do you now need?	What worked best in this session?	How could this session be improved?
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Please return form to the program presenter or to Lynn Seay in the Professional Learning office.

(Source: Thomas Guskey)

The Forsyth Staff and Professional Learning Program Description addresses the two major categories of the standards: Context and Process. Context is addressed by assuring that the program aligns with district standards to reinforce the connection between school improvement and professional learning. Process is addressed through the requirement of specific outcomes and methods of evaluation. The form also requires the description of specific follow-up activities to ensure successful implementation.

In the Forsyth Individual Learning Log form, evidence of alignment with school or department learning goals reinforces the connection between school improvement and individual professional learning. Reflection includes the first three levels of evaluation of professional learning (see Section 6: Evaluating the Impact of Professional Learning for more information about all five levels of evaluation). The question, “Did the experience meet your expectations?” addresses Level One: Participant Reaction. The question, “What did you learn from this experience?” addresses Level Two: Participant Knowledge. The question, “How will you use the information?” addresses, in part, Level Four: Participant Use. The requirement of attaching evidence of implementation through lessons plans or student work samples reinforces the concept that professional learning should be results-based.

The Forsyth Staff and Professional Learning Feedback Form provides opportunities for participants to give information for three levels of evaluation: participant reaction (*What do you value most from this experience, How could this session be improved?*), participant learning (*What did you learn from this session?*), and organizational change and support (*What do you now need?*).

## Analyzing Disaggregated Student Data

Another Process Standard for professional learning focuses on the use of data for decision-making.

*Data-Driven: Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.*

Effective schools and districts analyze disaggregated student data for multiple purposes. They use data to create baselines that are compared with end-of-year data to determine growth and change. They use data to monitor student progress on specific goals throughout the school year. They use disaggregated student achievement data to determine school improvement and professional learning goals. The full use of data in the school improvement process cannot be adequately covered in this Implementation Guide. You will find, however, other useful material on this topic in the Reference section of the Resource Guide.

A strategy that involves multiple stakeholders is provided here. Work in organization change has shown that when people are involved in creating meaning from their own data, there is much more ownership and commitment to the results. District staff should use this strategy when analyzing student data to determine district improvement goals.

This activity is also provided within the School Resource Guide. Districts should encourage conducting this activity at the school level using school staff and stakeholders. To encourage and support this activity at the school level, district staff should

- Confer with the principal and school improvement team about data to include in the process.
- Make graphs and charts from the data tables in order to make the information more accessible.
- Enlarge the data graphs into poster size.
- Serve as facilitators in the process.

## Involve Stakeholders in Analysis

One of the many books written about data-driven school improvement suggests a strategy for involving a variety of stakeholders in the analysis of student data (Holcomb, 1999). The Data Analysis Carousel described here utilizes small groups to examine enlarged displays of data and answer analysis questions. Data is displayed in graphs and charts rather than tables of numbers. The data is enlarged to poster-size so that it is easy for everyone to examine it together. The small groups rotate from one data display to the next to view and analyze all the data. This activity also allows the groups to see what others have said during the analysis phase. Each group has a designated amount of time (five-seven minutes) at each data station. The group's responses are written on a flip chart that is placed next to the station. Reflection and discussion end the session and allows participants to determine next steps in the improvement process. Holcomb (1999) offers the following suggestions for preparing materials, participants, and analysis questions.

## Activity: Data Analysis Carousel

**Purpose:** To involve stakeholders in analyzing student data

**Group Size:** Structure groups of five-eleven that cross program, department, role, and community lines.

**Time:** Depends on amount of data and number of people 2-3 hours

### Materials:

- Enlarge copies of the data displays.
- Place questions for discussion on flip chart paper.
- Provide colored markers at each station.
- Post the data displays and questions at stations around a large room with blank wall space.

### Directions:

#### 1. Preparing the participants

- Have groups designate a facilitator **and** a recorder.
- Remind teams that the colored markers travel with the recorder.

#### 2. Conducting the Carousel

- Rotate small groups from one data display to the next to view and analyze all the data.
- Allow 5-7 minutes at each station
- Use a bell or sound-making device as notification of movement to the next station; give a two-minute warning
- Time limit allows groups to review what others have written

#### 3. Questions for reflection

- What do these data seem to tell us?
- What does it not tell us? What else would we need to know to make use of this data?
- Do patterns exist in the data?
- What are other data telling us about student performance?
- How did various subpopulations of students perform? (Consider factors such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status.)
- What needs for school improvement arise from this data?

(Holcomb, 1999, p. 62)

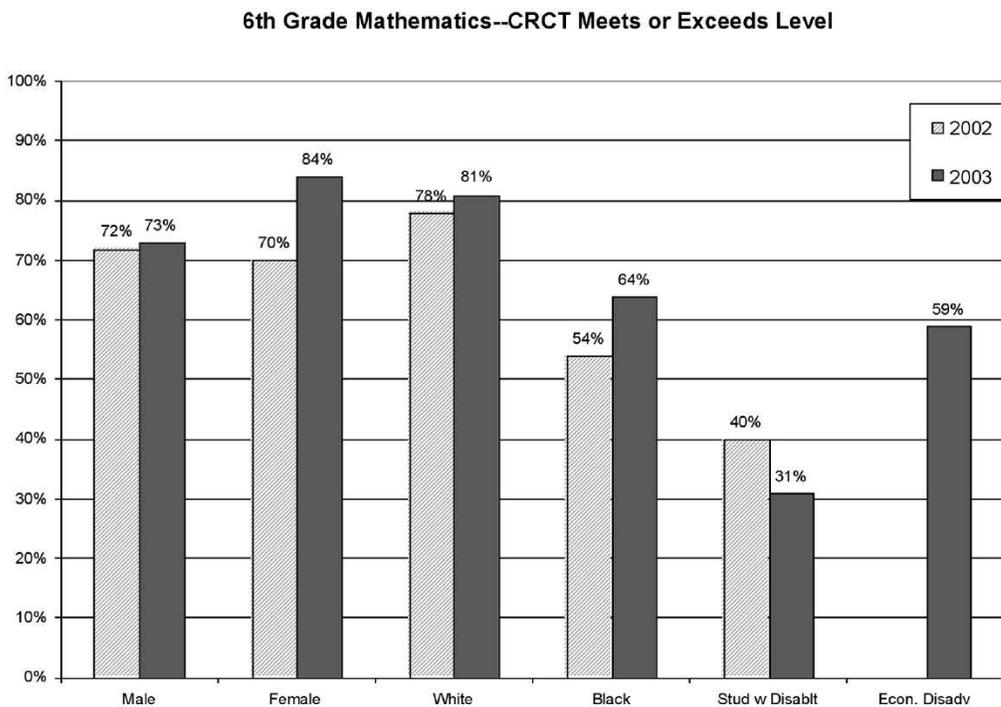
The answers from the analysis are used to

- write summary statements for each of the data displays.
- determine other data that may need to be collected, reviewed, and analyzed.
- identify school improvement goals.

**SECTION 2 – AREA 5**

Tables of charts need to be displayed in chart form in order to make them more accessible to all stakeholders. For example, the table of disaggregated CRCT mathematics achievement scores for 6th grade students would be transformed into a bar graph for the Carousel Activity. This chart shows the number of student who performed at the meet or exceed level.

	Male	Female	White	Black	Student with Disabilities	Econ. Disadvantaged
2002	72%	70%	78%	54%	40%	Not available
2003	73%	84%	81%	64%	31%	59%



Remember, student achievement data is not the only information that is useful to examine. Demographics, pass rates, discipline rates, teacher and student mobility rates and parent/community involvement data are examples of additional data that may inform decision making and planning.

## Developing Improvement Goals

Measurable goals clarify purpose and identify the means to determine whether outcomes have been attained. Goals are clear and specific not broad and vague. Measurable goals contain five components that answer the following questions:

1. **WHO:** Whose behavior, knowledge, or skills should change as a result of the action?  
*(students, teachers, parents, administration, central office staff)*
2. **WHAT:** What changes in attitudes, knowledge, and skill will result from the activity or program?  
*(mathematics achievement, student discipline rates, teacher instructional strategies, parent involvement)*
3. **HOW:** How will results be measured; what tools or devices will be used to identify the changes?  
*(state achievement data, off-year standardized test scores, discipline referrals, attendance rates, classroom observations, student climate surveys)*
4. **HOW MUCH:** What are the criteria for success; what is the level of gain or change that you expect?  
*(15% increase in number of students at Exceeds; 25% drop in discipline referrals; 20% increase in attendance)*
5. **WHEN:** When will this goal be accomplished? *(end of the school year, two year period ending in July of 2006)*

Typically, two types of measurable goals are used in school improvement:

1. *Student Goals:* describing how students will change
2. *Staff Goals:* describing how teachers will change to attain student results

### The Results You Want for Students

At All American School District, the fifth grade student scores on the state writing assessment at meets or exceeds will increase from 50% to 65% during the 2004-2005 school year.

### What Teachers Will Do to Accomplish Student Results

During the 2004-2005 school year, all teachers from the All American District will administer a common monthly writing prompt, teach students to assess their writing using the state's writing rubric, and design lessons to enhance students' writing skills based on the state test's diagnostic data. Teachers will also work in grade level groups weekly to compare student work and adjust instruction.

**Activity: Writing Measurable Goals** (Schmoker, 2001)

**Purpose:** Practice developing clear and specific goals

**Group Size:** 4-5

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Materials:** Student achievement data, discipline data, portfolios, attendance, etc

**Directions:**

1. Forms groups of 4-5 teachers who work at the same grade level and/or content area.
2. Provide the group with copies of student data—this can include standardized achievement data as well as student work and student portfolios.
3. Using the template, ask groups to write both student goals and areas of focus.

### Template

**Goal 1:** (All, female, low SES) student achievement at meets or exceeds in \_\_\_\_\_ will increase by the following:  
(writing, reading, math)

\_\_\_\_\_ % at the end of 2005

\_\_\_\_\_ % at the end of 2006

The increase will be assessed by the \_\_\_\_\_ (State Test, ITBS, district assessment, mathematics rubric, etc.) Specific areas to address to improve include:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Examples

**Goal 1:** Sixth grade minority student achievement at meets or exceeds level in mathematics will increase by the following:

  10   % at the end of 2005

  10   % at the end of 2006

The increase will be assessed by the Georgia CRCT. Specific areas to address to improve include:

- statistics and probability
- problem solving
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal 2:** Male eighth grade student achievement at meets or exceeds level in writing will increase by the following:

  15   % at the end of 2005

  10   % at the end of 2006

The increase will be assessed by the district writing rubric. Specific areas to address to improve include:

- composing complete paragraphs with topic sentences, organization, and closing sentence
- appropriate use of transitions between paragraphs
- the research process

## Identify Educator Learning Needs

Once measurable goals and objectives for student learning have been determined, then the intended results of district-based professional learning can be identified for educators (Killion, 2002). As with good instruction, planning for professional learning will be more focused when there are clear statements of intended results for those involved. According to Killion (2002), professional learning goals involve changes in five different areas:

1) knowledge, 2) attitude, 3) skill, 4) aspiration, and 5) behavior.

**Knowledge:** Conceptual understanding of information, theories, principles, and research

**Attitude:** Beliefs about the value of particular information or strategies

**Skill:** Strategies and processes to apply knowledge

**Aspiration:** Desires or internal motivation to engage in a particular practice

**Behavior:** Consistent application of knowledge and skills (Killion, 2003, p. 19).

For example,

- The intended result of a series of reading workshops is to build **knowledge** of effective comprehension strategies.
- The intended result of a reading workshop is to create a positive **attitude** toward using new comprehension strategies with struggling readers.
- The intended result of regular grade-level team meetings is to develop the **skill** to adapt new comprehension strategies to the 4th grade reading curriculum.
- The intended result of examining student work is to develop the **aspiration** to use the new reading strategies with struggling readers.
- The intended results of classroom coaching for that same reading program is to build the sustained **behavior** of using the new reading strategies during instruction.

When clear outcomes are developed for professional learning, decisions about planning, supporting, and funding will be easier. A worksheet has been included to assist you in the development of learning outcomes of professional learning.

Planning Goals and Objectives  
 (intended results—stated in terms of student achievement)

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<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Principals</b>	<b>Central Office</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>					
<b>Attitude</b>					
<b>Skill</b>					
<b>Aspiration</b>					
<b>Behavior</b>					

## Review Research to Validate Content, Programs, and Strategies

In the mid-90s, the National Staff Development Council embarked on a project to identify effective professional development programs that had evidence of impact on student learning. A national search was made for programs that had been implemented at multiple sites and executed effective professional development strategies. Responses came from 497 programs. Through the course of sifting through evaluation data only 26 programs could provide evidence of impact on student learning. This was a startling fact. It does not mean that the other 471 did not improve student achievement—it meant that program developers did **not** conduct research to discover whether the programs did impact student learning.

One of the standards for professional learning involves the application of research for decision making.

*Research-Based: Professional learning that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.*

In part, this standard means that school and district staff will seek evidence that the professional development programs that they adopt have a solid base of research that demonstrates impact on student learning. The NCLB legislation emphasized that same point by stating that strategies and methods “proven effective by the standards of scientifically-based research should be included in school reform programs” (Richardson, 2002, October). Scientific, research-based programs are defined as 1) grounded in theory, 2) evaluated by third parties, 3) published in peer-reviewed journals, 4) sustainable, 5) replicable in schools with diverse settings, and 6) about to demonstrate evidence of effectiveness (Guskey, Fall, 2003).

Unfortunately, much educational research does not adhere to these strict guidelines. According to Guskey (1998), only a small number of programs are based on stringent educational research and few programs can provide evidence of impact on student learning. As a result, Guskey suggests that educators become more savvy in finding and reading educational research.

New resources are available that review and summarize educational research. These resources identify effective 1. instructional strategies (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001), 2. classroom management strategies (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003), and 3. school improvement practices (Marzano, 2003). It is the power of Marzano’s work that has prompted Georgia to adopt the “What Works in Schools Survey” as a diagnostic tool for planning by schools in our state. All NI (Needs Improvement) schools were required to administer this survey in 2003-04 and are encouraged to continue its use each year as sponsored by the state. The survey is also available to other state schools to assist with school improvement planning. There are also new and existing clearinghouses that review research and disseminate findings about educational programming such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). New websites are being developed for mathematics, science, and reading programs (see box at the end of this section: *Websites on Research and Best Practices*).

A set of books published by NSDC called *What Works in the Middle*, *What Works in High School*, and *What Works in Elementary School* are available online. These materials identify effective professional development

programs that have evidence of impact on student learning. They can be downloaded off the NSDC website (see box at the end of this section: *Websites on Research and Best Practices*).

The *What Works* series offers a Program Review Format that focuses on Program Goals, Program Content, and Program Process. It can be used by a small team of school or district staff to review potential staff development programs. (See Staff Development Program Review format in this section).

## Using the Program Review Form

### I. Program Goals

1. The first section of the form asks for team members to review the program's goals. It is important that specific learning outcomes for students are clearly identified in the program's description. While student behaviors and student attitudes are also important, student learning should be the focus and a match to school and district needs.
2. Another issue for review is whether there is evidence of student success and identification of how that success was measured. Unfortunately, most educational research does not consider report card grades a valid measure of student learning. Valid measures can include standardized achievement tests, portfolios, performance tasks, exhibitions, local criterion-referenced tests—any product in which there is a defined standard of quality.

### II. Program Content

3. Program Content and Pedagogy is the focus of the second section. First, the reviewers should determine whether the content matches the desired professional learning outcomes for students and teachers. Secondly, decide whether the content aligns with district and state content standards. The team also needs to review the suggested pedagogy contained in the program and determine whether there is research support or best practice work that validates these strategies (see Marzano, 2003).

### III. Staff Development (Professional Learning in Georgia) Processes

4. This section focuses on the use of a variety of staff development models and whether follow-up and coaching are built into the program. There are five models of professional development as well as a number of job-embedded strategies<sup>1</sup>.
  - a. **Individually Guided:** Educators create Individual Learning Plans related to student and school improvement goals
  - b. **Observation and Assessment:** Use of multiple classroom observations and feedback—not evaluation visits. These observations can be conducted by skillful peers as well as administration.
  - c. **Training:** The training model builds knowledge and skills and also provides opportunities for practice within the training sessions as well as classroom coaching. Follow-up is a vital component of training.

<sup>1</sup>School Improvement in Georgia involves the use of all of these models. Legislation, organization and resources strongly emphasize the models of “School Improvement,” “Job-embedded Strategies” and “Action Research.” This is evident in the process and resources developed for each of the improvement levels of NCLB being employed by the Regional Support Teams and State Board policy on System Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (alignment with the Georgia Professional Learning Standards), to cite the two most outstanding examples.

- d. **Development or Improvement Process:** School improvement or curriculum development can be a professional development model if it involves the development of new knowledge and skills as well as a focus on implementation of new practices.
  - e. **Inquiry or Action Research:** Teachers or groups of teachers develop questions about their practice, altering classroom practices, and determining impact of those changes.
  - f. **Job-embedded strategies:** Other strategies involve study groups, development of units and lessons, analysis of student work, peer observation and feedback of classroom practice, reflection, and goal setting and planning for a common set of students.
5. Reviewers also need to determine whether there are classroom-based as well as nonclassroom-based follow-up activities already planned for the program. Follow-up support and assistance is necessary for implementation. These activities can involve the development of lessons, practice teaching, planning for implementation, and reflection on new practices. (See Follow-up in this section for more information.)

#### IV. Program Context and Demographics

- 6. Program Context/Demographics involves reviewing the program to see where the program was implemented in order to determine whether this is similar to the district and school student population and demographics. If the program has been replicated in multiple areas, the program results may be able to be generalized to all students, schools, and districts.
- 7. Decide whether the program had the support of the larger community, district, and school and the kinds of support that was necessary.
- 8. Intended participants in the program may include
  - a. Individual teachers
  - b. Teams of teachers
  - c. Grade level groups
  - d. Whole School
  - e. Whole District
- 9. Costs associated with the program include
  - a. Honorarium for the consultants
  - b. Travel costs (airfare, lodging, meals, rental car, mileage)
  - c. Materials
- 10. References: Determine whether there are any schools or districts who have implemented the program that can provide information about its success, barriers, concerns, etc.

Many programs will not necessarily include all this information in the program description. This form could also be used to draft questions that need to be answered in order for the team to make a recommendation concerning adoption of the program.

## Staff Development Program Review

Program Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Content Area(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Web site \_\_\_\_\_

Program Goals					
Evidence of Success	Yes	No	Measure	Notes	
Student Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Student Behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Student Attitudes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Teacher Content Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Teacher Behaviors/Practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Teacher Attitudes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Program Content					Notes
Content					
Pedagogy					
Staff Development Processes					
Models of Staff Development	Yes	No	Frequency	Length	Notes
Individually Guided Staff Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Observation and Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Development or Improvement Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Inquiry or Action Research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Follow-up		Yes	No	Notes	
Classroom-based		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Nonclassroom-based		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**SECTION 2 – AREA 5**

Program Context			
Geographic	Yes	No	Notes
Rural			
Urban			
Suburban			
Other			
Student/School Demographics		Notes	
Ethnic/Racial			
Socioeconomic Status			
Size of School/ District			
Teaching Staff			
Support Needed		Notes	
Community			
District			
Building			
Other Features		Notes	
Intended Participants	Yes	No	Notes
Individual teachers			
Team			
Grade Level			
School			
District			
Cost	Yes	No	Notes
Honorarium			
Travel Costs (air fare, lodging, meals, etc.)			
Materials			
Other			
Site Reference		Site Reference	Notes
School Name			
Address			
Phone			
Fax			

From *What Works in the Elementary School*, Killion, 2002, NSDC

Similar to reviewing textbooks during textbook adoptions, it is important that there are clear criteria by which to evaluate programs. Here are a series of question/criteria that can be used to review new professional development/school improvement programs:

1. Which programs address the skills and knowledge we have identified as educator learning needs?
2. What programs are being used in schools with similar demographics?
3. If our school's characteristics do not match those of schools in which the program was successfully implemented, what are the key differences? How likely are those differences to interfere with the program's success?
4. What changes could be implemented to increase the likelihood of success?
5. What aspects of the program (if any) might need to be modified to accommodate the unique features of our school?
6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
7. Does the content of the professional development align with program goals?
8. Does the program involve more than "training" and include opportunities for discussion, simulations, group activities, practice, and experiences with real-world problems and situations?
9. Are there valid, reliable, experimental research results available?
10. Is there evidence of effectiveness and impact on student learning?

Because of the limitations of resources and time, the selection of a school improvement/professional development initiative is a critical component of the process. This is sometimes quickly decided based on what is familiar, a "hot topic" in the state or region, or because a neighboring school or district has already adopted the program. This step will take time but is essential to ensure that the program has a record of success, has an effective design, and focuses on similar needs identified by the district or school. Next, it will be important to design a program so that it involves a variety of professional learning models and leads to implementation in the classroom.

#### **Websites on Research and Best Practices**

- <http://www.ncrel.org/pd/active.htm> (NCREL site that lists other websites)
- Literacy website: <http://www.ncrel.org/litweb/>
- Strategic Teaching and Reading Project  
<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/profdevl/pd2lk199.htm>
- Staff Development in Multilingual Multicultural Schools  
<http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed410368.html>
- What Works in the Elementary School (<http://www.nsd.org/connect/projects/elwhatworks.pdf>);
- What Works in the Middle School: <http://www.nsd.org/midbook/>;
- What Works in the High School: <http://www.nsd.org/connect/projects/hswhatworks.pdf>;

## Purposes of a Variety of Professional Learning Models and Strategies

According to current educational research, a single instructional strategy will **not** meet the needs of **all** students. Similarly, a single professional learning strategy will **not** meet the needs of **all** educators. Those who plan professional learning at the district-level, need to know and use a variety of staff development models and job-embedded strategies (Sparks, 1999, Summer). They also need to understand the primary purposes for each of the strategies. Workshops are appropriate if the goal is to attain knowledge. Coaching is appropriate if implementation of new strategies is the goal. Each strategy can help accomplish different goals, therefore, it is important for district-based planners to know about a variety of strategies and to understand primary purposes for each strategy. While these purposes were developed with teachers in mind, similar outcomes are appropriate in developing leadership skills.

There are at least five major purposes for professional learning:

1. **Developing awareness:** Used at the beginning phase of change, these strategies are designed to help participants become familiar with new classroom or leadership innovations.
2. **Building knowledge:** Used to provide opportunities for deeper understanding of content knowledge and instructional practices.
3. **Translating into practice:** Used to help educators transform new knowledge gained in professional development into classroom practice or leadership behaviors.
4. **Practicing teaching (or leading):** Used to help teachers deepen their understanding by implementing the new approach in their classroom with students. Principals practice new leadership skills when interacting with staff, students, and parents.
5. **Reflection:** Used to provide opportunities for reflection and engage educators in identifying the impact of the changes on their students or staff (see below, Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, & Hewson, 2003).

The next step is to determine the purposes of a variety of professional learning strategies. Each strategy can serve multiple purposes, but it is important to understand the primary use of each strategy. One group of mathematics and science professional developers identified the purposes of a variety of strategies used in their work. Primary purpose is indicated with an **X** and secondary purpose is indicated with a ✓.

<b>PD Strategy</b>	<b>Developing Awareness</b>	<b>Building Knowledge</b>	<b>Translating Into Practice</b>	<b>Practicing Teaching</b>	<b>Reflecting</b>
Action research		✓			X
Case discussions and case studies	✓	✓			X
Coaching and mentoring		✓	✓	X	✓
Curriculum development and adaptation		✓	X		
Curriculum implementation		✓	✓	X	
Demonstration lessons			X	✓	✓
Developing professional developers		✓	✓	X	✓
Examining student work	✓	✓	✓		X
Goal-centered meetings			X	✓	✓
Immersion into the world of math	✓	X			
Improvement process		X	X	✓	
Individually guided		X	✓	✓	✓
Observation/assessment	✓			X	✓
Partnerships	✓	X			
Problem-solving protocol				X	✓
Professional networks	✓	X	✓		✓
Replacement units		✓	✓	X	
Study groups	✓		✓		X
Technology	✓	X	✓		✓
Videotaping and debriefing a lesson			✓	X	✓
Viewing and discussing a video	✓	X			
Workshops, seminars, institutes	✓	X	✓		

X= Primary purpose, ✓= secondary purpose

(Loucks-Horlsey, *et al.*, 2003)

When planning and designing professional learning experiences, it is critical to begin with clear measurable goals that describe desired changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors of participants. It is also important to clarify beginning, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Matching these goals and outcomes to appropriate professional learning models will lead to more effective professional learning experiences.

For example, the school's goal is to improve student achievement in reading—especially in the area of comprehension. To accomplish this goal, teachers need to implement a variety of new comprehension strategies that are supported by the new reading program. The initial outcome is for teachers to gain knowledge about the new reading program and new comprehension strategies. This outcome could be accomplished by having teachers attend a workshop, access information through technology, or become part of a professional network on reading instruction. An intermediate goal is that teachers will collaboratively plan lessons for their classrooms that employ the new comprehension strategies. This goal could be accomplished through the use of curriculum development and adaptation activities as well as study groups. Finally, the intended result is to have 100% of the teachers routinely implementing new comprehension strategies in their classroom every day. This result can be accomplished through the use of coaching and mentoring, curriculum implementation activities, and curriculum replacement units.

**Student Goal:** By 2004, increase student achievement in reading by 15% as measured by the state assessment.

Outcome	Timeline	Optional Activities/Strategies
<b>Initial Professional Learning Outcome:</b> Teachers gain knowledge of the reading program and comprehension strategies.	Summer and first 6 months of 2003 school year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workshop <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional network
<b>Intermediate Professional Learning Outcome:</b> Teachers will plan lessons for their classrooms that use the new comprehension strategies.	Last 3 months of school year and summer work—2003-04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum development and adaptation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Study Groups
<b>Final Result:</b> 100% of the teachers routinely implementing new comprehension strategies in their classroom every day.	Emphasis on first 7 months of school year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coaching and mentoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum replacement units <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum implementation

An article about this topic can be downloaded from the NSDC website.

(<http://www.nsd.org/members/jsd/loucks203.pdf>)

## Professional Development Strategies

If professional learning is more than a workshop, what other strategies can be used? A brief description of job-embedded strategies follows.

- *Action Research*: Action research is a form of disciplined inquiry that intertwines traditional research approaches with real problems or issues faced by school staff. Four steps are involved in the process: 1) focusing on some aspect of the school or classroom, 2) collecting data by quantitative or qualitative methods, 3) analyzing and interpreting data to answer the initial question or focus, and 4) taking action based on what has been learned (Glanz, 1999).
- *Case Study*: Case studies are carefully chosen, real-world examples of teaching that serve as springboards for discussion among small groups of teachers. The predicaments presented in a case study allow teachers an opportunity to engage in careful reasoning and to make careful professional judgments. Case studies allow teachers to discover ambiguity, conflict, and complexity within deceptively simple-looking teaching scenarios (Barnett, 1999).
- *Goal-Centered Meetings*: Schmoker (2001) suggests that colleagues meet at least twice a month to tackle instructional issues. Colleagues meet to find solutions to students' needs by either using data to identify areas of instructional need or developing strategies for addressing those needs. Additional information and a thirty-minute agenda can be found in Schmoker, 2001, p. 139.
- *Demonstration Lesson*: An expert colleague demonstrates a lesson or activity with students in the classroom. An important component of this strategy is the debriefing and reflection between colleagues (Loucks-Horsley, et.al., 2003).
- *Examining Student Work*: Many protocols are being developed that provide a structure for teachers to meet and analyze student work. A Tuning Protocol from the Coalition of Essential Schools includes a presentation by the teacher that provides context about the lesson and students and establishes a question that he/she would like answered. The group asks clarifying questions, examines student work, and develops feedback. Feedback is provided concerning the teacher's question. The teacher reflects on the feedback, and the whole group debriefs the conversation (Easton, 1999).
- *Problem-Solving Protocol*: A problem-solving protocol is a helpful format for teams of teachers to use when trying to solve implementation issues for an innovation in their classroom. This protocol includes four steps: 1) description of the problem, 2) clarifying questions, 3) brainstorming solutions while not allowing the presenter to interact, 4) identifying and prioritizing possible solutions by the presenter. The presenter is not allowed to interact with the group during the third step in order to prevent "that won't work" comments that would hamper the brainstorming process.

- *Study Group*: A study group is a small group of teachers and administrators who have a collective responsibility to support each other's understanding and use of new instructional strategies, curriculum, or new classroom or leadership behaviors. The group meets regularly two-four times a month and develops a shared set of goals. There are seven steps in the process of using Whole-Faculty Study Groups: 1) collect and analyze a wide range of student data, 2) generate a list of student needs based on data analysis, 3) categorize student needs and prioritize the categories, 4) organize study groups around the prioritized student needs, 5) create study group action plans and display them in a public place in the school, 6) implement the study group action plans, 7) evaluate the impact of the study group effort on student performance (Murphy & Lick, 1998; Murphy, 1999).
- *Viewing and Discussing a Video*: With a specific purpose in mind, participants view a video that is aligned with current goals. Discussion questions are provided before viewing and discussion takes place in small groups. A tangible product should be expected—for example, answers recorded on a large sheet of paper and posted so that others can read the responses. (see the Discussion Guide for “Standards for Staff Development” video in this Implementation Guide for a specific example.)
- *Videotaping and Debriefing a Lesson*: Educators implement new curriculum or instructional strategies and videotape those lessons. Using a feedback protocol colleagues view a classroom video and debrief the lesson with the teacher. It is important to ensure there is a common vocabulary and understanding of critical components of the lesson. It is also important that colleagues know how to provide non-evaluative feedback (Richardson, Feb/Mar, 2001).
- *Training of Trainers*: Because school districts face financial limitations, training district or school staff to conduct training for their colleagues is an effective professional learning model. First, school personnel need to select an appropriate program that matches district and school philosophy, management practices, and goals. Second, appropriate personnel need to be identified who possess or could acquire presentation, coaching, and change-agent skills. Finally, a receptive environment needs to be cultivated that will embrace the new skills and knowledge offered by school-based trainers. Planning that considers these issues will result in more effective implementation of this strategy (Griffin, 1999).

## Aligning Professional Learning Activities with Outcomes

### Worksheet

Student Learning Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

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Professional Development Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Optional Professional Learning Strategies</b>
<b>Initial Outcome:</b>		
<b>Intermediate Outcome:</b>		
<b>Result:</b>		

## Follow-Up Support

Improvement of student achievement can only occur when there is implementation of new strategies and practices. Implementation is an elusive result in many professional development programs because of the lack of systematic follow-up and support.

Joyce and Showers (1988) identified the importance of classroom follow-up and coaching. Based in part on a 1987 meta-analysis conducted by Bennett, Joyce and Showers (Joyce & Showers, 1988) determined that there is only a 10-15% implementation rate when training does **not** include follow-up. In other words, learning about new strategies and curriculum will most likely not be implemented unless there is a rigorous and classroom-based follow-up system.

The development of a skill by itself does not ensure transfer; relatively few teachers, having obtained skill in a new approach, will then transfer that skill into their active repertoire and use the new approach regularly and sensibly unless they receive additional information. . . The conditions of the (work setting) are different from training situations: One cannot simply walk from the training session into the (work setting) with the skill completely ready for use—it has to be changed to fit the work conditions. Joyce and Showers, 1982, p.5

What is involved in creating a sustained follow-up program for professional learning? One source of ideas would be to review the chart provided above in this section of the purposes and variety of professional learning models and strategies. Strategies that indicate their purpose is translating into practice, practicing teaching, and reflecting are effective follow-up activities. These strategies provide support while educators are implementing and using new classroom practices.

Follow-up can take many forms—both classroom-based and non-classroom based. Killion (2002) provides a variety of strategies that can provide follow-up support and assistance in the following chart.

<b>Nonclassroom Follow-up Support</b>		<b>↔</b>	<b>Classroom-based Follow-up Support</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-mail</li> <li>• phone</li> <li>• web site</li> <li>• listserv</li> <li>• electronic networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refresher meetings</li> <li>• conferences</li> <li>• advanced training</li> <li>• newsletters</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrations</li> <li>• co-teaching</li> <li>• observation with feedback</li> <li>• planning sessions</li> <li>• curriculum/lesson/unit development</li> <li>• problem-solving sessions</li> <li>• examining student work</li> <li>• action research</li> </ul>	

What Works in the Elementary School, Killion, 2002

Follow-up support can also be conducted by teams developed as a result of becoming a learning community (see Section 2 of the Implementation Guide). The groups can be organized by grade level or as a vertical team consisting of multiple grade levels or a variety of content areas. The team's activities could include

- Problem-solving barriers to implementation.
- Studying content embedded in standards.
- Developing powerful lessons and assessments.
- Critiquing student work.
- Observing and coaching in each others' classrooms.
- Determining needs for additional learning.

All of these activities provide the kind of follow-up and assistance described in the research on training and effective professional learning. For additional strategies and information review the Reading section of the Resource Guide.

Follow-up assistance and support is essential in order to translate new knowledge into consistent and sustained classroom practice. The effort and resources used to provide new knowledge and skills will be wasted unless there is a strong program that supports educators as they try to use new strategies with students.

In the past, planning for professional development involved identifying a topic/program, securing a consultant, and arranging for a room, materials, and food. This section of the Implementation Guide outlines some of the new skills that are required to ensure that professional learning activities address student learning needs and develop educators' skills and knowledge. This section's message is that planning and developing professional learning needs to take more time in order to ensure that the activities, trainings, team meetings, and staff conversations are all focused on a common goal of improving educator skills and practices. Student learning will only be improved when professional learning intentionally focuses on changing leadership and classroom practices. Those kinds of changes will not occur without careful analysis of data, careful attention to teacher needs, deliberate long-term planning for specific results, and intentional use of a variety of professional learning strategies.

## 6. Evaluating the Impact of Professional Learning

The same phrase begins each of Georgia’s Standards for Professional Learning—**Professional learning that improves the learning of all students**. . . These standards were written with a single outcome in mind—to ensure that the professional learning of educators improves their students’ achievement. One of the Process Standards for Professional Learning focuses on the comprehensive evaluation of professional learning. The purpose of evaluation is two fold: to determine areas of improvement needed for current programs and to determine what difference professional learning makes for teachers and students.

*Evaluation: Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.*

The evaluation of professional learning, therefore, requires assessing the impact of professional learning on student learning and achievement. But the impact of professional learning needs to be considered in terms of years rather than months. Teachers and principals must first learn about new practices, plan how to use those practices, and implement them with high quality **before** student achievement is assessed.

Additionally, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires rigorous evaluation of professional learning programs. According to the legislation, professional development programs will be “regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development. Ultimately the program’s performance will be measured by changes in student achievement over time as shown through the other NCLB reporting requirements.”

The evaluation of professional learning can serve at least two purposes: 1) to allow course correction in current programming to improve implementation and 2) to determine the worth or impact of a program. For example, an evaluation can be conducted in the middle of professional learning activities to determine whether those activities are helping teachers use new mathematics instructional practices in their classrooms. Interviewing teachers and conducting Walk Throughs in classrooms could accomplish this evaluation (Richardson, 2001, October/November). A Walk Through (or learning walk or data-in-a-day) involves a team of people who gather specific data in classrooms, come to consensus on what they saw, and share data back with school staff.

If classroom use of new strategies is not evident and appropriate then the professional learning activities need to be adjusted to ensure support needed by teachers. When appropriate implementation of new classroom practices has occurred and been verified, then an evaluation of the impact of those practices on student learning can be conducted. This second type of evaluation includes analysis of student learning data and student interviews. This evaluation can determine whether those new instructional practices improved student learning. Collecting baseline data about student learning is a necessary first step in order to make this kind of comparison. The evaluation of student learning can take many forms beyond standardized achievement scores. For example, student portfolios, student surveys, student records, parent interviews, and post-secondary training information could also be used to evaluate the impact on student learning.

This section of the Implementation Guide provides information about evaluating professional learning in connection with student learning. Evaluation planning begins when professional development is planned. Information is provided here about the five levels of evaluation 1) participant reaction, 2) participant learning, 3) organizational support, 4) participant use, 5) student impact. Also included for each level are the questions addressed, how the information is gathered, what is measured and assessed, and how the information is used at each level of the evaluation. (See Individual Learning Log form in Section 5: Planning for High-Quality Professional Learning.)

## Levels of Evaluation

There are five levels of evaluation to consider over the course of the change process (Kirkpatrick, 1994; Guskey, 2000). The model was developed for a training model but can be adapted to fit job-embedded activities as well.

### **The first level focuses on participants' reactions to the professional learning activity.**

This evaluation level assesses whether participants felt they used their time well, whether the room arrangement was comfortable, and whether the presenter seemed organized. If conducting study groups or team learning, the questions might include whether the group spent their time well, whether they acquired the resources they needed to do the work, and whether they had a comfortable environment in which to conduct their work. This information is usually gathered using surveys and short-answer questions. It is important at this stage to determine whether the activities need to be redesigned or organized in a different way. It is a mistake, though, to believe that high ratings at this level guarantee use in classrooms or in schools. Equally, it is a mistake to assume that low ratings suggest immediate change is necessary. Low ratings early in the program may just be due to the “initial resistance” that may occur in any new program. Extremes in either direction need to be explored further through dialogue with participants.

**The second level of evaluation addresses participant learning.** This evaluation assesses whether participants learned new information and/or learned new skills. This information is gathered by examining learning logs or portfolios, demonstrations, or mini-lessons. The information is used to determine whether there are any program revisions needed and new resources provided. In a job-embedded setting, members could be asked to complete a learning log about the content of their study and new knowledge or skills.

### **The third level of evaluation assesses organizational support for the new practices.**

This evaluation assesses whether the organization has provided material support toward the development and use of new strategies. This support can include time, funds, collegial relationships, recognition of efforts, and changes in policy. The organization should address any barriers to implementation of the new strategies. If barriers are not removed, changes in practice are less likely to occur. For example, principals may need to learn how to use a new software package to create charts about grade level achievement. The third level of evaluation would determine whether there was adequate access to computers and whether the software was available at the school. This information can be used to reinforce support for desired changes in the classroom or leadership practices (Guskey, 2000). This level would collect similar information whether conducting training activities or job-embedded practices.

**The fourth level of evaluation focuses on implementation of the change in the classroom.**

This evaluation level assesses whether teachers are using the new practices and also assesses the quality of implementation. This information can be gathered through direct observations, Walk Throughs (Richardson, 2001, Oct/Nov), Innovation Configurations (section 3 of this Implementation Guide), or interviews. This information is used to document and support the use of new strategies. This level of evaluation is important because if few teachers are using the new practices, it is unnecessary to assess the impact on student learning.

**The fifth level of evaluation measures the impact on student learning, behaviors, or attitudes.** This evaluation assesses whether there were any changes in student achievement, attendance, or performance. This information can be gathered through analysis of student work, standardized achievement scores, attendance records, or student interviews. The information gathered at this level of evaluation is used to determine program effectiveness and impact.

Studies focusing on the implementation of new classroom innovations have found that expert learning of new strategies takes three to five years of skill training, coaching, and problem-solving. The impact on student learning can only be reliably evaluated when educators have implemented new strategies consistently and appropriately in their classrooms. Guskey strongly suggests that the five levels need to be evaluated in sequence—educators cannot jump to the fifth level without first evaluating the four successive levels. If this sequence is not followed, the evaluation of the impact on student learning will not be valid.

A Quick Guide to Building Evaluations of Staff Development outlines the questions addressed, how the information is gathered, what is measured and assessed, and how the information is used for each of the evaluation levels. The Quick Guide and a worksheet (HO 6.1) are included in this section for your use.

# Quick Guide to Building Evaluations of Staff Development

Issues to Consider	Level 1: Participant Reaction to Staff Development	Level 2: Participant Learning from Staff Development	Level 3: Organizational Support and Change	Level 4: Participant Use of New Knowledge and Skills	Level 5: Results—Student Learning Outcomes
<b>A. What questions are addressed?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did participants like it?</li> <li>• Was their time well spent?</li> <li>• Did the content make sense?</li> <li>• Will the content be useful?</li> <li>• Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful?</li> <li>• Were the refreshments fresh and tasty?</li> <li>• Was the room the right temperature?</li> <li>• Were the chairs comfortable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did participants acquire the knowledge and skills?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the organization support professional development? Including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational policies</li> <li>- Resources</li> <li>- Protection from intrusion</li> <li>- Openness to experimentation</li> <li>- Collegial support</li> <li>- Principal support</li> <li>- District administrative support</li> <li>- Recognition of success</li> <li>- Provision of time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do participants effectively incorporate the new knowledge and skills into classroom practice?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the teacher's staff development affect student learning?</li> <li>• Did it impact student performance?</li> <li>• Is student achievement improving?</li> <li>• Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being?</li> <li>• Are students more confident as learners?</li> <li>• Is student attendance increasing?</li> <li>• Are dropouts decreasing?</li> </ul>
<b>B. How will the information be gathered?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires administered at the end of the session(s).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre/Post assessments</li> <li>• Paper and pencil instruments focused on knowledge</li> <li>• Simulations</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Reflections (oral and/or written)</li> <li>• Participant portfolio</li> <li>• Participant work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct Observation</li> <li>• Analysis of District Records</li> <li>• Analysis of Meeting Minutes</li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• Structured Interviews</li> <li>• Personal Learning Logs and Reflective Journals</li> <li>• Participant Portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations</li> <li>• Innovation Configurations</li> <li>• Participant Interviews</li> <li>• Participant questionnaires</li> <li>• Supervisor interviews</li> <li>• Journal reflections</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> <li>• Project</li> <li>• Classroom videotapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student records and questionnaires</li> <li>• Parent interviews and questionnaires</li> <li>• Teacher interviews and questionnaires</li> <li>• Administrator interviews and questionnaires</li> <li>• School records</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> <li>• Student portfolios</li> </ul>
<b>C. What is measured or assessed?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial satisfaction with the experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New knowledge or skill level of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessing the organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition of those involved in improvement efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree and quality of implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning outcomes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cognitive</li> <li>- affective</li> <li>- psychomotor</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>D. How will the information be used?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the design and delivery of the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the format, content, and organization of the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To document and improve organizational support for change</li> <li>• To increase support strategies that enhance professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To document and improve the implementation of program content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up</li> <li>• To prove that staff development makes a difference in improving student learning/education</li> </ul>

Note: You must complete Level 1 evaluation before going onto Level 2; Level 2 evaluation before going onto Level 3; Level 3 evaluation before going onto Level 4; Level 4 before going onto Level 5.

# Worksheet – Building Evaluations of Staff Development

Issues to Consider	Level 1: Participant Reaction to Staff Development	Level 2: Participant Learning from Staff Development	Level 3: Organizational Support and Change	Level 4: Participant Use of New Knowledge and Skills	Level 5: Results— Student Learning Outcomes
<b>A. What questions are addressed?</b>					
<b>B. How will the information be gathered?</b>					
<b>C. What is measured or assessed?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial satisfaction with the experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New knowledge or skill level of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing the organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition of those involved in improvement efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree and quality of implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student learning outcomes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cognitive</li> <li>- affective</li> <li>- psychomotor</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>D. How will the information be used?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the design and delivery of the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the format, content, and organization of the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To document and improve organizational support for change</li> <li>To increase support strategies that enhance professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To document and improve the implementation of program content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up</li> <li>To prove that staff development makes a difference in improving student learning/education</li> </ul>

Note: You must complete Level 1 evaluation before going onto Level 2; Level 2 evaluation before going onto Level 3; Level 3 evaluation before going onto Level 4; Level 4 before going onto Level 5.

## Innovation Configuration Maps

The document Moving NSDC Staff Development Standards into Practice: Innovation Configurations can not be included here because it is under copyright to the National Staff Development Council.

**Georgia Educators:** The complete document is included in the printed version of this Resource Guide distributed to all Professional Learning Coordinators/Directors in 2005-2006. If you are a Georgia Professional Learning Coordinator/Director and do not have this Resource Guide in hard copy and/or the accompanying video, please contact the Department of Education, Director of the Division of School Improvement in the Office of Teacher and Student Support. A copy of the Innovation Configurations alone is also available from the Department of Education. Georgia Professional Learning Directors may copy Moving NSDC Staff Development Standards into Practice: Innovation Configurations for use by the staff of your school system. Copies may not be given to anyone not employed by your school system. Copies may not be sold under any circumstances.

**Other users:** Moving NSDC Staff Development Standards into Practice: Innovation Configurations is available from the National Staff Development Council on their web site at <http://nsdc.org/library/publications/index.cfm>

# NSDC Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI)

**Directions:** Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. It is best to complete this survey alone. When marking your responses, please fill in bubbles completely. You may use either a pen or pencil. Completing this survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Please mark the responses that most accurately reflect your experiences at your school.**

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
1. Our principal believes teacher learning is essential for achieving our school goals.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Fellow teachers, trainers, facilitators, and/or consultants are available to help us implement new instructional practices at our school.	0	1	2	3	4
3. We design evaluations of our professional development activities prior to the professional development program or set of activities.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Our school uses educational research to select programs.	0	1	2	3	4
5. We have opportunities to practice new skills gained during staff development.	0	1	2	3	4
6. Our faculty learns about effective ways to work together.	0	1	2	3	4
7. Teachers are provided opportunities to gain deep understanding of the subjects they teach.	0	1	2	3	4
8. Teachers are provided opportunities to learn how to involve families in their children's education.	0	1	2	3	4
9. The teachers in my school meet as a whole staff to discuss ways to improve teaching and learning.	0	1	2	3	4
10. Our principal's decisions on school-wide issues and practices are influenced by faculty input.	0	1	2	3	4
11. Teachers at our school have opportunities to learn how to use technology to enhance instruction.	0	1	2	3	4
12. Teachers at our school learn how to use data to assess student learning needs.	0	1	2	3	4
13. We use several sources to evaluate the effectiveness of our professional development on student learning (e.g., classroom observations, teacher surveys, conversations with principals or coaches).	0	1	2	3	4

## SECTION 4 – SAI

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
14. We make decisions about professional development based on research that shows evidence of improved student performance.	0	1	2	3	4
15. At our school teacher learning is supported through a combination of strategies (e.g., workshops, peer coaching, study groups, joint planning of lessons, and examination of student work).	0	1	2	3	4
16. We receive support implementing new skills until they become a natural part of instruction.	0	1	2	3	4
17. The professional development that I participate in models instructional strategies that I will use in my classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
18. Our principal is committed to providing teachers with opportunities to improve instruction (e.g., observations, feedback, collaborating with colleagues).	0	1	2	3	4
19. Substitutes are available to cover our classes when we observe each others' classes or engage in other professional development opportunities.	0	1	2	3	4
20. We set aside time to discuss what we learned from our professional development experiences.	0	1	2	3	4
21. When deciding which school improvement efforts to adopt, we look at evidence of effectiveness of programs in other schools.	0	1	2	3	4
22. We design improvement strategies based on clearly stated outcomes for teacher and student learning.	0	1	2	3	4
23. My school structures time for teachers to work together to enhance student learning.	0	1	2	3	4
24. At our school, we adjust instruction and assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners.	0	1	2	3	4
25. We use research-based instructional strategies.	0	1	2	3	4
26. Teachers at our school determine the effectiveness of our professional development by using data on student improvement.	0	1	2	3	4
27. Our professional development promotes deep understanding of a topic.	0	1	2	3	4
28. Our school's teaching and learning goals depend on staff's ability to work well together.	0	1	2	3	4

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
29. We observe each other's classroom instruction as one way to improve our teaching.	0	1	2	3	4
30. At our school, evaluations of professional development outcomes are used to plan for professional development choices.	0	1	2	3	4
31. Communicating our school mission and goals to families and community members is a priority.	0	1	2	3	4
32. Beginning teachers have opportunities to work with more experienced teachers at our school.	0	1	2	3	4
33. Teachers show respect for all of the student sub-populations in our school (e.g., poor, minority).	0	1	2	3	4
34. We receive feedback from our colleagues about classroom practices.	0	1	2	3	4
35. In our school we find creative ways to expand human and material resources.	0	1	2	3	4
36. When considering school improvement programs we ask whether the program has resulted in student achievement gains.	0	1	2	3	4
37. Teachers at our school expect high academic achievement for all of our students.	0	1	2	3	4
38. Teacher professional development is part of our school improvement plan.	0	1	2	3	4
39. Teachers use student data to plan professional development programs.	0	1	2	3	4
40. School leaders work with community members to help students achieve academic goals.	0	1	2	3	4
41. The school improvement programs we adopt have been effective with student populations similar to ours.	0	1	2	3	4
42. At my school, teachers learn through a variety of methods (e.g., hands-on activities, discussion, dialogue, writing, demonstrations, practice with feedback, group problem solving).	0	1	2	3	4
43. Our school leaders encourage sharing responsibility to achieve school goals.	0	1	2	3	4
44. We are focused on creating positive relationships between teachers and students.	0	1	2	3	4

**SECTION 4 – SAI**

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Always</b>
45. Our principal fosters a school culture that is focused on instructional improvement.	0	1	2	3	4
46. Teachers use student data when discussing instruction and curriculum.	0	1	2	3	4
47. Our principal models how to build relationships with students' families.	0	1	2	3	4
48. I would use the word, empowering, to describe my principal.	0	1	2	3	4
49. School goals determine how resources are allocated.	0	1	2	3	4
50. Teachers analyze classroom data with each other to improve student learning.	0	1	2	3	4
51. We use students' classroom performance to assess the success of teachers' professional development experiences.	0	1	2	3	4
52. Teachers' prior knowledge and experience are taken into consideration when designing staff development at our school.	0	1	2	3	4
53. At our school, teachers can choose the types of professional development they receive (e.g., study group, action research, observations).	0	1	2	3	4
54. Our school's professional development helps me learn about effective student assessment techniques.	0	1	2	3	4
55. Teachers work with families to help them support students' learning at home.	0	1	2	3	4
56. Teachers examine student work with each other.	0	1	2	3	4
57. When we adopt school improvement initiatives we stay with them long enough to see if changes in instructional practice and student performance occur.	0	1	2	3	4
58. Our principal models effective collaboration.	0	1	2	3	4
59. Teachers receive training on curriculum and instruction for students at different levels of learning.	0	1	2	3	4
60. Our administrators engage teachers in conversations about instruction and student learning.	0	1	2	3	4

# NSDC Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI)

## SCORING GUIDE

### I. Administering the SAI:

- A) Provide each faculty member with a copy of the SAI and a scoring sheet. Ask them to independently record their responses to each item.
- B) Select a faculty member or group of faculty to create a Frequency Distribution for each item by tallying the number of people who scored in each of the five categories: *Never*, *Seldom*, *Sometimes*, *Frequently*, *Always*. For example:

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
0	3	12	15	2

If possible, convert these frequency tables into bar graphs.

- C) Select another faculty member or group of faculty to compute the average score for each item. (Total all the ratings for an item and divide by the number of faculty responding to the item). Never=0, Seldom=1, Sometimes=2, Frequently=3, Always=4.
- D) Next, compute the overall school score for each of the twelve standards by totaling the average scores for the five questions under each standard and dividing by 5 (the number of items in each section). For example items #9, 29, 32, 34, and 56 address Standard 1: Learning Community. Add up the average scores for those five items and divide by 5 to determine the overall score for Standard 1.

### II. Interpreting Results:

- A) Review the Frequency Distributions (see above) and determine whether there is general agreement or disagreement among faculty members. For example, did most Staff members respond Seldom or Never to a specific item or are the responses scattered among all of the five categories. Wide distribution indicates disagreement among faculty concerning the statement. This type of distribution requires further dialogue among faculty members to clarify the reasons for the differences.
- B) Create a list that rank orders the average scores of the standards from highest to lowest.

### III. Taking Action:

- A) Hold a group discussion and come to consensus on which 3-4 standards are most important for improving student learning. Identify the standards that, if improved, would have the greatest potential for making advancements in the school. Use the Analysis Questions provided as a starting point.
- B) Create an action plan for implementing the priority standards. Refer to the Innovation Configurations for the NSDC Standards for suggestions for possible actions.

# (SAI) Scoring Form

## CONTEXT

### Learning Communities

- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 29. \_\_\_\_\_
- 32. \_\_\_\_\_
- 34. \_\_\_\_\_
- 56. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Leadership

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_
- 45. \_\_\_\_\_
- 48. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Resources

- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. \_\_\_\_\_
- 35. \_\_\_\_\_
- 49. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROCESS

### Data-Driven

- 12. \_\_\_\_\_
- 26. \_\_\_\_\_
- 39. \_\_\_\_\_
- 46. \_\_\_\_\_
- 50. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Evaluation

- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_
- 51. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Research-Based

- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. \_\_\_\_\_
- 21. \_\_\_\_\_
- 36. \_\_\_\_\_
- 41. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Design

- 15. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_
- 38. \_\_\_\_\_
- 52. \_\_\_\_\_
- 57. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Learning

- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_
- 42. \_\_\_\_\_
- 53. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Collaboration

- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. \_\_\_\_\_
- 28. \_\_\_\_\_
- 43. \_\_\_\_\_
- 58. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTENT

### Equity

- 24. \_\_\_\_\_
- 33. \_\_\_\_\_
- 37. \_\_\_\_\_
- 44. \_\_\_\_\_
- 59. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Quality Teaching

- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_
- 54. \_\_\_\_\_
- 60. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Family Involvement

- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 31. \_\_\_\_\_
- 40. \_\_\_\_\_
- 47. \_\_\_\_\_
- 55. \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

# Analysis Questions

**Use these questions to assist in the development of an Action Plan.**

- How well does our school adhere to the professional development practices within each standard?
- In what standards do we rate the highest? The lowest?
- Which practices, if improved, will have the most impact on student learning?
- Do the scores of these items suggest any areas of improvement that this school should investigate further?

# Using Professional Learning Standards to Improve Schools

## NSDC's Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI)

The Georgia Department of Education encourages schools and districts to use the results of the NSDC Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) to learn if their professional learning and professional development programs align with the Georgia Professional Learning Standards and the state's definition of quality professional learning. The results of the survey are also an invaluable tool for the school and the district to use to develop their Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIP). The Standards Assessment Inventory is a valid and reliable instrument for measuring the perceived extent of implementation in a school of the Georgia Professional Learning Standards (SEDL, 2004).

The free, online survey enables all staff members to respond to a 60-question survey that takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. The Georgia Department of Education provides access codes to all districts for distribution to each principal. This school code allows the faculty and staff to respond to the online survey for a designated period of time. At the conclusion of this time period, the program generates a number of summary reports for each school. Districts have access to school reports, and a summary report for each district is generated as well.

### Information from the assessment includes:

- **Report 1: Standard and Question Averages**

The chart shows the average standard values calculated from the question responses and outlines the five standards needing the most improvement. An additional chart accompanies this report that shows the numerical average response value for each question grouped by standard. There are five questions per standard.

- **Report 2: Frequency Counts by Standard Question**

Bar graphs display the frequency of each response by count and percentage for each question. This report is organized by the three standards categories: Context, Process, and Content and lists the accompanying standards and five questions.

The following activities are intended to assist a school's leadership team and staff in analyzing and interpreting the SAI survey results. The activities also begin to familiarize the school faculty with the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning by using the resources provided to every principal in the [Georgia Standards for Professional Learning Resource Guide: School-Based](#). The SAI, the Resource Guide and these activities are all intended to help schools develop successful school improvement plans that will increase student learning.

## **Staff Activity 1: Identify Standards to be addressed in the School Improvement Plan**

### Purposes:

1. To familiarize staff with the survey and the data reports.
2. To identify 1 - 2 Professional Learning Standards to begin to implement as a school and to incorporate into the school's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)
3. To increase understanding of the standards and the extent to which they are part of the school improvement process.

Audience: All faculty

Time: 60 – 90 minutes

### Preparation:

- ❖ Completion of the SAI.
- ❖ Make copies of **Standards Assessment Inventory Questions** (attached) and the **Standard and Question Averages Report** for the school.

Materials: Chart paper, markers, tape, copies of the **Standards Assessment Inventory Questions** (attached), and copies of the **Standard and Question Averages Report** for the school.

### Directions to the Principal/Facilitator:

1. Group staff into either vertical groups (all math teachers, for example) or horizontal groups (all fourth grade teachers, for example). Distribute the **Standard and Question Averages Report** for the school and the “**Standards Assessment Inventory Questions.**”
2. Using the “Standards Assessment Inventory Questions” and the Standard and Question Averages Report ask each group to discuss how the staff perceives practices in the school relative to each Standard.
3. Each group comes to consensus on **1 – 2 Standards** that appear to be strengths for your school that would have the greatest chance to impact student success if enhanced and extended. Each group reports and explains their recommendations. The total group then comes to consensus on 1 – 2 for the entire staff to explore further.
4. Each group comes to consensus on **1 – 2 Standards** that appear to be areas for improvement for your school that would have the greatest chance to impact student success if successfully implemented. Each group explains their recommendations. The total group then comes to consensus on 1 – 2 for the entire staff to explore further.

## Staff Activity 2: Analyze the 1 - 2 Standards Selected

### Purposes:

1. To use the **Frequency Counts by Standard Question Report** to clarify staff understanding of and responses to the questions for each of the Standards selected for emphasis and implementation.
2. To deepen staff understanding of the Professional Learning standards and the extent to which they are part of the school's improvement process.

Audience: All faculty

Time: 60 – 90 minutes

Preparation: Make copies of the **Frequency Counts by Standard Question Report** for each of the 1 -2 Standards selected by the staff in Staff Activity 1.

Materials: Chart paper, markers, tape, copies of the selected Standards in the **Frequency Counts by Standard Question Report** for each staff (or small group).

### Directions to the Principal/Facilitator:

1. Using the **Frequency Counts by Standard Question Report** either small groups or the total group (depending on the size of the staff) reviews each of the five questions for each of the 1 - 2 Standards the staff has selected to explore.
  - Does the “average” for each question accurately represent practice in your school as perceived by the majority of staff?

NOTE: A wide distribution of responses may indicate varied practice (or perception of practice) among staff or even that some staff did not actually understand the question.

For example,

- An average of 3.3 would occur if 75% of the participants responded 3 (Frequently) and 25% responded 4 (Always); this might be considered agreement among the staff.
  - If, on the other hand 25% responded 0 (never), 25% responded 3 (Frequently) and 50% responded 4 (Always) that would definitely be a difference in perceived practices among the staff and may need to be discussed further.
  - For some practices, such a wide distribution may be accurate. In that case, the staff then can decide is this a practice we want to be using through out the school and if so, how might this support the implementation of the SIP?
2. Groups report out any questions where they found a range of responses and their interpretation of the reasons for that range.

### **Staff Activity 3: Study the Standards to Enhance the Vision**

Purposes:

1. To deepen the understanding of the 1 - 2 Standards the staff identified for further exploration and possible inclusion in the school improvement plan.
2. To see the relationship between each Standard and improved staff and student performance.

(Remember, the activity can be used every time staff begin to explore a new Standard.)

Directions to the Principal/Facilitator:

Using the 1 - 2 Standards identified in **Staff Activity 1** above, staff completes the activity on pages 25-29 of the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning Resource Guide: School-Based. (Rationales for Standards can also be found in Tab 3 with the Innovation Configuration (IC) Maps.)

#### **Staff Activity 4: Assess Specific Standards**

Purposes:

1. Use the Innovation Configuration maps and the Standards Assessment Inventory results to assess the current level of practices for the 1 - 2 identified standards.
2. Use the analysis of the SAI results for improving professional learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

Directions to the Principal/Facilitator:

1. **Use the directions from the modified pages 43a – 43m (Attached) for the activity Assess Specific Standards on pages 43 - 44 of the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning Resource Guide: School-Based with the 1 - 2 Standards identified in Staff Activity 1 above. (In the District edition of the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning Resource Guide, this activity can be found on pp. 49-51.)**

## **Additional Notes for Principal/Facilitator for Activity 4**

This is the most critical of these four activities because this is where your data and knowledge of the standards is incorporated into the CSIP and therefore translated into action.

**Audience considerations:** This is a school leadership decision. The initial work of developing this part of your CSIP might fall to the leadership team or some other representative cross section of the staff, large or small. Ultimately, however, the entire staff must understand the plan, buy into the plan and support it, so the more staff that can be involved in the development of the plan, the better.

**Use of the Action Planning Process Tool:** The attached chart has 12 pages, one for each of the 12 Professional Learning Standards. You will need the pages for the 1 - 2 Standards your staff has chosen as having a high impact on student success.

Each chart is organized with a statement of the Standard on the left. Below that are the “Desired Outcomes” for teachers and principals. These come out of the Innovation Configuration Maps in Section 3 of your Resource Guide notebook. Where a teacher and principal desired outcome align, they appear side by side. (Note: the numbering, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc will not necessarily align. They are for reference only.)

The five columns on the right of the chart are your planning columns.

1. It is recommended that in Column 1 you place the statement from the rubric for that desired outcome that your staff identified as the current level of practice/behavior in your school. This is your current level. When the teacher and principal desired outcomes are aligned, the staff may discuss a combination statement of current practice, or you may choose to include the statement of current level of practice from both the teacher and principal rubric.
2. It is recommended that in Column 2 you place the next higher statement from the rubric for that desired outcome. (The rubric places the highest level of behavior as “Level 1” and lower levels with higher numbers.)

***Both of these first two columns could be filled out before the design/planning group begins its work.***

3. Self-explanatory
4. Self-explanatory
5. Note: Research has shown that the most effective strategy for dealing with barriers and boosters is to increase the number and power of the boosters and many of the barriers will disappear. Beginning with barriers can be negative and can create dissention, so beginning with strengthening and supporting current boosters and adding new ones is positive action.

When developing the action steps for each of the Desired Outcomes, keep in mind that you could be dealing with up to 25 or more Desired Outcomes for Principals and Teachers together. This may require prioritizing how you address your action ideas. In addition, in many cases, a principal desired outcome may require action before the corresponding teacher desired outcome can begin action. The key will be for the leadership team and staff to thoroughly familiarize themselves with each Standard by studying the Innovation Configuration maps for that Standard.

# Standards Assessment Inventory Questions

## Context Standards:

### Learning Communities (Questions 9, 29, 32, 34, 56)

9. The teachers in my school meet as a whole staff to discuss ways to improve teaching and learning.
29. We observe each other's classroom instruction as one way to improve our teaching.
32. Beginning teachers have opportunities to work with more experienced teachers at our school.
34. We receive feedback from our colleagues about classroom practices.
56. Teachers examine student work with each other.

### Leadership (1, 10, 18, 45, 48)

1. Our principal believes teacher learning is essential for achieving our school goals.
10. Our principal's decisions on school-wide issues and practices are influenced by faculty input.
18. Our principal is committed to providing teachers with opportunities to improve instruction (e.g., observations, feedback, collaborating with colleagues).
45. Our principal fosters a school culture that is focused on instructional improvements.
48. I would use the word empowering to describe my principal.

### Resources (2, 11, 19, 35, 49)

2. Fellow teachers, trainers, facilitators, and/or consultants are available to help us implement new instructional practices at our school.
11. Teachers at our school have opportunities to learn how to use technology to enhance instruction.
19. Substitutes are available to cover our classes when we observe each others' classes or engage in other professional development opportunities.
35. In our school we find creative ways to expand human and material resources.
49. School goals determine how resources are allocated.

## Process Standards

### Data-Driven (12, 26, 39, 46, 50)

12. Teachers at our school learn how to use data to assess student learning needs.
26. Teachers at our school determine the effectiveness of our professional development by using data on student improvement.
39. Teachers use student data to plan professional development programs.
46. Teachers use student data when discussing instruction and curriculum.
50. Teachers analyze classroom data with each other to improve learning.

### Evaluation (3, 13, 20, 30, 51)

3. We design evaluations of our professional development activities prior to the professional development program or set of activities.

13. We use several sources to evaluate the effectiveness of our professional development on student learning (e.g., classroom observations, teacher surveys, conversations with principals or coaches).
20. We set aside time to discuss what we learned from our professional development experiences.
30. At our school, evaluations of professional development outcomes are used to plan for professional development choices.
51. We use students' classroom performance to assess the success of teachers' professional development experiences.

**Research-Based** (4, 14, 21, 36, 41)

4. Our school uses educational research to select programs.
14. We make decisions about professional development based on research that shows evidence of improved student performance.
21. When deciding which school improvement efforts to adopt, we look at evidence of effectiveness of programs in other schools.
36. When considering school improvement programs we ask whether the program has resulted in student achievement gains.
41. The school improvement programs we adopt have been effective with student populations similar to ours.

**Design** (15, 22, 38, 52, 57)

15. At our school teacher learning is supported through a combination of strategies (e.g., workshops, peer coaching, study groups, joint planning of lessons, and examination of student work).
22. We design improvement strategies based on clearly stated outcomes for teacher and student learning.
38. Teacher professional development is part of our school improvement plan.
52. Teachers' prior knowledge and experience are taken into consideration when designing staff development at our school.
57. When we adopt school improvement initiatives we stay with them long enough to see if changes in instructional practice and student performance occur.

**Learning** (5, 16, 27, 42, 53)

5. We have opportunities to practice new skills gained during staff development.
16. We receive support implementing new skills until they become a natural part of instruction.
27. Our professional development promotes deep understanding of a topic.
42. At my school, teachers learn through a variety of methods (e.g., hands-on activities, discussion, dialogue, writing, demonstrations, practice with feedback, group problem solving).
53. At our school, teachers can choose the types of professional development they receive (e.g., study group, action research, observations).

**Collaboration** (6, 23, 28, 43, 58)

6. Our faculty learns about effective ways to work together.
39. My school structures time for teachers to work together to enhance student learning.
28. Our school's teaching and learning goals depend on staff's ability to work well together.

- 43. Our school leaders encourage sharing responsibility to achieve school goals.
- 58. Our principal models effective collaboration.

## **Content Standards**

### **Equity (24, 33, 37, 44, 59)**

- 40. At our school, we adjust instruction and assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- 33. Teachers show respect for all of the student sub-populations in our school (e.g., poor, minority).
- 37. Teachers at our school expect high academic achievement for all of our students.
- 44. We are focused on creating positive relationships between teachers and students.
- 59. Teachers receive training on curriculum and instruction for students at different levels of learning.

### **Quality Teaching (7, 17, 25, 54, 60)**

- 7. Teachers are provided opportunities to gain deep understanding of the subjects they teach.
- 17. The professional development that I participate in models instructional strategies that I will use in my classroom
- 41. We use research-based instructional strategies.
- 54. Our school's professional development helps me learn about effective student assessment techniques.
- 60. Our administrators engage teachers in conversations about instruction and student learning.

### **Family Involvement (8, 31, 40, 47, 55)**

- 8. Teachers are provided opportunities to learn how to involve families in their children's education.
- 31. Communicating our school mission and goals to families and community members is a priority.
- 40. School leaders work with community members to help students achieve academic goals.
- 47. Our principal models how to build relationships with students' families.
- 55. Teachers work with families to help them support students' learning at home.

**ASSESS SPECIFIC STANDARDS:  
Modified Activity for use with analyzing the SAI results  
See p. 43 Georgia Professional Learning Standards Resource Guide – School-Based**

**Activity:** Assess Specific Standards (Modified for use with the SAI results)

**Purpose:**

1. Use the Innovation Configuration maps (for *Teacher* and *Principal*) and the SAI results to assess current level of practices for the 2 - 4 selected standards.
2. Use the analysis of the SAI results for improving professional learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

**Group size:** 6 – 8 people per group

**Time:** 30 minutes per standard

**Materials:** *Teacher* and *Principal* Innovation Configuration maps for the 2 – 4 identified standards of focus and copies of the needed charts from pages (43b –m).

**Directions:**

1. With the entire faculty, form groups of 6 – 8 people.
2. Review with participants that they will be engaged in both dialogue and discussion. See Handout 3.1 on dialogue and discussion on page 44 of the School Resource Guide.
3. Ask participants to review individually (for *Teacher* and *Principal*) each Desired Outcome and read each of the levels for the standards being studied. Circle the level that most closely describes the current practice within the school.
4. Ask participants to share their initial rating for the item with a **dialogue** among members that allows each member to explain his/her rating.
5. Once all views have been shared, the small groups use **discussion** to come to consensus on a rating. Repeat the process to come to whole group consensus.
6. *For only the Desired Outcomes the staff chooses to address*, plot the agreed upon current levels of implementation in column ① of the appropriate Action Planning Process Tool chart page (pages 43b – 43m - below).
7. **Participants reflect on the ratings and complete the planning process chart to decide what actions to take** for improving professional learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.
8. **Submit revision proposals to the School Improvement Planning committee.**

**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i> <b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		① What we are doing now ... (current)	② What we want to do ... (desired)	③ Barriers	④ Boosters	⑤ Action Ideas for revising the SIP
<b>LEARNING COMMUNITIES</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
	<i>1.4: Creates and maintains a learning community to support teacher and student learning.</i>					
	<i>1.3: Understands and implements an incentive system that ensures collaborative work.</i>					
<i>1.1: Meets regularly with colleagues during the school day to plan instruction.</i>	<i>1.1: Prepares teachers for skillful collaboration</i>					
<i>1.2: Aligns collaborative work with school improvement goals.</i>	<i>1.2: Creates an organizational structure that supports collegial learning.</i>					
<i>1.3: Participates in learning teams, some of whose membership extends beyond the school.</i>	<i>1.5: Participates with other administrators in one or more learning communities.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
- ② What is the next level of behavior/practice from the IC on that Desired Outcome that the school wants to pursue in the SIP?
- ③ What will currently hinder our efforts to make these changes?
- ④ What will currently support our efforts to make these changes?
- ⑤ What actions will we take to increase the current level of Professional Learning Standards use in supporting the implementation of the SIP?

**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
	2.2: Creates a school culture that supports continuous improvement.					
	2.1: Promotes a school culture that supports ongoing team learning and improvement.					
2.1: Participates in instructional leadership development experiences.	2.3Creates experiences for teachers to serve as instructional leaders within the school.					
2.2 Serves in a variety of instructional leadership roles.	2.8: Participates in professional learning to become a more effective instructional leader.					
2.3: Contributes to the planning of school-based professional learning.	2.4: Involves the faculty in planning and implementing high quality professional learning for the school.					
2.4: Articulates the intended results of professional development programs on teacher practice.	2.6: Articulates the intended results of school-based professional development.					
2.5: Advocates for support of professional development.	2.7: Advocates for high-quality school-based professional learning.					
2.6: Articulates the benefits of professional learning.	2.5: Models continuous improvement and professional learning.					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) *professional learning behaviors* using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ①What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
- ②What is the next level of behavior/practice from the IC on that Desired Outcome that the school wants to pursue in the SIP?
- ③What will currently hinder our efforts to make these changes?
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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i> <b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		① What we are doing now ... (current)	② What we want to do ... (desired)	③ Barriers	④ Boosters	⑤ Action Ideas for revising the SIP
<b>RESOURCES</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
	3.2: <i>Focuses on a small number of high-priority goals.</i>					
3.1: <i>Participates in professional learning during the workday.</i>	3.1: <i>Allocates resources to support job-embedded professional learning in the school.</i>					
3.2: <i>Accesses funds to support learning priorities.</i>	3.3: <i>Allocates resources to provide for continuous improvement of school staff.</i>					
3.3: <i>Receives external and internal support related to learning priorities.</i>						
	3.4: <i>Allocates resources so technology supports student learning.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
- ② What is the next level of behavior/practice from the IC on that Desired Outcome that the school wants to pursue in the SIP?
- ③ What will currently hinder our efforts to make these changes?
- ④ What will currently support our efforts to make these changes?
- ⑤ What actions will we take to increase the current level of Professional Learning Standards use in supporting the implementation of the SIP?

**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>DATA-DRIVEN</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>4.1: Analyzes disaggregated student data to identify adult learning priorities at the classroom, school, and district levels.</i>	<i>4.1: Analyzes with the faculty disaggregated student data to determine school improvement/professional learning goals.</i>					
<i>4.2: Analyzes a variety of disaggregated data to identify learning needs of professionals.</i>	<i>4.2: Analyzes a variety of disaggregated data to identify school improvement/professional learning goals.</i>					
<i>4.3: Works with colleagues to use disaggregated data to establish professional learning goals.</i>	<i>4.3: .Engages teachers, parents, and community members in data-driven decision making</i>					
<i>4.4: Analyzes relevant student data in order to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies.</i>	<i>4.5: Collects, uses, and disseminates data that monitor the accomplishment of schoolwide goals.</i>					
	<i>4.4: Analyzes relevant staff data to design teacher professional development.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) *professional learning behaviors* using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?

② What is the next level of behavior/practice from the IC on that Desired Outcome that the school wants to pursue in the SIP?

③ What will currently hinder our efforts to make these changes?

④ What will currently support our efforts to make these changes?

⑤ What actions will we take to increase the current level of Professional Learning Standards use in supporting the implementation of the SIP?

Adapted from NSDC. (2001). Planning chart for action ideas. *Tools for Growing the NSDC Standards*. p. 16-17 by GDOE

**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>EVALUATION</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>5.1: Contributes a variety of data to evaluate the impact of professional learning.</i>	<i>5.1: Develops a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing evaluation of professional learning and professional development programs.</i>					
<i>5.2: Collects and analyzes classroom data to determine the impact of professional learning.</i>	<i>5.2: Evaluates school-based professional learning and professional development using a variety of data.</i>					
	<i>5.3: Designs formative and summative evaluations of school-based professional learning.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

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## Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results for School Improvement Planning

Standard: <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		① What we are doing now ... (current)	② What we want to do ... (desired)	③ Barriers	④ Boosters	⑤ Action Ideas for revising the SIP
Desired Outcomes:						
RESEARCH-BASED						
Teacher	Principal					
	<i>6.2: Develops staff and community capacity to analyze research that supports school-wide instructional decisions.</i>					
<i>6.1: Uses educational research when making instructional decisions.</i>	<i>6.1: Reads and interprets educational research.</i>					
	<i>6.3: Uses educational research when adopting professional learning/school improvement approaches.</i>					
	<i>6.4: Involves faculty and the community in analyzing research to make informed instructional decisions.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) *professional learning behaviors* using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		① <b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	② <b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	③ <b>Barriers</b>	④ <b>Boosters</b>	⑤ <b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>						
<b>DESIGN</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>7.1: Participates in a variety of appropriate professional learning designs aligned with expected improvement outcomes.</i>	<i>7.1: Ensures that professional learning designs align with expected outcomes.</i>					
<i>7.2: Participates in long-term and in-depth professional learning.</i>	<i>7.2: Provides long-term, in-depth, sustained professional learning efforts.</i>					
<i>7.3: Implements new classroom practices as a result of follow-up support</i>	<i>7.3: Establishes expectations for implementation of new classroom practices.</i>					
<i>7.4: Uses technology as a component of professional learning when appropriate.</i>	<i>7.4: Promotes technology as a professional learning tool.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) *professional learning behaviors* using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i> <b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		① What we are doing now ... (current)	② What we want to do ... (desired)	③ Barriers	④ Boosters	⑤ Action Ideas for revising the SIP
<b>LEARNING</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>8.1: Participates in professional learning that mirrors expected instructional methods.</i>	<i>8.1: Applies knowledge about the change process when planning and implementing school-based professional learning.</i>					
<i>8.2: Participates in professional learning that impacts depth of understanding.</i>	<i>8.2: Ensures that school-based professional learning develops teachers' deep understanding.</i>					
<i>8.3: Participates in a variety of professional learning experiences appropriate to career stage.</i>	<i>8.3: Provides professional learning experiences appropriate to career stages.</i>					
<i>8.4: Engages in professional learning that considers participant concerns about new practices.</i>	<i>8.4: Considers staff feelings and concerns when designing professional learning experiences.</i>					

For the **standard selected by the school for focus**, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>COLLABORATION</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
	<i>9.1: Builds a school culture that is characterized by trust.</i>					
<i>9.1: Participates in a school Culture that is characterized by collegiality and shared responsibility.</i>	<i>9.2: Builds a school culture that is characterized by collective responsibility for student learning.</i>					
<i>9.2: Develops knowledge about effective group process.</i>	<i>9.3: Assists teachers in learning how to work successfully with colleagues.</i>					
<i>9.3: Collaborates successfully with colleagues.</i>	<i>9.4: Models the use of effective collaboration skills when working with faculty.</i>					
<i>9.4: Uses effective conflict management skills with colleagues.</i>	<i>9.5: Assists team members in learning effective conflict management skills.</i>					
	<i>9.6: Uses effective conflict management skills with staff and colleagues.</i>					
<i>9.5: Uses technology to support collegial interactions.</i>	<i>9.7: Encourages and provides technology to support collegial interactions.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>10.1: Analyzes the impact of attitude, backgrounds, culture, and social class on the teaching process.</i>	<i>10.1: Communicates high expectations for self and for all teachers and students.</i>					
<i>10.2: Develops skills that communicate high expectations for each student.</i>	<i>10.2: Works with staff to understand the impact of attitudes on instruction and to modify classroom practices.</i>					
<i>10.3: Establishes a learning environment that is emotionally and physically safe.</i>	<i>10.3: Establishes a school environment that is emotionally and physically safe for teachers and students.</i>					
<i>10.4: Demonstrates respect and appreciation for students and families and for their cultural backgrounds.</i>	<i>10.4: Demonstrates respect and appreciation for students and families and for their cultural backgrounds.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>QUALITY TEACHING</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>11.1: Demonstrates a deep understanding of subject matter that assists students to meet rigorous standards.</i>	<i>11.1: Promotes educators deep understanding of content knowledge and the use of research-based instructional strategies as a high priority in the school.</i>					
<i>11.2: Uses appropriate instructional strategies that help students meet rigorous standards.</i>						
<i>11.3: Uses various classroom assessment strategies to monitor student progress toward meeting standards.</i>	<i>11.2: Promotes the use of a variety of classroom assessments as a high priority in the school.</i>					
	<i>11.3: Creates work schedules that support professional learning and collaboration about quality teaching.</i>					
	<i>11.4: Promotes a culture of innovation that continuously improves quality teaching.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
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**Action Planning Process Tool for Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory Results  
for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		① <b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	② <b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	③ <b>Barriers</b>	④ <b>Boosters</b>	⑤ <b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>						
<b>FAMILY INVOLVEMENT</b>						
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Principal</b>					
<i>12.1: Develops partnerships with families and other community stakeholders.</i>	<i>12.1: Develops partnerships among teachers, families, and community stakeholders.</i>					
<i>12.2: Implements strategies to increase family and caregiver involvement.</i>	<i>12.2: Implements strategies to increase family involvement.</i>					
<i>12.3: Uses technology to increase communication between school and home about student learning.</i>	<i>12.3: Uses technology to increase family involvement.</i>					

For the standard selected by the school for focus, translate the SAI results into *current* (what we are doing now) and *desired* (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this chart or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **barrier/booster analysis** to create steps for improving Professional Learning that will support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

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**Action Planning Process Tool (Think Sheet)**  
**Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) Results**  
**for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>LEARNING COMMUNITIES</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>1.4: Creates and maintains a learning community to support teacher and student learning.</i>						
<i>1.3: Understands and implements an incentive system that ensures collaborative work.</i>						
<i>1.1: Prepares teachers for skillful collaboration</i>	<i>1.1: Prepare administrators and teachers to be skillful members of learning teams.</i>					
<i>1.2: Creates an organizational structure that supports collegial learning.</i>	<i>1.2: Maintain and support learning teams.</i>					
<i>1.5: Participates with other administrators in one or more learning communities.</i>	<i>1.3: Participate with others as a member of a learning team.</i>					
	<i>1.4: Support learning team use of technology</i>					

For the standard(s) selected by the school for supporting their strategies for improving student achievement, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this “thinksheet” or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **booster/barrier analysis** to create steps for Professional Learning that will support the strategies for achieving the identified measurable student achievement goals.

- ① What is the level of behavior/practice identified by the staff for this Desired Outcome?
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**Action Planning Process Tool (Think Sheet)**  
**Using the Professional Learning Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) Results**  
**for School Improvement Planning**

<b>Standard:</b> <i>Professional Learning that improves the learning of all students...</i>		①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>		<b>What we are doing now ...</b> (current)	<b>What we want to do ...</b> (desired)	<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Action Ideas for revising the SIP</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>2.2: Creates a school culture that supports continuous improvement.</i>						
<i>2.1: Promotes a school culture that supports ongoing team learning and improvement.</i>	<i>2.1: Provide professional learning experiences to enable principals to function as instructional leaders.</i>					
<i>2.3: Creates experiences for teachers to serve as instructional leaders within the school.</i>	<i>2.2: Develop teachers to serve as instructional leaders.</i>					
<i>2.8: Participates in professional learning to become a more effective instructional leader.</i>						
	<i>2.3: Promote the knowledge of high quality professional learning</i>					
<i>2.4: Involves the faculty in planning and implementing high quality professional learning for the school.</i>						
<i>2.6: Articulates the intended results of school-based professional development.</i>	<i>2.5: Articulate the intended results of the district-based staff development programs.</i>					
<i>2.7: Advocates for high-quality school-based professional learning.</i>	<i>2.6: Advocate for high-quality professional development.</i>					
<i>2.5: Models continuous improvement and professional learning.</i>	<i>2.7: Model instructional leadership.</i>					
	<i>2.4: Model results-driven staff development for district-wide initiatives.</i>					

For the **standard(s) selected by the school for supporting their strategies for improving student achievement**, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this “thinksheet” or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **booster/barrier analysis** to create steps for Professional Learning that will support the strategies for achieving the identified measurable student achievement goals.

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<b>RESOURCES</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>3.2: Focuses on a small number of high-priority goals.</i>	<i>3.1: Allocate resources to support the identification of district-wide priority goals.</i>					
<i>3.1: Allocates resources to support job-embedded professional learning in the school.</i>						
<i>3.3: Allocates resources to provide for continuous improvement of school staff.</i>	<i>3.2: Allocate resources to create staff development that uses a variety of activities/models.</i>					
<i>3.4: Allocates resources so technology supports student learning.</i>						
	<i>3.3: Provide incentives for participation in results-driven staff development.</i>					

For the standard(s) selected by the school for supporting their strategies for improving student achievement, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this “thinksheet” or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **booster/barrier analysis** to create steps for Professional Learning that will support the strategies for achieving the identified measurable student achievement goals.

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<b>DATA-DRIVEN</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
	<i>4.4: Support administrator and teacher analysis of data.</i>					
<i>4.1: Analyzes with the faculty disaggregated student data to determine school improvement/professional learning goals.</i>	<i>4.2: Use a variety of student data when making program decisions.</i>					
<i>4.2: Analyzes a variety of disaggregated data to identify school improvement/professional learning goals.</i>	<i>4.1: Use disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities.</i>					
<i>4.3: Engages teachers, parents, and community members in data-driven decision making</i>	<i>4.3: Provide opportunities for administrators and teachers to learn how to use data for instructional decision making.</i>					
<i>4.5: Collects, uses, and disseminates data that monitor the accomplishment of school-wide goals.</i>	<i>4.5: Use student data to monitor and support continuous improvement.</i>					
<i>4.4: Analyzes relevant staff data to design teacher professional development.</i>	<i>4.6: Use staff data to design district-wide professional development experiences.</i>					

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<b>EVALUATION</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>5.1: Develops a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing evaluation of professional learning and professional development programs.</i>	<i>5.1: Develop the capacity of school-based leaders to conduct evaluations of school-based professional development.</i>					
<i>5.2: Evaluates school-based professional learning and professional development using a variety of data.</i>	<i>5.2: Evaluate staff development using a variety of data.</i>					
<i>5.3: Designs formative and summative evaluations of school-based professional learning.</i>	<i>5.3: Design summative and formative evaluations of district-based staff development programs.</i>					
	<i>5.4: Produce evaluations of staff development appropriate to specific audiences.</i>					

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<b>RESEARCH-BASED</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
6.2: Develops staff and community capacity to analyze research that supports school-wide instructional decisions.	6.2: Provide experiences for teachers and administrators to learn to use educational research effectively.					
6.1: Reads and interprets educational research.	6.1: Read and interpret educational research.					
6.3: Uses educational research when adopting professional learning/school improvement approaches.	6.3: Analyze research for the purpose of selecting staff development/school improvement approaches.					
6.4: Involves faculty and the community in analyzing research to make informed instructional decisions.	6.4: Provide a clearinghouse of research-based programs and proven best practices to assist schools in making decisions regarding improvement.					

For **the standard(s) selected by the school for supporting their strategies for improving student achievement**, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this “thinksheet” or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **booster/barrier analysis** to create steps for Professional Learning that will support the strategies for achieving the identified measurable student achievement goals.

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<b>DESIGN</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
	<i>7.3: Model effective staff development design in district-wide initiatives.</i>					
	<i>7.4: Provide long-term, sustained staff development programs for district-wide priorities.</i>					
<i>7.1: Ensures that professional learning designs align with expected outcomes.</i>	<i>7.1: Prepare administrators and teachers to design effective professional learning experiences.</i>					
<i>7.2: Provides long-term, in-depth, sustained professional learning efforts.</i>	<i>7.2: Support and monitor the design of school-based professional development.</i>					
<i>7.3: Establishes expectations for implementation of new classroom practices.</i>	<i>7.5: Provide follow-up support for all major change initiatives.</i>					
<i>7.4: Promotes technology as a professional learning tool.</i>	<i>7.6: Use technology as a staff development tool.</i>					

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<b>LEARNING</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>8.1: Applies knowledge about the change process when planning and implementing school-based professional learning.</i>	<i>8.1: Apply knowledge of the change process when planning and implementing district-based staff development.</i>					
<i>8.2: Ensures that school-based professional learning develops teachers' deep understanding.</i>	<i>8.2: Design district-based professional learning to develop participants' depth of understanding of new practices.</i>					
<i>8.3: Provides professional learning experiences appropriate to career stages.</i>	<i>8.3: Provide a variety of professional development experiences appropriate to career stages.</i>					
<i>8.4: Considers staff feelings and concerns when designing professional learning experiences.</i>	<i>8.4: Use teacher feelings and concerns as one of several factors when designing professional development experiences.</i>					

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<b>COLLABORATION</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>9.1: Builds a school culture that is characterized by trust.</i>	<i>9.1: Support a district culture that is characterized by collegiality.</i>					
<i>9.2: Builds a school culture that is characterized by collective responsibility for student learning.</i>	<i>9.2: Builds a district culture that is characterized by collective responsibility for student learning.</i>					
<i>9.3: Assists teachers in learning how to work successfully with colleagues.</i>	<i>9.3: Provide experiences for administrators to learn how to work successfully with colleagues.</i>					
<i>9.4: Models the use of effective collaboration skills when working with faculty.</i>	<i>9.4: Support school-based professional learning about collaboration.</i>					
<i>9.5: Assists team members in learning effective conflict management skills.</i>						
<i>9.6: Uses effective conflict management skills with staff and colleagues.</i>						
<i>9.7: Encourages and provides technology to support collegial interactions.</i>	<i>9.5: Provide technology to support collegial interaction.</i>					

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<b>EQUITY</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
	<i>10.4: Advocate that each student deserves a caring and competent teacher.</i>					
<i>10.2: Works with staff to understand the impact of attitudes on instruction and to modify classroom practices.</i>	<i>10.1: Provide experiences for school and district personnel to develop skills and knowledge related to educational equity.</i>					
<i>10.1: Communicates high expectations for self and for all teachers and students.</i>	<i>10.2: Communicate the district's high expectations for each student, teacher, and administrator.</i>					
<i>10.3: Establishes a school environment that is emotionally and physically safe for teachers and students.</i>						
<i>10.4: Demonstrates respect and appreciation for students and families and for their cultural backgrounds.</i>						
	<i>10.3: Provide a clearinghouse of best practice options to address educational equity.</i>					

For the standard(s) selected by the school for supporting their strategies for improving student achievement, translate the SAI results into **current** (what we are doing now) and **desired** (what we want to do...) **professional learning behaviors** using the Innovation Configuration (IC) in Section 3 of the Professional Learning Resource Guide and the current School Improvement Plan. Utilize this “thinksheet” or a similar planning framework to record the discussion and analysis. Use the **desired** behaviors and the **booster/barrier analysis** to create steps for Professional Learning that will support the strategies for achieving the identified measurable student achievement goals.

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<b>QUALITY TEACHING</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>11.1: Promotes educators deep understanding of content knowledge and the use of research-based instructional strategies as a high priority in the school.</i>	<i>11.1: Ensure that all teachers have deep content knowledge and use research-based instructional strategies in order to effectively teach all students.</i>					
<i>11.2: Promotes the use of a variety of classroom assessments as a high priority in the school.</i>	<i>11.2: Emphasize the use of a variety of classroom assessments as a high priority within the district.</i>					
<i>11.3: Creates work schedules that support professional learning and collaboration about quality teaching.</i>						
<i>11.4: Promotes a culture of innovation that continuously improves quality teaching.</i>	<i>11.3: Develop skills of school administrators to promote quality teaching.</i>					

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<b>FAMILY INVOLVEMENT</b>						
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Central Office Staff Members</b>					
<i>12.1: Develops partnerships among teachers, families, and community stakeholders.</i>						
<i>12.2: Implements strategies to increase family involvement.</i>	<i>12.1: Develop school and district personnel knowledge and skills about family involvement.</i>					
<i>12.3: Uses technology to increase family involvement.</i>	<i>12.2: Support school staff's use of technology to increase family involvement.</i>					

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## A NOTE TO CENTRAL OFFICE

The following “Action Planning Process Tool” is formatted just like the one intended for use in the school. The difference is that the school uses the Desired Outcomes for Teachers and Principals, and this one uses the Desired Outcomes for Principals and Central Offices. The idea is to give you a tool to work with the Principal and the school once they have identified the Desired Outcomes they want to include in their school improvement plan as either *Actions/Strategies/Interventions* or *Needed Professional Development* to support their student achievement goals. With this tool you can:

1. Come to consensus with the principal and/or leadership team in a given school about where the central office is on the rubric for the aligned Desired Outcomes, and
2. See what central office actions will help particular schools address both how to implement and monitor the impact on student learning for their chosen actions (*Desired Outcomes*).

As with the school, this exercise will generate deep conversation between the school and the central office about their school and the services you can provide that school. When you come to consensus on where the central office is on the rubrics for each of the Desired Outcomes, you automatically have a plan for providing services at the level that particular school needs.

Therefore, this is a tool for the central office to use with each school in planning your support for that school as they pursue further implementation of the Georgia Standards for Professional Learning (*Georgia Standards for School Performance - Professional Learning Strand*) to support their student achievement goals.

Please contact the Professional Learning Facilitator in your Regional Support Team if you have questions or would like help with this planning process.

## Discussion Guide for “Standards for Staff Development” Video

### **Meet Our Presenters**

This program features Dennis Sparks, Executive Director and Stephanie Hirsh, Deputy Executive Director of NSDC. In addition, successful staff developers from the United States and Canada share insights and experiences from their schools.

### **To the Facilitators**

Successful staff development requires leadership that will guide continuous instructional improvement in the school. It is not a one-short program. It requires the use of research-based resources and collaboration within learning communities or small clusters of educators. The videotape and implementation guide in this issue of the Video Journal of Education are designed to meet these standards.

This implementation guide will lead you through a series of 20-30 minute learning session that include video and learning activities:

- More than one learning session can be completed at a time
- Each participant should keep a journal.
- Collaborative activities enhance the learning
- The guide allows for flexibility.
- Facilitators may choose to organize activities on their own, modifying these resources to meet school and individual needs.

The important objective must always be improved learning for teachers to ensure increased learning for all students. Whatever form professional learning takes, the priority is for the important staff development standards inherent in these learning sessions to become job-embedded.

**The Steps to Successful Implementation****Step 1 – Preparation**

- Become acquainted with key concepts by watching the videotapes, listening to the CD soundtrack and carefully studying this implementation guide.
- Establish a learning community consisting of a staff or learning team led by an individual that is committed to long-term improvement. Learning communities may also include parents and other stakeholders in education.
- Plan the time necessary to work through each 20-30 minute learning segment with the learning community over a period of several days. More than one segment may be completed in one session.

**Step 2 – Participation**

- Watch the video in small segments as it is impossible to fully digest all the information in one continuous viewing
- Engage in group discussion and activities so that key ideas can be processed and adapted to the individual circumstances of the participants
- Make assignments for performance that will require the learners to practice new ideas in the real workplace.

**Step 3 – Performance**

- Participants consider how to implement new ideas in the school which will ultimately benefit the classroom.
- Collect data to monitor the effectiveness of implementation as it is measured in increased student performance.
- Allow individual access to the videos or CD so that they can, on their own time, solidify the understanding of key concepts.

**Step 4 – Reflection**

- Participants keep a journal to complete assignments and make note of ideas and problems that can be discussed in subsequent staff development sessions.
- Encourage participants to choose a peer coach or partner with whom they can consult on an as needed basis.

## Using the Videotape Program

Each segment of the videotape program begins with a colored bar and icon that can be seen clearly when forward-shuttling the video. The timer of the video player can be set at zero when the first icon appears. The program can then be fast-forwarded to a segment, located by minutes and seconds. The following pages contain brief descriptions of what will be viewed in each segment of the videotape program.

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### **Standards for Staff Development**

#### *Learning Session 1*

##### **Team Building Activity:**

Organize a fun and relaxing activity that will help every member in your learning community feel comfortable interacting with each other.

##### **Thought Provoking Discussion:**

What is the difference between Staff Development, Professional Development, and Professional Learning?

Note to Facilitator: *The three terms of Staff Development, Professional Development, and Professional Learning are essentially synonymous, and in these programs are used interchangeably. However the thinking of many experts favors the term Professional Learning. Explore why the experts prefer Professional Learning with your group.*

##### **Journal Note-Taking Activity:**

Have participants make notes of ideas and thoughts in the video that have implication in their professional work. Be prepared to discuss these notes after the video.

Watch the gold and red segments of the Video (6:42 in length)

---

<b>Time</b>	<b>Key Point in Gold</b>
00:00	<b>Introduction of Issue</b> Staff development should help educators learn the insights, knowledge, and skills they need to become effective classroom and school leaders. Increased student achievement is the underlying goal.
3:02	<b>Professional Learning</b> Three Critical Elements of Professional Learning <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Results-driven</li><li>2. Standards-based</li><li>3. Job-embedded</li></ol> <b>Closure:</b> Share ideas and thoughts from the video that have implications in your school or school system. Encourage participants to make additional notations in their journals that they can review during the next learning session.

**Greater student achievement is at the heart of Professional Learning.***Learning Session 2***Journal Review:**

As a review of the previous session, ask participants to look at their journals and share what they discovered about Professional Learning.

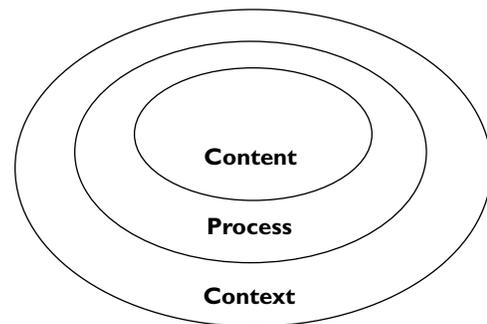
**Present the Guiding Question:**

Why does a good school climate promote Professional Development?

Watch the blue and yellow video segments (12:20 in length)

**Time Key Point in Blue Segment****6:42 Introducing the NSDC Standards**

- The standards prescribed come from the revised Standards for Staff Development published by the National Staff Development Council
- Organized and grouped as Context, Process, and Content Standards, all three must work together and be attended to simultaneously.

**Time Key Point in Yellow****10:50 Context Standards**

Context standards emphasize that all leaders within the educational community have a responsibility to create an environment that support the learning of everyone in the school.

- **Learning Communities:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.
- **Leadership:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.
- **Resources:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

**Discussion:**

Consider the Guiding Question above.

**Thought Provoking Question**

- What can be done in our school to improve the context that encourages professional growth?

**Journal Writing:**

Record thoughts as appropriate

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*Learning Session 3*

**Brainstorming Activity:**

What standards should drive Staff Development?

- In a chalk-talk activity, brainstorm various standards by which staff development should be conducted. Are they Content, Process or Context Standards?
- Watch the green segment (11:32 in length)
- This segment introduces the Process Standards

---

**Time      Key Point of Green Segment**

19:02      **Process Standards**

Process Standards focus on how educators can find and implement the practices that bring students to higher levels of achievement.

- **Data-Driven:** Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.
- **Evaluation:** Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.
- **Research-Based:** Prepares educators to apply research to decision making.
- **Design:** Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.
- **Learning:** Applies knowledge about human learning and change.
- **Collaboration:** Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

**Jigsaw Activity:** Divide participants into pairs or small groups and assign each group one of the process standards to discuss. Have a spokesperson from each group share with everyone a brief summary of the group's discussion.

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*Learning Session 4*

**Discussion Question:**

How should the needs of students be addressed in Staff Development standards?

- Student learning is at the heart of all that is done in professional development
- Watch the purple segment (12:28 in length). This segment introduces the Content Standards.

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**Time      Key Point in Purple Segment**

30:34      **Content Standards**

Content Standards relate directly to what students need to learn and how to learn. Standards established by other educational associations are also recognized.

- **Equity:** Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.

- **Quality Teaching:** Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.
- **Family Involvement:** Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

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**Time**

43:02 End of Videotape Program

**Journal Writing:**

Encourage participants to write down ideas as they relate to their own professional learning experiences.

## The capacity of teachers and principals to create better schools

Recognize and respect the talents that already exist in our schools.

By Dennis Sparks – *Results*, May 2002

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Teachers and principals are the front line of reform. Their work is what ultimately determines student learning. Unfortunately, they are too often unwittingly hampered by many well-intentioned people who believe they know what teachers and principals should be doing and spend much of their time trying to get them to do it.

Instead of manifesting itself in energy and commitment to continuous improvement in student learning, such efforts far too often produce "resistance" in the forms of resignation, passive-aggressive behavior, chronic complaining, and anger. This dynamic between the principals and teachers who are the doers and everyone else who wants them to do it their way (which includes representatives of district offices, state education agencies, and, yes, national education organizations, among others) is a major and largely unrecognized barrier to improvement.

Edward Deci, Richard Koestner, and Richard Ryan, writing in the Spring 2001 *Review of Educational Research* ("Extrinsic Rewards and Intrinsic Motivation in Education: Reconsidered Once Again"), put an academic spin on it: "Events that decrease perceived self-determination will undermine intrinsic motivation, whereas those that increase perceived self-determination will enhance intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, events that increase perceived competence will enhance intrinsic motivation so long as they are accompanied by perceived self-determination, and those that decrease perceived competence will diminish intrinsic motivation." Gerald Nadler and Shozo Hibino, authors of *Breakthrough Thinking* (Prima Publishing, 1994), observe that "we-will-take-care-of-you and we-know-what-is-best-for-you attitudes" often cause people to feel patronized and manipulated and that "resistance may simply be a rejection of perceived manipulation."

Although these two sets of authors come from different orientations, their views can be summarized this way: People (in this case, teachers and principals) are demoralized by attitudes and practices that often unintentionally diminish their collective desire and capacity for improvement. On the other hand, when outsiders interact with school people in ways that enable the latter to feel in control and competent, their commitment to improvement increases.

The quality of interactions between outsiders and insiders, I believe, is at the heart of the issue. Far too often, outsiders act as if there is a single "correct" solution to a school's problems, that outside "experts" know that solution, and that teachers and principals' views and expertise cannot be trusted. Such a view places those who do the work "one down" from those who know how it should be done.

There is another way, however: Those of us outside of schools can tap into the expertise and creative potential that already exists within them rather than provide prescriptions that predictably breed resistance and resignation. For such an approach to work, of course, requires skillful leadership by principals and teacher leaders that changes the conversation about teaching and learning and establishes a deep appreciation of the talents that already reside within the school. Of course, even the most potent forms of outside intervention will also fail without such internal leadership.

All of this does not negate the value of research and outside assistance if it is offered in respectful and empowering ways. Furthermore, educators will desire such assistance and use it effectively when they are energized by self-determination and the act of creating a better future for their students within a system that provides both high expectations and high support.

Examples of such invention exist in many places. A starting point is acknowledging the already existing and often untapped capacity of virtually all teachers and principals to create dramatically better schools. We can begin today by building relationships based on mutual respect and a recognition of the talents that already exist within our schools.

## Dollars and sense

Teacher development takes time and money, but it's the only sure way to improve student performance

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2003 (Vol. 24, No. 3)

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As a nation we have begun to recognize in recent years the importance of teacher professional development--and the importance of investing in it. Yet with current economic difficulties, state legislatures and school districts are being forced to make tough budget decisions to allocate scarce resources.

To meet rising expectations and to prepare to teach more challenging standards, teachers require support. Cutting resources to support professional learning will impair the main strategy all schools have to improve student performance--higher quality instruction through improved teacher learning.

The National Staff Development Council recently challenged the nation's schools to have all teachers in all schools experiencing high-quality professional learning by 2007. To meet this goal, every teacher must be a part of a learning team--a team of teachers who meet almost every day about practical ways to improve teaching and learning. Members of learning teams take collective responsibility for the learning of all the students they teach. These teachers help one another develop deeper understanding of the standards students have to master, help each other plan more effective lessons, critique student work, and work on solving the common problems of teaching. And as learning teams evolve, the whole school becomes a learning community. Team members improve their daily work, advancing schoolwide achievement and district learning goals.

NSDC feels so strongly that committing resources is key to effective professional learning that the organization adopted a resolution and advocates a standard addressing this message. The Council's standard on resources states, "Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration." Representatives of the national organizations (see list below) that helped develop the standards unanimously agreed that effective professional learning requires sufficient resources. The group also agreed states and districts are responsible for providing those resources. The NSDC Board of Trustees, on behalf of the NSDC membership, continued this theme by adopting a resolution that explicitly states the percentage of a district's budget and percentage of time from a teacher's workweek essential for high-quality professional development. The Council recommends that school systems dedicate at least 10% of their budgets to staff development and that at least 25% of an educator's work time be devoted to learning and collaboration with colleagues.

To achieve NSDC's vision of powerful professional learning, educators must first discuss how resources are used. Standards task force members reached a consensus of how resources could be used and how staff and students would benefit, including both providing financial resources for professional learning and providing time.

### Financial Resources

Reduced support for teachers' professional learning will have a long-term, costly impact on all students' education. State and district support for professional development contributes the resources and time needed for high-quality professional learning, including:

- **Outside consultants who provide technical expertise to help districts and schools achieve their priorities.** Many districts don't have the internal capacity to generate the kinds of schoolwide change needed for long-term school improvement. External help may be a school-university partnership, a whole-school reform model, or a consultant with expertise the district does not have on staff.
- **District trainers who help teachers learn new curriculum, instructional strategies, and technology.** Successful districts recognize the importance of building internal expertise, and they invest in developing and supporting their own district trainers. These full-time specialists conduct workshops, provide long-term follow-up, and offer classroom-based support to ensure district priorities are being implemented.

- **School-based coaches who help teachers with standards-based curriculum in areas such as mathematics and language arts.** Some districts invest in full-time, school-based coaches who are assigned to one or two schools. These coaches assist school teams with daily professional learning meetings, support teachers in the classroom as they implement new curricula and instructional strategies, and help address the challenges of teaching all students to high standards.
- **Materials and supplies for teachers' ongoing study.** Professional journals, new books, CDs, and other resources ensure teachers have access to the latest research to advance their thinking and expertise.
- **Memberships in professional and content organizations to support individual and team learning.** Participating in professional associations, content organizations, and regional, state, and national networks often gives teachers the professional incentive and support to continue the hard work of school reform.
- **Money for travel, registration, and substitute teaching time** for teachers and administrators to attend local, state, and national meetings to learn about cutting-edge research and best practices, and share and solve common problems with others away from the work site. Such meetings frequently draw attention to issues the school needs to address and reinforce the importance of the difficult work that schools have chosen to undertake.
- **Stipends for teacher leaders who serve as mentors for new teachers, team leaders for learning teams, and trainers.**
- **Stipends for teachers who work extended contracts to develop curriculum, classroom assessments, and other resource materials.** Many districts recognize staff expertise and provide extended contracts or hourly compensation to teachers for these tasks.
- **Stipends for teachers who demonstrate knowledge and skills outlined in district standards.** While most districts do not view stipends on salary schedules for advanced degrees as a professional development investment, others have embraced this perspective. In some districts, teachers receive stipends for demonstrating the knowledge and skills the district views as essential for ensuring high levels of performance by all students.
- **Formal evaluation of the results of the district's investment in professional learning.** For district leadership to remain committed to professional development, leaders must see how improved teacher practice and student learning result from professional development. Formal evaluations take committed time and resources.
- **Training and support for district leaders.** District leaders need technical expertise, mentoring, and coaching to ensure they are skillful in their work.

### **Providing Time**

Allocating teacher time for professional learning is another resource issue. Adding days to the calendar for additional professional development or changing teachers' daily schedules costs money. Districts can craft yearly schedules that provide a set number of days for professional development or designate days as late start or early release to provide time for professional learning.

Providing time within the teacher's workday for job-embedded learning is often a bigger challenge. To accomplish this, districts typically either have to reduce the professional staff's teaching load or hire additional and/or special area teachers to provide more flexibility in the school schedule. Finding more time for teachers to engage in professional learning is necessary for:

- **Daily team learning** to support the deep understanding of student standards, development of powerful lessons, examination of student work, development of classroom-based assessments, and discussion of common problems encountered in the classroom. Without such learning time, teachers are left to their individual devices to figure out what to teach, the best ways to teach it, and to solve problems. Lack of continuity of instruction and assessment across a school and system contributes to fragmented efforts and inconsistent results for students.
- **Classroom-based support from colleagues.** When teachers are isolated, they frequently return to the practices that they used in the past. If schools are serious about the changes they expect teachers to make in classrooms, then classroom-based support that helps teachers make initial changes and deal with the inevitable challenges associated with substantive change is essential.

- **Richer learning opportunities offered on set-aside staff development days and through extended contracts.** All the work necessary for improved classroom instruction and student results cannot be accomplished during daily team learning time. Development of deeper knowledge in math and science, for example, requires a substantive commitment through extended learning time in the summer.
- **Faculty meetings organized to support school improvement priorities.** Faculty meetings provide powerful opportunities to support collaborative learning. Regular whole school faculty meetings viewed as learning time are key to maintaining the school vision for excellence and keeping teachers focused on the bottom line.
- **Committee meetings for advancing the priorities of a school improvement plan.** Flexible school schedules ensure teachers have time for committee meetings to address school improvement in areas such as schoolwide discipline and family involvement.

Schools are under tremendous pressure to improve the academic performance of all students. Current legislation has caused many state and local leaders to re-examine strategies to support student learning. But if educators are committed to helping all students perform at high levels, then we must help all teachers to perform at high levels. Staff development is the most powerful strategy for achieving this goal.

### **NSDC Resolution 1:**

The National Staff Development Council believes that high-quality staff development is essential to school reform and that school systems have an obligation to ensure that employees are thoroughly prepared to successfully discharge their responsibilities. Time for these activities can often be provided via extensive on-the-job opportunities and collaborative work which require no additional resources.

Therefore, the National Staff Development Council recommends that school systems dedicate at least 10% of their budgets to staff development and that at least 25% of an educator's work time be devoted to learning and collaboration with colleagues.

### **Standard**

Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

### **Contributing Individuals and Organizations**

- Michael Allen, Education Commission of the States
- Nancy Ames, National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform
- Kathryn F. Blumsack, Maryland Association of School Boards
- Cynthia G. Brown, Council of Chief State School Officers
- Agnes Crawford, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Timothy Crawford, National Education Association
- Honor Fede, American Association of School Administrators
- Alice Gill, American Federation of Teachers
- Mary Henton, National Middle School Association
- Eric Hirsch, National Conference of State Legislatures
- Stephanie Hirsh, National Staff Development Council
- Shirley Hord, Southwest Education Development Laboratory
- Sharon Horn, U.S. Department of Education
- Barbara B. Kelley, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Joellen Killion, National Staff Development Council
- Richard Mainzer, Council for Exceptional Children
- Hayes Mizell, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
- Marion J. Payne, Baldwin County Board of Education
- Pete Reed, National Association of Secondary School Principals
- Sandra Rowell, Minnesota Department of Children, Family, and Learning
- Patricia Roy, Delaware Professional Development Center
- Marilyn Schlieff, National Education Association
- Dennis Sparks, National Staff Development Council
- Adria L. Thomas, National School Boards Association
- Rosie O'Brien Vojtek, Bristol Public School District
- Ann Walker, National Association of Elementary School Principals

### **About the author**

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## Seeing and Creating the Future

by Stephanie Hirsh – *SCHOOL TEAM INNOVATOR* - September 1996

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back for the 1996-1997 school year. Let's start this year with a fresh look at the value and purpose of school vision and mission statements. After all the study completed in preparation for this issue I have affirmed for myself the importance of schools having both a vision and mission statement.

A school vision should be a descriptive statement of what the school will be like at a specified time in the future. It uses descriptive words or phrases and sometimes pictures to illustrate what one would expect to see, hear, and experience in the school at that time. It makes reference to the facility, the curriculum, instruction, assessment, the staff, and the community. It engages all stakeholders in answering such questions as:

- What kind of school do we want for our children and staff?
- How will students benefit from attendance at our school?
- How will their success be measured or demonstrated?
- What will students learn? How will they learn?
- If parents had a choice, on what basis would they choose to send their children to our school?
- Of all the educational innovations and research, which strategies should we seek to employ in our school?

Here is an example of what a vision statement might look like:

*By the year 2000, the Math, Science, Technology Magnet will be the premier elementary school in the district. Student achievement will be ranked superior on all measures of the state assessment. A waiting list to enter the school will be a solid measure of the community's satisfaction with its educational programming. More than 60% of the teaching staff will have completed graduate work in science, math, and technology. A specialized, hands-on curriculum will demonstrate a commitment to the constructivist approach to education. Students will have ongoing access to a variety of forms of technology to facilitate learning at all times. Business partnerships will ensure the school is up-to-date in preparing students for a technologically-based society. Parent and student satisfaction with the education will be at the highest level.*

In contrast to a vision, a mission statement is a succinct, powerful statement on how the school will go about achieving its vision. The mission describes the purpose of the school as well as its function. It provides guidance for actions on a daily basis. The mission answers these questions:

- What do we care most about?
- What is our purpose?
- What must we accomplish?
- What are the cornerstones of our operations?

Here are some examples:

*To prepare children for a technologically-based society, the Math Science and Technology Academy will ensure student success through an integrated curriculum, community partnerships, and a hands-on learning environment.*

*The mission of our school is to provide a place where all students will receive individual attention to their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs to achieve continuous success throughout their school careers and adult lives through a cooperative effort between school and home.*

*Our school guarantees student success through the application of high expectations, high standards, and high content.*

These statements provide a rallying point for the staff and community. It may be summarized for bumper stickers. It inspires ownership and commitment to the cause and the vision.

We are interested in receiving and publishing on our World Wide Web site examples of powerful vision and mission statements. Please forward yours to Joan Richardson at NSDCJoan@aol.com

**From the Innovator Tool Kit...** Use this month's tool if you are interested in learning whether your colleagues share the same vision. Provide poster size paper to mixed groups, grade level teams, department teams, etc., and ask them to begin by answering the questions around the center square. Then ask them to fill in the middle block with their vision for the school. Following a presentation of these visions, lead a discussion with the following questions:

- How are our visions similar and different?
- How did this exercise challenge your thinking?
- Is a common vision for our school important? Why or why not?
- How might we proceed to create a combined vision for our school?
- Is there additional information or resources we should procure before we try to write a new vision?

Good luck, again we invite you share your results with us.

**For Parents on Your Team...** I would like to take a minute to review the purpose of this page. It is written each month to reinforce the message that parent involvement leads to improved student learning. Articles are selected purposely to be copied and disseminated to the parents on your school improvement team and through your PTA newsletters. Parents need to be reminded constantly and in a variety of ways that their involvement on a variety of levels matters. Their attention to their children's schoolwork (even if they can't help with that advanced algebra problem) translates into improved academic performance. As I continue to serve on two school improvement teams (my daughters elementary school and my son's junior high school), I ask that this page be disseminated at monthly meetings and summarized for our PTA newsletters. How about you?

Have a great month,

Stephanie Hirsh

## Collaboration benefits standards as well as staff learning

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, September 2001

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### ***The standard:***

Collaboration: Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

Have you ever been asked to identify characteristics of staff development experiences that you rate as positive and negative? Whenever I use this question with groups, one of the key attributes of the more powerful experiences is the opportunity to plan, develop, or work with colleagues on a meaningful project like curriculum mapping, developing student lessons, or critiquing teaching. While the word "collaboration" rarely surfaces, the common component of these experiences is the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues with similar interests and needs. Yet putting people together in groups doesn't always result in powerful learning. Hence, in the revised NSDC Standards for Staff Development we retained the standard on collaboration. It calls for providing educators with appropriate opportunities to develop the necessary knowledge and skills that facilitate effective collaboration.

NSDC values collaboration as a standard as well as an operating principle. NSDC demonstrated this through its work in revising the standards which were released in early summer. A dedicated and thoughtful group of educators representing most of the major education associations began meeting in spring 2000. Each member of the Standards Task Force brought unique interests and perspectives to the project. Facilitating consensus in such a diverse group was not always easy. But the final standards document was stronger because of that consensus.

If NSDC had decided to "go it alone," the standards would have represented the beliefs of the 10,000 members of the Council. But they are even more powerful now because they were created by individuals from 23 leading education organizations that represent several million educators. Because of the collaboration involved in their development, the standards show that the field can come together and reach consensus on the most critical aspects of professional learning in schools and school systems.

This collaboration strips policy makers of an all-too-commonly used argument for delaying action on an educational concern. "You educators can't get your act together," "your different organizations are sending mixed messages" or "the research isn't clear on this matter" are often cited as the basis for policy makers choosing a particular route in decision making. Hence, establishing national standards informs policy makers that educators and researchers agree about the professional development that all educators must experience if higher quality learning and performance is to occur in our schools.

As this standard notes: "... Because many of the recommendations contained in the standards advocate for increased teamwork among teachers and administrators in designing lessons, critiquing student work, and analyzing various types of data, among other tasks, it is imperative that professional learning be directed at improving the quality of collaborative work" (p. 26).

Begin this school year by bringing together all the stakeholders to review these newly revised standards. Spend time reviewing and practicing the skills associated with consensus decision making and collaboration. Then, take the time necessary to develop deep understanding of each standard. Use the discussion questions provided with each standard to encourage dialogue. Read the case studies to see if there are implications for your school or school system. By committing to this process, you ensure that all stakeholders have the understanding and commitment that are necessary to create a standards-based professional development system.

## High-performing cultures increase teacher retention

By Dennis Sparks – *Results*, December 2002

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Our inability to support high-quality teaching in many of our schools is driven not by too few teachers coming in, but by too many going out, that is, by staggering teacher turnover and attrition rate," a rate that is much higher than in other occupations, the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF) says in its latest report, *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children*. "The high demand for teachers is not being driven by an under supply of entering teachers, but by an excessive demand for teacher replacements that is driven by staggering teacher turnover," the report notes.

In addition to the significant problems such turnover causes in continuously recruiting qualified teachers, NCTAF points out that turnover leads to another critical challenge-creating and sustaining professional learning communities in revolving door schools. "High turnover diminishes the sense of community, continuity, and coherence that is the hallmark of strong schools," the report observes.

Fortunately, teachers' working conditions can be significantly improved and turnover considerably reduced, even in our most challenged schools. An essential aspect of improving teachers' working conditions is establishing a high-performance culture whose hallmark is a shared responsibility for the learning of all students. Establishing a high-performance culture in schools is one of NSDC's six strategic priorities which are aimed at dramatically improving the quality of professional learning for all teachers and administrators in all schools by 2007.

NSDC believes teachers—even those in the most demanding settings—are far more likely to remain in their positions when they feel supported by administrators, have strong bonds of connection to colleagues, and are aggressively pursuing a collective vision for student learning about which they feel passion and commitment. Teachers' connections to the profession and to their schools are also strengthened when they feel they possess the content knowledge, instructional skills, and technological tools to meet the challenges of standards-based education in increasingly diverse classrooms.

NCTAF's recommendations are consistent with the Council's priorities. "The era of solo teaching in isolated classrooms is over," the report notes. "Good teaching thrives in a supportive learning environment created by teachers and school leaders working together to improve learning—in short, to support quality teaching our schools must support strong professional learning communities. These communities can no longer be considered utopian; they must become the building blocks of a new foundation for America's schools. Collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers."

Strong professional learning communities do not occur by accident. It is critical that union contracts, district calendars, and teachers' schedules be designed to support results-driven, team-focused professional learning and collaboration that are part of teachers' work days. It's also critical that principals and teacher leaders be equipped with knowledge and skills that enable them to build and sustain performance-oriented cultures that have at their heart high-quality interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect.

The ability of school leaders to create a professional culture in which teachers thrive and grow throughout their careers is an essential ingredient in ensuring quality teaching in all classrooms by dramatically reducing the staggeringly high rate of teacher turnover. Establishing such cultures in all schools is one of this nation's most significant educational challenges.

## Leadership begins with thoughtful consideration

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, February 2002

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### **Leadership:**

Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.

For years I have advised school board members, superintendents, and staff developers to seek adoption of the NSDC Standards for Staff Development. In the very near future, the Texas school board of which I am a member will consider the adoption of the standards. Looking back on how my board got to this point, I would like to share some lessons I have learned.

To go through the motions of adopting standards without real consideration would be an empty act of leadership. A local school board's adoption of the NSDC standards should be the culminating step in a process of study and dialogue that encourages board members and superintendents to develop their own meaning for the standards.

Adoption means to make something one's own. The process of adoption of NSDC standards should actively engage policy makers in an extended dialogue so that they interact with the content of the standards as opposed to being passive recipients of someone else's explanations and presentations. This allows them to deeply consider how the standards can strengthen the work in their school system.

Here are three potential ways to get the conversation moving in your school systems.

### **Example 1**

Our district vision statement calls for everyone to be part of a learning community. A discussion of the NSDC standards will help us understand the characteristics of a true learning community and our role and responsibilities in the community.

### **Example 2**

Student learning is dependent on the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching is directly influenced by teacher learning. We need to ensure that staff development is helping shape high quality teaching. Studying the NSDC standards will help us in this evaluation and adopting the standards will focus our attention on ensuring the quality of our staff development activities.

### **Example 3**

A school board's fiduciary responsibility calls for careful examination of all district expenditures. The single largest expenditure is personnel costs. Ensuring these expenditures are directed toward a well-prepared staff should concern all school board members and superintendents. One way a district maintains a highly competent staff is through its staff development program. Understanding NSDC's standards enables a school board to scrutinize its expenditures for staff learning and compare them to nationally-adopted benchmarks.

Simply adopting the standards does not guarantee that practices in the school district will automatically improve. The school board and superintendent must have a sustained commitment to high quality staff development for all educators.

In the end, the NSDC belief holds true: Expectations influence accomplishments. When leaders make clear and explicit the results they seek and the actions they want, they significantly improve the chances that their goals will be achieved. Study, ongoing dialogue, and formal adoption of and regular review of standards for staff development are vital to a school district's quest to ensure high levels of learning and performance by all students and staff members.

## Leadership is intensely interpersonal

*Improving personal relationships is a crucial but overlooked aspect of school reform.*

By Dennis Sparks — *Results*, December 2003/January 2004

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Leadership development is an essential and often-neglected task in the process of creating schools in which all students and teachers learn and perform at high levels. It is important that principals, teacher leaders, and district administrators acquire the knowledge and skills to be instructional leaders and to create and sustain high-performance cultures in their organizations. And because instructional and cultural change is intensely interpersonal, it is also important that leaders develop the communication and problem-solving skills that promote positive, productive relationships and that school systems provide individualized support to guide leaders' efforts and to maintain their motivation over many years.

Because of NCLB and state and school system initiatives, leadership development efforts in the past few years have often focused on raising test scores by instituting strong literacy and mathematics programs and by assisting principals to improve teaching in those areas. While those activities are worthwhile, unless school systems simultaneously address the complex and emotionally-laden interpersonal demands of leadership, schools will be unable to sustain improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Many principals say that a great deal of their time and emotional resources these days are devoted to upset parents, disaffected staff members, and unrelenting pressures from outside the school. They also report few opportunities for sustained conversations about important issues. Teacher leaders who serve on school improvement teams or as school-based staff developers may face anxious and frustrated colleagues, experience internal doubts about their own capacity to effectively serve in new roles, and feel torn by conflicting expectations for their work held by teachers, principals, and district staff.

Some methods of personal interactions have proven more effective than others in addressing such issues. School leaders can develop clarity regarding their purposes and values, become more powerful speakers and writers, learn to listen deeply and with empathy to others in the spirit of dialogue (which is particularly challenging when they feel unfairly attacked), acquire the ability to stay focused on possibilities rather than falling prey to resignation and dependency, and develop the resourcefulness to generate multiple pathways to achieve goals. NSDC has conducted pilot programs that have demonstrated that these are teachable skills that can improve the results achieved by even experienced, sophisticated leaders.

Individualized support can take the form of mentoring for new leaders and of "executive coaching" for veteran administrators of the type that has become increasingly prevalent in businesses. Such support can provide leaders with the insights and wisdom of successful, experienced educators and offer opportunities for leaders to clarify their intentions, strengthen their planning and problem-solving capacities, develop stronger communication and interpersonal skills, and maintain energy and enthusiasm for their critically important work.

Such leadership development efforts will not only improve teaching and learning throughout the school, they will also serve as a valuable recruitment tool to attract the best candidates to difficult-to-fill positions. These efforts will also contribute to the long-term retention of leaders who feel that the challenges they face are understood by their employers, who believe that they are being adequately supported in meeting those challenges, and who perceive that their efforts are truly making a difference.

Instructional improvement and culture building are relationship intensive and emotionally demanding. Establishing productive, trusting relationships is a critically important aspect of the improvement journey for which school leaders are often ill-prepared and under supported. The ultimate success of school reform, I believe, will be determined to a large extent by our ability to support leaders in addressing these demanding interpersonal challenges.

## Shared Culture

A consensus of individual values

By Joan Richardson – *Results*, May 2001.

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Principals are the primary shapers of school culture, in both large and small ways.

Principals send large cultural messages to staff and students with every decision regarding budgets, curriculum, instruction, as well as interactions with central office and community leaders. But principals also send hundreds of small cultural messages to students and teachers every day. In every interaction with a student or teacher, a principal telegraphs a message about his or her expectations for that school. That gives principals enormous opportunities to shape a school's culture—for good or ill.

Some principals provide cultural leadership intuitively, said Kent Peterson, professor of educational administration at the University of Wisconsin and co-author with Terrence Deal of *Shaping School Culture* (Jossey-Bass, 1999). But all principals can learn to consciously identify culture-making opportunities and use them to influence teachers, students, and parents to move in a new direction, he said.

Peterson recalled one principal who recognized that he did not intuitively know when a "cultural moment" was presenting itself. So, using a 3x5 index card, he wrote down five elements of the school culture that he wanted to improve. He stuck the card in his shirt pocket and pulled it out throughout his day as a way to remind himself of questions he could ask.

"You can find ways to encourage yourself to be more conscious of this. Eventually, it becomes internalized," Peterson said.

Peterson also recalled shadowing a principal who found ways to blend administrative tasks with opportunities to influence attitudes in his building. This principal had to provide central office with the total number of ceiling tiles in his building. Rather than assign that task to a maintenance employee, the principal assumed the job himself. The principal's arrival in each classroom was, of course, a big event to both students and teachers. In each classroom, he asked what students were learning that day and asked to see student work—then he counted the ceiling tiles. He had taken responsibility for a mundane task because it allowed him to connect with every classroom in the building and to send a message about the importance of students' work.

Although principals are enormously influential, they alone cannot shape the culture of a school, Peterson said. "Culture is the accumulation of many individuals' values and norms. It is a consensus about what's important. It's the group's expectations, not just an individual's expectations. It's the way *everyone* does business," he said.

Teachers are especially important in influencing the direction of a school's culture. Teachers connect with other teachers, with their students, and with the parents of their students. When teachers are sending a shared cultural message, that message reverberates throughout the entire school community.

### One school's story

Joan Vydra practically gushes about her school in suburban Chicago. "It's so awesome to walk in the door here," she said of Briar Glen School in Wheaton. The school with 480 students in grades K-5 is in Glen Ellyn Community Consolidated District 89.

As a veteran principal, Vydra believes no school can improve unless it has a culture that supports improvement and collaboration and a shared vision for what it wants to achieve. She also believes fervently that a school will improve only if it has a culture of caring. "If teachers don't feel cared about, they can't perform at optimum levels. If I care about the teachers, they will pass that on to the kids," she said.

When she arrived at Briar Glen five years ago, there was some tension in the school. Briar Glen, an award-winning school, had "wonderful teachers" who worked well within their teams, but spent most of their team time on organizational rather than instructional issues. Although wonderful things were happening in individual classrooms, there was little sense of an overall direction and no school improvement plan to guide their collective work. "There was no shared vision about what the school should be," she said.

Vydra began by telling the staff, "I'm going to walk in your shoes for a year. Then, whatever changes we make, we're going to make together." High on Vydra's agenda was ensuring that teachers could do the work they were hired to do.

"I don't want anything on a teacher's plate that doesn't belong there. I want them to focus on their students and on the goals of our school improvement plan."

For example, rather than overloading teachers with excessive testing data and expecting them to wade through it, Vydra winnows the data down to what each teacher needs to know. Then, when she meets with teachers, they are able to focus on individual children who need assistance, rather than swimming through irrelevant numbers.

When teachers agreed that they wanted parents to have a better understanding of what children are expected to know and be able to do, Vydra wrote a grant that would enable her to give teachers summer stipends to prepare standards-based newsletters for distribution during the school year. "If I'm asking them to improve their communication with parents, I want to remove obstacles that prevent them from doing that. Time is an obstacle and this was a way to work around that," she said.

### **Listening to parents**

As she listened to teachers, Vydra also listened to parents. It was parents' perceptions that not enough teachers attended the parent-sponsored events. Vydra asked parents which events were most important for teacher attendance. From a long list, parents identified four significant events.

With that list, Vydra approached teachers and said, "You don't have to do this, but this is very important to our parents. If we're going to build our learning community, this is a good first step. If you'll try to attend these specific events, I'll tell parents that you won't be at all the other events and meetings."

At the same time, Vydra thanked the teachers for their willingness to attend events by informing them that she would not enforce previously mandatory starting and ending times for the work day. "I trust these teachers. They don't need to be told what time to get here or when they can leave. They're going to be here."

The teachers quickly responded to the request and have made teacher attendance at the identified events part of the cultural norm.

### **Nothing is perfect**

During her five years at Briar Glen, Vydra admits to missteps along the way. An enthusiastic advocate for school and classroom newsletters, she announced in a faculty meeting during her second year at the school that she would be sharing teachers' classroom newsletters. "I found something good in every newsletter, but they hated it," she said. "Nobody wanted to be put out in front."

"We're more ready for that now. But I'm still careful to praise teams, not individuals," she said.

When personal praise is warranted, she writes personal notes instead of making a public statement. "In meetings, I might mention the example without mentioning the name," she said.

Vydra acknowledges that if she had entered a school with a "toxic culture," she would have responded differently. "If it's a broken school and kids are being hurt and there is low achievement, there have to be some top-down initiatives.

"Shaping a culture takes time. Anything that is top-down will last only as long as the leader stays in that office. Then those ideas will evaporate and everything will go right back to the way it was," Vydra said.

But culture stays. "Culture protects a school and teachers from willy-nilly fads and from leaders who think they own the day," she said.

## Together, you can do more

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, October 2002

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### **Learning Communities:**

Staff development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

In a results-oriented environment, principals and their staffs craft visions and establish goals. They use data to help determine the distance between the current status and the results they seek. They select strategies to close the gap to achieve the desired results. At this point, schools make a critical decision: whether to allow individuals to develop independent plans of action or to establish a context that encourages interdependent learning.

In my view, while individual learning is important to the process, team learning allows the school to take advantage of the strengths that interdependence has to offer.

Many of these benefits are similar to those of cooperative learning for students. A shared vision and set of mutually-agreed upon goals focuses the team's work and encourages a staff to work as a team rather than as independent contractors. Positive interdependence results when team members have the opportunity to contribute to the accomplishment of a goal larger than anyone could achieve alone. It results because all staff have the opportunity to contribute to achieving the goals.

Recognizing and appreciating the strengths each person brings to the team is another benefit of positive interdependence. This recognition occurs when each member can describe how he or she wants to aid in achieving the team and school goals. As strengths are surfaced, appreciation for each team member increases. At the same time, team members begin to understand why the team is essential to achieve the vision and goals for the school. Eventually, team members arrive at a point where they recognize everyone is in this together. Interdependent team work accelerates the accomplishment of goals. When team members adopt similar goals and strategies, the pace is increased. Everyone's sense of responsibility and accountability is enhanced when each member recognizes that the goals will not be achieved unless everyone "pulls their own weight." When individuals work in teams, it will soon become evident if one member is not sharing in the commitment and the work.

Team-based learning doesn't happen without support. Time (which will be addressed in next month's column) is necessary to support team learning. And yet team learning and interdependence do not occur simply because team times are arranged. Technical assistance in the form of facilitation and guidance with initial meetings will help teams function productively. Investment in the knowledge and skills that teams need to conduct their work will sustain their effort.

Most teams will benefit by understanding the characteristics of effective groups and by training in skills associated with high-performing teams. For example, teams benefit from understanding the cycles of group development (forming, norming, storming, and performing) and gaining strategies to assist with movement through the stages.

They increase their productivity when they learn the skills associated with dialogue, building consensus, and addressing conflict. Teams also become stronger when they learn skills associated with collective inquiry, group problem solving, and evaluation. Implementing these skills will take time and practice. Participation by leaders in team meetings and follow-up support by staff developers demonstrate the school's commitment to the goal and the teams. Investing the time to build the framework and skills of team members will accelerate the schools progress towards its goals.

## A new way to examine yourself

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, December 2003/January 2004

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NSDC's Standards for Staff Development self-assessment was conceived to assist schools with planning professional development. Schools would give the assessment to their faculty, display the responses on a scattergram, and discuss implications. Guided by a skilled facilitator, the staff would identify its strengths and weaknesses. The process encouraged them to set professional development goals by building on strengths and correcting weaknesses.

Over the years, educators raised questions about the self-assessment:

- What do the results from the assessment tell us?
- Was validity and reliability established? How?
- Would application of the results produce the desired improvements in adult practices and student learning?
- Could improvements in assessment scores be used to document results of a particular staff development initiative?
- Could the assessment be used to document that more teachers each year experience higher quality professional development than the previous year as required by No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?

These questions plus the requirements of NCLB contributed to NSDC's desire to update the instrument. NSDC sought support from Wes Hoover, president and CEO of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Joan Buttram, SEDL vice president and COO and Sue Street, SEDL's director of evaluation and an NSDC Academy graduate. We agreed to work with SEDL to produce a reliable and valid staff development assessment instrument aligned with NSDC's standards for quality professional development. The SEDL evaluation service team included Street, Erin McCann, Cori Groth, and Todd Sherron. About 60 schools and hundreds of educators are participating in the pilot and field testing process. Members of SEDL's evaluation team are scheduled to present the new instrument at this month's NSDC Annual Conference in New Orleans.

SEDL was contracted to develop the new instrument and establish its reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement. Validity refers to the ability of the instrument to measure what it purports to measure. The instrument was designed to measure the degree to which a school's professional development program adheres to the NSDC standards. Instrument scores will provide information to determine areas of growth where the school's quality of professional development can be improved.

Individuals with a deep understanding of the NSDC standards and many years of staff development experience were invited to nominate schools to participate in field testing the new instruments. Included in this group were staff from former U.S. Department of Education Model Professional Development Award winners and NSDC Academy graduates. They nominated schools with varying levels of understanding and implementation of the standards.

When completed, NSDC will place the assessment on its web site so interested individuals can download the instrument for immediate use. (On the drawing board at NSDC: We want to provide a way for whole faculties to complete the instrument online which will allow NSDC to provide a profile to the school of its strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for actions. Please contact me if your school is interested in piloting this online feature. If you are a state department that wants to use the instrument to provide data regarding NCLB requirements, we would like to hear from you as well.)

So next time I get a call regarding the value of the NSDC standards self-assessment, I'll have my answer ready: It's this month's column.

## What's next after adopting the standards?

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, November 2003

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“We adopted the standards, but since then, nothing new seems to be happening. What are we supposed to do with them?” In response to such questions, NSDC, in partnership with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), has developed Innovation Configurations for the standards. The project was spearheaded by Shirley Hord, SEDL scholar emerita, and Patricia Roy, an independent consultant .

The concept of Innovation Configurations (IC) was first advanced in the 1970s by a research team working on change. IC maps detail what an innovation (such as the standards) look like in practice and offer guidance to educators implementing innovations and monitoring them.

The NSDC standards IC maps are organized in three ways. First, they are organized by role group with separate IC maps available for teachers, principals, central office staff members, superintendents, and school board members. Each set describes the possible actions that a particular group could take as it implements the standards.

A second organizer breaks down each standard into "desired outcomes." For example, successfully implementing the Learning Community standard requires four key actions of teachers, each with its desired outcome:

- 1.1 Meet regularly with colleagues during the school day to plan instruction.
- 1.2 Align collaborative work with school improvement goals.
- 1.3 Participate in decision-making responsibilities within the school.
- 1.4 Participate in learning teams some of whose membership extends beyond the school.

A third organizer provides a continuum of practices for each standard. The most desirable practice is Level 1. The chart below is an example for teachers.

NSDC has invested in this work to provide a clear, descriptive vision of what standards look like in action. We want to provide staff developers with a guide as they assist others to improve the quality and the impact of professional development, to offer suggestions of what the work might look like in district and school plans that are focused on improving professional development, and to assist with monitoring and assessing the impact of quality professional development.

### **Desired Outcome 1.1: (The teacher) Meets regularly with colleagues during the school day to plan instruction.**

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Meets regularly with learning team during scheduled time within the school day to develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress, assess the effectiveness of instruction, and identify needs for professional learning.	Meets regularly with learning team during the school day to plan instruction, examine student work, and monitor student progress.	Works with learning team on special instructional projects during planning time.	Works with others on non-instructional issues. Addresses personal concerns, not group issues.	Uses planning time for individual planning.	Uses planning time for non-instructional tasks (e.g. management, personal tasks).

## Plan thoughtfully for team time

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, November 2002

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### Resources:

Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

How does a school find the time to encourage the professional learning envisioned by NSDC? I suggest the issue is not about finding the time. Many schools have crafted the kinds of daily and weekly schedules we advocate (see the NSDC web site at [nsdc.org/library/time.html](http://nsdc.org/library/time.html) for examples). Instead, the question to ask is this: What will you do with the time once you find it?

Time is our most precious resource. How we use each second, minute, and hour demonstrates what we value. Leaders who commit to ensuring each teacher has time to participate in a learning team must also ensure that teachers use that time as it was intended.

Context, process, and content issues must be addressed to produce the kinds of results expected from learning teams.

**Establish expectations for team learning.** The school board, superintendent, and principals must be clear that student learning is the focus of team learning time. They must ensure that common distractions (such as discussions about lunchroom duties, bus schedules, tardies) are not allowed to distract from that time. Teams should maintain public records of their meetings in order to demonstrate how they use their time and what they are accomplishing.

**Specify the content for learning team time.** The content addresses what students need to know and be able to do. Three key questions focus their work.

1. What standards are addressed in the upcoming units of study?
2. What assessments can all team members create and/or use to determine if students are achieving those standards?
3. What content knowledge do students need in order to meet the standard?

Teachers review the assessment results to determine which students require additional help and to identify strategies to assist them. Teachers repeat this cycle throughout the year and thereby contribute to the continuous improvement by the team and its students.

**Teach processes that encourage smooth meetings.** No one looks forward to attending a poorly run meeting. Effective meetings send a message that the teachers who participate are respected and valued by the school. Teacher leaders invest in developing the knowledge and skills associated with effective and productive meetings. Effective group facilitators can build consensus, address conflict, negotiate, facilitate conversations, run effective meetings, use dialogue, and engage all participants. Attendance will always be high at well-run meetings because participants rate them as productive.

**One last example.** Many years ago, I helped a school garner community and district support for early release days. Teachers said they did not have enough time for learning so many people invested in finding the time they wanted. Administrators assumed teachers knew what to do with this found time. This was not the case. Left to their own devices, teachers allowed other priorities to fill the time and soon they questioned whether this learning time was benefiting their students. The problem was identified too late, the damage was done, and several months later the decision was reversed.

Lesson learned: School leaders must pay equal attention to how all new learning time is created and used. In the end, how the time is used will contribute or not contribute to the results the schools seek.

## Think Outside the Clock

Create time for professional learning

By Joan Richardson – *Tools for Schools*, August/September 2002

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Teachers at Addison Elementary School in Marietta, Ga., work in a school district that provides substantial opportunities for staff development. But Addison teachers wanted more: They wanted to work together in study groups every week, an activity not covered by the district staff development plan. Because they were saddled with the traditional school schedule, the study groups would have to meet after school unless teachers had another plan.

Principal Carolyn Jurick and the Addison staff approached the school's PTA about supporting cultural arts activities that would involve students but not teachers for one hour every other week. That worked fine for awhile but parents soon tired of the substantial commitment required in that effort and Jurick moved on to Plan B.

In Plan B, Jurick hired subs to cover classrooms for an entire day every other week. The subs worked all day but rotated from classroom to classroom. A study group of six to eight teachers could meet for one hour while subs covered their classrooms.

“At first, teachers thought that was a godsend. But that wore thin after awhile. Even though they were out of their classrooms, they still had to plan for the subs, and they still had to worry about covering lunch,” Jurick said.

On to Plan C. In Plan C, Jurick and her staff concocted a plan to have students begin school 10 minutes earlier than other elementary schools and end 10 minutes later—in exchange for releasing students from school at 1:30 p.m. every Wednesday. Teachers would continue to work until at least 3 p.m. and use that time to meet in their study groups.

Four years later, this plan is still working.

“It costs us nothing, and we love it. But we couldn't have done this if we hadn't been able to show that the other ways wouldn't work,” Jurick said.

The Addison staff's experience in trying to find time for professional learning offers several significant lessons about the conundrum facing virtually all schools that struggle with this issue:

- Teachers must be flexible and even creative in how they think about their schedules.
- Teachers must be willing to make trade-offs in order to gain what they really want.
- Teachers must be clear about the connection between their own learning and improvements in student learning.
- Teachers must come prepared with Plan B in case Plan A doesn't work.

Although educators are increasingly realizing the value of having teachers work together every day and every week, schools are still burdened with outdated ideas about teachers' and principals' work day and work year. And shaking up that status quo impacts not only teachers but families that have come to expect schools to operate at certain times and in certain ways.

NSDC is clear in its beliefs about this: 25% of an educator's work time should be devoted to professional learning and collaboration with colleagues. But a survey of members in 2000 revealed that no districts had yet reached that level of commitment. Excluding daily planning time, 81% of the respondents to that survey said less than 5% of a teacher's work week was devoted to professional learning.

Even preparation time for teachers is limited, according to Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond. She estimates that most U.S. elementary teachers have three or fewer hours for preparation each week (only 8.3 minutes for every hour in the classroom) and that secondary teachers generally have five prep periods per week (13 minutes per hour of classroom instruction (Darling-Hammond, *Journal of Staff Development* Spring 1999, p. 33).

Acknowledging the difficulty of the task, NSDC Executive Director Dennis Sparks recommends that schools begin by identifying three to four hours a week—or about 10% of a teacher's work time—for learning and working with peers on improving instruction. "Then schools can begin to experiment with ways to extend that time over the next two or three years to 25% of teachers' work time," he said.

James Madison University professor Michael Rettig, who consults with numerous school districts on scheduling issues, said no district has ever invited him in specifically to find more time for staff development. Typically, districts contact him because they want to find larger blocks of instructional time. If that creates opportunities for staff development, it's a great side benefit, but not the primary focus, he said.

But Rettig said the challenge of finding more time for professional learning is the same as finding larger blocks of instructional time. "The problem is that they're not willing to trade away something in order to get that," Rettig said.

In elementary schools, for example, he said finding common planning time for all teachers in a grade-level is relatively simple. "I can easily create a schedule that would achieve that. But it would mean that teachers might have to lose their individual planning periods on certain days. That's a trade-off that many teachers don't want to make," he said.

When schools do find a schedule they believe will work for them, Rettig urges them to pilot the new plan for a year and, if possible, to pilot several different ideas in the same district before committing.

Mikii Bendotti, who has worked with several Arizona schools to find more professional learning time, cautions that freeing teachers to work together is insufficient. "Once the time is there, teachers need guidance and preparation for how to use it. If it just becomes time for them to sit by themselves and grade papers, then an opportunity for learning has been lost," said Bendotti, executive director of the Arizona Teacher Advancement Program, which is funded by the Milken Foundation.

Teachers need preparation in how to run a meeting, how to set norms for those meetings, how to lead decision making and more. In other words, teachers need staff development in order to prepare for staff development. "That's especially the case when teachers have only experienced a sit-and-get model of staff development," she said.

Bendotti has also learned that it's better to make sacrifices to carve out larger chunks of time that occur less frequently than to have short but more frequent meetings. For example, arranging to have teachers meet for 30 minutes every day is probably less effective than meeting for 45 minutes three times a week.

Like many districts, the Hoover City Schools in suburban Birmingham, Ala., is still searching for the answer to its time puzzle. "We're still struggling to find that perfect model, that perfect solution. But it's not there. You have to think creatively. How do you develop your teachers and safeguard the instructional time for your children? That's the rub," said Deborah Camp, curriculum instruction technology specialist for has been part of discussions where teachers and administrators have been grappling with this issue.

"Here's my dream: Have all teachers work on a 12-month calendar, compensate teachers for that time, and build staff development days right into their work year. If we lengthened the school day for teachers and increased the number of days that teachers work, your time issue would disappear. Doing it any other way, it's always going to be a struggle," Camp said.

## Resources

### "Finding Time for Collaboration"

Mary Anne Raywid, *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), September 1993.

Offers 10 strategies schools are using to create time. Order from ASCD, (800) 933-2723.

### "Making Time for Teacher Professional Development"

Ismat Abdal-Haqq, ERIC Clearinghouse, October 1996.

Answers seven frequently asked questions regarding creating time for professional development. Order Digest # 95-4 from ERIC, (202) 293-2450, Price: \$4. Available online at [www.eric.org/pages/digests/making\\_time\\_teacher\\_pro\\_dev\\_95-4.html](http://www.eric.org/pages/digests/making_time_teacher_pro_dev_95-4.html).

### **Prisoners of Time**

National Commission on Time and Learning. Washington, DC: Author, 1994.

Key national report on time in schools. Order from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Supt. of Documents, Mail Stop, SSOP, Washington DC, 20402-9328; (202) 783-3238; Stock No. 065-000-00640-5. Price: \$5.50.

Available online at [www.ed.gov/pubs/PrisonersOfTime/](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PrisonersOfTime/)

### **"Scheduling Time to Maximize Staff Development Opportunities"**

Brenda Tanner, Robert Canady, and Michael Rettig, *Journal of Staff Development*, 16(4), Fall 1995.

Provides examples of how high schools can structure time to improve instruction and professional learning.

### **"Smart Use of Time and Money"**

Joan Richardson, *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(1), Winter 1997.

Explores the issue of resources for professional learning. Available online at [www.nsd.org/library/jsd/richardson181.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/richardson181.cfm).

### **Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning: Transforming Professional Development for Student Success**

National Foundation for Innovation in Education (now the NEA Foundation for Innovation in Education).

Washington, DC: Author, 1996.

Addresses rationale for teacher development work and the relationship between teacher learning and student learning.

Order from NFIE Publications, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT, 06516. Price: \$15.

Available online at [www.nfie.org/publications/takecharge\\_full.htm](http://www.nfie.org/publications/takecharge_full.htm)

### **"The Time Dilemma in School Restructuring"**

Gary D. Watts and Shari Castle, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(1), December 1993.

Identifies five primary ways that innovative schools "found" time for professional learning. Order from PDK, (812) 339-1156.

### **Time for Reform**

Susanna Purnell and Paul Hill. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992.

Identifies six strategies schools use to provide time for reform. Order online at [www.rand.org/education/pubs/reform.prior.html](http://www.rand.org/education/pubs/reform.prior.html).

Price: \$7. Text available online at [www.goodschools.gwu.edu/researchdb/PDFDocs/ED/354/595/ED354595.PDF](http://www.goodschools.gwu.edu/researchdb/PDFDocs/ED/354/595/ED354595.PDF)

### **"Time: Squeeze, Carve, Apply, Target, Use, Arrange, for Adult Learning"**

*Journal of Staff Development*, 20(2), Spring 1999.

The entire issue of the Spring 1999 Journal of Staff Development is devoted to exploring various issues related to use of time in schools. Order from NSDC Business Office, (800) 727-7288 or through NSDC Online Bookstore, [store.nsd.org](http://store.nsd.org).

### **Time for Staff Development: Library Category**

This section of NSDC's web site offers links to additional articles and web links related to effectively finding and using time for professional development. [www.nsd.org/library/resources/time.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/library/resources/time.cfm)

## Time for professional learning serves student learning

by Dennis Sparks – *Results*, October 2001

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Creating schools in which everyone learns and performs at high levels—students and staff alike—requires extended conversation in three major areas: the results a school intends to achieve, the most powerful strategies for achieving those ends, and the school's assessment of its progress in achieving its intentions. Such conversations, however, must move beneath surface features of reform to the development of shared meaning on the part of all participants and to a deeper appreciation of the school's existing strengths. These conversations take a great deal of time, thought, and not just the time provided by periodic "inservice days."

A recent report on this subject from the New American Schools Corporation, *Rethinking School Resources* ([www.newamerican-schools.org/respub/tools.phtml](http://www.newamerican-schools.org/respub/tools.phtml)) by Karen Hawley Miles, is noteworthy. "When teachers share responsibility for all students learning to standards," Miles writes, "they need time together to learn new strategies, look together at student work and develop or integrate new curriculum material." While citing the importance of extra professional development days during the summer and school year to jump start new practices, Miles contends that regular periods of time of longer than 45 minutes in duration for teaching teams is "central to the job of teaching in today's schools."

"Researchers find that teachers need at least three hours a week together in groups that collectively share the responsibility for student learning," Miles points out. These longer blocks of time are found in schools, she says, by using the following strategies alone or in combination:

- Creating double planning periods;
- Combining planning periods with other non-instructional time;
- Combining classes for special subjects;
- Rethinking the use of student time by creating time for learning activities not supervised by core teachers; and
- Reducing teacher administrative assignments to non-teaching duties.

*Rethinking School Resources* offers examples of schools that provide time for professional learning, and additional examples can be found at NSDC's web site ([www.nsd.org/library/time.html](http://www.nsd.org/library/time.html)).

The logic for providing additional time for teachers to plan lessons together, review student work, analyze data, and find ways to assist low-performing students in meeting standards seems straightforward and compelling. And while making such changes may not be easy and requires navigating some substantial barriers, it is eminently doable as the many schools that have already done it indicate.

While schools districts and unions play a critical role in addressing various barriers, structural changes are insufficient unless those in schools are committed to high levels of learning for all students. What is ultimately required is that principals and teachers link professional development and collaboration to the attainment of their most important goals and recognize that sustained, substantive conversations are essential if significant and lasting changes in instruction and student learning are to occur. If it is to be well used, additional time for professional learning must serve powerful fundamental choices (see Sept. 2001 column, [www.nsd.org/library/results/res9-01spar.html](http://www.nsd.org/library/results/res9-01spar.html)) and unleash the creative capacity that exists within virtually all schools (see Oct. 2001 column, [www.nsd.org/library/results/res10-01spar.html](http://www.nsd.org/library/results/res10-01spar.html)).

Fundamental choices, stretch goals, and creative energy are the ultimate sources of the heightened commitment that must be present if educators are to sustain their efforts over the long haul. While commitment cannot be sustained without resources, such resources will be of little value unless they serve larger purposes. The success of standards-based reform ultimately will be determined by whether hundreds of thousands of principals and teacher find compelling purposes for their work and by their ability to create the time to sustain conversations about those purposes and how they will be achieved.

## Data tell a school's full story

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, December 2002

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### **Data-driven decision making:**

Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.

Several years ago, I facilitated a school improvement plan for a school in an affluent neighborhood. Countless staff members asked why the staff was engaged in this process. Their students were performing well above the national norm on tests. Why did things need to change? We began by disaggregating test performance by gender and by socioeconomic status. This exercise showed boys were consistently outperforming girls in math and science measures. The higher SES population was consistently performing better than students on free and reduced-price lunch. This staff really believed that all children were equally successful--when the data showed them a different picture, they were ready to discuss and work on what needed to change.

That situation is an example of the power of using data to inform a staff. For that reason, NSDC includes data-driven decision making as one of its 12 standards. A key phrase in this standard--disaggregated student data--is often overlooked. But using disaggregated data is key to successful staff development planning and often key to influencing staffs to make necessary changes in their schools.

Every time I type "disaggregated," my spellchecker pops it up as a questionable word. This tells me this word is not recognized as part of our common vocabulary. The dictionary defines disaggregated as "separated as an aggregate (collection into a sum, mass, or systems) mass." To me, using disaggregated data means carefully examining data to ensure that educators understand the impact of any measure on various sub-groups of students.

Typically, disaggregated student data addresses gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Disaggregated data also can help educators compare results in other ways. For example, educators could compare:

- Special education students and the general population;
- English language learners and the general population; and
- Students with more and fewer than five absences.

Answers to these questions provide a fairer picture of how well schools serve all students. In addition, staff development leaders have a responsibility to study disaggregated data associated with principal and teacher learning as well as student performance.

More comparisons provide insight into how staff development interventions affect students. Such comparisons might include:

- Teachers who received mentoring vs. those who did not;
- Teachers who experienced a particular staff development program vs. general teaching population; and
- Teachers who participate in regular learning teams vs. those who do not.

NSDC wants all of the staff in all schools to experience higher quality staff development within five years. This is ambitious but it's a goal we can meet if we pull together to do what is required. A key step in this process is the systematic application of the standards. Paying attention to some of the standards or parts of some standards is insufficient; all of the standards warrant our attention and our commitment. Disaggregation of data on student learning is essential if we are to be honest in determining whether schools have achieved that goal.

## Harness the Potential of Staff Meetings

By Joan Richardson – *Tools for Schools*, Oct-Nov. 1999

(Editor's Note: The tools that accompany this article are available in the printed version of the newsletter or in Adobe PDF format.)

Almost any teacher or principal would agree that faculty meetings are one of the most dreaded and ineffective parts of the work week.

"Faculty meetings are a wasteland. Teachers make jokes about them. They laugh about how bad they are," says Mike Murphy, NSDC's director of programs and a former elementary school principal in Texas.

But Murphy also acknowledges that staff meetings represent "a chunk of time that is begging to be used in a productive way."

Independent consultant Pam Robbins agrees. "More and more principals are finding themselves asking where they can find time in the traditional day to develop the skills within teachers to help them meet rigorous demands for student accountability."

That has led an increasing number of principals to seize the opportunity to transform staff meetings into mini-staff development sessions in which the entire staff reads, discusses, analyzes, and plans together.

In schools where time is a precious and limited commodity, using staff meetings more effectively can be a way to "find time" for staff development. In many school districts, teacher contracts already recognize that teachers are obligated to attend staff meetings on a regular basis.

"I don't discount the importance of staff meetings. I think they can be very valuable. But we've kind of dumbed them down. We've used them as a 45-minute memo," Murphy says.

Instead, staff meetings can be used as tools for building a learning community among a school's staff. "Staff meetings are an opportunity to built unity and community. They're perfect times to physically connect with everyone on the staff to make sure that there is coherence and continuity," Murphy says.

### Where to start

Principals who want to make this change must first determine how to disseminate information that traditionally has been shared in staff meetings.

Murphy says he designated a bulletin board in his elementary school where he posted information that needed to be shared with the staff. Carole Schmidt, a former high school principal, says she delegated to department chairs the responsibility of ensuring that certain kinds of information reached teachers.

As a principal begins to shift from a traditional staff meeting to a staff development meeting, Robbins also recommends that the learning portion of the meeting comes first. Quoting Kent Peterson, she says, "what you pay attention to communicates what you value."

### Staff readiness

Before changing the staff meeting, Robbins says principals must examine the working relationships among the staff. If a staff is not used to working together, she recommends introducing the idea slowly. "You'll doom your collaborative effort to failure if you use a high-risk activity with a group that's not ready for it," Robbins says.

When she thinks about schools, Robbins divides them into three categories, depending on their readiness and familiarity with collaboration.

**Schools with little collaboration:** In these schools, the staff rarely interacts professionally with each other.

For these schools, Robbins recommends "low-risk" staff development meetings initially. For example, the principal can invite staff members to a "swap meet" in which teachers exchange books, articles, and classroom materials.

"This gets them used to sharing stuff, even though it's physical stuff. No one has to put their professional skill and knowledge on the line for scrutiny," she says.

A notch above is a jigsaw reading. For staffs who are unaccustomed to talking together, this will give them an opportunity to read a similar article and have a substantive conversation about it. Such a discussion also begins the process of recognizing the expertise that already exists in the staff, she said.

"Collegiality must be based on congeniality and this begins to develop a basic comfort level with one another," she says.

**Schools with moderate collaboration:** Teachers in these schools may already have done some classroom visits and observations.

For such schools, Robbins often recommends an activity she calls "Mail Call." In this activity, teachers can privately identify problems and receive suggestions from colleagues about how to address the issues. Because it's done privately, teachers are less likely to feel embarrassed about seeking help.

Robbins says such an activity, however, begins to demonstrate to teachers that their colleagues have a great deal of expertise. "They can leave the room with 15, 20, 25 ideas about how to deal with something. It creates an understanding that, if only I reach out to my colleague, perhaps the answer to my problems exists three to four doorways away," she says.

**Schools with high collaboration:** In these schools, teachers already are accustomed to working with each other — through peer coaching and team teaching, for example.

For those schools, Robbins recommends introducing them to techniques for examining student work. Again, she cautions that not all staffs are ready for an activity like this. "Teachers might get a little nervous. This can be very threatening because other teachers are dissecting the actual work that their students are doing and that's a reflection on their teaching," she says.

A preliminary step might involve having teachers discuss work done by students in other schools. "This way, they learn the strategy and no one teaching in your school feels like they've been put on the chopping block," she says.

### **Setting the agenda**

To make staff meetings meaningful to teachers, Murphy recommends entrusting teachers with the responsibility for selecting the content in relation to student learning goals.

Then, the principal needs to assume responsibility for planning staff meetings. "Treat the meetings the way you would any formal learning experience. Apply the same standards you would apply to any quality professional development," Murphy says.

During one year at his school, for example, teachers decided to they wanted to devote staff meeting time to discipline issues. During a series of faculty meetings, teachers read articles and watched videos of simulations and real-life situations of different discipline issues. Murphy led discussions about what they read and saw. Over time, they generated ideas of what would work in their school.

"Faculty meetings became meetings that people were eager to attend," he says.

As a high school principal, Carole Schmidt did something similar. During her first year as principal, she listened to teachers' concerns about the scattershot efforts at improvement. "What they wanted was a common focus. We were killing people with all of the committees that we had," she says.

Schmidt decided that the entire staff would spend its four staff development half days plus staff meeting time during the next year rewriting the school's mission, vision, and establishing learning goals. She also moved from weekly staff meetings to quarterly staff meetings. "Any time we had the faculty together, we focused on learning goals for the school," she says.

"We changed the meeting so it wasn't just a meeting to get together. It was a meeting designed for their learning and for mine," she says.

Murphy says pulling a staff together to focus on a single theme over a long period helps build a sense of community among the staff. "Teachers have been very isolated from each other. Faculties don't just naturally come together. But they're expected to work on common goals and common needs. They can't do that until schools find ways to bring people together," he says.

## Heed knowledge about human learning and change

by Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, Dec/Jan 2002

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### The standard:

**Learning:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.

Scenario #1: A workshop leader lectures for two hours on the benefits of using cooperative learning.

Scenario #2: Classroom examples used in a science workshop on problem-based learning do not match participant's assignments.

Scenario #3: A district mandates a one-day training session on constructivist teaching.

Any sound familiar? While the content may differ, the situations may be all too familiar.

Powerful staff development requires adults to experience the kinds of learning strategies desired for their students. If we believe students will benefit from higher-quality instruction then adults must have opportunities to learn and experience the strategies associated with it.

### Examine each scenario

Examine each scenario from this perspective. In Scenario #1, if the leader recognizes the need for teachers to experience learning that is congruent with how they're expected to teach, the leader will make certain teachers have sufficient opportunities to understand cooperative learning, practice it, try it out in real-life settings, and receive feedback.

The leader may make a powerful case regarding the benefits of cooperative learning, but, without the opportunity to experience it, participants will lack the confidence necessary to try it.

Scenario #2 points out that if teachers are expected to use relevant examples with their students, then presenters must ensure that teachers are provided opportunities to hear or develop relevant examples. In this case, the presenter could put participants into groups with similar teaching assignments so they could create examples that fit their own classrooms.

In the Scenario #3, a district has decided the constructivist approach to teaching would benefit students. In the one-day workshop, teachers are presented with a list of characteristics of constructivist classrooms. But a district that was really committed to this instructional model would more likely provide teachers with opportunities to construct their own knowledge rather than receive it from trainers in a pre-digested package. Implementing this model of teaching will require a greater commitment to teacher talking, writing, and testing ideas.

If we want professional development experiences to mirror what we expect teachers to do in their classrooms, what are the options for replacing our scenarios?

### The bottom line

Scenario #1: To ensure more teachers use cooperative learning strategies, future after-school workshops will put participants in cooperative learning groups and ask them to plan lessons together for interdisciplinary units that will include cooperative learning assignments for students.

Scenario #2: Science teachers will have opportunities for summer internships to experience the work of scientists and then be asked to design more problem-based lessons for their students.

Scenario #3: Before planning lessons for the following year, whole faculties participate in a year-long discussion series on constructivist learning approached through the constructivist model.

The Bottom Line: Staff development must be designed to ensure that participants experience the strategies they will be expected to use on the job.

## Needs Are Based On Student Goals

by Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, October 2001

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Educators planning staff development frequently contact NSDC seeking a needs assessment instrument. Typically, the caller wants an instrument in order to learn what a staff wants before planning staff development for the year or simply because he or she has been told by a supervisor to do a needs assessment for the district.

Neither reason is satisfactory given our current state of knowledge of effective staff development. Here's why I say that.

First, results-driven staff development cannot be driven by individual wants or needs. Good staff development planning begins by examining the results your school or organization wants for students and staff. High-quality planning is driven by three basic questions:

- What has the district and school decided that students must know and be able to do?
- What must our teachers know and be able to do to ensure that students achieve the designated district and school goals?
- As a result, what content and learning processes are most likely to develop the necessary professional skills and knowledge to produce success?

The answers to these questions and an analysis of those responses provides the kind of assessment that lays the foundation for designing staff development that will help the district and schools achieve their goals for staff and students. An instrument created by an organization or individual unconnected to your school system or organization is not likely to be sufficiently aligned with the goals and expectations your district has for its students.

A staff development assessment can be designed and used to measure educator's perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses associated with the teaching competencies that align with the results the district seeks for its students. For example, if all students are expected to master certain writing skills and all teachers are expected to include writing assignments in their courses, then it would make sense to ask staff how well prepared they feel to help students attain the district's writing standards. Their responses to this question could provide guidance about where the greatest needs exist, perhaps for focusing on a grade-level or a curriculum department. By comparing this data with actual student writing results for the various grade levels, the staff developer can determine if teachers' perceptions were accurate.

So, why did NSDC include a self-assessment with the revised NSDC Standards for Staff Development? This assessment instrument can help you in two ways. First, its questions are aligned with the characteristics of high-quality professional development. Districts can assess whether educators perceive that necessary support and conditions exist to truly improve their practice. The questions that look at process provide valuable information to the district regarding how educators perceive the design of professional learning.

Second, the questions aligned with the content standards also can be helpful to staff development planners in other ways. They provide an example of content-oriented assessment questions. In the absence of content or teaching standards, the self-assessment questions provide a starting place to collect data on teachers' needs in relation to the knowledge and skills that research has shown are connected with results for students.

Use the NSDC standards self-assessment as the first step in thinking about what you want to accomplish with your own assessment. Information about other needs assessment resources can be found on our web site at [www.nsd.org/library/selfassess.html](http://www.nsd.org/library/selfassess.html). When you complete your first instrument, please send it to me so the next time I hear these questions, I'll have a new example to share.

## The Numbers Game

Measure progress by analyzing data

By Joan Richardson – *Tools for Schools*, Oct/Nov 2000

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If a district or a single school has a vision of what it wants to be, the use of data can be a powerful tool to measure its progress along the way.

Sylvie Hale has seen the power of using data in that way. “Schools have to collect data to make sure they’re on target. Data do not lie,” she said.

Ask Hale, senior research associate at West Ed, for an example of how using data guided a school to fulfill its vision and she’s ready with a handful of stories. This is one of her favorites:

A rural California school district had a goal of ensuring that all children would read at grade level by 3rd grade. Teachers in one school were quite discouraged because many 1st and 2nd graders were reading below grade level. How could they meet the district goal if children were falling behind so early?

Teachers quickly decided that the school needed a new reading program.

Hale and other consultants from a regional assistance center urged the school to look over its data very closely. Perhaps the school would discover that the curriculum wasn’t the only reason students were struggling with reading.

After receiving some preliminary school data, teachers discovered that a majority of kindergartners had been absent for more than half the year. That must mean that parents don’t care enough about education to get them to school, teachers concluded.

The consultants pushed them to look at other possible explanations for missing school.

The teachers talked with parents of students with high absenteeism and learned that these children rode a bus to school but that the district provided no bus transportation to take them home at the end of their half-day in school. The buses were needed to transport high school students and the district did not want to mix high schoolers with kindergartners. Working parents or parents who relied on others for after-school transportation frequently kept children home rather than deal with the transportation hassle.

Clearly, the reading curriculum was not at fault. When providing transportation for these kindergartners turned out to be financially unfeasible, the teachers explored other options.

By the next school year, the school created an extended day kindergarten. Money for a remedial reading program was diverted to pay for extra teacher hours. At last report, the reading of these students was improving.

What’s the lesson? “Check your assumptions at the door,” said Hale.

“I don’t think that’s an uncommon story. We all make quick assumptions. Instead, we need to look at data, generate questions and find answers. Data keep you honest,” she said.

### A data plan

Let’s assume that district’s vision includes a statement that all children will read at grade level by 3rd grade and remain at grade level every year thereafter. How could you use data to measure your progress towards achieving that vision?

**Collect basic information.** Every school should maintain basic data on student demographics and achievement. See the Student Data Checklist on Page 3 for a guide to collecting information that will give you a snapshot of students in your school.

Break down this information by grade. Keep the original data available so you can cross-reference it with other data in later steps.

**Identify additional data.** To check on students’ reading ability in your school, what data will you need to collect?

To measure academic performance, a school would probably collect, at a minimum, standardized test scores, grades, and classroom assessments. You should always collect at least three types of data for any study.

Identify who will be responsible for collecting this data and set a date for finishing this task.

**Disaggregate the data.** Assemble the academic performance data and disaggregate it according to the characteristics collected under Step One. At a minimum, you should break down each type of data by gender, race, socio-economic factors, attendance, mobility, discipline issues, and English language ability.

Use the Data Summary Sheet on Page 5 for this process. Prepare one sheet for each type of data you collect.

**Analyze the data.** After you've filled out the Data Summary Sheets, begin to ask questions about that data.

What is the lowest performing group? What is the highest performing group? Are boys and girls performing equally well in reading? Are there dips in reading achievement between different grades? If so, which grades? What are the reading levels of various language groups? Do different socio-economic groups have different reading levels? Are reading levels similar between various racial and ethnic groups?

**Summarize the data.** Describe in a statement what the data tells you. These statements can be called either data summary statements or needs statements. See sample statements on Page 4.

In this step, the school team is trying to identify the problem, not solve it. This forces individuals to spell out what they see and not fall back on assumptions, Hale said. Write one statement or write a dozen summary statements, depending on your observations.

At this stage, avoid the urge to brainstorm solutions. That step will come later. For now, concentrate on simply describing your observations.

**Brainstorm causes.** Once a school team has objectively evaluated the data, the next step is to suggest possible explanations.

What's going on instructionally? What's going on with the curriculum? Where are the gaps? Why do these gaps exist?

"If you're not getting the results you want, there's dissonance someplace. Where is the dissonance?" Hale asks.

For example, a staff may suggest that the curriculum is not aligned with the assessment or that teachers lack sufficient training to implement the curriculum appropriately.

**Collect more data.** After the team has suggested explanations for blips in the data, the next step is to collect more data to determine which explanations are most accurate.

For example, if the team hypothesizes that the curriculum has not been implemented completely, the team might survey teachers about their practices as well as observe relevant classes.

**Analyze and summarize data.** As it did with the student data, the team now analyzes the data it has collected regarding instruction and curriculum.

The team repeats the process of writing objective statements about the data it has collected.

**Identify a goal.** After the data has been analyzed and summarized, the team now needs to identify its goals. See Page 6 for a tool to help with this.

Write a specific, measurable and attainable goal. What would you consider success? How will you measure that? When will you measure that?

**Repeat the process.** Once the goal has been identified, the process has not ended. The team needs to establish a timetable for repeating the process of collecting and analyzing the data. This forces the team to stay focused on measuring its progress.

But Hale cautions teams against focusing too narrowly on certain areas because of the potential to ignore other areas. "You have to collect data to make sure you're on target but you also have to look at data to make sure other things aren't falling through the cracks," Hale said.

"Data collection and analysis is a continuing process. It never ends. Once you begin asking questions and looking for answers, you find that you have more answers and more questions," Hale said.

## Taking Measure: Map out evaluation goals

*A master plan can guide you down the rocky path of evaluation*

By Robby Champion – *Journal of Staff Development*, Fall 2002 (Vol. 23, No. 4)

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See an example of a matrix to help guide evaluations in the PDF version of this article.

When you launch a major professional development evaluation, regardless of the project's scope, you may quickly find yourself on a slippery, often rocky road, with twists and unexpected turns.

Before venturing too far and becoming disillusioned about program evaluation, create a master plan. While it requires an upfront investment of time and may delay starting, it quickly becomes an invaluable road map that helps you avoid delays and detours along the way.

Developing an evaluation master plan is most useful when you are launching a major, summative program evaluation. A "summative" evaluation is done at major junctures in a program's life cycle and emphasizes documenting impact. Information from summative evaluations is used to make important decisions about the initiative, such as whether to continue, alter, expand, downsize, or eliminate it. A "formative" evaluation, on the other hand, means monitoring and collecting data, often informally and spontaneously, throughout program implementation. Formative evaluation helps show implementers where to make adjustments so a program can eventually achieve significant results.

A thoughtfully prepared master plan for a major evaluation effort would:

- Focus the evaluation effort and help implementers avoid being sidetracked by leadership changes and new opinions;
- Create a realistic timeline and work plan that provides needed momentum for the work;
- Be a key informational document to provide an overview and answer specific questions throughout the process;
- Help recruit people to assist with the project on the myriad evaluation tasks;
- Give the message that the evaluation will be open and not secretive.

Whether your evaluation must be completed within a few months or will extend for several years, think through four phases of work before starting.

### **PHASE I: Organize the process**

1. Form a steering committee, including any needed outside expertise.
2. Learn more about program evaluation together.
3. Write a clear description of each program to be evaluated.
4. Agree on the primary purpose of the evaluation.
5. Plan how you will keep everyone informed along the way.

Steering committees, charged specifically with program evaluation, are important to focus attention and maintain the energy and momentum needed for the evaluation. They also help build a spirit of collaboration and open inquiry. And they keep the evaluation on track when other priorities might push the effort aside.

Provide steering committee members with the tools to succeed. Members need not be evaluation experts, but they do need information, support, and guidance to make informed decisions. They need background material to learn about program evaluation and examples of good evaluation studies. Finally, they need access to experts on professional development, measurement, and the content areas of the training programs.

Before launching any evaluation effort, have a written description of each program to be evaluated. You would be amazed at the number of people who do not have a clear idea of what you mean by the "New Teacher Induction Program" or the "Early Literacy Initiative" since so many different initiatives are being undertaken simultaneously around the school or district.

## **PHASE II: Design the evaluation**

1. Generate questions to guide the evaluation.
2. Generate potential data sources/ instruments to address the questions.
3. Using a matrix to provide a bird's-eye view, agree on the most important questions and the best data sources.
4. Decide if collecting data from a sample group is warranted to make the evaluation manageable.
5. Determine the evaluation approach that makes sense: quantitative vs. qualitative/naturalistic.
6. Gather or create the instruments for data collection.
7. Determine a realistic schedule for collecting data.
8. Create a system for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data.

Decisions made in Phase II are critical. They determine the technical quality of your evaluation. In the questions you select, you determine what to examine and what to ignore. When you finish with the design phase, your program evaluation will be shaped to use a quantitative or a qualitative model-- or a mixture of the two.

In the design phase, you make other major decisions, such as whether to use a sample group. You also decide whether to do an in-depth case study, whether to survey the whole population, whether to use examples of student work instead of official documents such as student grades or standardized test scores, or whether to judge adult learners' understanding of the training content with performance tasks during training or by exit tests, classroom observations, or student feedback.

If the programs to be evaluated already have stated indicators of long-term impact, generating appropriate evaluation questions is much simpler than when programs have only vague, lofty goals. The steering committee may drift into the realm of program planning as you encounter hurdles like fuzzy program outcomes. To avoid making misinformed evaluation design decisions, involve program leaders in your discussions.

Developing or gathering instruments and then collecting the data are the most expensive steps in any evaluation. Think strategically about which data to collect, from whom to collect it or where to find it, and the best time to collect it. Your organization may already be collecting data for another purpose that now can be used for program evaluation. Some public records, such as student attendance, may be valuable if, for example, "20% increase in student attendance at all grade levels" is one of your program's indicators of impact.

## **PHASE III: Prepare to report**

1. Determine which audiences will want to know the results.
2. Consider several forums and formats to disseminate the results.
3. Plan reports, presentations, photo displays, graphs, charts, etc.

Remember that your job is to make the evaluation results useful to your organization, so consider a range of ways to provide information to various groups. Consider briefs in the school or district newsletter, a handout updating staff about the schedule for data collection, five-minute progress updates in faculty meetings, bulleted statements on your web site, a digital picture album of the program's results in classrooms with photos of students, and hallway displays of student work. If your final report is a formal document complete with examples of your data collection instruments, consider writing an executive summary of five pages or less to help readers get the essential information.

## **PHASE IV: Create the work plan**

1. List all tasks to be completed for the whole evaluation.
2. Create a realistic timeline.
3. Assign work.
4. Distribute the master plan.

You will have to be creative to accomplish all the evaluation tasks. In education, we rarely have the luxury of contracting outsiders for the entire project. Enlist steering committee members, partners, graduate students from the local university, and other talented critical friends to get the work done.

One caution: For formal or summative evaluations to be credible, avoid using insiders such as the program designers or implementers (coaches, mentors, trainers, or facilitators) to perform critical evaluation tasks that call for objectivity and distance. And be sure to get ongoing, high-quality technical expertise for the critical technical analysis.

### **A catalyst for reflection**

Completing a major program evaluation usually serves as the catalyst for serious reflection on the current designs, policies, and practices of your professional development programs--their goals, content, processes, and contexts. In fact, revelations are often so powerful that they bring about the realization that major changes are needed if significant results are really expected from professional development. People frequently conclude that designing the evaluation should be the first step in the program planning process, rather than an afterthought during implementation.

### **About the author**

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## Make clear your theory of change

By Stephanie Hirsh – *Results*, February 2003

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### Evaluation:

Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.

Imagine this scenario. School board members cut the district's staff development budget. They justify this decision on the lack of evidence that staff development is producing results for students. With a declining budget and pressure to improve achievement, they want to allocate resources to programs that can demonstrate their worth. The money is reallocated to an after-school tutoring program.

Now imagine a different scenario. School board members increase the district's staff development budget. Guided by the district staff development director, the board reviews the theory of change it previously endorsed, periodic reports of progress, and end-of-the-year state test results. Board members celebrate the interventions that contributed to the excellent results. They consider revisions in their theory of change for next year. They conclude by providing additional resources to expand staff development.

Which scenario will be your fate? To ensure the latter result, consider the value of a well-conceived theory of change and the NSDC standard on staff development evaluation.

*Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development* (Killion, 2002) describes the characteristics and strengths of a program's theory of change. A theory of change "...delineates the underlying assumptions upon which the program is based. It includes not only the components of a program, but also incorporates an explanation of how the change is expected to occur" (p. 55). According to Whaley (1987), program components include program resources, program activities, initial and intermediate outcomes, and ultimate goals.

Both Killion and Whaley confirm the importance of including stakeholders in designing a theory of change: Involving more persons in developing the theory will mean more discussion about the assumptions that lead to selected activities and the development of a consensus among all groups. In addition, more involvement means more fidelity to the plan and more willingness to attribute the final results to the inputs.

We can sell the impact of staff development when we involve stakeholders in developing the theory of change. When we jointly reveal our assumptions, identify our goals, design our interventions, and identify our ultimate outcomes, we demonstrate our expectation that these interventions will produce certain results.

A very simple theory of change might include the following set of activities:

**Goal:** Improve literacy performance in grades 1-2.

**Activities:**

1. Three-day summer training for all teachers.
2. Monthly follow-up networking meetings.
3. Literacy lead teachers on all campuses for classroom follow-up visits and demonstration teaching.
4. New reading materials for classrooms.

**Initial outcomes:** Teacher observation forms will document teachers using new practices. Intermediate outcomes:

Classroom assessments and district-level six-weeks test will document improved student scores.

**Final outcomes:** State test scores will document improved student learning.

If stakeholders buy this theory of change, then the final results will be attributed to the links in the chain.

Making explicit one's theory of change, unearthing its underlying assumptions, and building consensus will result in stronger staff development plans and ease the evaluation process. An explicit theory of change enables a more compelling argument that staff development contributes to increased student achievement.

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## Seeing Through New Eyes

Walk throughs offer new way to view schools

By Joan Richardson – *Tools for Schools*, Oct/Nov. 2001

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In 1998, educators at Haas Middle School in Corpus Christi knew they needed to change: 47 percent of the students were being retained in their grade each year and some children were spending three or four years in the same grade.

“We knew we had to do something to change what was going on in the classroom. No one had given any instructional guidance to the faculty in years,” said Deborah Scates who arrived that year as principal.

The strategy that has had the greatest impact on changing teacher behavior and improving Haas has been Instructionally-focused Walk Throughs, she said.

“The relationships in the building have changed. Everything now is focused on staff development and improvement of teaching. It’s all about learning here,” Scates said. Student achievement on Texas’ statewide reading assessment has also improved, she said.

Although many educators are familiar with walk throughs, the walk through is a new twist on an old idea.

In more traditional walk throughs, someone – usually a principal or an outside observer – goes through the school with a checklist and notes a variety of activities or materials in the classroom. “Sometimes, they stop in a classroom for a long period of time. Sometimes, they just stick their head in the door. What they want out of it is not really well-defined so they don’t get much out of it,” said George Perry, a consultant who works with several Corpus Christi, Texas, schools under a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

Whether known as “instructional walks,” “learning walks,” or “data in a day,” the pattern of walk throughs is roughly the same: A team of observers is dispatched to numerous classrooms where they spend about 10 minutes looking for very specific things. At the conclusion, the observers assemble their information and share what they have learned with the teachers whose rooms have been observed.

Unlike a classroom observation which provides a view of a single classroom, a walk through creates a schoolwide picture made up of many small snapshots, Perry said. It’s a strategy for providing a school, not an individual teacher, with feedback about what it’s doing or not doing, he said.

“You can gather a lot of really good information in a short period of time if you’re very focused on what you’re doing. The more narrow the focus, the easier it is to talk with someone about what they’re doing,” Perry said.

At Haas, a team walks through about once a week, Scates said. Sometimes, the observers are from other Corpus Christi middle schools whose principals work closely with Scates. She then reciprocates by doing walk throughs of their schools. But, nearly every week, a Haas team walks through the building. The school-based team includes Scates, an assistant principal, and three or four teachers. Teachers rotate on and off the walk through team. So far, about half of the Haas teachers have participated in a walk through as a team member. The rest will get their chance this year, she said.

### Clear focus

As with any school improvement process, a school that wants to do walk throughs needs to be familiar with its data about student achievement and to have deep conversations about what teachers will do to improve student achievement. In those discussions, teachers must be clear about what is expected to happen in each classroom and principals need to ensure that teachers are provided with professional learning opportunities to help them make the necessary changes.

Walk throughs are a way of collecting data about the school’s success in achieving its goals, Perry said. They provide a way for the principal to determine what additional support teachers need in order to achieve the school’s goals.

At Haas, for example, the overarching focus is on literacy and one of its goals is to increase the amount of student writing.

Preparing for a walk through to gauge the school's progress on that goal, the visitors would assemble in the principal's office for about 30 minutes and discuss what they would expect to find in a middle school classroom:

- Visitors would see students writing.
- Visitors would see evidence of past student writing such as piles of written work in the classroom and examples of student writing posted on classroom walls.
- Students would maintain writing journals.
- Students would be able to explain the writing process.
- Exemplary student writing would be highlighted so students know the standard for good writing.
- Prompts for journal writing would be on the chalkboard.

Before going into the classroom, visitors would be assigned a specific task. For example, one visitor might be assigned to note whether and what types of student writing are displayed in the room, another to write down what is written on the chalkboard, and another to pull aside one or two students to learn what they understand about the writing process.

In most walk throughs, the teaching continues and the visitors sit in the back or walk quietly around the classroom looking for evidence, Perry said. If visitors are going to talk with students, teachers need to be aware of that ahead of time. The visitors do not speak to each other while they are in a classroom.

Visitors spend only 10 to 15 minutes in each room. The visitors repeat the same pattern in each classroom they visit.

### **Debriefing**

After leaving each classroom, the team of visitors goes down the hall a short way and spends about five minutes comparing notes.

After visiting all of the classrooms for that day, the visitors assemble and spend about 45 minutes going over the evidence they have collected.

At Haas, Scates prepares two reports. The first is a general report about what the team observed; the second is an individual report for each teacher.

She takes that a step further by having a private conversation with each teacher within a day of the walk through. "I think the worst thing you could do is put the form in a box and not talk with them," she said.

Typically, her conversations sound like this: "I saw you were doing this. Can you explain why you were doing that? I noticed that you didn't do this. Can you explain why?"

"When the teachers answer the questions, that's where the learning comes in," she said.

Perry believes the walk throughs also produce information in bite-sized pieces that are easier for teachers to digest. "Talking to a teacher or to a faculty about a whole laundry list of things confuses the issue. That allows teachers to pick and choose what they hear and what they respond to. It's easier to attend to a shorter list of things than a longer list of things."

Learning for teachers also occurs when they have a chance to get inside another teacher's classroom. "That really opens their eyes to the need for improvement and for consistency. They assume everyone else is doing what they're doing. They find that's not the case," Scates said.

Perry agrees. "Not until teachers get into each other's classrooms and see practices are they actually able to understand what's going on and why there's a need for change and for ideas about how to do that."

## Online Resources

“By the numbers,” by Margery Ginsberg, *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2001. Describes the Data in a Day process as it has been used to collect information about classroom practices that support student motivation. Available online at [www.nsd.org/library/jsd/ginsberg222.html](http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/ginsberg222.html).

**Data in a Day.** Concept developed by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to gather data about issues considered important by staff and students. NWREL's web site offers information to get a school started on this process. [www.nwrel.org/scpd/scc/studentvoices/diad.shtml](http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/scc/studentvoices/diad.shtml).

“Data analysis by walking around,” by Francis Barnes and Marilyn Miller, *The School Administrator*, April 2001. Article describing the walk throughs practiced at the Palisades School District in Pennsylvania. Available online at [www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2001\\_04/barnes\\_april2001.htm](http://www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2001_04/barnes_april2001.htm)

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## Wishful thinking and other barriers to improvement

Well-designed evaluation of staff learning is an essential part of school improvement.

By Dennis Sparks – *Results*, March 2002

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In some ways, nothing could be more straight forward than evaluating staff development: First, staff development leaders establish clear goals for their work, then they decide what evidence would tell them they have reached their goals, they determine the audience for the evaluation, they select or design instruments or processes for gathering the evidence, they prepare a report or reports for their audience(s), and they decide what changes, if any, will improve this or future efforts.

I know there may be complicating factors--like whether the evidence that has been gathered is reliable and valid--but most of the challenges of evaluating staff development occur in the steps I have outlined. I found myself thinking these thoughts as I previewed *Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development*, a new NSDC publication prepared by Joellen Killion of the Council's staff.

The process I've described, however, often breaks down at its very beginning. Staff development leaders are frequently unclear about their staff development goals. No one has given the subject much thought beyond vague intentions such as "We want to improve our test scores" or "We'd like teachers to be familiar with these ideas." And when the goal is unclear, everything that follows tends to be muddled.

The National Staff Development Council believes the primary purpose for staff development is high levels of learning and performance for all students and staff members. From the Council's perspective, that means the vast majority of professional learning will be directed at changes in leadership and teaching practices that improve student achievement.

Even when staff development leaders are crystal clear about student learning outcomes, though, another major problem quickly arises as planners enter what someone has aptly named the "the zone of wishful thinking." For various reasons, educational leaders select staff development content and processes that are far too weak to produce the desired results. So instead of being tough-minded in assessing the strength of each link in the causal chain that leads to the intended outcome, leaders initiate activities that keep everyone busy but are not likely to change much of anything.

Perhaps my views seem unfair. After all, I am not engaged in the day-to-day realities of trying to bring about reform in very complex situations. Yet I continue to hear criticism on all sides--from teachers and their union leaders, from administrators and school board members, from academics and policy makers--that low-quality staff development is a continuing, serious impediment to reform.

It makes little sense to commit precious resources to the evaluation of professional development that virtually everyone agrees is of poor quality and clearly not powerful enough to affect practice. So it is critical that educational leaders-- particularly superintendents, principals, and teacher leaders--take seriously the NSDC's Standards for Staff Development and the Council's Code of Ethics (both of which can be found at [www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org)) and other such documents produced by state and federal education agencies, school districts, and researchers.

Well-designed evaluation not only informs and contributes to the knowledge base of our field, it also empowers educators as they reflect on ways to improve their work, plan and implement effective staff development, and observe the differences that this professional learning makes in their practice and in student outcomes. As an African proverb reminds us, "The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The next best time is today." It's time for education leaders to take evaluation of staff development seriously in order to benefit the entire school community.

# Additional Readings

**Below are titles and web addresses of additional readings that will support the six areas of the Implementation Guide.**

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# Georgia Standards for Professional Learning

## CONTEXT STANDARDS

**LEARNING COMMUNITIES:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

**LEADERSHIP:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.

**RESOURCES:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

## PROCESS STANDARDS

**DATA-DRIVEN:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.

**EVALUATION:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.

**RESEARCH-BASED:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.

**DESIGN:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.

**LEARNING:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.

**COLLABORATION:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

## CONTENT STANDARDS

**EQUITY:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.

**QUALITY TEACHING:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:** Professional learning that improves the learning of all students provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

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# NSDC Standards – Annotated Bibliography

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Read at [http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed400259.html](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed400259.html)

This paper outlines what research and best practice suggest about effective professional development for teachers working in restructured, learner-centered schools. It considers the implications of traditional school scheduling patterns for implementing effective professional development and shares some approaches that various schools and districts have taken to find time for teacher development activities. Effective professional development provides adequate time for teachers to acquire, practice, and reflect on new concepts and skills as well as time to collaborate and interact with peers. Traditional school schedules typically lack sufficient time for this kind of teacher activity during the school day. Some schools and school districts have devised several approaches and strategies to make time for teacher development available during school hours. (*Standards Resources, Learning, Collaboration*)

Ames, C. (1995). *Teachers' school-to-home communications and parent involvement: The role of parent perceptions and beliefs* (Report No. 28). Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI: Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 383 451). Order from website of the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/ivory.htm>

This study is part of a longitudinal project examining the relationship between parent involvement and specific types of teacher practices, namely school-to-home communications. Sampling 35 elementary school teachers from four Midwestern school districts in small cities and rural areas, and a control group of 34 teachers from different schools in the same district, the study evaluated the teachers' use of home-to-school communications and assessed parent involvement. The study found that parents' overall evaluation of the teacher, their sense of comfort with the school, and their reported level of involvement was higher when they received frequent and effective communications. Children's motivation, attitudes toward parent involvement, and perceptions of their parents' level of involvement were more positive when their parents received frequent communications from the teacher. (*Standard Family Involvement*)

Arnold, M., Simms, N. & Wilber, D. (1999). Innovative approaches to maximizing resources. In *Noteworthy Perspectives on Comprehensive School Reform* (pp. 49-55). Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory.

Download in PDF form at <http://www.mcrel.org/products/noteworthy/noteworthy99/noteworthy99.pdf>

The authors discuss how success of a comprehensive reform initiative requires restructuring of the school operations as a whole and strategic allocation and use of resources. Suggestions are made on how district personnel can begin the process of maximizing resources with a focus on the district's vision and mission. Some of these include maximizing the use of staff expertise, harnessing time, investing in professional development, using federal dollars creatively, and cultivating community support. The allocation or reallocation of resources may sometimes involve unpopular and difficult decisions such as the elimination of any programs that are not contributing to overall student achievement. The article concludes with examples of obstacles to resource allocation. (*Standard Resources*)

Banks, J. (1993). Multicultural education: Development, dimensions, and challenges. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(1), 21-28.

Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

James Banks identifies some myths about multicultural education: (1) that it is only for African-Americans, Hispanics, the poor, women, and other victimized groups; (2) that it is opposed to the Western tradition; and (3) that it will divide the nation. He then discusses some of the progress made by multicultural education, using five dimensions to describe the field's major components: (1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) an equity pedagogy, and (5) an empowering school culture and social structure. (*Standard Equity*)

Barth, R. (2001). Teacher leader. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(6), 443-449.  
Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

Roland Barth's article is based on his work with more than 100 teacher leaders in Rhode Island who participated in the Sizer Fellowship Program and in the Rhode Island Teachers and Technology Initiative. He argues that teachers who become leaders experience personal and professional satisfaction, a reduction in isolation, a sense of instrumentality, and new learnings—all of which spill over into their teaching. He discusses many of the benefits of effective teacher leadership, as well as some of the systemic obstacles to it. Finally, he describes some of the roles that principals can play in the process of building effective teacher leadership. (*Standards Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Collaboration*)

Bernhardt, V. (1998). *Data analysis for comprehensive schoolwide improvement*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, Inc.  
Order from Eye on Education's website: <http://www.eyoneducation.com>

Victoria Bernhardt analyzes barriers schools face data analysis, describing how and why to gather data. She defines and describes the importance of four major measures of data (demographics, perceptions, student learning, and school processes), exploring the interactions of these measures that allow schools to determine what they need to do to prevent failures and to increase student learning. Also she describes how to communicate the results of comprehensive data analyses to the community and how to use the results of data analyses for schoolwide improvement. (*Standards Data-Driven, Family Involvement*)

Bodilly, S., Keltner, B., Purnell, S., Reichardt, R., & Schuyler, G. (1998). *Lessons from New American Schools' scale-up phase* (MR-942.0-NAS). Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corp. Read at <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR942/>

Established in 1991, the goal of New American Schools is to help schools evolve into organizations of improved learning and increased academic performance. Acknowledging that the implementation of reforms is not an easy task, this RAND study presents findings from the scale up phase (1995-1997) during which NAS collaborated with ten jurisdictions to implement whole school design-based programs. Several "lessons" were learned: 1) the variety and quantity of people involved in the initiative complicates school reform, 2) cooperation and collaboration of schools and districts with the design teams are necessary, and 3) stable leadership and the belief that the effort is important to success are two factors that affect the degree of teacher participation. (*Standards Leadership, Collaboration*)

Boyd, V. & McGree, K. (1995). Leading change from the classroom: Teachers as leaders. *Issues... about Change*, 4 (4). Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Read at <http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues44.html>

As schools begin to restructure, teachers are becoming leaders of change. Teacher leaders do not subscribe to hierarchical definitions of leadership, but rather prefer the view of leadership as a collaborative effort. Teachers who become leaders often experience personal gain, intellectual and professional growth, and decreased isolation. There are problems associated with leadership roles, however, including lack of definition of the role, lack of time, and constraints of the school culture. This case study describes the efforts of teacher leaders in one school district to implement change, focusing on one teacher's story of her experience as a teacher leader. Necessary to the success of new teacher roles and responsibilities are vision, structure, time, and skills. (*Standards Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Brooks, J. & Brooks, M. (1993). *In search of understanding: The case for constructivist classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

This book provides a rationale for the development of classrooms based on constructivist learning. The authors describe five guiding principles for teaching derived from constructivism, (1) posing problems of emerging relevance to learners, (2) structuring learning around "big ideas" or primary concepts, (3) seeking and valuing students' points of view, (4) adapting curriculum to address students' suppositions, and (5) assessing student learning in the context of the teaching. The authors provide research support for and classroom examples of each principle. (*Standard Learning, Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Brophy, J. (1998). Classroom management as socializing students into clearly articulated roles. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 33(1), 1-4.

Order by writing to: Journal of Classroom Interaction; University of Houston, Room 452 FH; Houston, TX 77204-5874

Jerome Brophy provides a historical perspective of the classroom-management issues, noting that certain classroom-management principles are applicable to a range of possible instructional strategies. He concludes that management systems should support instructional systems, and student roles should be clearly articulated in the planning process for instruction. Brophy takes into account students' roles emphasized in social constructivist classrooms. (*Standard Equity*)

Calderon, M. (1997). *Staff development in multilingual multicultural schools*. New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 410 368)

Read at [http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed410368.html](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed410368.html)

The author presents recommendations for a staff development program that has been tested and shown to be effective for a multilingual, multicultural teaching staff. Effective instruction in bilingual and multicultural schools requires that teachers combine a sophisticated knowledge of subject matter with a wide repertoire of teaching strategies and state-of-the-art knowledge about learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, curriculum, technology, assessment, and programs that work. Researchers at the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk have gained insight into ways of bringing instruction, cultural relevance, and equitable power relations into a staff development program. (*Standard Equity*)

Calhoun, E. (1994). *How to use action research in the self-renewing school*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Emily F. Calhoun presents her practical definition of action research for organization improvement: "Let's study what's happening at our school (through the collection and utilization of data) and decide how to make it a better place." She outlines a model for a quick start to action research. She then says that action research (1) uses student data to inform us about success, (2) must be focused on student learning as a collective mission, (3) can develop the school as a learning community, (4) can build organizational capacity to solve problems, and (5) can be a form of personal as well as professional development. (*Standard Learning Community, Evaluation, Research-Based*)

Carson, T. (1986). Closing the gap between research and practice: Conversation as a mode of doing research. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 4(2), 73-85.

Order by contacting Dr. Max van Manen, Department of Secondary Education, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB Canada T6G2G5 Fax: 403-492-9402

The conduct of educational research seldom has the explicit goal of improving the practice of study participants, but the language used to report research findings is generally inaccessible to teachers. The author discusses the use of conversation (as opposed to interview) as a mode of doing research. He describes four interpretive studies which adopt a normative stance (the intention of the researchers is to influence the practice of the participants) with specific attention to uses of conversation in which teachers and researchers seek to deepen their understanding of the topic. He concludes, "By engaging in conversation, researchers are helping to create spaces within educational institutions for thoughtful reflection oriented towards improving practice." (*Standard Research-Based*)

Cawelti, G. (1999). *Handbook of research on improving student achievement, Second edition*. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service. (ERIC Documentation Service No. ED 394 629)

Order from Educational Research Service's website: <http://www.ers.org>

This handbook identifies classroom practices that research has shown to result in higher student achievement. The fundamental premise is that efforts to improve instruction must focus on the existing knowledge base about effective teaching and learning. Although most studies rely on traditional kinds of achievement testing, a broader definition of achievement is used here. Integrated approaches within disciplines are included if they are judged appropriate. Each chapter contains a reference list of 60 to 90 items. (*Standards Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Cohen, D. & Ball, D. (1990). Policy and practice: An overview. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 12(3), 347-53.  
Order from AERA by emailing [subscriptions@aera.net](mailto:subscriptions@aera.net)

David K. Cohen and Deborah Loewenberg Ball provide an overview of five case studies and ancillary essays on teacher implementation of the California Mathematics Curriculum Framework. They describe the dilemma of the teacher as the traditionalist versus the teacher as innovator. Research of this nature provides insights into how instructional policy and teaching practice affect each other. (*Standards Leadership, Quality Teaching*)

Collins, D. (1997). *Achieving your vision of professional development*. Tallahassee, FL: The Regional Educational Laboratory at SERVE.

Download in PDF form at <http://www.serve.org/publications/htayv.htm>

This “how-to” resource guide offers many tips to help at each stage of building an effective professional development system. The guide reports the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory’s six strategies for implementation: developing a vision, creating a context for change, planning, investing resources, providing continual assistance, and assessing and monitoring progress. It also includes summaries of the 1997-98 winners of the U.S. Department of Education’s National Awards Program for Model Professional Development and five examples of model schools. (*Standards Learning Community, Resources, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Design, Learning*)

Corcoran, T. (1995, June). Helping teachers teach well: Transforming professional development. *CPRE Policy Briefs*. Rutgers, NJ: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 69-79.

Download in PDF form at <http://www.cpre.org/Publications/rb16.pdf>

To meet rising expectations, teachers need to deepen their content knowledge and learn new methods of teaching. They need more time to work with colleagues, to critically examine the new standards being proposed, and to revise curriculum. Corcoran reviews what is known about professional development — where it is now and where it needs to be. The brief discusses professional development’s organization, costs, and effects on practice. The brief also suggests some principles to guide professional development in the future and offers a framework for designing and assessing policies and programs. (*Standards Learning Community, Resources, Design, Learning, Collaboration, Quality Teaching*)

Corcoran, T. & Goertz, M. (1995). Instructional capacity and high performance schools. *Educational Researcher*, 24(9), 27-31.  
Order from AERA by emailing [subscriptions@aera.net](mailto:subscriptions@aera.net)

The authors suggest that “capacity” means the maximum production of a school or educational system if the product is defined as high quality instruction. The instructional capacity of a school appears to be determined by the intellectual ability, knowledge, and skills of the faculty; the quality and quantity of resources available for teaching; and the social organization of instruction. The authors describe nine issues related to capacity and capacity building drawn from their review of the research literature. (*Standards Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Quality Teaching*)

Covey, S. (1990). *Principle-centered leadership*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.  
Order from Simon & Schuster’s website: <http://www.simonsays.com>

Stephen Covey outlines key leadership traits from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In developing principle-centered leaders, he emphasizes the need for trust and patience as individuals become involved in paradigm shifts. Principle-centered leadership introduces a new paradigm, one founded on the belief that there are certain “true north” principles—trustworthiness, trust, empowerment, and alignment—that should guide personal and interpersonal relationships and form the foundation of effective leadership. In this new paradigm for leaders, it is possible to defuse overloaded bureaucracies and empower staff to participate in a process that leads to quality decision making. (*Standards Learning Community, Leadership*)

Covey, S. (1989). *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.  
Order from Simon & Schuster's website: <http://www.simonsays.com>

In this national bestseller, Stephen Covey outlines seven habits of highly effective people, some of which are also characteristic of effective professional development. Habit 2, "begin with the end in mind," is especially relevant to the understanding that all professional development must be designed for and geared toward the specific end of improved student learning outcomes. Proceeding backward from the end of improved student learning, teachers must be provided with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve this goal, and staff developers must design and use the appropriate strategies for helping teachers acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to improve student learning. (*Standards Leadership, Data-Driven, Design*)

Cushman, K. (1996). Looking collaboratively at student work: An essential toolkit. *Horace*, 13(2), 1-12.  
Read at [http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces\\_res/57](http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/57)

The author describes a strategy used by teachers in Essential Schools. The teachers come together to examine student work and use specific protocols to focus their discussion on the qualities of the work and what they can learn from it about their students and themselves. Cushman describes a "tuning protocol" that creates a ritual of presentation and response and provides structure for conversations among teachers. Cushman reports that teachers say the examination of student work has had far-reaching impact on their practices. (*Standards: Learning Community, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Collaboration, Quality Teaching*)

Day, C. (2000). Beyond transformational leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 57(7), 56-59.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Arguing that successful and skillful leaders are essential for school reform efforts to increase overall student achievement, the author of this article lists characteristics of an effective school leader. Based on a 1998 leadership study commissioned by the United Kingdom's National Association of Headteachers (the equivalent of principals in the U.S.), results revealed several leadership qualities: values-led, people-centered, achievement-oriented, inward- and outward-facing, and able to manage a number of ongoing tensions and dilemmas. A discussion of each is included. (*Standard: Leadership*)

Deal, T. & Peterson, K. (1999). Shaping school culture: *The heart of leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.  
Order from Jossey-Bass's website: <http://www.josseybass.com>

Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson show how leaders can harness the power of school culture to build a lively, cooperative spirit and a sense of school identity. They draw from more than 20 years of research on school improvement as well as from their own extensive work with school leaders across the country to identify viable new strategies for effective school leadership. They describe the critical elements of culture, show how a positive culture can make school reforms work, explore the harmful characteristics of toxic cultures, and suggest antidotes to negativity on the part of teachers, students, principals, or parents. (*Standard: Leadership*)

Decker, L. (1996). *Teacher's manual for parent and community involvement*. Alexandria, VA: National Community Education Association. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 402 000)  
Order by calling NCEA 703-359-8973 Fax: 703-359-0972

To be successful in the primary mission of educating the community's children, educators need to know a great deal about the community and the families from which the children come. The focus of this manual is the crucial role the classroom teacher plays in parent and community involvement efforts. The text covers demographics and trends influencing public education, changing attitudes, what the research is saying, a framework for parent involvement, principles for successful strategies and programs for reducing home-school barriers, implementation strategies, building bridges between home and school, and school volunteer programs. (*Standard: Family Involvement*)

DuFour, R. & Berkey, T. (1995). The principal as staff developer. *Journal of Staff Development*, 16(4), 2-6.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/jsddufour.html>

Rick DuFour and T. Berkey discuss their research on the principals' role to nurture and develop teachers' professional growth as part of the school culture. The authors remind us to create consensus, promote shared values, ensure systematic collaboration, encourage experimentation, model commitment, provide one-on-one staff development, offer purposeful staff development programs, promote self-efficacy, and monitor the sustained effort. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Rick DuFour and Robert Eaker offer recommendations for those who seek to transform their schools into professional learning communities as characterized by mutual collaboration, emotional support, personal growth, and a synergy of efforts. References to and brief summaries of directions for curriculum, teacher preparation, school leadership, professional development, school-parent partnerships, and assessment practices are included, along with sample vision statements. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Data-Driven, Collaboration, Quality Teaching, Family Involvement*)

Elmore, R. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute.  
Download in PDF form at <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/building.pdf>

Richard Elmore outlines five principles for a model of distributed leadership focused on large-scale education improvement: (1) the purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role; (2) instructional improvement requires continuous learning; (3) learning requires leaders that model the values and behavior that represent the collective good; (4) the roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution; and (5) the exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity. (*Standards: Leadership, Collaboration*)

Epstein, J. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701-712.  
Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

Joyce Epstein summarizes the theory, a framework, and guidelines that can assist schools in building partnerships. She presents research indicating that partnerships between the school and families do not exist automatically but must be built over time. (*Standards: Family Involvement*)

Epstein, J. (1997). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.  
Order from Corwin at <http://www.corwinpress.com>

Joyce Epstein gives instructions for how to design a positive, permanent program for your school and community that will help everyone focus on student learning and school success. The book covers six types of involvement for partnership programs and describes the challenges and likely results with each reader to help decide which level of involvement is right for their school. The program was created at Johns Hopkins University and has been field tested for more than 12 years. (*Standards: Family Involvement*)

Fessler, R. (1995). Dynamics of teacher career stages. In T. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: New paradigms and practices*, New York, NY: Teachers College Press.  
Order from Teachers College Press's hotline: 800-575-6566

In this chapter, the author presents the Teacher Career Cycle Model as a framework for analyzing and understanding the stages teachers' experience in their careers. Previous work that influenced model development is reviewed, the process used for model building is presented, model components are described, and implications for teacher growth and development and research are considered. (*Standards: Design, Learning*)

Fink, E. & Resnick, L. (2001). Developing principals as instructional leaders. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(8), 598-606.  
Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

The authors describe how New York City's District 2 improved student achievement by combining a strong sense of accountability with a culture of learning among principals. Principals in District 2 are responsible for creating cultures of learning in their schools as the district has devolved decision-making authority and resources to schools. The authors tell how a community of principals was formed built on strong interpersonal relationships and a sustained focus on teaching and learning. Principal learning is supported through various means: monthly principals' conferences, principals' study groups, literacy support groups, new principals' support groups, intervisitation, buddying, and individualized coaching. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Data-Driven, Quality Teaching*)

Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's worth fighting for in your school?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.  
Order from Teachers College Press's hotline: 800-575-6566

Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves discuss the importance of collaboration linked with norms and the opportunities for continuous improvement and career-long learning. When teacher improvement is seen as collective rather than individual, teachers are more likely to trust and value advice and expertise. The authors present research suggesting that a more collaborative environment reduces teachers' uncertainties and their sense of powerlessness and increases their sense of efficacy. (*Standards: Learning Community, Collaboration*)

Fullan, M., and Stiegelbauer, S. (2001). *The new meaning of educational change, The third edition*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.  
Order from Teachers College Press's hotline: 800-575-6566

Michael Fullan reviews the literature of planned educational change over the last 30 years to provide some clear insights about the do's and don'ts of bringing about change in elementary and secondary schools. Fullan distills from his experience the most powerful lessons about how participants can cope with and influence educational change. He compiles the best theory and practice in order to explain why change processes work as they do and to identify what would have to be done to improve them. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Data-Driven, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Gall, M. & Vojtek, R. (1994). *Planning for effective staff development: Six research-based models*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.  
Order from ERIC Clearinghouse's website: <http://www.eric.uoregon.edu>

Meredith Gall and Roseanne O'Brien Vojtek classify objectives for teacher staff development into eight categories: development of teachers' (1) knowledge and understanding, (2) attitudes, (3) instructional skills and strategies, (4) ability to reflect on their work and to make sound decisions, (5) ability to perform specialized roles, (6) ability to improve students' academic achievement, (7) ability to develop and implement curriculum, and (8) ability to restructure their schools' curriculum, instruction, and organization. They then identify six models for staff development and identify some program-design features that should be incorporated in staff development. (*Standard: Design*)

Garmston, R. & Wellman, B. (1999). *The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.  
Order from Christopher-Gordon's website: <http://www.christopher-gordon.com/howtoorder.htm>

An adaptive school is one that not only meets today's challenges but can also effectively handle problems that emerge in the future. This sourcebook provides tools to support school leaders in developing and facilitating collaborative groups to improve student learning, a critical step in redesigning schools and creating better learning environments. The authors utilize systems thinking and learnings from the new sciences to ground their work. The book offers practical guidelines for development of skills and processes that help leaders facilitate adult interaction and establish a collaborative working environment where learning is the goal for all community members, educators as well as students. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration, Family Involvement*)

Giles, H. (1998, May). *Parent engagement as a school reform strategy*. New York, NY: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 419 031)  
Read at [http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed419031.html](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed419031.html)

Hollyce Giles identifies the characteristics of successful school reform initiatives, such as (1) viewing the school and community as an ecology, (2) building relationships based on common concerns, (3) acknowledging the role of power in school-community relationships, (4) fostering the collaborative leadership of principals, (5) developing and training parents and educators as leaders, and (6) monitoring and evaluating progress. (*Standard: Family Involvement*)

Guskey, T. (1986). Staff development and the process of teacher change. *Educational Researcher*, 15(5), 5-12.  
Order from AERA by emailing [subscriptions@aera.net](mailto:subscriptions@aera.net)

The “Model of Teacher Change” proposes that change occurs in the following order: that change occurs in the following order: (1) professional development, (2) change in classroom practices, (3) change in student learning, (4) change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs. The model says that significant changes in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occur primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning. These improvements typically result from changes teachers have made in their classroom practices. Teachers believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs. Substantial evidence in support of this model is provided along with specific implications for staff development planning, implementation, and evaluation. (*Standard: Learning*)

Guskey, T. (1992, November). What does it mean to be “research-based”? *The Developer*, 5.  
Request from NSDC office: 513-523-6029 [nsdcoffice@aol.com](mailto:nsdcoffice@aol.com)

Thomas Guskey discusses the importance of using educational innovations that have an extensive research foundation. He suggests that many innovations have been subject to only a few studies that fail to meet minimum requirements for inclusion in systematic syntheses of the research. For this reason staff developers must take a critical attitude toward innovations described as “research-based.” They must familiarize themselves with a broad range of educational resources in order to ensure that staff development time, money, and energy is spent on innovations with ample evidence showing that they can help improve student learning outcomes. (*Standard: Research-Based*)

Guskey, T. (1998). The age of accountability. *Journal of Staff Development*, 19(4), 36-44.  
Read at <http://www.nsdcoffice.org/library/jsd/guskey194.html>

Thomas Guskey discusses the importance of evaluation of staff development efforts. He claims that educators can no longer operate with the assumptions that all staff development is good and that more staff development is better. He proposes questions that should be asked to determine how effective staff development is in enhancing student learning. (*Standards: Data-Driven, Evaluation*)

Guskey, T. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.  
Order from Corwin’s website: <http://www.corwinpress.com>

In this book Guskey helps readers to effectively assess professional development, understand the dynamic nature of professional development, and identify what contributes to improved student learning. The evaluation processes and tools recommended by Guskey make it clear that if staff development is to improve student learning, many levels of change are required, each with its own particular evaluation challenges. (*Standard: Evaluation*)

Guskey, T. & Sparks, D. (1996). Exploring the relationship between staff development and improvements in student learning. *Journal of Staff Development*, 17(4), 34-38.  
Read at [http://nsdcoffice.org/library/jsd/f\\_gusky.html](http://nsdcoffice.org/library/jsd/f_gusky.html)

Thomas Guskey and Dennis Sparks argue that documenting the connections between staff development and improved student learning is becoming crucial. They propose a model for understanding this connection and suggest that student learning outcomes should provide the starting point for all school improvement and staff development efforts. (*Standards: Data-Driven*)

Hall, G. & Hord, S. (1987). *Change in schools: Facilitating the process*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.  
Order from SUNY's website: <http://www.sunypress.edu>

This text discusses the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). Three diagnostic dimensions are described: stages of concern about the innovation, levels of use of the innovation, and innovation configuration. The first dimension addresses the thoughts and feelings of users. The second dimension is a description of the behaviors as they familiarize themselves with and skillfully use the innovation. The third diagnostic dimension, innovation configuration, focuses on the anticipated change.

Hall, G. & Hord, S. (2001). *Implementing change: Patterns, principles, and potholes*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.  
Order from Allyn & Bacon's website: <http://www.ablongman.com>

This new text that focuses on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model contains four primary sections: the context for implementing change, tools and techniques for change facilitators (includes Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, Innovation Configurations), the imperative for leadership in change, and constructing and understanding the realities of change (includes a focus on organizational culture, climate, and context). (*Standard: Learning*)

Haslam, B. (1997, Fall). How to rebuild a local professional development infrastructure. *NAS Getting Better by Design*.  
Arlington, VA: New American Schools.  
Download in PDF form at <http://www.naschools.org/respub/haslam.pdf>

Bruce Haslam argues that too many schools still see professional development as something that is delivered to teachers without opportunities for follow up, little or no time for individual or collective reflection, and little testing of new ideas and information. He outlines a six-step school transformation strategy for districts: (1) convene a professional development task force, (2) map the local professional development infrastructure, (3) agree on broad principles and attributes to guide local practice, (4) report on current professional development programs and policies, (5) redesign current professional development programs and policies to support school transformation, (6) and monitor progress continuously. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Design*)

Henderson, A. & Berla, N. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education.  
Order from Center for Law and Education's website: <http://www.cleweb.org>

This annotated bibliography reviews 66 research studies that examine the impact of engaging families on student achievement. The authors conclude that taken together, the studies in this report strongly suggest that when schools support family involvement at home and at school, children do better in school, and the schools get better. Children from low-income families and diverse backgrounds gain most and approach the grades and test scores expected for middle-class children. Some of the benefits documented are higher grades and test scores, better attendance, more homework done, fewer placements in special education, more positive attitudes and behavior, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in post-secondary education. (*Standard: Family Involvement*)

Hilliard, A. (1997). The structure of valid staff development. *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(2), 28-34.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/jsds97hill.html>

Asa Hilliard argues for a revolution in the structure of staff development. He claims that current staff development is too preoccupied with questions of student capacity and student rankings and that staff development must change to incorporate the ideas of successful teachers who break with routines to try new strategies. (*Standards: Design, Learning, Equity*)

Hord, S. (1992). *Facilitative leadership: The imperative for change*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.  
Read at <http://www.sedl.org/change/facilitate/welcome.html>

The text contains research that supports six categories of actions that are used by effective leaders to facilitate change. These include developing a culture of readiness for change, promoting the vision, providing the necessary resources, ensuring the availability of professional development, maintaining checks on progress, and providing the ongoing assistance necessary for change to occur smoothly. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Data-Driven*)

Hord, S. (1994). Staff development and change process: Cut from the same cloth. *Issues . . . about Change*, 4(2). Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.  
Read at <http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues42.html>

In this paper, Shirley Hord describes the Joyce and Showers staff development model and relates it to a change model derived from school improvement studies. Noting the fit of the two models, Hord suggests successful strategies for a comprehensive approach to changing teachers' practices which include developing and articulating a vision, planning and providing resources, investing in training, monitoring progress, providing continuous assistance, and creating a context conducive to change. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Hord, S. (1997). *Professional learning communities: Communities of continuous inquiry and improvement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 18-19.  
Read at <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/change34/welcome.html>

Shirley Hord summarizes the research, articulating the requirements for effective professional learning communities: (1) the 'collegial and facilitative participation of the principal who shares leadership, power, and authority through inviting staff input in decision making; (2) a shared vision that is developed from the staff's unwavering commitment to students' learning and that is consistently articulated and referenced for the staff's work; (3) collective learning among staff and application of the learning to solutions that address students' needs; (4) the visitation and review of each teacher's classroom behavior by peers as a feedback and assistance activity to support teachers; (5) physical conditions and human capacities that support such an operation. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Hord, S. M. (2004). (Ed). *Learning together, leading together: Changing schools through professional learning communities*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Filled with real-life examples, *Learning Together, Leading Together* describes two projects conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory that focused on professional learning communities (PLCs) and the process of how PLCs are created. In one project, SEDL staff studied five schools that had already become PLCs; in the other project, SEDL staff worked with 19 co-developers who acted as external change agents to develop professional learning communities within schools and districts. In *Learning Together, Leading Together* the characteristics of academically successful PLCs are described along five dimensions and actions taken by school and district staff to support the five dimensions are discussed. Additionally, book details the roles of leadership and trust in developing PLCs. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Huberman, M. (1995). Professional careers and professional development. In T. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: New paradigms and practices* (193-224). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.  
Order from Teachers College Press's hotline: 800-575-6566

Michael Huberman asserts that teachers have different aims and different dilemmas at various moments in their professional lives, and that their desires to reach out for more information, knowledge, expertise, and technical competence will vary accordingly. His assumption is that while there will be commonalities among teachers in the sequencing of their professional lives, no one particular form of professional development may be appropriate. He reviews some of the recent paradigms of teachers' life-span development and extracts from each some of the guideposts around which professional development activities could be designed. He then devises a more generic model of professional collaboration. (*Standards: Design, Learning*)

Jackson, A. & Davis, G. (2000). *Turning points 2000: Educating adolescents in the 21st century*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.  
Order from Teachers College Press's hotline: 800-575-6566

Anthony Jackson and Gayle Davis update the Carnegie Corporation's 1989 report to integrate what is known from education research and practice within a coherent approach toward adolescent education that educators can use to transform middle grade schools. Their report emphasizes that, in addition to structural changes in classrooms and schools, educators must also make substantial, far-reaching changes in curriculum, student assessment, and instruction in order to improve student learning. (*Standards: Design, Learning, Collaboration, Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Johnson, R. (1996). *Setting our sights: Measuring equity in school change*. Los Angeles, CA: The Achievement Council.  
Order from the Achievement Council's website: <http://www.achievementcouncil.com>

Ruth Johnson identifies six roles for data: (1) improving the quality of criteria used in problem solving and decision making; (2) describing institutional processes, practices, and progress in schools and districts; (3) examining institutional belief systems underlying assumptions and behaviors; (4) mobilizing the school community for action; (5) monitoring implementation of changes; and (6) accountability. (*Standards: Data-Driven, Evaluation, Equity, Family Involvement*)

Joyce, B. & Calhoun, E. (1996). *Learning experiences in school renewal: An exploration of five successful programs*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.  
Order from ERIC Clearinghouse's website: <http://www.eric.uoregon.edu>

The authors present five case studies of programs used to build improved learning communities. Each of the five programs presented focuses on unique components of school renewal. Technical and social aspects of school renewal are examined, and the goal of building a learning community for the whole school remains a central theme throughout. The programs include the use of staff development as a tool for school improvement, the effective use of governance structures, the use of an initiative to create a culture of readers and writers, the use of staff development to increase the capacity of inner city schools, and the use of action research as a tool for school improvement. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Quality Teaching*)

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1988). *Student achievement through staff development*. White Plains, NY: Longman Inc.  
Order from Longman at <http://www.awl.ca/ordering.html>

Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers offer a rationale for staff development based on the goal of student learning. They describe how teaching, schooling, and curriculum can be organized to accelerate student learning and the aptitude to learn further. Their book notes current staff development practices, but looks toward a future in which the investment in teachers and administrators will be adequate and time for study will be part of their work. (*Standards: Design, Learning*)

Kane, C. (1994). *Prisoners of time research: What we know and what we need to know*. Washington, DC: National Education Commission on Time and Learning.  
Read at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PrisonersOfTime/>

Cheryl Kane reports the conclusions of the two-year study by the National Education Commission on Time and Learning. The Commission offered eight recommendations, including reinvent schools around learning, not time; using time in new and different ways; keeping schools open longer to meet the needs of children and communities; investing in technology; giving teachers the time they need; and sharing the responsibility. (*Standard: Resources*)

Kaufman, M. (1997). A professional development stance for equity. *SSI Perspectives*, 2(3), 4-5.  
Read at <http://www.terc.edu/handsonIssues/f96/equity.html>

The author describes a professional development process that assists teachers in implementing successful instructional strategies by using equity as a framing tool for decision making. Teachers are able to improve the educational outcomes for all students by creating a framework around which to initiate change. Teachers learned to approach change using the following elements: (1) a stance of critique and inquiry; (2) data-driven decision making; (3) investigation of best practices, including instruction, curriculum, and materials; and (4) teacher leadership development. This framework is a means of eliminating the fragmentation that typically accompanies the implementation of reform. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Data-Driven, Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Kelly, J. (1999). Free to teach, free to learn: A model of collaborative professional development that empowers teachers to reach diverse student populations. *Journal of Negro Education*, 68(3), 426-432.  
Order from Journal of Negro Education's website: <http://www.founders.howard.edu/soe/programs/JNE/index.htm>

Judith Kelly points out that America's increasing diversity has put greater pressure on teachers and administrators to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully educate students from a wide variety of racial, ethnic, and cultural

backgrounds. She argues that teachers continue to manifest racism and ethnic discrimination in the classroom, often unintentionally, and that a major change toward more appropriate professional development is essential for making America's teaching more culturally responsive and bridging the learning gap between black and white students. (*Standard: Equity*)

Kennedy, M. (1998). Education reform and subject matter knowledge *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 35, 249-263.  
Request from John Wiley & Sons; 212-850-6645 subinfo@wiley.com

This article explores what K-12 teachers need to know to teach mathematics and science well. The research literature is reviewed to reveal the kinds of knowledge teachers need to teach as described in reform documents. Kennedy concludes that teachers should have conceptual understanding of the subject, pedagogical content knowledge, beliefs about the nature of science and mathematics, and particular attitudes toward these disciplines. Two problems in the area of subject matter knowledge are the lack of research knowledge on how to foster teachers' deep understanding and reasoning ability and how to measure it, and the lack of evidence of how any of the characteristics of knowledge contribute to actual teaching practice. (*Standard: Quality Teaching*)

Kennedy, M. (1999). Form and substance in mathematics and science professional development *National Institute for Science Education Brief*, 3(2), 1-7.

Download in PDF form at [http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/Publications/Briefs/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_2/Vol.3.No.2.pdf](http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/Publications/Briefs/Vol_3_No_2/Vol.3.No.2.pdf)

Mary Kennedy presents research and policy analyses that criticize the one-shot workshop approach to professional development and offer a number of proposals for how professional development should be designed and organized. The research indicates that (1) programs should be lengthy rather than brief, (2) teachers should have a role in defining the content rather than having the topics imposed on them, (3) the scheduled meetings should be interspersed with classroom practice rather than concentrated into a short period of time, and (4) teachers should work together in groups, rather than in isolation. (*Standards: Design, Learning, Quality Teaching*)

Killion, J. (1999). *What works in the middle: Results-based staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.  
Order from <http://www.nsd.org>

As project director for Results-Based Staff Development for the Middle Grades, Joellen Killion discusses processes and resources for selecting, designing, and evaluating staff development to improve student achievement. The guide describes 26 successful staff development programs in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and interdisciplinary programs that were studied and evaluated to ascertain their impact on student learning. It offers guidelines for selecting and/or designing initiatives to improve student performance. (*Standards: Evaluation, Research-Based, Design, Quality Teaching*)

Kirkpatrick, D. (1994). *Evaluating training programs*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.  
Order from Berrett-Koehler's website: <http://www.bkpub.com>

Donald Kirkpatrick provides a rationale for the evaluation of programs and outlines four levels of evaluation: reaction, learning, behavior, and results. Evaluation at the level of reaction measures how those who participate in the program feel about it. Outcomes refer to the extent to which participants change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skill as a result of participation. Kirkpatrick defines the behavior change as to the extent to which on-the-job performance has changed because the participants attended the training program. Finally, he defines the results level as the "bottom line" improvements that occurred because of participants' attendance in the program. (*Standards: Evaluation*)

Knowles, M. (1978). *The adult learner: A neglected species*. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company.  
Order from amazon.com or other online bookstores

Malcolm Knowles, the father of andragogy, points out the need for work on a theory of how adults learn: "We know more about how animals learn (especially rodents and pigeons) than about how children learn; and we know much more about how children learn than about how adults learn." (*Standard: Learning*)

Kolenko, C. & Schrup, M. (1992). *Inservice education-staff development: CASE information dissemination packet*. Bloomington, IN: CASE Research Committee, Indiana University.  
Request from CASE Research Committee, 812-855-5090

This information packet is intended to provide special education administrators with information and materials regarding inservice education and staff development. The first section presents a research and development model based on Project TAMEC (Technical Assistance for Mainstreaming Exceptional Children). The second section presents seven “best practices” models, focusing on building-based programs and networking systems. The final section focuses on structuring staff development programs. (*Standards: Leadership, Design, Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Krupp, J. (1993). Teaching career evolution in early adulthood. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 30(4), 100-105.  
To check on availability, please call 1-800-284-3167

Judy-Arin Krupp explores teachers’ careers during the ages 22-27, 28-33, and 34-39, and the challenges faced by teachers in these age brackets. She argues that leaders must be sensitive to the personal concerns of their teachers in order to attain higher levels of productivity. (*Standard: Learning*)

Kruse, S., Louis, K., & Bryk, A. (1994). *Building professional community in schools*. Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring Schools.  
Download in PDF form at

[http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archives/completed/cors/Issues\\_in\\_Restructuring\\_Schools/ISSUES\\_NO\\_6\\_SPRING\\_1994.pdf](http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archives/completed/cors/Issues_in_Restructuring_Schools/ISSUES_NO_6_SPRING_1994.pdf)

Sharon Kruse, Karen Seashore Louis, and Anthony Bryk argue that if education is to improve, the school must be the focus of change. They argue that teachers in a strong professional community must demonstrate reflective dialogue, de-privatization of practice, collective focus, collaboration, and shared norms and values. They outline five structural condition of a professional community: time to meet and talk, physical proximity, interdependent teaching roles, communication structures, and teacher empowerment and school autonomy. Finally, they discuss the social and human resources that enhance professional communities: openness to improvement, trust and respect cognitive and skill base, supportive leadership, and socialization. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Lambert, L. (1998). *Building leadership capacity in schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.  
Order from ASCD’s website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Linda Lambert outlines five key assumptions which form the conceptual framework for building leadership capacity: (1) leadership means providing the reciprocal learning processes that enable participants to construct and negotiate meanings leading to a shared purpose of schooling; (2) leadership is about collective learning that has a shared purpose and leads to constructive change; (3) every member of the school community has the potential and right to work as a leader and can learn to do so, (4) leading and learning must be shared because school change is a collective endeavor, (5) leadership requires the redistribution of power and authority. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Levine, S. (1985). Translating adult development research into staff development practices. *Journal of Staff Development*, 6(1), 6-17.  
Request from NSDC office: 513-523-6029 [nsdcoffice@aol.com](mailto:nsdcoffice@aol.com)

Sarah Levine highlights research on adult development and suggests appropriate staff development strategies. She argues that reform efforts must devote more time and energy to the adults who work in schools. (*Standard: Learning*)

Lewandowski, A. & Moller, G. (1997). The change that matters. *Journal of Staff Development*, 18(3), 45-49.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/lewandowski183.html>

Antonia Lewandowski and Gayle Moller report on the Florida Assisting Change in Education Program, which teaches school leaders to facilitate the change process in schools. Training for school improvement facilitators teaches them to lead groups, encourage discussion, mediate differences, and create an appropriate spirit for crafting and implementing school improvement

plans. Evaluation of the program indicates it successfully trains facilitators and provides necessary skills for facilitating the change process. (*Standards: Leadership, Collaboration*)

Lewis, A. (1998). Teachers in the driver's seat. *The Harvard Educational Letter*, 14(2), 1-4.  
Read at <http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/1998-ma/teacher.shtml>

When teachers look at student work together and talk about how it could be better, they become student focused. This author says that three things have facilitated the implementation of this strategy: a political and policy climate that wants proof that students are learning to high standards, reform efforts that encourage teachers to share responsibility for student success, and the emergence of a research base that is giving teachers better clues as to how to move students to higher levels of learning. Looking at student work together has become an effective form of professional development as conversations move from student work to subject areas to teaching and learning. (*Standards: Collaboration, Quality Teaching*)

Lieberman, A. & McLaughlin, M. (1992). Networks for educational change: Powerful and problematic. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 74, 673-677.

Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

Networks of teachers offer a new approach to staff development as teachers grow professionally and assume new leadership roles. Networks have a clear focus yet offer a variety of activities. In networks, the knowledge of teachers is respected. However, several problems can arise including failure to assess and modify their practices, difficulty in assimilating networks into schools, maintaining stability, uncontrolled growth, the threat to outside groups from the powerful ownership by teachers, lack of knowledge about change, lack of new models of leadership and accountability, and goals created outside of the network. Teachers support networks because they offer challenges and give them incentives to change their practice. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Lieberman, A. & Miller, L. (1999). *Teachers — Transforming their world and their work*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller share insights and wisdom gathered from educators across the country whom they have met during the past decade and a half. They argue that teachers should be at the center of all efforts to improve, rethink, and redesign schools. The authors enrich the current dialogue on teaching and schools by focusing on the constraints as well as the possibilities that are embedded in practice. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Little, J. (1982). Norms of collegiality and experimentation: Workplace conditions of school success. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19(3), 325-340.

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Interviews with 105 teachers and 14 administrators, supplemented by observation, provide data for a focused ethnography of the school as a workplace, specifically of organizational characteristics conducive to continued "learning on the job." (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Little, J. (1997, March). *Excellence in professional development and professional community* (Working paper, Benchmarks for Schools). Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

View excerpt at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/BlueRibbonSchools/profdev.html>

Order complete paper from U.S. Department of Education. 202-219-2149

The basic premise of the paper is that a school that is effective with students is also likely to play a powerful, deliberate, and consequential role in the support of teacher development. Professional development is moving toward a vision of professional communities that support teacher learning through diverse experiences. Little focuses on the environments (structures or practices, traditions or culture) that are conducive to teacher learning. She begins with an overview of a broadened conception of professional development, then describes the aspects of school organization and culture that affect professional development and concludes with a method for assessing the school's contribution to professional development. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration*)

Loucks-Horsley, S. (1996). *Principles of effective professional development for mathematics and science education: A synthesis of standards*. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI: National Institute for Science Education, NISE Brief 1(1). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 409 201)

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Susan Loucks-Horsely discusses some of conclusions from the Professional Development Project of the NISE. She presents seven principles that are found in excellent professional development experiences for science and mathematics educators: developing a clear, well-defined image of effective classroom learning and teaching; providing teachers with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and teaching approaches; using instructional methods to promote learning for adults which mirror the methods used with students; strengthening the learning community of science and mathematics teachers; preparing and supporting teachers to be leaders; providing links to other parts of the educational system; and making continuous assessment part of the professional development process. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Design, Learning, Quality Teaching*)

Louis, K., Kruse, S., & Raywid, M. (1996). Putting teachers at the center of reform: Learning schools and professional communities. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 80(580), 9-21.

No longer available for purchase

Literature on organizational learning suggests three features of school culture and practice have an impact on teachers' ability to sustain an openness to learning: organizational memory, a shared knowledge base, and information distribution and interpretation. Professional communities are characterized by shared norms and values, reflective dialogue, de-privatization of practice, collective focus on student learning, and collaboration. The authors propose that organizational learning and professional communities, become linked through the concept of reflective practice. Using two school examples, they describe how one school became a thriving example of reform and the other did not. (*Standards: Learning Community, Collaboration*)

Marzano, R., Pickering, D., & Pollock, J. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollock present some of the results of a McREL study designed to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies that could be used by teachers in K-12 classrooms. This study evaluates nine different categories of instructional strategies affecting student achievement. In order from most effective to least effective, they are identifying similarities and differences; summarizing and note taking; reinforcing effort and providing recognition; homework and practice; nonlinguistic representations; cooperative learning; setting objectives and providing feedback; generating and testing hypotheses; and questions, cues, and advance organizers. (*Standard: Quality Teaching*)

Miles, K. & Darling-Hammond, L. (Spring 1998). Rethinking the allocation of teaching resources: Some lessons from high-performing schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.

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Karen Hawley Miles and Linda Darling-Hammond describe case studies of five high-performing public schools that have organized professional resources in innovative ways. Miles and Hammond identify six principles of resource allocation that the schools share: reduction of specialized programs to provide more individual time for all, more flexible student grouping, structures that create more personalized environments, longer and varied blocks of instructional time, more common planning time for staff, and creative definition of staff roles and work schedules. They develop a framework for examining the use of resources and a methodology that may be used to measure the extent to which schools use their resources in focused ways to support teaching and learning. (*Standard: Resources*)

Moffett, C. (2000). Sustaining change: The answers are blowing in the wind. *Educational Leadership*, 57(7), 35-38.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

The author contends that the answers to the question how to sustain change are (and have been) "blowing in the wind" via the abundant research on sustaining educational change. She argues that all policy makers and school and district leaders have to do is look to the body of knowledge on sustaining change to keep from enacting futile and counterproductive policies. The author concludes the article with a reminder that "we know enough to act" and "we cannot afford to ignore the research" because "as Bob Dylan sang so many years ago, the answers are blowing in the wind." (*Standard: Research-Based*)

Newmann, F., Marks, H., & Gamoran, A. (Spring, 1995). Authentic pedagogy: Standards that boost student performance. *Issues in Restructuring Schools, Report No. 8*. Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring Schools.  
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1025 W. Johnson St., Room 242, Madison, WI 53706 608-263-4214

In this report, a conception of instruction and assessment is offered that remains consistent with active learning but which emphasizes that all instructional activities must be rooted in a primary concern for high standards of intellectual quality. The report includes general criteria for authentic pedagogy, as well as more specific standards that can be used to judge the quality of assessment tasks, classroom lessons, and student performance. (*Standard: Quality Teaching*)

Newmann, F. & Wehlage, G. (1995). *Successful school restructuring: A report to the public and educators*. Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, 37-48.  
Order from Document Service, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 1025 W. Johnson St., Room 242, Madison, WI 53706 608-263-4214

Fred Newmann and Gary Wehlage present research concerning the conditions that enhance student learning and enable schools to function as professional communities. The structural conditions include shared governance that increases teachers' influence over school policy and practice, interdependent work structures which encourage collaboration, staff development that enhances technical skills consistent with school missions, deregulation that provides autonomy for schools, small school size, and parent involvement. Other conditions presented are effective human resources and leadership, external standard setting, school and teacher autonomy, and parent involvement. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Collaboration, Family Involvement*)

Nichols, B. & Singer, K. (2000). Developing data mentors. *Educational Leadership*, 57(5), 34-37.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Beverly Nichols and Kevin Singer share their struggle to gather and analyze student assessment data and to apply this information to the classroom. They discuss the success of two major activities to assist teachers and principals: data notebooks for each school, and a data-mentor program to develop data-analysis skills in school personnel. (*Standard: Data-Driven*)

Pardini, P. (2000). Data, well done. *Journal of Staff Development*, 21(1), 12-18.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/pardini211.html>

The author provides examples of schools and districts nationwide that use data-based decision making effectively to enhance beginner teacher education, multi-age reading classes, literacy education, tracking of student achievement, ongoing data-driven professional development, and school discipline efforts. The programs share a commitment to putting data at the center of ongoing, collaborative staff development. (*Standard: Data-Driven*)

Pechman, E. & King, J. (1993). *Obstacles to restructuring: Experiences of six middle-grades schools*. New York, NY: National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED362985)  
Order from NCREST's website: <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/~ncrest/>

The implementation of a school improvement effort in six middle-grades schools is reported in this paper. The research identifies six factors that are essential for successful school reform. They are a stable and safe school environment, the ongoing support from district staff for reform, the presence of teacher leaders within the school; the collaboration and support of the whole faculty, the acceptance and commitment by the faculty to participate in the change process, and a principal who facilitates the changes and encourages collegiality. (*Standards: Leadership, Collaboration*)

Peterson, P., McCarthy, S., & Elmore, R.. (1996). Learning from school restructuring. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33, 119-153.

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The authors analyze successful restructuring experiments from three elementary schools. Their study found that (1) teaching and learning are mainly a function of the teacher's beliefs, understandings, and behaviors within the context of specific classroom problems; (2) changing classroom practice is primarily a problem of continuous learning resulting in improved practice for teachers, not a problem of school organization; (3) school structures can provide opportunities for learning, but structures by themselves do not cause learning to occur; and (4) where teachers have a shared vision, teaching practice and student learning are successfully connected. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Raywid, M. (1993). Finding time for collaboration. *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), 30-34.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Time for collaboration among teachers to pursue and sustain school improvement efforts is a very important feature of school improvement. The author suggests that this collaboration time is possibly more important than equipment, facilities, or traditional staff development. Citing research, the author says that successful schools are distinguished from unsuccessful ones by 'the frequent and efficient use of collaborative time among teachers. After surveying 15 schools, the author describes how these schools are making the necessary collaborative time available for their teachers. (*Standard: Resources*)

Rényi, J. (1996). *Teachers take charge of their learning: Transforming professional development for student success*.

Washington, DC: National Foundation for the Improvement of Education.

Read at [http://www.nfie.org/publications/takecharge\\_full.htm](http://www.nfie.org/publications/takecharge_full.htm)

This report provides the results of the NFIE's national survey of more than 800 teachers and two years of observations, consultations, surveys, and other studies. Two major findings: (1) 74 percent of teachers said they engage in professional growth to improve student achievement, and (2) 53 percent said they participate in professional development to improve their teaching skills. The report explores the conditions and policies needed to incorporate teachers' learning into their daily work in schools and makes recommendations regarding incentives, processes, policies, and structures that support wise, shared decisions about teachers' learning. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Research for Better Schools, Inc.: The Urban Education Project. *The new vision of the urban learner: Four staff development modules*. Philadelphia, PA: Research for Better Schools.

Order from <http://www.rbs.org/catalog/pubs/ar23.shtml>

This document provides an overview of the Urban Learner Framework (ULF), a decision-making framework that challenges generalizations of urban learners as deprived, underachieving, unmotivated, and at risk, and it presents instead a view of the urban learner as culturally diverse, capable, and resilient. This document also describes the four research-based themes which provide the ULF's foundation, and their ramifications for practice in the schools. The themes are: (1) cultural diversity and learning; (2) unrecognized ability and underdeveloped potential; (3) enhancing ability development through motivation and effort; and (4) resilience. Each theme is presented with a training guide and handouts. (*Standard: Equity*)

Riel, M. & Fulton, K. (2001 March). The role of technology in supporting learning communities. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(7), 518-523.

Order through *Phi Delta Kappan*. Contact Terri Hampton at 800-766-1156

The authors assert that both students and adult learners benefit from participating in communities of practice. Technology facilitates interaction within learning communities. Online mentoring, distance education, and state-supported electronic networks open up the isolation of classrooms and offer teachers access to one another for ongoing support and professional development and sharing. The use of technologies such as interactive lesson plan templates, multimedia databases, streamed video, web-conferencing, and e-mail can help teachers access other teachers for ongoing professional collaboration. The authors site several examples of electronic communities of practice for educators. (*Standards: Learning Community, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Sagor, R. (1992). *How to conduct collaborative action research*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

The author explains that the isolation of the teacher is the key inhibitor to education improvement and that when teachers are involved in action research, they move out of isolation and into collegial relationships with their fellow teachers. He goes on to say that these new researchers must establish their own focus, but he provides two guiding principles for the work: (1) the phenomena chosen for study must concern the teaching/learning process, and (2) those phenomena must also be within the practitioner's scope of influence. (*Standards: Leadership, Data-Driven, Research-Based, Collaboration*)

Schmoker, M. (1996). *Results: The key to continuous school improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Mike Schmoker sees tangible, measurable results as the goals to successful school improvement. He explores the conditions under which dramatic results may be achieved and the theory behind them. Creating opportunities for meaningful teamwork, setting clear and measurable goals, and regularly collecting and analyzing data are stressed as the means to improvement. Examples are given to illustrate successful applications by schools from around the country. Schmoker concludes with the note that, "Schools improve when purpose and effort unite. One key is leadership that recognizes its most vital function: to keep everyone's eyes on the prize of improved student learning." (*Standards: Data-Driven, Evaluation*)

Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., Roth, G., & Smith, B. (1999). *The dance of change: The challenges to sustaining momentum in learning organizations*. NY, New York: Doubleday, Inc.

Order from Doubleday's website: <http://www.randomhouse.com/doubleday>

A *fifth Discipline* resource, the book offers in-depth accounts of efforts to sustain learning initiatives undertaken by corporations and other organizations. Ten unique challenges are identified as those "sets of forces that oppose profound change." These challenges are discussed in terms of three growth processes that sustain change. The challenge of initiating include not enough time, lack of support, irrelevance, and lack of participation. The challenges of sustaining transformation include fear and anxiety, assessing, and supporters vs. non-supporters. The challenges of redesigning and rethinking include governance, diffusion, strategy, and purpose. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Sergiovanni, T. (1994). *Building community in schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Order from Jossey-Bass's website: <http://www.josseybass.com>

Thomas J. Sergiovanni discusses the importance of building a learning community by reorganizing our educational values, beliefs, and practices, rather than just using the word "community" in our mission statements. He argues for an understanding of a community as a collection of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals. This bonding and binding is tight enough to transform them from a collection of "I's" into a collective "we." As a "we," members are part of a tightly knit web of meaningful relationships sharing common sustaining sentiments and traditions. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership*)

Slavin, R. & Fashola, O. (1998). *Show me the evidence: Proven and promising programs for America's schools*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Order from Corwin's webpage: <http://www.corwinpress.com>

The authors argue that the daunting task of improving teaching and learning in all schools might be accomplished more effectively if schools choose from rigorously researched and well documented reform designs that provide networks of support for implementation. They also suggest that the adoption of these well evaluated programs by policy makers would lead to more efficient and effective use of professional development funds. This book presents information on widely available programs that the authors feel have been tested against a set of rigorous standards of evidence. (*Standard: Research-Based*)

Sparks, G. (1983). Synthesis of research on staff development for effective teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 41(3), 65-72.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Georgea Sparks briefly summarizes some of the research on appropriate content for staff development, as well as the appropriate context for staff development. The major focus of the article, however, is on the training process of staff development. Sparks combines some of the research on effective training activities to form a list: diagnosing and prescribing, giving information and demonstrating, discussing application, and coaching. Finally, she presents some of the research concerning the importance of designing staff development programs that are adapted to fit various teacher characteristics and attitudes. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Design, Learning, Equity, Quality Teaching*)

Sparks, D. (1998). Making assessment part of teacher learning. *Journal of Staff Development*, 19(4), 33-35.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/joyce194.html>

Dennis Sparks interviews Bruce Joyce regarding his advocacy for staff development that improves student learning. Joyce discusses the importance of continuous adult learning, studying implementation, assessment as part of instruction, formative evaluation, and some barriers to implementation. (*Standards: Evaluation, Learning, Data-Driven, Quality Teaching*)

Sparks, D. & Hirsh, S. (1997). *A new vision for staff development*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and National Staff Development Council.  
Order from ASCD's website: <http://www.ascd.org>

Dennis Sparks and Stephanie Hirsh describe three powerful ideas altering the shape of schools and staff development: results-driven education, systems-thinking, and constructivism. Major shifts in staff development resulting from these three ideas include movement from individual development to individual and organizational development; from fragmented, piecemeal improvement efforts to staff development driven by a clear, coherent plan; from a focus on adult needs and satisfaction to a focus on student needs and learning outcomes; from training conducted away from the job to multiple forms of job-embedded learning; and from staff development as a "frill" to staff development as indispensable. Sparks and Hirsh elaborate on these shifts and provide examples from around the country. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Evaluation, Design, Learning, Collaboration, Equity, Quality Teaching, Family Involvement*)

Sparks, D. & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1989). Five models of staff development for teachers. *Journal of Staff Development*, 10(4), 40-57.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/sparks104.html>

Dennis Sparks and Susan Loucks-Horsley describe five major models for developing teachers: individually guided, observation/assessment, involvement in a development/improvement process, training, and inquiry (individual or group). The authors provide examples, explain the theoretical and research underpinnings and potential outcomes of each model, and describe the organizational contexts needed to support each model. (*Standard: Design*)

Sparks, D. & Schlechty, P. (1998). The educator examined. *Journal of Staff Development*, 19(3), 38-42.  
Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/slechty193.html>

Dennis Sparks interviews Phillip Schlechty, founder of the Center for Leadership in School Reform, who discusses assumptions about teachers' roles, suggesting teachers be viewed as inventors and leaders of knowledge workers. The interview addresses teachers as inventors; developing school leaders, assumptions about behavior, structural changes in education, building capacity for reform, central office role, and preparing to lead. Ten critical qualities of student work are presented. (*Standard: Leadership*)

Stiggins, R. (2001). *Student-involved classroom assessment (3rd ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.  
Order from Prentice Hall's website: <http://www.vig.prenhall.com/catalog/academic/product/1,4096,0130225371,00.html>

Richard Stiggins describes how to create high quality classroom assessments and use them to build student confidence and maximize student achievement. He emphasizes what teachers need to know to manage day-to-day classroom assessment effectively and efficiently and he focuses on student well-being and potential for self-assessment. He offers practical guidelines on how to use various assessment methods and how to match them with achievement targets. He offers time- and energy-saving ideas for teachers, and he connects the concepts in the book with traditional notions of validity and reliability. (*Standards: Data-Driven, Evaluation, Quality Teaching*)

Stigler, J. & Hiebert, J. (1999). *The teaching gap: Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Order from Simon & Schuster's website: <http://www.simonsays.com>

James Stigler and James Hiebert use the results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study to show that although American teachers are often competent at implementing American teaching methods, these teaching methods themselves are severely limited. They propose a new plan for improving classroom teaching in America. Their proposal is based on six principles: (1) expect improvement to be continual, gradual, and incremental; (2) maintain a constant focus on student learning goals; (3) focus on teaching, not teachers; (4) make improvements in context; (5) make improvement in the work of teachers; (6) build a system that can learn from its own experience. (*Standards: Learning Community, Resources, Design, Learning, Quality Teaching*)

Sykes, G. (1999). Make subject matter count. *Journal of Staff Development*, (2), 50-51.

Read at <http://www.nsd.org/library/jsd/sykes202.html>

Gary Sykes discusses recent reports suggesting that research on teaching has been overlooking the importance of subject matter, the content of instruction. He offers some strategies for correcting this, such as engaging teachers simultaneously in learning about the subject matter and the teaching of the subject matter and grounding the content of professional development in part in the content of the student curriculum. (*Standard: Quality Teaching*)

U.S. Department of Education Professional Development Team. (1994). *Building bridges: The mission and principles of professional development*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Read at <http://www.ed.gov/G2K/bridge.html>

The Professional Development Team used available research to create a set of principles for staff development. According to their study, high quality professional development: (1) focuses on teachers as central to student learning; (2) focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement; (3) respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of individuals within the school community; (4) reflects best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership; (5) enables teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, and technology; (6) promotes continuous inquiry and improvement; (7) involves collaborative planning; (8) requires substantial time and other resources; (9) is driven by a coherent long-term plan; and (10) is assessed by its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Data-Driven, Evaluation, Research-Based, Design, Learning, Collaboration*)

Wenglinsky, H. (2000). *How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussions of teacher quality*. Princeton, NY: Milken Family Foundation and Educational Testing Service.

Download in PDF form at <http://www.ets.org/research/pc/teamat.pdf>

Harold Wenglinsky's study explores the influence of classroom practices, professional development, and teacher input on student achievement. The study uses data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress based on a national sample of students and their schools. The study finds that while teacher inputs, professional development, and classroom practices all influence student achievement, the greatest role is played by classroom practices, followed by professional development that is specifically tailored to those classroom practices most conducive to the high academic performance of students. (*Standards: Leadership, Evaluation, Design, Quality Teaching, Family Involvement*)

*What matters most: Teaching for America's future.* (1996). New York, NY: National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. Download in PDF form at <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/~teachcomm/WhatMattersMost.pdf>

This report offers one of the most important strategies for achieving America's educational goals: a blueprint for recruiting, preparing, and supporting excellent teachers in all of America's schools. The Commission offers five major recommendations for surmounting some of the barriers to achieving America's education goals: (1) get serious about standards, for both students and teachers; (2) reinvent teacher preparation and professional development; (3) fix teacher recruitment and put qualified teachers in every classroom; (4) encourage and reward teacher knowledge and skill; and (5) create schools that are organized for student and teacher success. (*Standards: Learning Community, Leadership, Resources, Design, Learning, Collaboration, Equity, Quality Teaching, Family Involvement*)

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., & Hyde, A. (1998). *Best practice: New standards for teaching and learning in America's schools, Second edition.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Order from Heinemann's website: <http://www.heinemann.com>

Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels, and Arthur Hyde encourage everyone involved in school reform to recognize, understand, appreciate, and start exploiting the remarkably coherent models for across-the-curriculum school reform that already have been built. They analyze a rich base of research and exemplary practice that points the way to school renewal through curriculum reform. They provide a compact and accurate summary of current "best practice" research in each of six teaching fields: reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and fine arts. After describing each field's research base, they provide at least one example that shows how some teachers are implementing key content and processes in their classrooms. (*Standards: Research-Based, Equity, Quality Teaching*)