



Professional Learning System Review:

A Companion Tool for the Quality Professional Learning Standards

Contents

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SYSTEM REVIEW: A COMPANION TOOL FOR THE QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS	3
Description of the Professional Learning System Review	3
Professional Learning System Review Process	4
Following Through on Results	5
STANDARD: DATA	6
Element A: Addressing Students' Capabilities and Needs	6
Element B: Addressing Educators' Capabilities and Needs	7
Element C: Program/School Quality	8
Element D: Continuous Review of Quality and Impact	8
STANDARD: CONTENT AND PEDAGOGY	10
Element A: Curriculum Content and Materials	10
Element B: Pedagogy	11
Element C: Learning Support	12
STANDARD: EQUITY	13
Element A: Academic Equity	13
Element B: Systemic Equity	14
Element C: Climate Equity	15
STANDARD: DESIGN AND STRUCTURE	16
Element A: Focus and Time	16
Element B: Embedded in Practice	17
Element C: Differentiation	17
Element D: Active and Varied Methods of Learning	18
STANDARD: COLLABORATION AND SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY	19
Element A: Collaborative Culture	19
Element B: Shared Accountability	20
Element C: External Networks	21
STANDARD: RESOURCES	23
Element A: Fiscal Capital	23
Element B: Human Capital	24
Element C: Time	25
Element D: Equipment and Materials	26
STANDARD: ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE	27
Element A: Policies and Regulations	27
Element B: District and School Alignment	28
Element C: Professional Career Continuum	29
APPENDIX A	30

Professional Learning System Review:

A Companion Tool for the Quality Professional Learning Standards



The Superintendent's Quality Professional Learning Standards¹ (QPLS) support the creation of a coherent system of professional learning policies and activities that leads to improved educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions and, ultimately, increased student learning results. They identify essential elements of quality professional learning, for teachers, administrators, and other staff, that cut across specific content knowledge, pedagogical understanding, and leadership skills.

California has identified a clear outcome for professional learning—to continuously develop educators' capacity to teach and lead so that all students learn and thrive—and seven interdependent professional learning standards that focus on:

- Data
- Content and Pedagogy;
- Equity;
- Design and Structure;
- Collaboration and Shared Accountability;
- Resources; and
- Alignment and Coherence.

The QPLS are intended to help educators, local educational agencies, and the state develop and contextualize professional learning system goals and plans. These standards are not meant to be used to evaluate any educator in any aspect of his or her work. Instead, by providing a common vision for professional learning, everyone connected to increasing educator excellence—teachers; principals; district, county, and state education agency staff; university professors; professional learning and technical assistance providers; and policymakers and other stakeholders—can transform California's professional learning system into one that ensures that every student benefits from an excellent teacher and principal.

Description of the Professional Learning System Review

Using the QPLS is valuable in helping educators keep focus on critical features of high-quality professional learning while making decisions about goals, plans, and program evaluations in their own professional learning systems. In order to do this, educators must collaboratively engage in careful study and analysis about whether or not they are implementing professional learning that is based upon sound research, strategies, and practices. The *Professional Learning System Review* is a tool that supports this purpose.

¹ California Department of Education. (2015) *The Superintendent's Quality Professional Learning Standards*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

The seven broad standards of the QPLS serve as a foundation for the content, processes, and conditions that are essential to all educator professional learning. Three to five major elements for each standard, along with indicators of practice, describe quality professional learning in more detail. Together, the professional learning standards, elements, and indicators help educators and stakeholders make decisions about what quality professional learning is and how it should be supported. The *Professional Learning System Review* helps users systematically assess local professional learning in relation to the research-based quality indicators for each of the seven QPLS. It has been designed not only to help assess and analyze professional learning actions against individual quality indicators, but also to capture evidence of implementation or the rationale for gaps/challenges in planned actions. The information collected with this tool provides a single point-in-time benchmark that can guide next steps in extending or revising professional learning practices.

IMPLEMENTATION LEVELS

For each indicator, users determine the status of current efforts—a level of implementation—and assess the indicator accordingly:

0/Undeveloped	No observable or documented evidence
1/Initiating	Preliminary discussions; planning stage
2/Developing	Early and/or small-scale implementation
3/Implementing	Full implementation
4/Integrating	Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

For every indicator, users provide notes about the evidence for or obstacles to the implementation of that indicator. These notes specifically document actions that differentiate between the selected implementation level and the surrounding ones. If Undeveloped is chosen, users are asked to explain the obstacles preventing progress or reasons this indicator was not/has not been prioritized.

Professional Learning System Review Process

Rarely is a single person charged with determining the level of implementation or quality of a district's or school's professional learning system. Rather, a team of people, with differing roles, areas of expertise, and individual perspectives, comes together in a joint effort.² Individuals may use the *Professional Learning System Review*, but its results are most useful when they are part of an individual reflection that is then used in and for group discussion, collaborative inquiry, and shared decisions about improvements.

The *Professional Learning System Review* serves as a guide for educators and stakeholders as they collectively analyze and assess evidence about their professional learning practices. The inquiry process that this tool promotes helps educators and stakeholders develop a shared understanding of and

² Killion, J. (2013). *Comprehensive professional learning system: A workbook for states and districts* (p. 43). Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

vocabulary for the professional learning that is known to be most important in increasing educator learning and capacity related to increasing student learning and well-being. Working together, users can draw preliminary conclusions from the review in order to point out direction for course corrections, as well as to identify strengths from which to take next steps. (See **Appendix A** on p. 30 for one process that a group can use with the Professional Learning System Review.)

Following Through on Results

After the review, what is the plan? Most leaders, educators, and stakeholders will have determined how to use information gathered during the assessment as part of their decision to engage in this inquiry process. However, the following prompts, adapted from Learning Forward³, may offer additional areas of inquiry to consider in moving quality professional learning from planning to effective practice.

- From the information considered, what conclusions are evident? What other evidence or study is needed?
- What areas of professional learning require particularly close attention in order to ensure early successes?
- What are the indicators of success that we expect to see in the short- and long-term if professional learning is strengthened?
- How will we share information with those not involved in the committee or process? What information is most important to share and with whom?
- What did we learn about the process and our capacity to assess our professional learning system in the future?
- What is or can be put in place to provide continuous monitoring of and interim review processes for professional learning?
- What changes are needed in the roles and responsibilities of educators at the district and school levels to ensure smooth implementation of professional learning changes? Will these shifts require changes in their authority?

There is little doubt that quality professional learning is a critical factor in building a strong and lasting foundation of educator growth and excellence. The QPLS describe elements that are necessary in effective systems, but they are, in themselves, only a guide in instituting quality practices. Quality professional learning requires collaborative effort to implement evidence-based and equitable practices that are appropriate to the goals and context of the district or school. These practices include attentive monitoring, using a variety of data to inform mid-course corrections, and checking on both efficiency and effectiveness. The *Professional Learning System Review* supports educators and stakeholders in assessing their professional learning practices and establishing productive next steps for a high-quality system.

³ Killion, J. (2013). *Comprehensive professional learning system: A workbook for states and districts*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Adapted from Tool 7.6, Implementation of state or district comprehensive professional learning system and professional learning plans (pp. 193-194), and Tool 8.1, Guide to evaluation: Interpreting the analyzed data (p. 196).

Professional Learning System Review:

A Companion Tool for the Quality Professional Learning Standards

STANDARD: DATA

Quality professional learning uses varied sources and kinds of information to guide priorities, design, and assessments.

The QPLS data standard reinforces that it is good practice to use information and various sources of data to anchor decisions about planning, implementing, or assessing quality professional learning. Those responsible for improving educator effectiveness identify the starting point for improvement; apply the best-known ways to improve knowledge and skills; and assess short- and long-term results. To help every student succeed, educators begin by looking at data describing: what students know and still need to learn; current professional capacity to address next steps; and the overall picture of school program effectiveness. With these data in hand, educators establish priorities that support extending and strengthening their capacity to address individual student needs and strengths. The emphasis is on using data from educators, rather than about educators, to identify systemwide professional learning needs and priorities. When educators review professional learning experiences and results over time, they have the information required to evaluate whether professional learning efforts are having an impact on educator effectiveness and, ultimately, student performance.

ELEMENT A: ADDRESSING STUDENTS' CAPABILITIES AND NEEDS

Quality professional learning is continuously informed by multiple measures of student data, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1a	Disaggregated formative achievement data	
1b	Disaggregated summative achievement data	

2	Disaggregated school climate data		
3	Family and community information		
4	Staff, community, family, and student opinions as perception data		

ELEMENT B: ADDRESSING EDUCATORS' CAPABILITIES AND NEEDS

Quality professional learning develops from an understanding of educators' current capacity and future development needs, as evidenced by:

Indicator		Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Data about educators' knowledge, skills, and dispositions		
2	Assessments of educators' ability to meet students' academic, cultural, social, physical, and emotional needs		

ELEMENT C: PROGRAM/SCHOOL QUALITY

Quality professional learning uses schoolwide information to determine the current policies, practices, and outcomes that are the most essential priorities for educators' professional learning, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Information from school initiatives and improvement efforts to identify needed knowledge and skills		
2 Assessments of current program alignment with federal, state, and district expectations for safe and secure environments		
3 Family and community feedback to identify needs		

ELEMENT D: CONTINUOUS REVIEW OF QUALITY AND IMPACT

Quality professional learning continuously improves through regular and long-term review of its purposes, components, processes, and outcomes, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Participant feedback to assess levels of participation, satisfaction, usefulness, and learning		
2 Changes and/or improvements in collective practice		

3	Quality and impact data to determine needs, track progress, and refine school and district professional learning plans		
----------	--	--	--

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STANDARD: CONTENT AND PEDAGOGY

Quality professional learning enhances educators' expertise to increase students' capacity to learn and thrive.

Quality professional learning focuses on the knowledge and skills that educators need in order to help students bridge the gaps between their current level of knowledge, skill, and understanding and expected student outcomes. Therefore, opportunities for professional learning must focus educators' learning on teaching specific curriculum. In addition, skillful educators must have a deep understanding not only of the disciplines they teach, but also of the progression of subject matter across grade levels, and of the ways students learn the content and apply it to engaging and challenging problems.

Educators must build a repertoire of instructional strategies that enable them to address new student standards—standards that require deeper, specialized knowledge of instructional strategies that are based in research, new technologies, better formative assessments, and improved ways of serving California's diverse student population. Professional learning also requires educators to develop expertise in designing and modifying curricula and instruction based on evidence of student progress; monitoring and adjusting implementation and change processes; learning how to collaborate with colleagues and experts; and providing constructive feedback.

ELEMENT A: CURRICULUM CONTENT AND MATERIALS

Quality professional learning builds educators' knowledge and understanding of subject-matter curricula and materials so that all students meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Knowledge of content required to meet state and district outcomes/standards for students		
2 Knowledge of subject matter within educators' own discipline and across other disciplines		
3 Use of curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, equipment, and technology that support subject-matter content		

4	Use of universal and linguistically and culturally responsive materials		
----------	---	--	--

ELEMENT B: PEDAGOGY

Quality professional learning expands educators' instructional and assessment skills, practices, and behaviors so that all students meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Differentiated instructional approaches for various content areas and diverse student learning needs		
2 Opportunities to practice and receive feedback on new skills		
3 Instructional techniques and strategies that apply to both educators and students		
4 Use of formative and summative assessments to plan and modify content and instruction		

ELEMENT C: LEARNING SUPPORT

Quality professional learning develops educators' attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions to ensure that all students have differentiated support to meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Modifications and scaffolding to instruction based on data and knowledge of how students learn and develop		
2 Support for educators to build flexible learning pathways and processes for students, inclusive classrooms, and alternative programs		
3 Practices that support students' academic, cultural, social, physical, and emotional well-being		
4 Data on students' participation, engagement, connection, and sense of belonging		

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

STANDARD: EQUITY

Quality professional learning focuses on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students, with an emphasis on addressing achievement and opportunity disparities between student groups.

In order to help every student meet new and more rigorous performance expectations, educators must understand the challenges and opportunities each student faces in achieving them. When educators have access to quality professional learning, they gain new knowledge and skills to extend their own experiences related to different equity perspectives, including race, gender, language, sexual orientation, religion, special abilities and needs, and socioeconomic status, on learning. Quality professional learning supports educators in examining their personal attitudes and biases and understanding their roles in creating equitable student learning and performance outcomes. Together, educators learn about and practice how to apply theories and principles of equity that can contribute to equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students. When educators use an equity lens to address teaching, learning, student discipline, school culture, family involvement, and other programmatic areas, they increase their impact on schooling for all students, especially those who are vulnerable or historically underserved.

ELEMENT A: ACADEMIC EQUITY

Quality professional learning increases educators' capacity to improve learning outcomes for all students, focusing on those with special needs; those with cultural, racial, and linguistic differences; those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds; and those in foster care, as evidenced by:

Indicator		Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1a	Disaggregated summative achievement data		
1b	Disaggregated formative achievement data		
1c	Disaggregated perception data		

2	Evidence-based instructional strategies responsive to students' diverse needs		
3	Increased understanding of the connection between students' abilities, perspectives, and potential and student learning		

ELEMENT B: SYSTEMIC EQUITY

Quality professional learning helps educators develop equitable and inclusive policies and align them with implemented practices, as evidenced by:

Indicator		Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Equitable access to effective professional learning and support		
2	Changes in school and district policies that address systemic inequities for students		
3	Reduction of overrepresentation or underrepresentation of students in specialized educational programs		

ELEMENT C: CLIMATE EQUITY

Quality professional learning facilitates safe, fair, and respectful school environments for all students and improves educators' understanding of the cultural, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs of each learner, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Positive school culture focused on maximizing opportunities for students to learn	
2	Trusting relationships; messages of high expectations; and opportunities for meaningful participation	
3	Support for the cultural, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of each learner	

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STANDARD: DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

Quality professional learning reflects evidence-based approaches, recognizing that focused, sustained learning enables educators to acquire, implement, and assess improved practices.

As is the case with students as learners, educators as learners benefit from multiple opportunities to learn. Those responsible for developing quality professional learning design it to address the learning priorities of educators, supporting them to continuously improve practice across their careers. At the core of decisions about how to design and structure quality professional learning is the principle of planning and organizing processes that actively engage educators in inquiry centered on authentic problems and instructional practices to improve student performance. Quality professional learning is also designed to be job-embedded—that is, situated as realistically as possible in the work setting of the learner so that theoretical learning and its practical application are directly linked. Learning activities may take on various forms—for example, a study group, coaching network, web-based workshop, learning community, collaborative committee, or curriculum development group. They may vary in time duration, be scheduled within or outside of the regular school day, or be synchronous or asynchronous technology-based designs. However, all quality professional learning must provide for intensity, follow-through, and continuity. Taken together, the various designs and structures provide educators opportunities for differentiated learning experiences that are best suited to their individual and collective goals.

ELEMENT A: FOCUS AND TIME

Quality professional learning is purposeful, focused, and sustained over time, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Clearly identified purposes related to educators' capacity and student learning outcomes	
2	Ongoing and consistent effort	
3	Dedicated time, within the school schedule, for educator learning, practice, reflection, and collaboration	
4	Extended time opportunities for educator learning, practice, reflection, and collaboration	

ELEMENT B: EMBEDDED IN PRACTICE

Quality professional learning provides many opportunities for educators to analyze their practice and apply new learning, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Use of problems of practice as a base for new learning		
2 Opportunities to clarify and use new learning		
3 Practice and implementation of new learning with frequent reflection, feedback, and support		

ELEMENT C: DIFFERENTIATION

Quality professional learning is relevant—building on the skills, knowledge, and learning needs of educators across career stages, grade levels, assignments, and contexts, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Reflection of schoolwide and district goals, and educator needs and perspectives		
2 Growth in educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions across career stages		

3	Attention to grade level; subject matter; and school setting, performance, and demographics		
----------	---	--	--

ELEMENT D: ACTIVE AND VARIED METHODS OF LEARNING

Quality professional learning employs diverse, research-based learning designs, with an emphasis on the active engagement of educators, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	A continuous learning process in which educators interact with content and one another	
2	Involvement in processes that are focused on schoolwide goals and educators' interests, needs, and learning styles	
3	Opportunities to analyze, apply, and engage in evidence-based practices	
4	Use of technology to enhance and extend learning opportunities	

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

STANDARD: COLLABORATION AND SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

Quality professional learning facilitates the development of a shared purpose for student learning and collective responsibility for achieving it.

Learning is an active, social process of constructing understanding and meaning. Professional learning research confirms this concept and shows that educators improve when they work in community to build common goals, exchange practices, and share accountability for outcomes. While educators can individually engage in some types of professional learning, tasks such as evaluating and solving problems of practice or implementing evidence-based instructional practices are usually best accomplished peer-to-peer or collectively. When successfully facilitated, collaboration among educators capitalizes on their multiple perspectives and experiences and distributes responsibilities across the group so that there is sustained interest and long-term focus on problem solving and improving practice.

To have the greatest impact on increasing educator and student results at the school site or district level, quality professional learning must include broad, collaborative participation from, for example, the principal, content and special-assignment teachers, nurses, librarians, counselors, technology specialists, and other instructional and support staff. When additional expertise or support is needed to address professional learning goals, educators may choose to work with collaborators who are external to the site and who can offer needed options that are meaningful, relevant, and results oriented. Roles of participants vary widely across districts and schools, depending on the local context. However, educators, regardless of roles, share responsibility to effectively address student learning needs and are accountable for continuously developing individual and collective expertise to do so successfully.

ELEMENT A: COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

Quality professional learning builds a culture of collaboration and mutual trust by facilitating opportunities for educators to work together to strengthen their practice and improve student learning, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Professional communities of practice that support mutually agreed-upon student learning goals and outcomes		
2 Clear purposes, goals, and working agreements that support the sharing of practices and results within a safe and supportive environment		

3	Common understanding of terminology and group process skills involved in establishing and sustaining a professional community of practice		
4	Collective learning structured around a cycle of continuous learning and improvement, with a focus on shared goals		
5	Transparent practice, including peer observation, common planning, and experimentation with feedback		

ELEMENT B: SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

Quality professional learning builds the capacity of educators to commit to shared ownership and accountability for effective professional practice and student learning, as evidenced by:

Indicator		Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0-4
1	Educators holding themselves and their peers accountable for upholding professional standards and improving student learning outcomes		
2	Educators identifying personal challenges and receiving constructive support from their peers		
3	Educators trying new approaches and sharing results with colleagues		

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

4	Using the expertise of educators within schools or districts		
----------	--	--	--

ELEMENT C: EXTERNAL NETWORKS

Quality professional learning includes external collaborations that provide effective options for educators with diverse experiences and needs to improve their practice, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Working with and evaluating external professional learning providers	
2	Including families, community members, regional partnerships, institutions of higher education, professional organizations, and others as professional learning providers and partners	
3	Opportunities for educators and external collaborators to exchange promising practices and resources	
4	Relationships with networks that have specialized expertise or resources	

5	Use of technology that supports cross-community communications and extends educators' access to learning and resources		
ADDITIONAL NOTES:			

STANDARD: RESOURCES

Quality professional learning dedicates resources that are adequate, accessible, and allocated appropriately toward established priorities and outcomes.

Professional learning is critical in increasing educator and school effectiveness and student growth. Opportunities for educators to engage, individually and collectively, in quality professional learning are possible when there are adequate resources such as staff, materials and technology, and time—all of which depend on availability of funding. Access to, quality of, and effectiveness of educator learning experiences depend upon whether and how these resources are prioritized to align with identified professional learning needs. To make decisions about equitably allocating resources for professional learning, those responsible must have a thorough understanding of varied student and educator learning needs and must thoughtfully consider which priorities will lead to improved outcomes for all students and educators. Because resources for professional learning come from many sources—including government allocations, public and private agencies, and educators themselves—distributing, tracking, and monitoring these resources is challenging. Understanding the sources, uses, and effects of professional learning resources and accurately tracking them provides educators and policymakers with information needed to make decisions about resource allocation and ways to improve the quality and results of professional learning.

ELEMENT A: FISCAL CAPITAL

Quality professional learning is supported by sufficient, sustainable funding leveraged from both current and new sources, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Prioritization in the budget		
2 The integration and application of multiple sources of funding in order to target identified professional needs		
3 A process to monitor how finances are used, the impact of investment on desired outcomes, and future allocations		

4	Outcome measures and perception data that establishes its value as an effective investment		
---	--	--	--

ELEMENT B: HUMAN CAPITAL

Quality professional learning utilizes various sources of expertise and experience to address individual and collective learning goals, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	The leadership of internal staff who present, facilitate, or coach targeted professional learning	
2	Flexible staffing arrangements that allow for peer-to-peer learning	
3	Engaging external expertise for identified needs when necessary	
4	Vetting external professional learning providers against rigorous criteria	
5	Using parents, community members, regional partnerships, institutions of higher education, county offices of education, and others as professional learning providers and partners	

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

ELEMENT C: TIME

Quality professional learning maximizes time for educators to engage in learning and collaboration, both within and outside of the school day, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Availability of ongoing and systematic time for collaboration and learning		
2 A cycle of activities spaced over time, including theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, reflection, and coaching		
3 Increased time for collaboration and learning		
4 Practice-embedded learning and release time		

ELEMENT D: EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Quality professional learning ensures the availability of a variety of tools so that educators have equitable access to relevant and effective learning opportunities, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Technology that enables educators to learn and practice new skills	
2	Availability of equipment, print materials, and other supplies that support educators in meeting individual or collective learning goals	
3	ADA-compliant equipment and materials	
4	Resources shared across programs, schools, districts, and county, state, and federal providers to expand use and maximize benefits of equipment and materials	
ADDITIONAL NOTES:		

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

STANDARD: ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE

Quality professional learning contributes to a coherent system of educator learning and support that connects district and school priorities and needs with state and federal requirements and resources.

To create an aligned system, policymakers and educators develop a common purpose and a commitment to coordinate these efforts across federal, state, district, school, and educator plans and learning opportunities. Initiatives that define and implement standards for education continue to be a strong policy lever to support all students to achieve at high levels, whether these efforts take the form of national efforts that define equitable expectations for all students or increased state expectations for school systems, schools, and educators. When combined with standards for school leadership, teaching, and student learning, the QPLS focus adult learning on high-leverage strategies that increase individual and collective educator and student effectiveness.

Quality professional learning, when implemented well, links federal, state, and local policy requirements and initiatives, across multiple systems. Building a coherent system of developing and supporting effective educators throughout their careers requires quality professional learning.

ELEMENT A: POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Quality professional learning integrates policy expectations into strategies that are focused on identified needs within local contexts, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1 Use of local goals and state direction to meet federal laws and guidelines		
2 Addressing preparation, licensing, induction, and continuously improving practice		
3 Implementation of content and pedagogy that aligns with national, state, and local standards, curricula, and assessments		

4	Learning and practice activities that are directed toward meeting educators' professional and performance standards		
----------	---	--	--

ELEMENT B: DISTRICT AND SCHOOL ALIGNMENT

Quality professional learning provides ways for districts and schools to link educators' growth goals, expertise, and resources across multiple initiatives, programs, agreements, and improvement efforts, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Clear, written district policy regarding professional learning	
2	Classroom, school, and district goals for student and educator growth, aligned with policies, structures, and practices	
3	Coordinated district and school professional growth plans	
4	Professional learning as a critical component of districts' educator support and evaluation systems	

0/Undeveloped—No observable or documented evidence 1/Initiating—Preliminary discussions; planning stage 2/Developing—Early and/or small-scale implementation

3/Implementing—Full implementation 4/Integrating—Strategic effort, including integration into one or more systems

ELEMENT C: PROFESSIONAL CAREER CONTINUUM

Quality professional learning is a part of a seamless system that provides increasingly more complex opportunities for educators to learn and practice skills that advance expertise throughout their careers, and that makes leadership roles available as educators progress, as evidenced by:

Indicator	Implementation Notes (Evidence or Obstacles)	Level 0–4
1	Preparation of candidates to assume novice educator roles	
2	Support for novice educators to apply theoretical learning to real-world assignments	
3	Opportunities for experienced educators to continuously improve	
4	Opportunities for skilled veteran educators to assist novice educators and peers and lead school and district initiatives	

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

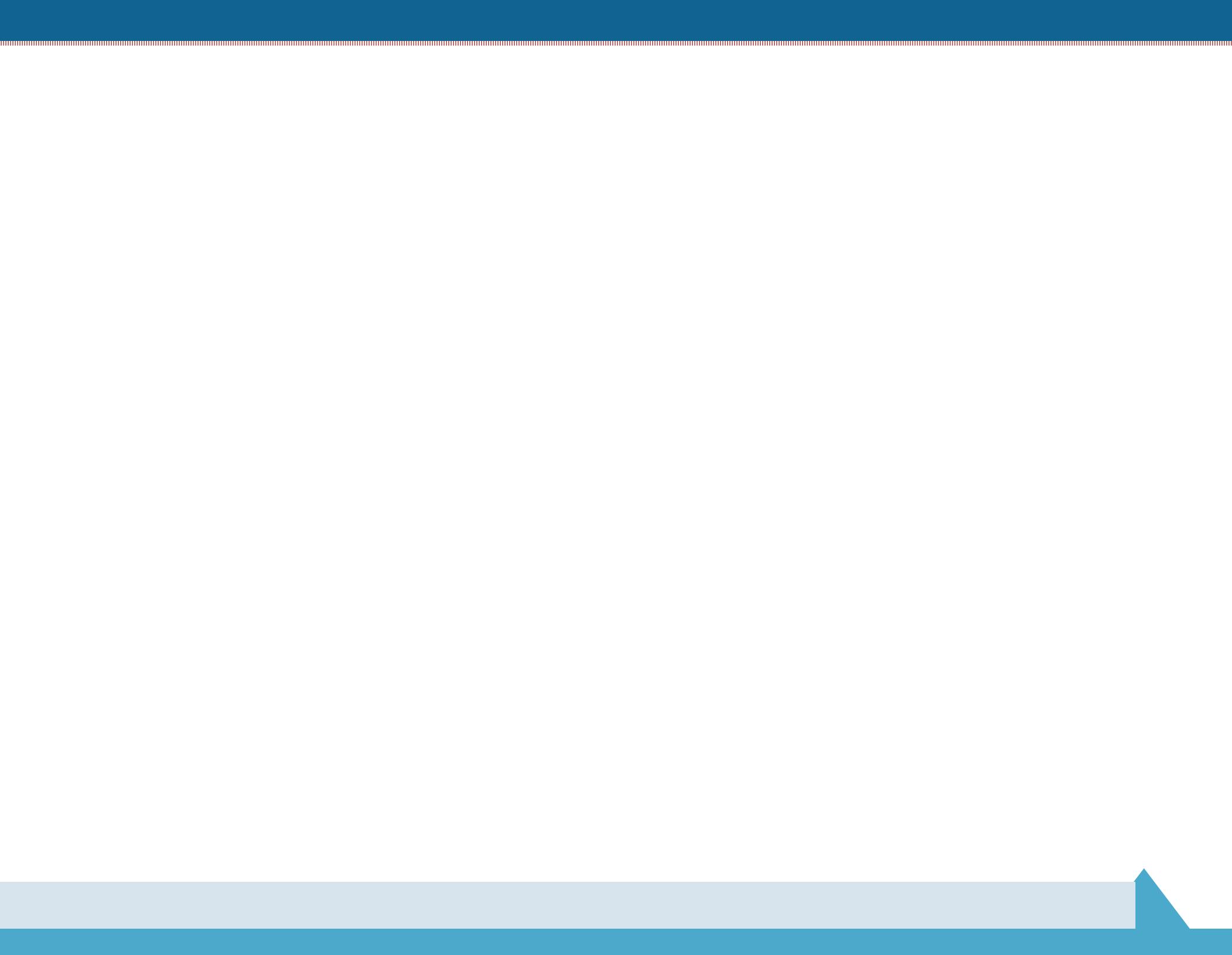
Appendix A

HOW TO USE THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SYSTEM REVIEW

The Professional Learning System Review can be used in more than one way. The following steps suggest one process that may be appropriate for various configurations of collaborative groups that may meet once or over time.

The leader(s) should:

1. Determine the main purpose(s) of engaging in the district or school review at this time. Is the group mainly looking for areas of strengths to celebrate, gaps to target new efforts, and/or opportunities to link and integrate areas of strength with areas needing improvement?
2. Identify whether work will focus on completing the whole review or will target specific sections of the standards.
3. Convene a review team with members who represent a range of assignments, career stages, sites, and/or perspectives, so that ratings and sources of evidence are broad and deep. Ensure that the number of members on the team is large enough to represent varied experiences, but is of a manageable size to allow for full engagement in discussions.
4. Ask each member to draft individual implementation notes and levels—using his or her own experiences—prior to the group meeting. However, remind members that they will need to consider other evidence or points of view when new information is introduced into group discussions later in the process.
5. Facilitate the meeting by breaking members into small groups. The number of members in each group will vary depending on the scope of the review and the size of the whole group. Assign the standard(s) and indicators to be discussed.
6. Have individuals share with their small groups the evidence that each found for the indicators. Ask the group members to discuss questions about the relevance of the evidence presented and areas of agreement or disagreement.
7. Ask small-group members to reconsider their individual ratings in light of the group discussions about evidence, and then have members share their ratings with one another. Have them record the (range of) responses to share with the larger group.
8. Record the (range of) responses for each of the groups, noting similarities and differences. Facilitate a discussion among the whole group, to reach consensus about the implementation status of the standard, if necessary, or to explain the next steps in the review and follow-through process. If multiple standards are part of the review, repeat the process.





CALIFORNIA
COMPREHENSIVE
CENTER

WestEd The WestEd logo consists of the word "WestEd" in a serif font next to a small globe icon showing the Western Hemisphere.

This is a companion tool for the publication *The Superintendent's Quality Professional Learning Standards*, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/qpls.asp>. For further information, please consult the full publication.

This tool was developed by the California Comprehensive Center at WestEd.