



NEI

Planning Professional Learning Tool & Cycle

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PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SELF – EVALUATION

Critical self-evaluation is the foundational move when determining your professional learning needs. These needs should emerge from and connect to your practice and your professional growth plan. Your professional learning should respond to your curiosity and needs, and the needs of your students, and work environment.

Explore What You Need to Know

An important and often undervalued aspect of self – evaluation is the ability to receive feedback from others. The strategies below are not exhaustive. However, they provide opportunities for personal and collegial informed self-evaluation.

- **Discuss your professional learning needs with a school leader, teacher leader, or mentor**
 - These education professionals will be able to directly connect your professional learning needs with your practice
- **Have collegial chats**
 - When you use collective responsibility as a feature of your professional learning, needs applicable to your whole team and school may emerge, as well as areas for individual growth.
- **Observations**
 - Invite a knowledgeable and trusted colleague into your classroom or visit another educator’s space. Trust is essential in both exchanges. Whether observing or being observed, you must be intentional about the focus you may want to develop. This provides context for the observation and the feedback to support your professional learning decision making.
- **Use student data to inform**
 - When using student data to inform professional learning, acknowledge data as powerful but limiting in scope. Concurrently consider your practice, thereby positioning data as a resource for self-evaluation and informed decision making, not the sole source.

Connect Self-Evaluation to the Standards for Professional Learning

When planning your professional learning, use reflective questions to ensure that your self-evaluation connects to the high-quality practices, knowledge and skills embedded in Learning Forward’s Standards for Professional Learning. Ask,

- How is the standard reflected in my practice?
- How will development of the standard impact my practice/professional growth?
- What of this standard do I already know and do? What do I need to know or be able to do within the standard?
- How do I use research, professional readings, theory, and policies to inform my development?

Remember, the standards are a system, always explore how the standard you are exploring links to the knowledge and practices explored in other standards.



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ENGAGING IN PL

Once you identify the target area for learning, you must decide on the appropriate professional learning format. Systems and school leaders committed to high quality teacher learning will have supports and resources in place that demonstrate their understanding that professional learning is:

- Embedded in the classroom – Learning where teaching occurs is the most effective setting for adult learning
- Ongoing – Deep learning rarely results from one time offering PD sessions
- Collaborative – Education professionals who approach learning as a shared responsibility heighten student outcomes. These educators learn from each other and help other to learn.

What Does Professional Learning Look Like?

What activities constitute professional learning? The suggestions below are not exhaustive and are subject to system, school leader and/or Bermuda Educators Council approval.

In School Professional Learning

- Peer classroom observation
- Peer coaching, Instructional coaching, Mentoring
- Action research (individual, collegial, whole school)
- Learning walks
- Research lesson studies
- Curriculum design and development

Off Site Professional Development

The research of Joyce and Showers highlights that when learning beyond the school environment, adding peer coaching to the established learning components of theory, demonstration, and practice, heightens the probability of knowledge and skill transfer into the classroom. Peer coaching can occur face to face or via video. Off-site professional development requiring transfer of knowledge and skills into the classroom include:

- Conferences and professional events
- Research and publishing
- Courses and learning series

Versatile Formats

These formats can occur in school, off site, online, or face to face.

- Book and professional literature studies
- Formal professional conversations
- Action learning
- Webinars
- Courses



PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Aligning Professional Learning to Needs

When educator learning is not connected to relevant needs, educators may become disinterested, disengaged, or even resentful of the learning time and processes presented to them. In what has become a time poor work environment for teachers, valuable learning must align with their needs. When system and school leaders understand this, they encourage educators to seek meaningful professional learning that promotes growth for the students as well as the professional. System and school leaders, as indicated in the [Evidence Standard for Professional Learning](#), provide data as supporting evidence so that educators have a context for the responsibilities required of them. Best is when the learning explicitly connects the needs of the students, the professional, and the school improvement plan. When seeking alignment between professional learning and needs, educators should ask:

- How does my target area connect to my needs, student needs, and/or the needs of my work place?
- What development needs do I have in relation to this target area?
- Who might I collaborate with to achieve the learning in this target area?

When contemplating engaging with external PD providers educators should ask:

- Does my off-site professional learning venue provide collaborative and immersive professional activities?
- Does my off-site professional learning venue provide processes and tools to transfer learning into my classroom?

Professional Learning Impact

Personalised professional learning, informed by educator and student needs, is intentional and considers the learning impact. You can think about impact in two ways. Firstly, what impact do you anticipate your learning having on the identified need? Secondly, what evidence can you collect that demonstrate the impact of your professional learning on your practice and your students. In other words, impact should be thought about at every stage of the professional learning process.

While planning professional learning for impact you must ask:

- What impact do I want my professional learning to have?
- By engaging in (professional learning activity) I anticipate (indicate the expected impact or change)

Post professional learning, essential questions you must ask regarding impact are:

- How has my professional learning deepened my knowledge, advanced my skills, transformed my practice, and how do I know?
- How has my professional learning impacted my students and how do I know?



PLANNING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional Dialogue

From Action Learning, Research Lesson Study, to Formal Professional Discussions, many of the adult learning approaches, espoused by the NEI, encourage the documentation and sharing of learning with others. Making professional learning visible is beneficial in the following ways:

Promotes Collaboration and Exchange of Ideas

Sharing the outcomes of your professional learning with other educators encourages collaboration and the exchange of ideas. By making learning visible, you indicate an openness to feedback and suggestions from colleagues. This may continue your growth process and lead to improved teaching practices.

Professional Growth and Reflection

To share your learning experiences, you must engage in a process of reflection and self-assessment. Articulating your findings to others requires you to think critically about your methods and impact. Reflective processes can deepen understanding and lead to further professional growth.

Contributes to the Knowledge Base

Education is a constantly evolving field, and every education professional's unique experiences adds to the collective knowledge base. By sharing, you contribute valuable insights and perspectives that can benefit Bermuda's wider education fraternity and inform future studies and locally based research.

Inspires and Motivates Peers

Visible professional learning can serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for other educators. When colleagues see the positive impact of action research or lesson studies, they may be encouraged to embark on their own inquiry-based practices. Your learning may foster a culture of continuous improvement within your school and others.

Enhances Accountability and Transparency

Making professional learning visible promotes professional responsibility within the education community. It demonstrates a commitment to evidence-based practices and data-informed decision-making, which can lead to more effective teaching strategies and improved student outcomes.

Professional Learning Planning Cycle

The Professional Learning Planning Cycle Tool of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, shared below, provides a framework for elements discussed above. Used with their permission, the NEI invites you to engage with this tool and each of its stages to plan and share your professional learning.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLANNING CYCLE

