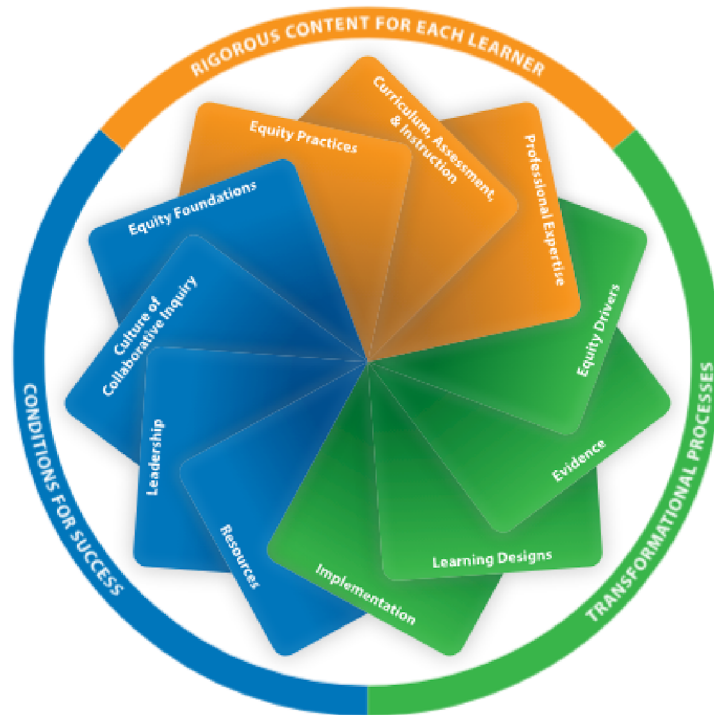


Resources



Standards for Professional Learning



LEARNING FORWARD

Resources

Professional learning results in equitable and excellent outcomes for all students when educators allocate resources for professional learning, prioritize equity in their resource decisions, and monitor the use and impact of resource investments.

Educators need significant resources to plan, facilitate, assess, and experience high-quality professional learning. Resources include money, time, people, technology, materials, and services from external providers. The level of investment in professional learning is tied to its quality and results. Further, educators' intentions and aspirations to achieve equitable outcomes for all students require an equity orientation toward resource allocation and use.

Educators in leadership positions at the [system] level hold primary responsibility for resource allocation, use, and monitoring across [schools] while school leaders have some autonomy regarding their own schools' resource use. Educators at other levels have the responsibility to document resource use, advocate for resources, and influence how they are used within the contexts they serve.

Here are the main constructs of the Resources standard.

Educators allocate and coordinate resources for professional learning.

As educators plan professional learning to achieve school- and system-level strategic visions and priorities, they make important decisions about how to wisely use the professional learning resources available to them. Aligning resource-related goals and strategies across departments within a [school] and across a system is particularly critical given how limited time and money are for professional learning.

Educators have access to funds to support professional learning from many sources, depending on the education context. Professional learning funds cover people-related expenses, including hiring staff with professional learning responsibilities. Hiring and retaining coaches and mentors within a district, for example, require a significant investment.

Other staff costs include money and time to cover the learners' participation or for substitute teachers when educators leave the job site to learn. As educators allocate human resources to support professional learning, they determine the expertise needed for a particular professional learning responsibility and then select or hire the people who have the identified expertise.

Educators have a unique appreciation for time as a critical resource for professional learning. Sustained, job-embedded learning requires time during the work day as well as on professional learning days during and beyond the school year. Collaborative, team-based professional learning happens ideally during the work week, with consistent, protected times for teams to meet.

School and system leaders create time for professional learning when they establish master schedules with dedicated blocks of time for learning. They also examine other noninstructional uses of time in the schedule and maximize use of those hours to prioritize learning — for example, through the redesign of faculty and staff meetings.

Educators in many schools have this time available due to the widespread implementation of professional learning communities or teams over the last two decades. [Private and public schools and systems] take a range of approaches to finding time, including early dismissal or early start days, creative scheduling with special area teachers, and block scheduling.

The allocation of protected time for collaborative learning supports educators' capacity to take collective responsibility for all students. Educators at all levels build in mechanisms for monitoring how they use professional learning time and continually seek to make their use of time more effective.

Educators recognize technology, materials, and other learning tools as essential investments. Access to technology tools and platforms enables educators to connect and network with peers synchronously and asynchronously, access coaching and other expertise remotely, and engage in online learning of all kinds, from webinars and courses to simulations.

Learning management systems organize resources and opportunities online and offer access to data about students and educators. Leveraging technology in professional learning can maximize scarce resources by eliminating meeting and travel costs and maximizing educators' use of time.

Fiscal resources also support contracting with external vendors or technical assistance providers to provide professional learning services. Such services range from long-term engagements on leadership development and curriculum implementation to shorter-term opportunities designed to achieve a specific goal aligned with school and system strategic priorities.

Educators prioritize equity in their resource decisions.

As educators explore and discuss rigorous goals for students and professional learning's role in achieving them, they take into account the resources available to them and prioritize their most critical goals as well as the highest-leverage strategies. Equitable outcomes for each student are essential factors educators consider to make decisions about resource use. To make decisions based on areas of highest need for students, educators analyze and disaggregate data and allocate resources intentionally to address any gaps.

Educators analyze multiple sources of data to make decisions about resource use, considering not only recent student-level achievement, behavioral, attendance, graduation, and demographic data for example, but also trends over time to understand a district or school's successes and challenges in ensuring equitable outcomes for all students given their many assets and aspects of identity.

With the evidence in hand, educators strategically prioritize the use of resources to build educator capacity in areas where students demonstrate the highest levels of need and where educators determine particular resources or strategies will have the maximum impact. This includes matching educators and learning leaders with high levels of knowledge and skills with student and educator learners with high levels of need.

Educators invest in high-quality curriculum and instructional materials because they believe in the potential of such purchases to have a positive impact on students and achieve equitable outcomes for students who historically have not had access to or opportunity for rigorous learning. Yet, without a concomitant investment in relevant and aligned professional learning, high-quality instructional materials are unlikely to achieve their promise to close learning opportunity gaps and engage all students in deeper learning. The same is true of any initiative — an investment in high-quality professional learning is required for full, effective implementation.

Educators monitor the use and impact of resource investments.

When educators allocate and coordinate professional learning resource use in alignment with strategic plans, they also have a responsibility to monitor how those resources are used and make adjustments in resource allocation and coordination as necessary.

Educators determine whether their investments in professional learning are leading to the results intended for educators and students. They share the results publicly and share their next steps to maximize the use of resources going into the future.

Professional learning is often among the first to be eliminated when education funds are cut or disappear altogether, in many cases because those responsible for providing or authorizing funds do not understand the positive impact professional learning has on student success. This makes it critical to document and share the impact of professional learning investments.

Educators establish mechanisms to track resource use in professional learning, including time, money, technology, and human resources. They know where and how, for example, coaches are spending time, what the intended outcomes are for their time, and what the results are for a coaching program. When leaders engage with external providers, they clearly establish expectations and criteria in their contracts and insist on strategies for documenting progress throughout the engagement. At any level of the system, educators share evidence about progress and successes to make the case for continuing funding.

Educators similarly track the use and impact of time as a resource so they can talk with parents, educators, and communities about how time allocated for professional learning has made a positive difference for students and educators alike. Similarly, educators investing in technology use for professional learning share their goals and benchmarks and document progress toward goals along the way.

Educators determine which investments have not resulted in desired changes to educator practice or student outcomes, make decisions about what to continue or discontinue to fund, and determine how to use the resources in ways that are most productive.

Selected research

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Links to other standards

Educators use the Standards for Professional Learning together to inspire and drive improvement. Each of the 11 standards connects to the other standards to support a high-functioning learning system. **Here are some of the ways the Resources standard connects to other standards:**

The **Equity Foundations** standard highlights the importance of making equitable outcomes for all learners nonnegotiable, and educators prioritize resources accordingly.

The **Implementation** standard emphasizes building capacity in using high-quality curriculum and instructional materials, which links to educators' content and instructional expertise.

The **Leadership** standard details how coherence contributes to an aligned system of support for all learners.