

Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool

November 2014

About the *Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool*

The primary purpose of the *Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool* is to support districts in the planning, integration, and implementation of professional learning for continuous improvement.

Part 1 focuses on characteristics of high-quality and evidence-based professional learning strategies: face-to-face, blended, online, and connected.

Part 2 focuses on additional characteristics of high-quality and evidence-based online and connected professional learning.

The tool achieves this broad purpose through a process of assessing and planning, enabling you to:

- Further align your professional learning strategies with your student learning and improvement goals
- Use the evidence-based characteristics, described in Parts 1 and 2 of the tool, to determine the
 degree to which your current professional learning strategy or set of strategies is of high quality and
 aligned with technology standards and Standards for Professional Learning
- Look at the examples online at <u>tech.ed.gov/FutureReady/Professional-Learning</u> document to see how other districts and schools have designed, integrated, and implemented effective online and connected professional learning strategies
- Determine how you might refine and better integrate your strategy or set of strategies to achieve your goal
- Use the Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool again to rate how well your refined strategy or set of strategies takes advantage of high-quality connected, blended, and face-to-face professional learning

As you use this tool to assess your current professional learning strategies and refine them, keep in mind that, even if a strategy or set of strategies does not address every characteristic, the strategy may be worth pursuing and refining over time. At the same time, the more evidence-based characteristics your strategy addresses, the more likely the strategy is to have a significant and sustained impact on teaching and learning.

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See the References at the end of this tool and *The Future Ready District Brief*, especially the section in the brief titled *Design Principles for Integration*, to learn more about the research and standards base supporting strategies and their potential impact on teaching and learning. This checklist is part of the *Future Ready Schools: Empowering Educators through Professional Learning* toolkit and can be found at tech.ed.gov/FutureReady/Professional-Learning.

Who Would Benefit From Using This Tool?

The Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool is meant to be used by the same cross-stakeholder district team responsible for professional learning and/or continuous improvement planning that began work with the Future Ready Schools: Empowering Educators Through Professional Learning toolkit. At this point in the decision-making process, you might find it helpful to include additional staff knowledgeable about the professional learning strategies currently in use in your district or those strategies under consideration. It will be especially important to ensure that teacher leaders and other educators knowledgeable about instruction and closest to the classroom are active participants in this process, including individual connected educators who are often on the leading edge of technology and innovation.

Instructions for Use

- 1. Review the district plans you collected for Step 1: Determine District Readiness. Those plans may include continuous improvement plans, professional development plans, technology plans, strategic leadership plans, teacher evaluation framework or process, and any other plans or processes that involve substantive professional learning in order to meet district goals.
- **2.** On the basis of your district plans, describe one or more high-priority district student learning or improvement goal(s) as SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely), and list the goal(s) in order of importance:
 - a. List and briefly describe any current professional learning strategies—face-to-face, blended, or online and connected—that address your highest priority goal. For example, a weeklong summer face-to-face science workshop with three follow-up sessions throughout the academic year; an online community of practice on formative assessment with monthly application of assessments in site-based grade-level or subject-area meetings; or an e-course on problem-based learning with an e-portfolio of artifacts of project work.
 - b. Include a broad desired outcome or indicator of success for each strategy. These outcomes or indicators will be helpful when considering evidence of value in Step 4 of this tool and in the subsequent evaluation tool. For example, you might describe desired educator and student performance, content, and practice outcomes.
 - c. Identify one or more sources of information for each strategy. For example, specific plan, manual, website, or other sources.
 - d. Print out this page for easy reference when completing Steps 4 and 5 of the instructions for use of this tool.

Professional Learning Strategy (Brief description of professional learning activities or experiences)	Broad Outcomes or Indicators of Success	Source of Further Information

- **3.** Use Parts 1 and 2 of this tool to rate your current professional learning strategies for the highest priority goal. For each evidence-based characteristic of professional learning, mark the rating scale to show the degree to which your strategy or set of strategies represents high-quality professional learning. As you are determining the value of each characteristic, make note of any observable evidence of that value and of anything else that informs your professional learning planning, integration, and implementation.
- 4. Consider your ratings, particularly for the characteristics you think will help refine your professional learning strategies. Access the examples online at tech.ed.gov/FutureReady/
 Professional-Learning to see how other districts and schools have designed and implemented effective online and connected professional learning strategies. Plan for how you will refine your strategy or identify a new strategy, including how you will know when you are successful (your indicators of success or evidence of value).
- **5.** Rate your refined professional learning strategy using this Professional Learning Strategies Self-Assessment Tool.
- **6.** Where appropriate, access the Online Professional Learning Quality Checklist to further refine learning options, including webinars, hashtag Twitter chats, online conferences, MOOCs (massive open online courses), online courses, and communities of practice.
- **7.** Repeat Steps 1–7 of these instructions for any other high-priority goals and corresponding professional learning strategies you wish to assess and refine using this tool.

Part 1: Characteristics of High-Quality and Evidence-Based Professional Learning

When planning and implementing professional learning for continuous improvement, the following evidence-based characteristics will ensure that your professional learning strategies—face-to-face, blended, online, and connected—are of high quality, aligned with your improvement plan and standards for professional learning, and likely to improve teacher practice and student learning.

Use the continuum to rate where your professional learning strategy is along the range of value for each characteristic, where 1 is disagree and 5 is agree.

	haracteristics of High-Quality and idence-Based Professional Learning Strategies	R	Rati	ng S	Scal	e	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
1.	Aligns with district improvement goals. [1, 2, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
2.	Focuses on the content students need to know in relation to goals (that is, content standards, key curriculum concepts, assessments). [1, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
3.	Improves teacher content knowledge in areas identified in improvement plans and/or educator evaluation results. [1, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
4.	Advances teacher use of effective instructional practices in areas identified in improvement plans and/or educator evaluation results. [1, 2, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
5.	Provides sufficient time, opportunities, and support for building efficacy and mastery of new content knowledge and instructional practices contained in improvement plans. [2, 3, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		

^{*}Aligns with designated standard(s) from Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning, which are available online at http://www.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning

	haracteristics of High-Quality and idence-Based Professional Learning Strategies	R	Ratii	ng S	Scal	e	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
6.	Involves active learning by participants (e.g., hands-on learning and inquiry-based learning). [1, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
7.	Involves participants working in collaborative groups. [1, 2, 3, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
8.	Brings together educators who are already associated in some manner (that is, collaborative teams such as learning communities or data teams, similar grades, subject areas, issues, or leadership roles). [1, 2, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
9.	Intentionally develops a sense of community; interspersing face-to-face experiences with online experiences as appropriate. [1, 2, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
10.	Involves initial and follow-up opportunities for learning and long-term, ongoing contact. [1, 5, 6]*	1	2	3	4	5		
11.	Embedded within the school day or school year. [1, 2, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
12.	Applies or situates professional learning in teachers' classrooms so that they can learn on the job and try out ideas directly related to their curriculum. [1, 5]*	1	2	3	4	5		
13.	Provides opportunities for analyzing and reflecting on practice and learning from evidence-based feedback. [1, 2, 5, 6]*	1	2	3	4	5		

^{*}Aligns with designated standard(s) from Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning, which are available online at http://www.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning

Characteristics of High-Quality and Evidence-Based Professional Learning Strategies	F	Rati	ng S	Scal	le	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
14. Seeks input from participants and customizes to meet their needs; provides "just-in-time" learning experiences that are highly relevant and meet teachers' immediate needs. [5, 6]*	1	2	3	4	5		
15. Monitors and evaluates for effectiveness at multiple levels (that is, cycle in the Values Creation Framework, Five Levels of PD Evaluation). [1, 3, 4]*	1	2	3	4	5		
16. Multiple sources of data are analyzed and documented in order to guide present and future decision making. [1, 3, 4]*	1	2	3	4	5		
17. Documented basis in evidence: scientific research or effective practice. [5, 6]*	1	2	3	4	5		
18. Serves as a model of high standards for professional learning (that is, Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning or comparable state standards). [2, 4, 5, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
19. Incorporates some form of incentivizing and credentialing of the professional learning experience. [2, 3, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		
20. Actively supported by leadership. [2, 3, 7]*	1	2	3	4	5		

 $^{{\}rm *Aligns~with~designated~standard}(s)~from~Learning~Forward's~Standards~for~Professional~Learning,~which~are~available~online~at~\\ {\rm $http://www.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning}$

The seven standard areas intended to work in partnership with one another are:

1. Learning Communities 2. Leadership 3. Resources 4. Data

5. Learning Designs 6. Implementation 7. Outcomes

Part 2: Characteristics of High-Quality and Evidence-Based Online and Blended Professional Learning

The following additional evidence-based characteristics will ensure that your online and connected professional learning strategies are of high quality, aligned with your improvement plan and standards for teaching and leading in the digital age, and likely to improve teacher practice and student learning.

Use the continuum to rate where your professional learning strategy is along the range of value for each characteristic, where 1 is disagree and 5 is agree.

	haracteristics of High-Quality and idence-Based Professional Learning Strategies	F	Rati	ng S	Scal	e	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
1.	Promotes self-directed learning through active participation in online spaces. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C6, ISTE•A3, iNACOL-C]*	1	2	3	4	5		
2.	Involves participants in online communities of practice that support innovation for improved learning. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C1, ISTE•A2]*	1	2	3	4	5		
3.	Models use of technology to explore real-world issues. [ISTE•T1, ISTE•C2, ISTE•A2, iNACOL-C]*	1	2	3	4	5		
4.	Advances the use of technology for sharing practice (e.g., posting a lesson plan for peer review). [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C6, ISTE•A4]*	1	2	3	4	5		
5.	Supports collaborative knowledge construction via various communication and collaboration tools. [ISTE•T3, ISTE•C6, ISTE•A2, iNACOL-C]*	1	2	3	4	5		

^{*}Aligns with designated standard(s) from ISTE teacher, coach, and administrator standards (formerly the NETS) published by the International Society for Technology in Education, which are available online at https://www.iste.org/standards. Also aligns with the *National Standards for Quality Online Teaching*, which are available online at http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/iNACOL TeachingStandardsv2.pdf. See References for details.

Characteristics of High-Quality and Evidence-Based Professional Learning Strategies		Rati	ng S	Scal	le	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
6. Encourages the customization and personalization of learning activities through the use of digital tools and resources. (ISTE•T3, ISTE•C2, ISTE•A2, iNACOL-B]*	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Supports technology use to facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies. [ISTE•T4, ISTE•C2, ISTE•A5, iNACOL-G, iNACOL-H, iNACOL-I]*	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Involves the use of social media in instructionally sound ways that benefit and amplify learning. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C2]*	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Makes effective use of current and emerging digital tools to support research. [ISTE•C2. ISTE•A3, iNACOL-B]*	1	2	3	4	5		
10. Models and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of digital information and technology. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C5, ISTE•A6, iNACOL-E]*	1	2	3	4	5		
11. Focuses on strategies that require equitable access to appropriate digital tools and resources for all. [ISTE•T4, ISTE•C5, ISTE•A2, iNACOL-F]*	1	2	3	4	5		
12. Uses digital-age communication and collaboration tools to extend cultural understanding and global awareness. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C5, ISTE•A6, iNACOL-A]*	1	2	3	4	5		

^{*}Aligns with designated standard(s) from ISTE teacher, coach, and administrator standards (formerly the NETS) published by the International Society for Technology in Education, which are available online at https://www.iste.org/standards. Also aligns with the *National Standards for Quality Online Teaching*, which are available online at http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/iNACOL TeachingStandardsv2.pdf. See References for details.

Characteristics of High-Quality and Evidence-Based Professional Learning Strategies	F	Rati	ng S	Scal	le	Evidence of Value: How Is This Characteristic Observed or Experienced?	Notes
13. Grows personal learning networks for professional and classroom learning. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C5, ISTE•A3, iNACOL-J]*	1	2	3	4	5		
14. Applies knowledge gained through participation in global and local learning communities to inform practice. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C6, ISTE•A3, iNACOL-J]*	1	2	3	4	5		
15. Leverages digital tools to transparently reflect upon current research and professional practice. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C6, iNACOL-C]*	1	2	3	4	5		
16. Uses advantages of technology to extend skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. [ISTE•T1, ISTE•C2, iNACOL-C]*	1	2	3	4	5		
17. Promotes substantive and sustained conversations where there is shared practice. [ISTE•T5, ISTE•C6, ISTE•A3, iNACOL-C, iNACOL-J]*	1	2	3	4	5		

^{*}Aligns with designated standard(s) from ISTE teacher, coach, and administrator standards (formerly the NETS) published by the International Society for Technology in Education, which are available online at https://www.iste.org/standards. Also aligns with the *National Standards for Quality Online Teaching*, which are available online at http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/iNACOL TeachingStandardsv2.pdf. See References for details.

The primary standard areas, meant to work in concert with one another, are:

- 1. Adopt digital-age dispositions and values
- 2. Facilitate and inspire learning and creativity
- 3. Design and develop digital-age learning experiences and assessments
- 4. Promote student success through clear expectations, prompt responses, and regular feedback
- 5. Model digital-age work and learning
- 6. Promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility
- 7. Engage in professional growth and leadership
- 8. Engage in systemic improvement

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