

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 curricula 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.

INDICATORS

Quality professional learning:

1. Uses local goals and state direction in following federal laws and guidelines to improve individual and collective educator and student performance.
2. Frames educators' development through preparation, licensing, induction, and continuously improving practice.

3. Extends educators' capacity to implement content and pedagogy that prepare all students for national, state, and local curricula and assessments.
4. Offers 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.

INDICATORS

Quality professional learning:

1. Develops from clear, written district policy.
2. Reflects classroom, school, and district goals for student and educator growth, to which policies, structures, and practices are aligned.
3. Is combined with other system elements in comprehensive district and school professional growth plans.
4. Is a critical component of districts' educator support and evaluation 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.

INDICATORS

Quality professional learning:

1. Prepares educator candidates to assume novice educator roles.

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2. Supports novice educators' induction and their ability to apply theoretical learning to real-world assignments and reflect upon results and next steps.
 3. Continuously extends experienced educators' capacity to meet professional expectations and to meet the needs of all students through a coordinated system.
 4. Enables skilled veteran educators to assist novice educators and peers and to lead schoolwide and districtwide initiatives.