

# Standards policy action guide

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Full implementation of the new Standards for Professional Learning will require individuals and teams of education leaders to become advocates for effective professional learning and to advance policy changes required to adopt the new standards or to revise the existing policies that address the 2001 edition of Standards for Staff Development.

This guide is designed to assist education leaders to initiate policy changes related to the new Standards for Professional Learning. Because policies about professional learning differ among school systems, states, provinces, or nations, education leaders who want to become advocates for effective professional learning may want to add additional steps to the process outlined here or may find that some steps do not apply to their education systems.

## Strategies for states/provinces with no professional learning standards tied to policy

For those entities that have not adopted the previous version of the standards, the release of Standards for Professional Learning is an opportunity to examine what role standards might play as part of local, state, provincial, or national policy.

### STEP 1: Determine existing assumptions related to Standards for Professional Learning.

For example, which of the following assumptions best fits the most common views about the role of Standards for Professional Learning in policy?

- a. Adopting standards into policy at the state or ministry level sets the context for implementation and supports results.
- b. Good practice is more important than policy about professional learning.
- c. The more people who know the standards, the better professional learning will be.
- d. In order to move the standards into state/provincial policy, school systems must first adopt the standards into local policy.
- e. Local school system policy has greater leverage than state/provincial policy when it comes to professional learning.

*Generate your own assumptions about standards and policy.*

### STEP 2: Determine your individual or organization's goals related to Standards for Professional Learning.

Goals might include:

- a. Adopt the standards into state/provincial/national policy, regulation, administrative guidelines, etc.
- b. Adopt the standards into local school system policy, regulation, administrative guidelines, etc.
- c. Establish the standards as criteria for funding for professional learning, i.e. Title II, Title I, ASCI, etc.
- d. Implement a knowledge campaign.
- e. Establish awards for schools and/or districts exhibiting the standards in practice.
- f. Use the standards to evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning.

*Generate your own goals for standards.*

### STEP 3: When goals are established, create an action plan with timeline, assignments, indicators of success, and evaluation plan for professional learning.

### STEP 4: Monitor progress and adjust.

### STEP 5: Report publicly to other education leaders about progress toward achieving the identified goals.

## Strategies for states/provinces with 2001 standards in policy

For those entities that have adopted the previous version of the standards, educators will need to determine what changes are required as a result of the release of Standards for Professional Learning.

**STEP 1: Determine where the standards exist in policy, i.e. legislation, administrative code, regulation, guidelines, etc.**

**STEP 2: Determine who or which body is responsible for this level of policy, i.e. state school board, state legislature, ministry of education, state department of education, etc.**

**STEP 3: Determine who leads and/or influences this group.**

**STEP 4: Determine who has influence with this person or group.**

**STEP 5: Prepare to meet with this person or representative of this group. Be crystal clear about what you want to happen. Use laser talk strategies to convey your message.**

**Engage the listener:** WHY ARE YOU COMING TO THIS PERSON?

You have been a champion for education and particularly for increasing student achievement. As you have said before, professional learning is essential to ensure that every student has the most effective teaching every day. We come to you as an advocate for student success.

**State the problem:** WHAT IS THE SITUATION/PROBLEM/NEED?

Professional learning is the only vehicle available to every school to improve teaching and student learning. It is a core practice in all school systems, yet its quality is uneven and its results are inconsistent. If we are to realize the dream of success for all students, we want to be certain that every educator engages in effective professional learning every day. Standards for Professional Learning by Learning Forward in collaboration with other leading professional associations offer guidelines for effective professional learning to increase the impact of our investment in educator learning. The standards have been updated to reflect new research on professional learning and to tie professional learning more closely to educator effectiveness and student results.

**Inform the listener about the solution:** WHAT IS THE ACTION/GOAL?

Standards for Professional Learning define the indicators of successful professional learning. If all professional learning met these standards, the results for both educators and students would be higher. We want to be sure all educators have effective professional learning to increase the success of all students. One way to do that is to adopt the standards as expectations for all professional learning and establish a statewide or province-wide system for monitoring the effectiveness of professional learning.

**Or simply,**

Substitute the new standards for the existing ones so that our standards align with the most current research in the field.

**Seek commitment:** WHAT DO YOU REQUEST OF THIS PERSON?

We ask you, because of your commitment to education and student success, to serve as the champion of this effort by \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. introducing the idea to your colleagues, opening doors for affiliate leaders to speak to the appropriate representatives or groups about the standards, developing a resolution, bill, guidelines) to establish standards for professional learning throughout the state/province. We are willing to support you in this effort by \_\_\_\_\_.