

Evaluating professional learning: Measuring educator and student outcomes

Educators want to know that their professional learning is effective; system and state leaders want evidence that their planning and funding are producing results; and community members want to know that educators are spending their time and tax dollars wisely and, most importantly, achieving results for students. Evaluating professional learning can satisfy these needs and help educators make the connection between professional learning and better teaching. Not all evaluation of professional learning requires rigorous, academic processes. When professional learning is focused on changing educator practice and improving student outcomes, all educators have the ability and responsibility to gather evidence and participate in the evaluation of professional learning as part of a system of continuous improvement.

What to measure

The goals of standards-based professional learning are to change educator practice and improve student learning, so those are the outcomes to measure in an evaluation.

Practitioner responsibility

Because effective professional learning improves educator practice and is fundamental to student learning, all educators have an obligation to evaluate professional learning.

Seven steps for evaluating professional learning

Read the full issue to see how effective professional learning systems share seven core elements that encourage continuous evaluation, no matter what the context.

Practitioner perspectives



TEACHER LEADER

Michele Johnson, coach for Lanier Middle School (Va.), shares how she links student learning to professional

learning using indicators in data and classroom observations, and how she overcomes challenges in connecting coaching to student learning.



PRINCIPAL

Nathan Pitner, principal for Bookwood Forest Elementary (Ala.), explains his team's efforts to evaluate the

learning part of professional learning instead of traditional outputs. He finds the best success when teachers are guiding their own problems of practice.



SYSTEM LEADER

Dawn F. Wilson, director of professional development for Duval County Public Schools (Fla.), shares how her

district measures and evaluates the impact of professional learning and offers three recommendations to help districts build their own evaluation systems.

FOR FURTHER READING AND RELATED TOOLS...

This document is a summary of Learning Forward's new bimonthly action brief, *Transform Professional Learning*.

Learning Forward members get the full text of each issue, with suggested actions to take, concerns, related articles, and tools for implementation at www.learningforward.org/transform.

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FEATURED TOOL:

Formative evaluation of Martinsville Middle School's professional development

This tool explains how a school used formative evaluation strategies to gather evidence of implementation. Use this tool to consider what processes might be used in your own school or system. Available for members at www.learningforward.org/transform.