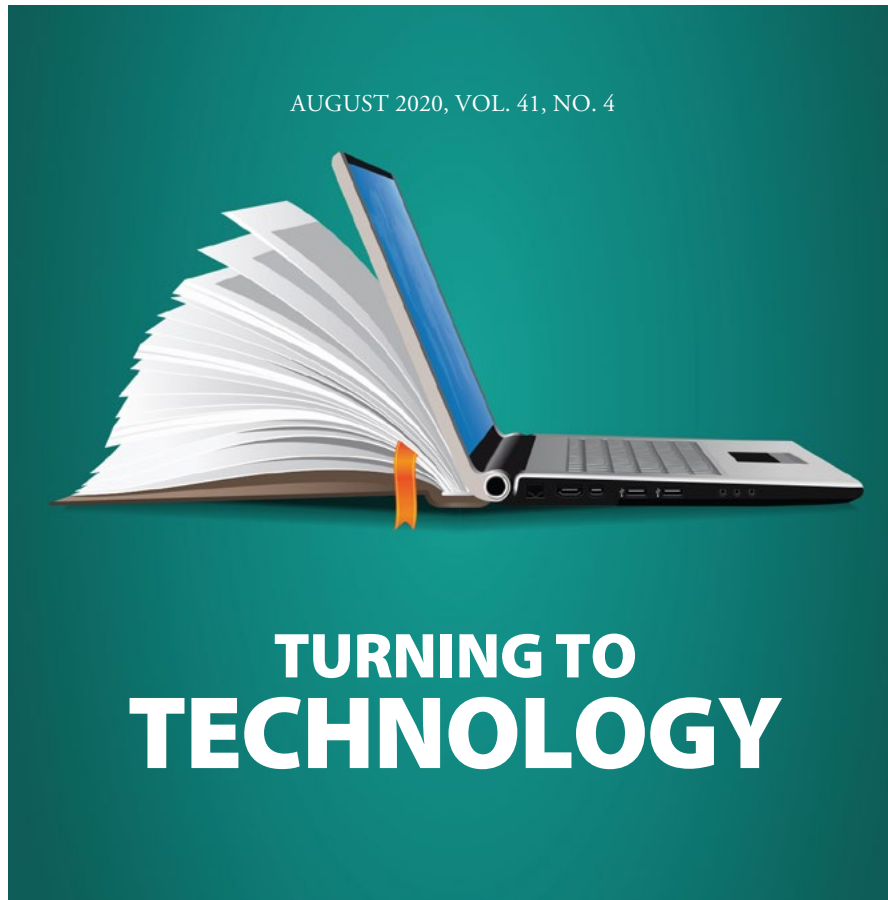


# THE LEARNING PROFESSIONAL

SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDE FOR DISTRICT TEAMS



**T**hank you for being a district member with Learning Forward. This supplemental guide, designed exclusively for district members, will help you and your team take a deep dive into the latest issue of *The Learning Professional*.

This month's guide is focused on using technology in professional learning. As COVID-19 pushes all of us to continue facilitating professional learning virtually, we encourage you to pause and reflect on what has been

working — and not working — before planning next steps. You may choose to use the guide individually or with members of your team.

Be sure to give us feedback about whether you found this useful, and, if you post on social media, tag us [@LearningForward](#) [#LearnFwdTLP](#) so we can share your good work!

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## NEED HELP LOGGING IN?

If you or your colleagues have questions about logging in with your district membership to access the articles, call **800-727-7288** or email [christy.colclasure@learningforward.org](mailto:christy.colclasure@learningforward.org).

# GET STARTED

## Shift learning online

In the article [“How tech can build teams,”](#) Cynthia Callard, Eugenie Foster, and Jennifer Kruger share lessons they learned from designing an online professional learning course with the [Standards for Professional Learning](#) in mind. They discovered that some activities, when intentionally and thoughtfully designed, actually worked better online than in more traditional settings.

### ACTIONS:

1. Ask participants to read the article and note or highlight strategies the authors found worked well online.
2. Ask each participant to reflect on his or her own online professional learning and complete the tables below.
3. As a group, reflect on the strategies and elements that work for each participant. Where are there commonalities? Differences? How will you use this information to plan online professional learning that meets everyone’s needs (not necessarily at the same time)?



## MY REFLECTIONS ON STRATEGIES

Strategies I've tried that have worked well

Strategies I've tried that have not worked well

Strategies I would like to try

Elements that make online professional learning work for me

Plans and goals for future online learning

# NEXT STEPS

## Build responsive relationships

Ensuring that professional learning includes attention to social and emotional skills is always important, especially now, when educators are experiencing high levels of stress. But, as Laura Summers writes in [“The right blend,”](#) “In the rush to prepare educators for virtual environments, today’s professional learning does not always model or embody the responsiveness and relational focus necessary for equity.” Read the article for her suggestions on how to change that.

### ACTIONS:

1. After reading Summers’ article, read the article she recommends from the August 2018 issue, [“Sowing seeds of SEL.”](#)
2. Review and reflect on the figure on p. 31. Focus on the “anchor competencies” in the yellow ring.
3. Choose a coach, supervisor, or other trusted team member to hold one-on-one check-ins with each team member. He or she should ask about and listen deeply to each person’s current challenges and stresses.
4. During an online team meeting, reflect as a team on the anchor competencies. With facilitation from the team leader who conducted the check-ins, have a team discussion about which of the anchor competencies your team needs most support with right now. Invite but do not require team members to share some of their challenges and how they believe focusing on certain competencies could help them.
5. As a team, make an action plan for intentionally focusing on two or more of the anchor competencies during staff support and professional learning over the next six months. For each competency you will target, include:



## ACTION PLAN FOCUSING ON 2 COMPETENCIES

Competency:

Competency:

Strategies for building the competency

Resources needed (e.g. time, finances, technology)

Concrete first steps

How you will hold yourselves accountable for the goal

## Move ahead with mentoring

**M**entoring is an important strategy for helping teachers, especially new teachers, improve their practice. To help districts and schools continue effective mentoring practices in remote learning environments, Learning Forward staff and consultants created [a tool for planning virtual lesson observations](#).

### ACTIONS:

1. Organize into pairs or small groups. Ideally, mentors and mentees should work together. Discuss goals of your upcoming observation. What practices will you focus on?
2. Complete the planning tool together.
3. Create your own tool for the debrief conversation. Some questions to consider: How should the mentor begin the debrief? How can the mentor use video clips to illustrate to the mentee what she observed? What questions will the mentor and mentee ask of one another? How will the pair plan for next steps? (See below.)



### MY OWN QUESTIONS FOR THE DEBRIEF SESSION:



4. Schedule and hold the observation and debrief, using the planning tools.
5. In mentor-mentee pairs, reflect on this first observation and debrief. Consider:
  - a. How well were you able to address your goals?
  - b. What worked well?
  - c. What challenges did you encounter?
  - d. When will you hold your next observation and what will you focus on?
  - e. How will you address the challenges from the first observation? What will you do differently?