# Evaluating Professional Learning



Webinar March 21, 2024

If you can see the slide and hear the music, you are all set.

# Welcome! We will begin shortly.

All attendees are muted upon entry.

Please use the chat feature for comments and questions during the webinar.



# Thank you for joining us

The webinar will be recorded and available.

All webinar registrants will receive a followup email that will include the webinar slide deck, recording, and other resources mentioned during the presentation.

Please introduce yourselves in the chat box

- Your name
- Your location
- Your role in the educational sector
- What you hope to learn today

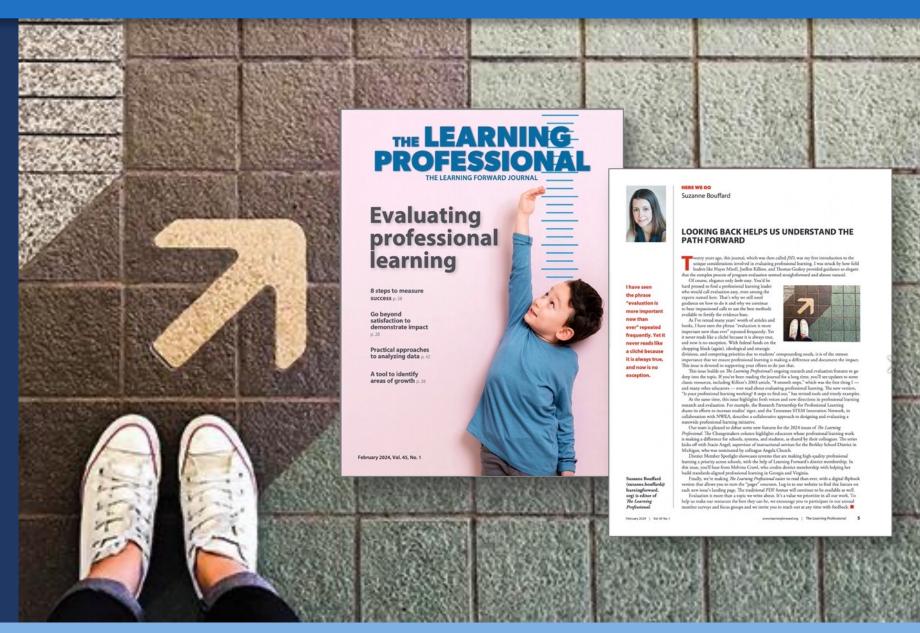
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# Let's get started



Suzanne Bouffard
Senior Vice President
Communications and
Publications

Learning Forward



# Participants will...

Discover a range of evaluation purposes and approaches

Learn how to go beyond satisfaction surveys to measure impact

Explore tools for planning and conducting evaluation

Identify next steps for evaluating your work

## Let's check in

# How prepared do you feel to evaluate professional learning?

- Not at all prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Very prepared

### Which word do you think best describes evaluation?

- Helpful
- Inspiring
- Confusing
- Overwhelming

### Presenters

### Joellen Killion

Senior Advisor
Learning Forward
Lakeway, TX



### **Thomas Guskey**

**Professor Emeritus** 

College of Education

University of Kentucky

Lexington, KY

### Joellen Killion



### **7 REASONS** to evaluate professional learning

BY IOELLEN KILLION

ach year, educators engage hours of professional learning to enhance their ractice. Those hours are ited, both by contract

and the imperative of keeping teachers 22 The Learning Professional | www.learningforward.org

in classrooms as much as possible. It is the quality, effectiveness, and impact of professional learning. It provides essential that this professional learning time is well-spent and pays dividends data for planning and strengthening toward the goal of all public education: educators' learning and, ultimately, ensuring that each student succeeds. explaining and justifying school Evaluation is fundamental for assessing systems' investments in it.

and analyze data about the effects of professional learning, they tend to default to some common fallacies

professional learning, students automatically benefit.

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- · If educators report that professional learning was beneficial, they will change their practice and students will benefit.
- Spending more on professional learning guarantees that educators and students will
- · When professional learning focuses on evidence-based practices, student success automatically increases. These assumptions have limited

educators' efforts to collect data and measure the relationship between professional learning and student success. In many cases, there is, in fact, a positive relationship between professional learning and ements for educators and students. But without evaluation, we don't have an abundance of evidence to support the claim. This means

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TOOLS

### Is your professional learning working? 8 steps to find out

BY JOELLEN KILLION

to measure its effectiveness and impact on student learning is an important process for those who design, lead, and facilitate educator learning. Evaluation demonstrates a commitme to accountability for investments in professional learning and a mechanism The Standards for Professional Learning (Learning Forward, 2022) articulate the (Learning Forward, 2022).

to the Evidence standard, "Professional learning results in equitable and excellent outcomes for all students when educators create expectations and build capacity for use of evidence, leverage evidence, data, and research from multiple sources to plan educator learning, and measure and report the impact of professional learning"

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Evaluating professional learning

requires thoughtful and intentional

Impact (Killion, 2018), "Evaluation

is a systemic, purposeful, standards-

driven process of studying, reviewing

multiple sources to make judgments

and informed decisions about the

program" (Killion, 2018, p. 8).

learning program gathered from

and analyzing data about a professiona

effort. As I have defined it in Assessing



### **ABOUT THIS ARTICLE**

In fall 2003, Learning Forward (then National Staff Development Council) published the article "8 smooth steps" by Joellen Killion. which outlined an eight-step process for evaluating a professional learning program. Since then, the article has become a model for designing effective evaluation of professional learning. In this article, Killion offers a fresh look at how to apply a scientific, systematic process to evaluation that ensures reliable, valid results.

### TOOLS ACCOMPANYING THIS ARTICLE

- Mapping an evaluation step by step
- Identifying KASABs
- · Creating a logic model Establishing an evaluation

actions, guided by research, evidence,

and standards of effective professional

learning, accompanied by adequate

resources, and directed toward the

related to educator practice and its

impact on student learning" (Killion

Assessing evaluability involves

determining if the program's design is

likely to produce its intended results.

from a professional learning program

Evaluation cannot compensate for a

is poorly conceived and constructed.

'Current problems and limitations of

program evaluation lie more with lack

of adequate conceptual framework of

professional learning program that

Perhaps Chen (1990) said it best:

that is unlikely to produce them.

achievement of defined outcomes

2018, p. 8).

However, not all evaluation efforts are rigorous enough or sufficient to make a claim that professional learning impacts

Using the following eight steps of the evaluation process, drawn from extensive practice and research in program evaluation, professional learning leaders will be able to answer important questions about the relationship among professional learning, educator practice, and student learning. The process is described in this article. Threaded throughout is an example of evaluating a professional learning effort to improve teachers' math instruction to improve student achievement in math.

### 1. ASSESS EVALUABILITY.

The first step is determining whether a professional learning progra or initiative is ready to be evaluated. This is based on the degree to which the professional learning, as planned, is sufficient to generate the intended results. A program of professional learning, not individual events or episodes, is far more likely to change educator practice and student learning. A program of professional learning is a "set of planned and implemented

the program than with methodological weakness (p. 293)' " (Killion, 2018, pp. 44-45). Before evaluating any professional learning program, the evaluator asks whether the program is feasible, clear, sufficiently powerful to produce the intended results, and worth doing. To determine whether a program is ready to be evaluated, an evaluator analyzes the program's goals, expressed

as expected changes for students; outcomes, expressed as changes for educators; indicators of success; standard of success; and the program's theory of change and logic model, each of which is described below.

A program's goals express its success. Instead of a goal such as "It is futile to expect results for students training all teachers, a results-driven program has a clearly stated goal for students, such as all students meeting grade-level expectations in math. A strong goal is to increase student performance on end-of-course assessments by a certain percentage over a defined time period. When student mance reaches the established threshold, the program is working as intended. If not, the program requires adjustment in its design, operations, or

Outcomes describe the specific changes necessary to achieve the goal The changes occur in some or all of these areas: knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors, which can be remembered through the acronym

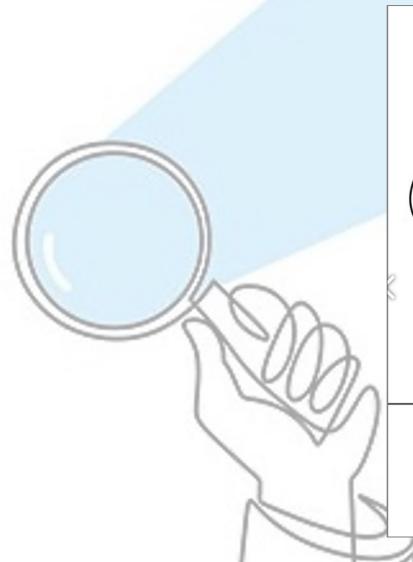
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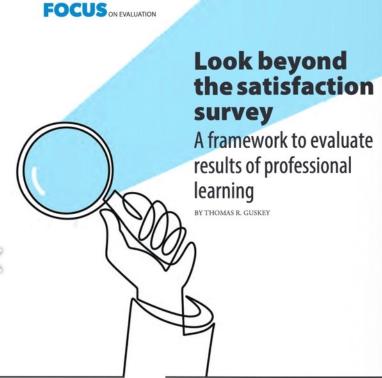
# 7 reasons to evaluate professional learning



- 1. Problem identification
- 2. Planning
- 3. Quality
- 4. Implementation
- 5. Effectiveness (changes in educators' knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors)
- 6. Impact on students
- 7. Social justice and human rights

# Thomas Guskey





rofessional learning is vital to address the multiple issues facing educators today. Recovering from declines in student achievement brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic requires educators to prioritize learning goals and develop new ways to

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accelerate students' learning progress. Political discord, social tensions, and global conflicts compel teachers to guide students in exploring diverse perspectives and engaging in constructive, respectful dialogues. Furthermore, the rapid evolution of technology, particularly artificial intelligence (Al), necessitates teachers and school leaders to consider entirely new paradigms in instructional methods and assessment.

At the same time, there is a great need for credible evidence on the effectiveness of professional learning. Rachel Garrett and her colleagues (2021) conducted an extensive meta-analysis of high-quality studies

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of teacher professional learning published between 2010 and 2020. The aim was to establish connections between features outlined in Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning (Learning Forward, 2022) and teacher instruction as well as

and teacher instruction as well as student learning.

To be eligible, studies needed to

"(1) include teachers in Grades K-12,
(2) examine the impacts of professions

"(1) include teachers in Grades K-12, (2) examine the impacts of professional learning on instruction measured through classroom observation, and (3) have enough information to compute effect sizes" (p. 5). Among the hundreds of studies identified, only 48 met these modest criteria for inclusion.

This combination of a significant demand for professional learning and a paucity of credible evidence vields two critical implications. First, it highlights the pressing need for enhanced methods of collecting sound evidence on the impact of professional learning. While many professional learning initiatives may indeed have a positive influence on teaching and student learning outcomes, there has been a lack of concerted effort to adequately document these effects. Second, it underscores the necessity of using trustworthy evidence to elevate the quality of professional learning experiences for all educators. This entails more systematic and purposeful evaluations of professional learning initiatives.

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### A LONG HISTORY

These two implications have long swith Dennis Sparks, Stephanie Hirsh, Shirley Hord, and Susan Loucks-Horsley during my initial involvement with Learning Forward, then called the National Staff Development Council. I had just graduated with a degree in educational measurement and evaluation, and these influential leaders sought my advice on developing new and better methods for gathering evidence on the effects of professional learning.

Initially, I proposed a model developed by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959 for evaluating training programs in business and industry. Kirkpatrick's four-level model included traines' reaction (initial satisfaction), Jearning (knowledge, skills, and attitudes), behavior (on-the-job performance), and outcomes (increased productivity). However, early attempts to apply the model to professional learning in education were challenging and proved unsuccessful. It was apparent that something unique to the field of education was missing.

Analyses of the lack of success in applying Kirkpatrick's model consistently pointed to organizational factors. Professional learning leaders were successful from a training perspective, but challenges arose when participants returned to organizations that either did not sufficiently support implementation of new ideas or posed barriers to implementation.

In response to these organizational challenges, I adapted Kirkpatrick's model to create a five-level model that included organization support and change. This modification recognized the crucial role of organizational support in the success of professional learning initiatives. By incorporating this additional level, the model aimed to address the unique dynamics of educational settings and the importance of aligning organizational structures and culture with the goals of professional

### A MODEL FOR EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The new evaluation model I proposed presents a comprehensive framework for assessing the effectiveness and impact of professional learning initiatives in education. It can be applied to event-driven activities like workshops and seminars, as well as to the wide range of ongoing, jobenbedded professional learning activities such as study groups, action research, collaborative planning, curriculum development, structured observations, peer coaching, mentoring, and so on.

The model provides a systematic

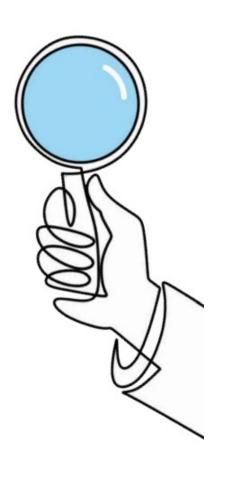
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# Five levels of professional learning evaluation

Level	What questions are addressed?	How will information be gathered?	What is measured or assessed?	How will information be used?
1. Participants' reactions	Did they like it? Was their time well-spent? Did the material make sense? Will it be useful? Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? Were the refreshments fresh and tasty? Was the room the right temperature? Were the chairs comfortable?	Online questionnaires and surveys.	Initial satisfaction with the experience.	To improve the design and format of the experience.
2. Participant learning	Did participants acquire the <i>intended</i> knowledge and skills?	Questionnaires and surveys. Performance tasks or assessments. Simulations or demonstrations. Participant reflections (oral or written).	New knowledge and skills of participants.	To improve the content, format, and design of the experience.
3. Organization support and change	Was implementation advocated, supported, and facilitated? Was the support public and overt? Were sufficient resources made available? Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently? Were successes recognized and shared? What was the impact on the organization? Did It affect organizational procedures, climate, and culture?	Minutes from follow-up meetings.  Questionnaires and surveys. Interviews with participants and leaders. Participant reflections (oral or written).	The leaders' and organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition.	To document and improve leader and organization support. To inform future improvement efforts.
4. Participant use of new knowledge and skills	Did participants effectively apply or implement the new knowledge and skills?	Direct observations. Interviews with participants, leaders, and students. Questionnaires and surveys. Focus groups. Implementation records and reflective journals.	Degree and quality of participants' implementation of new practices, knowledge, and skills (i.e., fidelity).	To document and improve implementation of new knowledge and skills.
5. Impact on student learning outcomes	What was the impact on students? Did it affect student performance or achievement? Did it influence students' attitudes, dispositions, or behaviors? Are students more confident as learners? Is student attendance improving? Are graduation rates increasing?	Student data. School/district data. Questionnaires and surveys. Interviews with students, parents, teachers, and school leaders. Participant reflections.	Student learning outcomes:  a. Cognitive (performance and achievement). b. Affective (attitudes and dispositions). c. Psychomotor (skills and behaviors).	To focus and improve all aspects of activity design, implementation, and follow-up.  To demonstrate the overall impact of professional learning.

- 1. Participants' reactions
- 2. Participant learning
- 3. Organization support and change
- 4. Participant use of new knowledge and skills
- Impact on student learning outcomes

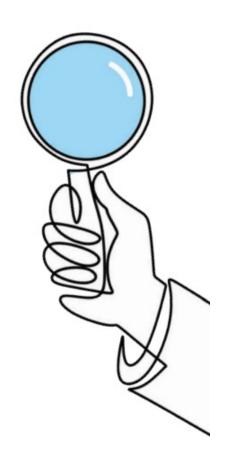
# Backward planning keeps the focus on students



The five-level evaluation framework is helpful for planning professional learning. Start with the end goal of improvement in student learning, then work backward to identify the steps to get there. Follow this process:

- Define the desired student learning outcomes (Level 5).
- Determine the instructional practices and policies to achieve the outcomes (Level 4).
- Identify organizational support needed to implement the practices and policies (Level 3).
- Determine the knowledge and skills needed to implement the practices and policies (Level 2).
- Select or design learning experiences that increase the knowledge and skills (Level 1).

# Which level is most important?



- 1. Participants' reactions
- 2. Participant learning
- 3. Organization support and change
- 4. Participant use of new knowledge and skills
- 5. Impact on student learning outcomes

# **KASAB**

### **Identifying KASABs**

Delineating KASABs (knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors) is a way to define the outcomes of learning and the necessary changes required to achieve success with any initiative. In professional learning, KASAB defines the changes educators are expected to make to affect student success. Systemic change requires changes in KASABs for all key actors who contribute to, facilitate, lead, or are responsible for the change. For some initiatives, other actors such as parents and community members may also be expected to change.

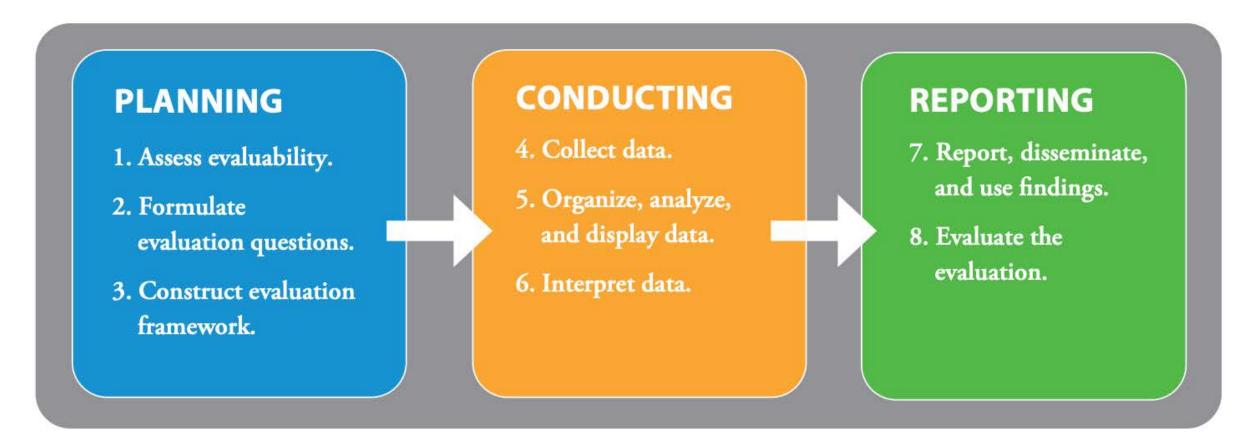
This tool can be used in combination with the Mapping an Evaluation Step by Step tool. Fill out the desired outcomes for specific stakeholders. You will likely leave some cells blank.

Students	Teachers	Coaches	Principals	Central office staff	Organization (policy, structures, systems, etc.)
	Students	Students Teachers	Students Teachers Coaches	Students Teachers Coaches Principals	

Knowledge	Conceptual understanding of information, theories, principles, and research.
Attitudes	Beliefs about the value of information or strategies.
Skills	The ability or capacity to use strategies and processes to apply knowledge.
<b>A</b> spirations	Desires, or internal motivation, to engage in a practice.
Behaviors	Consistent application of knowledge and skills driven by attitudes and aspirations.

Source: Killion, 2018. Assessing Impact: Evaluating Professional Learning (3rd ed.), p. 50.

# Steps to evaluate professional learning



Source: Killion, 2018.

# Step 1: Assess evaluability

# **PLANNING**

- 1. Assess evaluability.
- 2. Formulate evaluation questions.
- 3. Construct evaluation framework.

# CONDUCTING

- 4. Collect data.
- 5. Organize, analyze, and display data.
- 6. Interpret data.

REP

- 7. Rep
- 8. Eva eval

# Compare a theory of change with a logic model

SAMPLE THEORY OF CHANGE District leaders analyze student and educator data about mathematics performance to identify highleverage opportunities for increasing student learning. Professional learning leaders Coaches and teachers design and implement a course review classroom tasks and to develop and extend teacher daily assessment results and coach understanding to adjust instruction to and use of mathematics address student needs. instructional practices. Coaches and principals engage District and school teachers in problem-solving and leaders provide classroom extended learning about the use instructional materials and of mathematics instructional resources to support teacher practices and how to assess and student success. student learning. District leaders support principal Coaches provide ongoing and coach understanding of how coaching support to teachers to gather data about effective as they implement and refine mathematics instructional their use of mathematics practices and support teacher instructional practices. use of them.

Source: Killion, 2018, p. 54.

Source: Killion, 2018, p. 60.

Goal statement (intended mathematics by at least		the end of the school y	ear, all students will increase the	eir performance on end-of-unit and end-of-course	assessments in		
matnematics by at leas		ic models are planned from	m the goals background				
	order of planning, Log	Order of planning: Logic models are planned from the goals backward.					
INPUTS	OUTPUTS OUTCOMES				RESULTS		
Resources	Actions/strategies Outputs	Outputs	Initial educator learning outcomes	Intermediate educator practice outcomes	Intended results for students		
Time to participate in the professional learning course.  Math manipulatives.	Design professional learning course for teachers, coaches, and principals. Implement course.	Course materials. Video library of teachers applying the mathematics practices.	Teachers, coaches, and principals explain the eight mathematics practices with 85% accuracy (knowledge).  Teachers, coaches, and principals identify the research-based explanation about how students benefit when mathematics practices are used (knowledge, attitudes).  Teachers, coaches, and principals evaluate videotaped	All teachers and coaches remodel instructional units to integrate mathematics practices and explain the rationale for choosing the practices included and their alignment with the unit's content with 85% accuracy (skills).	All students increase their performance on end-of-course assessment by at least 10% by the end of the school year.		
Math instructional materials that integrate the mathematic principles.	Engage teachers in analysis of instructional materials for integration of mathematics practices.	Formative assessments of student performance.	lessons for evidence of integration of mathematics practices with 85% accuracy (knowledge, skills).  Teachers explain how to assess student performance that results from use of the mathematics practices with 85% accuracy (knowledge, skills).	Teachers generate daily and common formative assessments aligned with mathematics content standards and the mathematics practices.			
Time for microteaching.	Engage teachers in microteaching to apply the mathematics practices.	Classroom observation guide for implementation of the mathematics practices.  Innovation Configuration map for self-assessment of the implementation of mathematics practices.	Teachers, coaches, and principals evaluate videotaped lessons for evidence of integration of mathematics practices with 85% accuracy (knowledge, skills).	Teachers, coaches, and principals explain the value of and advocate for the use of mathematics practices to colleagues, students, parents, and community members (attitudes).			
Time for teacher teams to plan and design	Engage teachers and coaches	Unit and lesson plan accommodations	Teachers generate a unit of instruction that integrates at	Teachers generate five units of instruction that integrate at least four math practices with 80%			

# Step 2: Formulate evaluation questions

## **PLANNING**

- 1. Assess evaluability.
- 2. Formulate evaluation questions.
- 3. Construct evaluation framework.

## CONDUCTING

- 4. Collect data.
- 5. Organize, analyze, and display data.
- 6. Interpret data.

### REP

- 7. Rep
- 8. Eva eval

# Level 5: Impact on student learning outcomes

What questions are addressed?	How will information be gathered?	What is measured or assessed?	How will information be used?
What was the impact on students?  Did it affect student performance or achievement?  Did it influence students' attitudes, dispositions, or behaviors?  Are students more confident as learners?  Is student attendance improving?  Are graduation rates increasing	Student data  School/district data  Questionnaires and surveys  Interviews with students, parents, teachers, and school leaders  Participant reflections	Student learning outcomes:  a. Cognitive (performance and achievement)  b. Affective (attitudes and dispositions)  c. Psychomotor (skills and behaviors)	To focus and improve all aspects of activity design, implementation, and follow-up  To demonstrate the overall impact of professional learning

# Discussion and Questions



# Additional evaluation resources from Learning Forward

# ESOURCES

**EVALUATION** is a vital way to make sure that professional learning is working as intended and benefiting educators and students.

### Learning Forward has a wealth of resources to guide evaluation of professional learning.

A new page on our website features highlights from across our organization for easy access. Among the many resources available, you'll find:



### JOURNAL ISSUES focused on evaluation and evidence

- Evaluating Professional Learning
- Measuring the Impact of Professional Learning



### **SELECTED ARTICLES** about evaluation strategies and considerations

- "The rules of evidence," by Thomas Guskey
- "Why evaluations fail," by Joellen Killion
- "What works?" Q&A with Heather Hill



### **EVALUATION TOOLS**

- Professional Learning State and District Planner
- Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide



### WEBINARS on conducting evaluation and research

- $\hbox{--"Collecting Evidence to Share Impact of Professional Learning: Districts Share Their Stories"}\\$
- "Evidence and Evaluation for ESSA: An In-Depth Conversation"
- "The Mythbusters Guide to Educational Research with Douglas Reeves and Thomas Guskey"



### **BOOKS** about assessing professional learning's impact

- Assessing Impact by Joellen Killion



### STANDARDS RESOURCES

- Evidence standard and Innovation Configuration maps
- Article: "Survey gives systems a clear picture of their professional learning"



Access these resources at learningforward.org/evaluation

To search by topic, keyword, author, date, or resource type: learningforward.org/search-resources



### 6 things to know about evaluating professional learning

### What is evaluation

Evaluation is a formal process of collecting and analyzing data about a program or initiative to make judgments and informed decisions. It examines clearly defined outcomes so stakeholders can determine whether and in what ways the program was successful.

### How is evaluation different from research?

Research explores the relationship among two or more variables to develop knowledge on a topic. It is a broad category of social science inquiry that can describe a phenomenon, examine the causes of a problem, or test solutions, whereas evaluations examine specific programs with defined outcomes.

### What do policymakers mean when they ask for evidence?

Evidence is a type of data. Data are pieces of information that are analyzed to answer evaluation questions. Evidence is data that serves to answer whether and how well a program works.

### What does it mean to show impact?

Impact is the effect of a program on its participants and the people they serve. In professional learning, impact usually means changes in teachers' and students' knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors.

### Who can conduct evaluation?

Anyone. While many education systems hire external evaluators with research backgrounds, any educator can use an array of evaluation strategies that range from simple to complex. Resources are available in this issue of *The Learning Professional* and at learningforward.org/evaluation

### Why does it matter?

Evaluation is important for understanding which professional learning approaches work, when, where, for whom, and why. With that information, all stakeholders can make good decisions about how to invest time and resources so that all educators grow and all students succeed.

Some definitions are adapted from Assessing Impact by Joellen Killion (Corwin, 2018).

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# Please fill out our

# post-webinar

survey

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XXPS7DW



# Mark your calendars

**April 9, 2924** 

3-4 PM ET

Book Club discussion

with

Dennis Shirley and

**Andy Hargreaves:** 

The Age of

The Age of Identity

**April 2, 2024** 3 PM CT

Leadership
Team Institute
Information
Session



April 15, 2924
Registration Deadline

Leadership Team Institute



### Online resources

Look for follow-up resources, including a recording of this webinar and slides:

- Read latest issue of <u>The Learning Professional</u>
- Check out the Learning Forward blog
- Use the <u>Action Guide for</u> <u>Principals</u>
- Coaching Resources



# Thank you!