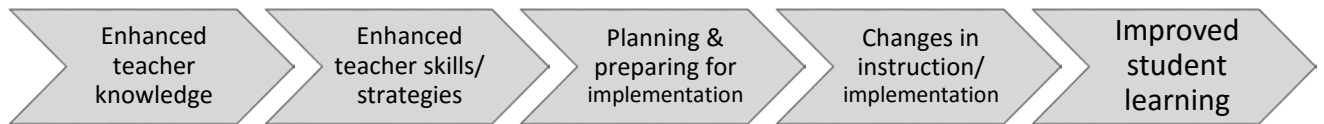


## Professional Learning Scenarios

### Directions:

1. Read the descriptions of professional learning.
2. Identify the learning designs used to enhance each of the components of the Theory of Change *below*. For example, determine how educator knowledge was increased and place that design in the appropriate column. You might discover that there multiple learning design for each category. You might also find that a single design might fit in more than one category.
3. If the design was also conducted collaboratively with peers or colleagues *star* that item.
4. Highlight learning designs that you think are especially powerful in supporting implementation.



1					
2					
3					

4					
5					

**1** Through an analysis of student and educator data, an elementary school identified that educators needed to develop deeper content knowledge of mathematics. The staff acknowledged that they had had mostly survey courses in mathematics during their undergraduate training. Professional learning began by asking teachers to work on sample math problems from the state assessment. Based on results, a mathematics content specialist was brought in to help design activities that would help teachers learn the content embedded in the Common Core standards. She conducted two-hour sessions every two weeks after school. Staff learned by engaging in the same type of activities students would use in the classroom. They debriefed by examining the content and the learning strategies. Study groups were established for each grade-level, and the schedule arranged so that they could meet twice a week to follow-up on the seminar using grade level appropriate materials which the district’s math coach helped them plan. The teams also read and discussed articles and reviewed videos of mathematics lessons that included the teacher reflecting on the strengths and needs of the lesson. The teams also planned lessons together to use in their classrooms. Finally, once a month during staff meetings, each grade level shared a student math problem they had taught and modeled a “Think Out-loud” about the variety of ways to unravel and solve the problem, sometimes using manipulatives. The staff was engaged in the math problem and also provided

feedback about the lesson, the content, and the processes used. The faculty also had an opportunity to look at student work resulting from the lesson.

**2** A middle school had been focused on improving reading comprehension skills of expository text for two years. They participated in trainings, did book studies, and watched and analyzed videos about instructional strategies and materials that increased reading comprehension of expository text. Interdisciplinary teams analyzed their students' reading scores and identified specific areas of need. They worked in pairs to develop lessons that focused on student learning needs. The partners conducted the lesson, observed each other, and debriefed the experience. After 3 months, the leadership team decided to determine the extent to which teachers were using the new instructional strategies and materials. As a team, they developed a list of key indicators and conducted Walk-throughs of every classroom in the school. They also interviewed students and examined bulletin boards and samples of student work. They summarized the results and held a discussion during a staff meeting. The staff used this data to identify strategies that required additional focus and practice. They also identified barriers to using these new strategies. The teams created a schedule for peer classroom observations and debriefings that focused on reading comprehension skills. Based on results, the teams conducted an on-line search for content-based reading lessons plans that could be adapted for their classrooms. They used a rubric to score how well the lessons matched the criteria they identified for powerful instruction. Pairs of teachers divided up and revised the lessons and shared the revised lessons with the whole faculty.

**3** A high school recognized that the only way to help students improve their writing was to have each content area focus on a different aspect of the writing process. A four-day summer institute was conducted that addressed writing within the content areas. Break-out sessions were provided so that science, social studies, mathematics, and business could examine writing skills expected in careers within those fields. They also focused on specific writing skills in each content area.

When school began, content-area learning teams were established. Team members examined lesson plans and determined what kind of writing assignments would be appropriate to prepare students for the state assessment as well as work within their content area. Each week the learning team reviewed two lessons from different members to identify how writing had been integrated into the lesson. Teams collected student data from new lessons to determine whether the lessons were improving writing. Eventually, the learning teams used a structured discussion format called a Tuning Protocol to examine student writing samples to determine strengths and needs. The district writing specialist addressed those student needs at one meeting a month with the learning teams to review a writing skill and brainstorm how that skill could be used within each content area. Time was set aside during faculty meetings for teams to take turns sharing their work and student results with the remainder of the faculty.

**4** A group of physics teachers from different high schools within one district met during a two-day content-based conference that they all attended. They decided to stay in contact with each other, and with the help of a district technology specialist, created a web-based learning community. Each week one member posed an instructional question based on the content addressed in the conference or presented a student learning activity that had been used in the classroom. Input from other members was posted on the site and at a designated time, they all met virtually to continue the conversation. They also decided to read articles on science instruction and used a discussion format called *Save the Last Word for Me* protocol to respond to what they had read. With the help of the district, they also asked a university physics professor to participate in a videoconference to answer some of their content and instructional questions. Each person recorded a segment of a lesson, uploading it to the group site, members of online group reviewed it, and provided feedback on the lesson. They had built a list of critical lesson components and used the list during feedback. They also used their individual lessons to do a self-assessment employing the same key indicators that the group identified during their meetings. They met again during the summer to celebrate their successes, identify their continuing needs, and plan for the following year.

**5** An elementary school found through an analysis of data that their students were not doing well with higher order thinking required in the state assessments. To improve student results, teachers decided they needed to learn more about the intellectual rigor and how to integrate high level thinking into their curriculum. They began by forming Book Study groups to read and discuss rigor and how it is built into lessons.

This study also involved looking at current questions, tasks, and assessments to identify the use of higher order questions. They also found that they needed to study scaffolding in order to prepare and support their students' critical thinking. The Book Study groups used a variety of protocols to help them think critically about what they were reading and learning. The next step was to create learning teams who identified the content area to focus on and to develop lesson plans that focused on integrating high-order thinking.

At a faculty meeting, the staff brainstormed and identified critical attributes of lessons required to stimulate higher order thinking. They reviewed their own lessons as a learning team according to the identified criteria. The school conducted a *Lesson Faire* to share their lessons across the grade levels.

Grade level teams developed common assessments appropriate for their grade level and held scoring conferences to assess student work. The assessment results were analyzed to determine areas where students were successful and areas that needed to be retaught in alternative ways. Additional lessons were developed after searching the Internet for exemplary lesson plans. Using their scoring guides, they assessed each lesson and made revisions appropriately. They formed mentoring partnerships between teachers who taught similar grade levels but supported higher-order thinking in different ways. These partnerships shared lesson plans, created common lesson plans together, conducted the lessons, and reviewed student work to determine next steps.