Planning Professional Learning—Part II

Course Syllabus

Course Introduction

This online course is based on the Backmapping Model, which describes diagnosing, planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating effective professional learning (Killion, 2013). Effective professional learning is not an event but a sequence of learning designs that builds knowledge, develops skills, inspires action, and stimulates the use of new, effective classroom practices. The most thorough description of effective professional learning is presented through seven standards developed by Learning Forward in cooperation with eighteen national organizations (Learning Forward, 2011).

This course, *Planning Professional Learning: Design,* focuses on the final three steps of the Backmapping Model. Building on the first four steps of the model, *Step 5* focuses on examining research about professional learning and critical content. *Step 6* develops multiple learning designs and plans for both formative and summative evaluation of professional learning. *Step 7* focuses on supporting implementation and conducting summative evaluation.

Participants will be able to learn more from this course if they have already completed the first four steps of the Backmapping Model:

- Analysis of a variety of student data
- Collection and analysis of educator, school, district, and community data
- Development of student learning goals written in a SMART goal format
- Development of educator professional learning goals written in a SMART goal format.

All seven steps of the model are interwoven and complementary. The steps need to be synchronized in order to build a coherent plan focused on enhancing teacher practice which in turn improves student learning. That relationship between educator learning and student learning is a core belief and an essential definition of effective professional learning. Effective professional learning is not a crazy quilt of random topics presented to faculty to build their knowledge. It is an organized set of learning activities that builds knowledge, develops skills, kindles motivation, and supports change in classroom practices. Our final evaluation of professional learning lies with whether those enhanced classroom practices have truly improved student learning.

This course is built on the assumption that a single learning design *cannot* meet the needs of all adult learners—if our final outcome is implementation. A sequence of learning designs is required that progresses through multiple levels of learning: beginning with awareness and knowledge of new practices through initial rehearsals and planning to finally supporting and sustaining implementation in the classroom. Supporting high quality implementation becomes an essential component of effective professional learning—rather than a vague hoped-for end that may or may not occur.

This course also includes skill practices. Supporting the planning steps are skills such as developing a Theory of Change or using a Program Review form to identify content and processes identified by research which might be a good match for local professional learning goals. Practice activities have been included because we believe that you are more likely to *use* these skills when you've practiced them beforehand. Our expectation is that the practice activities will deepen your understanding, ground your practice, and encourage you to take action.

Course Modules:

There are five modules in this online course:

Module One: Overview of the Backmapping Model

Module Two: Study Evidence and Research

Module Three: Plan and Design Professional Learning

Module Four: Plan Professional Learning Evaluation

Module Five: Implement, Monitor, and Sustain

The essential question this course will focus on throughout the modules is

Course Essential Question: *How do we increase the likelihood that professional learning will enhance teacher practices and result in improved student achievement?*

Course Outcomes:

Participants, who complete this course, will be able to

1. Clarify the purposes of the planning, sustaining, and evaluating phases of the Backmapping model.
2. Articulate how research and other evidence can improve planning of professional learning and avoid pitfalls and barriers.
3. Describe why professional learning is a process not an event.
4. Explain how formative evaluation about adult learning is used to improve the professional learning process.
5. Make the argument that systemic involvement supporting implementation increases the probability of increased student achievement.

Module One: Overview of the Backmapping Model

Essential Question: *How do we increase the likelihood that professional learning will be effectively planned, implemented, sustained, and evaluated?*

Module One Outcomes:

Learners, who complete this module, will be able to

1. Describe the purposes of the Backmapping Model
2. Clarify the purpose of the planning, implementation, sustaining, and evaluating phase (Step 5-7).
3. Articulate the components needed to change educator practice.

Topics

- Introduction to Course
  - Course Modules and Titles
  - Course Outcomes
- Beliefs and Assumptions—Video presentation, Pat Roy and Parker McMullen
- Module Outcomes and purpose
- Open Space Forum
- What is *learning design*?
- Educational Recipe—Ingredients
- Research on Implementation—Joyce and Showers
- Learning Design—Podcast: Dayna Richardson and Pat Roy
- Reflection #1
- Module Review
- Self-Assessment: Are you ready to complete Steps 5-7?
- Backmapping Model Overview—Video: Joellen Killion
- A Different Pathway—Narrated Power Point
- Design, Implement, Sustain, and Evaluate
- Module Review
- Reflection #2
- Module Assessment

Module 2: Study Research and Evidence

Essential Question: *What can be learned by examining research and evidence about professional learning that will improve planning and avoid pitfalls and barriers?*

Module 2 Outcomes:

Learners, who complete this module, will be able to

1. Articulate the design implications arising from professional learning research and evidence.
2. Analyze existing programs to determine the relevant components that correspond to their local professional development needs and outcomes.
3. Adapt the professional learning program review tool to be more relevant and pertinent to their professional development needs and outcomes.
4. Employ Tool 5.2 to identify learning designs which would be more appropriate to their local professional development needs and outcomes.

Topics

- Module Introduction: Consumer's Guide to professional learning design
- Professional Learning Research
- Joyce and Calhoun
- Open Space Forum—Summarize Research
- Explore Tool 5.1: Professional learning program review
- Open Space—What components have you added or modified?
- Explore Tool 5.2: Appropriateness of designs
- Module Review—summation, written
- Final Reflection
- Module 2 Assessment

Module 3: Designing Professional Learning

Essential Question: *Why is it important to consider the entire learning process (from awareness to implementation) rather than focusing on single learning events?*

Module 3 Outcomes:

Learners, who complete this module, will be able to

1. Explain the purpose and structure of a Theory of Change and Logic Model.
2. Discuss key concepts contained in the Learning Design standard.
3. Describe why multiple designs are essential to effective professional learning.
4. Analyze a professional learning design by identifying the presence or absence of essential components.

Topics

- Introduction—Video: Pat Roy and Parker McMullen
- Learning Design Standard
    - Video: Frederick Brown, Learning Forward Deputy Executive Director

- Activity: Contrasting professional learning designs
- Examining the *McClellan* example (pages 28-30)
- Reflection #1
- Intro: Logic Model
- Logic Model: Activity
- Analysis
- Open Space Forum
- Long View of Professional Learning Design: Multiple Designs
- Reflection #2
- Container Designs—Reading: Lesson Design
- Culminating Activity: Analysis of a Learning Design
- Open Space Forum—share analysis
- Module 3 Assessment

Module 4: Monitoring Implementation and Evaluation

Essential Question: *How can formative and summative evaluation findings help refine and improve professional learning design?*

Module 4 Outcomes:

Learners, who complete this module, will be able to

1. Describe why professional learning evaluation focuses on outcomes versus activities.
2. Explain the importance of an evaluation framework.
3. Diagram the linkage between SMART Goals, Theory of Change, Logic Model, and Evaluation Framework.

Topics

- Introduction
- Data Standard—Reading
- Video—Frederick *Brown*, Deputy Executive Director, Learning Forward
- Formative Evaluation or Progress Monitoring
- 30-60-90 example plus reading from Learning Design
- Key understandings
- Professional Learning Evaluation Planning
- Overview—Evaluation Framework, Tool 6.8
- Tool 6.6: Creating Evaluation Questions
- Clarify the Desired Change
- Reflection: Learn, relearn, or surprised you from this reading

- Learning Activity: Evaluation framework
- Module Review
- Final Reflection: Why is it important not to wait until the end of your program to do the evaluation?
- Module 4 Assessment

Module 5: Implement, Support, and Evaluate Professional Learning

Essential Question: *How does supporting implementation increase the probability of improving student achievement?*

Module 5 Outcomes:

Learners, who complete this module, will be able to

1. Explain why it is necessary to support and support and sustain implementation of new practices.
2. Provide a rationale for why clear, specific descriptions of new practices are essential for deep (high-fidelity) implementation.
3. Identify three observation tools and explain how they could support implementation.
4. Define various facets of support.

Topics

- Introduction—Essential Component: Implementation
- Reading: Implementation Standard
- Video—Implementation Standard, Stephanie Hirsh, Executive Director, Learning Forward
- Clarity of Practice—High quality performance looks like
- Learning activity—Innovation Configuration from Kentucky
- Open Space—What do you see as the benefit of an IC or other tools that define new practices?
- Sustain or Support Implementation
- Using Implementation Data to Refine P.L. Design
- Module Review
- Module 5 Assessment
- Course Review—Video

Course References

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