

TOOL 3.1

Designing a learning system

PURPOSE		
Help task force members make critical operational decisions related to designing a professional learning system.		
TIME		
3 hours		
MATERIALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the System Chart for each member • Extra paper • Pens and pencils 		
STEPS		TIME
1.	Distribute the chart to each member, and depending on the size of the group, have members answer questions individually or in table groups.	1 hour
2.	Discuss responses as a whole group and develop agreements.	2 hours

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd***System chart**

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Complete
1. Vision, mission, and beliefs for professional learning	Describes the vision, mission, and beliefs for effective professional learning and its relationship to educator effectiveness and student achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are our shared fundamental beliefs, assumptions, or principles about our professional learning system that will guide decisions we make? • What is the purpose or function of professional learning? • How do we describe our ideal professional learning—the kind of professional learning that deeply and intellectually stimulates and challenges educators to grow and learn so their students grow and learn? • How do we use our description to help all stakeholders know why it is so vital to student and educator success? 	
2. Definition of professional learning	Defines professional learning and positions it as a comprehensive system of improvement, occurring continuously, and engaging educators in collaborative learning primarily at their worksite with additional opportunities outside their worksite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is our definition of professional learning? • How do we use the definition to help others understand what professional learning is so they can advocate for it and hold themselves and others accountable for it? 	
3. Standards for Professional Learning	Delineates research-based standards for professional learning that are used to monitor and measure effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in the professional learning system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the research-based criteria that all professional learning must meet to ensure high-quality learning experiences for educators? • How do we assist those with responsibilities for effective professional learning to know about and act on these attributes? • How do we use the Standards to improve the quality of professional learning? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Complete
4. Purposes for professional learning	Specifies three distinct purposes for professional learning including individual growth and development, team and school improvement, and program implementation, all linked to increasing student achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we manage multiple purposes for professional learning to ensure that we can meet individual, team and school, and program or initiative goals? • What do we consider to be an appropriate balance among the three purposes? • How do we monitor professional learning to ensure that we are meeting purposes appropriately? 	
5. Governance for professional learning	Delineates lines of authority for professional learning and defines processes for decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who holds primary authority for professional learning? • How does authority for professional learning vary at the individual, team, school, district, and state level? • How do those responsible for professional learning actively engage learners so their needs, preferences, contexts, and goals are fully considered in all decisions related to professional learning? • What policies hold leaders accountable for meeting the professional learning needs of all members of the education workforce? • How are conflicts or disputes regarding professional learning addressed? How frequently are policies and governance agreements reviewed and revised? • What are the elements of the process for review and revision? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Complete
6. Roles and responsibilities for professional learning.	Delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and other contributors to effective professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who shares responsibility for professional learning? • How are those responsibilities monitored and supported? • How are the essential knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions to effectively carry out the responsibilities developed and supported? • How do the roles and responsibilities vary at the individual, team, school, school district, and state levels? • Who monitors and supports those with a role in professional learning? 	
7. Requirement for professional learning	Requirement for professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What professional learning are members of the education workforce required to complete, e.g. for various role- or job-specific responsibilities, career advancement, licensure, new initiative implementation, etc.? • How are decisions regarding requirements for professional learning made? • To what degree are educators responsible for the required professional learning engaged in decisions about required learning? 	
8. Alignment with other systems	Links professional learning with educator (both teacher and administrator) effectiveness or evaluation systems, major reform initiatives, and other learning-focused and operational systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does professional learning support other core systems within the agency or district, such as human capital, curriculum and instruction, assessment and data, licensing/certification, mentoring and induction, etc.? • How do other core systems support the professional learning system? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Complete
9. Data-informed professional learning	Uses student, educator, and system data to inform decisions about needs, content, designs, and effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data inform decisions about professional learning? • How well do data represent all educators, students, and systems accurately and fully? • How are data used in professional learning decisions? • To what degree are those responsible for professional learning engaging all stakeholders as appropriate in using data to make individual, team, school, district, and state decisions related to professional learning? 	
10. Leadership for professional learning	Requires leaders and facilitators of professional learning to be well-prepared for their leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do teacher leaders and administrators understand their roles and responsibilities related to professional learning? • What professional learning is provided to prepare and support them in carrying out their responsibilities? • To what degree are leaders held accountable for effective, efficient, and equitable professional learning for all educators? 	
11. Plans for professional learning	Requires individual, team, school, district, and state professional learning plans that align with individual, team, school, system, and state improvement goals, components of the plans, and process for developing and approving plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has responsibility for developing and implementing plans for individual, team, school, district, and state professional learning? • What are the essential requirements for professional learning plans? • Who reviews and monitors professional learning plans and their implementation? • How often are professional learning plans developed and reviewed? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Complete
12. Licensure/ certification	Specifies the role of professional learning for initial, additional, and advanced licenses or certificates that prepare educators for their new roles and develops the disposition of continuous learning and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role does professional learning play in licensure and relicensure? • What parameters or expectations are there for professional learning required for relicensure? • How does professional learning for relicensure advance the high-priority goals or initiatives of the state or district? 	
13. Dedicated time for professional learning	Allocates time for professional learning within the workday several times per week and sets aside additional days, approximately 10, per school year, for learning associated with school, system, and state improvement goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much time is available for professional learning within the regular workday and year? • How is the available time used to advance the high-priority goals or initiatives of the state or district? • Who has authority and responsibility for determining how the available time is used? • To what degree are educators who are implementing professional learning engaged in decisions related to the amount and use of time? • To what degree is the available time commensurate with the expectations for professional growth and student learning? • What accountability requirements exist for monitoring the effective use of time for professional learning? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Completed
14. Dedicated funding for professional learning	Requires set aside and/ or adequate funding to ensure application of learning to achieve full implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much funding is available for professional learning? • How is the available funding used to advance the high-priority goals or initiatives of the state or district? • Who has authority and responsibility for determining how funding is used? • To what degree are educators who are implementing professional learning engaged in decisions related to the amount and use of funding? • To what degree is the available funding commensurate with the expectations for professional growth and student learning? • What accountability requirements exist for monitoring the effective use of funding for professional learning? 	
15. Other resources	Requires other resources such as staff, technology, and materials to increase access to, efficiency of, and effectiveness of professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other resources support professional learning, e.g., personnel, technology, materials, space, etc.? • Who determines what resources are available and how these resources are used? • What accountability requirements exist for monitoring the effective use of other resources for professional learning? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Completed
16. Flexible designs	Supports flexible designs for professional learning to differentiate learning for experience, background, learning preference, and other factors that influence learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are learning designs for professional learning determined? • Who is involved in decisions related to learning designs? • How well do learning designs align with the intended outcomes and match the expected change in practices? • How thoroughly are factors that influence learning (such as individual learner needs; learning preferences; background; previous experience and knowledge; time for learning; outcomes; etc.) considered in making decisions about learning designs? • To what degree do learning designs employ technology to advance and support individual, team, schoolwide, districtwide, and statewide learning? • How well do learning designs use technology to increase personalization of, access to, effectiveness of, and efficiency of professional learning? 	
17. Job-embedded collaboration	Promotes job-embedded collaboration among peers within professional learning and during application and refinement of practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what degree does professional learning engage peers in collaborative learning as a routine part of their work responsibilities? • How are collaborative learning teams supported in their efforts to strengthen educator performance and student learning? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Completed
18. Mentoring and induction	Provides multiyear mentoring with induction to support novice educators, those assuming new positions, or those with new certifications or licenses transition to their new work responsibilities, receive personalized support for success and acculturation. Solidifies the disposition of continuous improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is professional learning embedded into the comprehensive induction system? • How do mentors leverage their support of educators as a form of personalized professional learning for themselves and those whom they support? • What requirements or expectations are in place for mentors and novice educators to engage in professional learning? • How are dispositions about continuous improvement and professional responsibility cultivated through induction and mentoring? • To what degree are induction and mentoring requirements aligned with high-priority goals and initiatives within the district or state? 	
19. Incentives and recognition for professional learning	Uses application and impact of professional learning as criteria for incentives or recognition for professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What value is placed on improving professional practice? How is that value conveyed to educators? • What incentives exist for professional learning? • To what degree are changes in educator practice and increased student success used as criteria for recognition or incentive for professional learning? 	
20. Evaluation of professional learning	Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for accountability and improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for routine formative assessment and summative evaluation of professional learning? • What are the requirements for the evaluation of professional learning? • What measures are used to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of professional learning? • How are evaluation findings used to improve professional learning? • How often is professional learning evaluated? • How and to whom are evaluation results reported? 	

TOOL 3.1 *cont'd*

Component	Explanation	Essential questions	Completed
20. Evaluation of professional learning	Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for accountability and improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for routine formative assessment and summative evaluation of professional learning? • What are the requirements for the evaluation of professional learning? • What measures are used to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of professional learning? • How are evaluation findings used to improve professional learning? • How often is professional learning evaluated? • How and to whom are evaluation results reported? 	
21. Third-party providers	Establishes criteria for engaging third-party partners in the professional learning system to maintain effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and alignment with specified outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is considered a third-party provider? • To what degree are third-party providers responsible for adhering to the same regulations, responsibilities, or expectations that districts are required to meet? • What rules, responsibilities, expectations, or restrictions govern third-party providers? • How are third-party providers regulated, coordinated, and evaluated? • What are the responsibilities of education agencies that contract with third-party providers? 	
22. Learning management system	Uses a technology solution that links with educator and student databases to manage and increase access to professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What software system manages and increases access to professional learning for educators? • To what degree does the system facilitate registration and recordkeeping, manage documents or artifacts, provide access to a wide variety of learning opportunities, allow access to necessary data, and support ongoing monitoring, assessments and evaluation of professional learning? • To what degree does the system interact with educator and student data systems? 	

Source: Killion, J. (2013). *Professional learning policy review: A workbook for states and districts*, pp. 45–48. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.