

# PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE: IDEAS FOR WAYS DISTRICT LEADERS CAN TAKE ACTION

The [Principles for High-Quality, Standards-Aligned Professional Learning](#) are an evidence-based articulation of what attributes need to be present in effective professional learning.

**Principle 1:** Professional learning must be content-focused. Professional learning builds teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge necessary to teach the concepts of their discipline.

**Principle 2:** Professional learning must be teacher- and student-centered. Professional learning promotes collective responsibility for students' learning and cultivates a dynamic culture for adult learning.

**Principle 3:** Professional learning must be instructionally relevant and actionable. Professional learning is anchored in the instructional priorities of teachers' daily work and is sustained in a coherent system of collaborative planning, classroom practice, observation, feedback, and continuous cycles of inquiry grounded in evidence of student learning.

There are many short-term and long-term actions that district leaders can take. The following is a list of sample ideas, developed in collaboration with practitioners, that could begin to make these needed changes a reality. One of these actions alone will not lead to professional learning that fulfills the entirety of the Principles; however, the ideas below, and ideas of your own, can be a good place to start.

## Content-Focused

- Purchase high-quality mathematics and ELA/literacy instructional materials so that daily lessons are aligned to the instructional vision and academic priorities. Consult [edreports.org](https://edreports.org) for information about instructional materials alignment, or use a high-quality materials evaluation tool such as the [Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool](#).
- Ensure that purchasing materials includes content-focused professional learning to support skillful implementation. Consult the [Curriculum Support Guide](#) for support in developing a coherent plan for materials implementation.

## Teacher- and Student-Centered

- Build capacity across roles in your district by creating a series of virtual professional learning experiences to develop foundational, equitable instructional practices in mathematics and ELA/literacy. Consult these [professional development resources](#) for ideas to get started.
- Celebrate and incentivize a culture where educators feel safe taking risks and learning from mistakes by creating structures for observation and feedback that are not part of a formal evaluation system.
- Learn more about the needs of teachers and students by regularly conducting surveys and empathy interviews to inform decisions about teaching and learning.

## Instructionally Relevant and Actionable

- Regularly visit schools in your district during their professional learning time to observe the model of professional learning. Collect and analyze evidence of teacher and student learning to support schools in focusing professional learning on equitable mathematics and literacy instruction that leads to improved student learning.
- Develop and enact strong processes for vetting the professional learning content, including content from external providers, that is put in front of teachers to ensure it connects to the instructional vision and academic priorities of the school and/or district.
- Share the [Principles for High-Quality, Standards-Aligned Professional Learning](#) on the district website to communicate the district's priorities for professional learning.
- Coordinate the efforts of departments that oversee curriculum and instruction, professional learning, and equity to drive coherent learning for teachers and students.