

# PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE: IDEAS FOR WAYS STATE 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 state 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

- Ensure all mathematics and ELA/literacy instructional materials on the state purchasing list are high quality and aligned to college- and career-ready standards. Incentivize districts to purchase aligned materials. Consult [edreports.org](http://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 state purchasing lists include guidance for content-focused professional learning in supporting skillful implementation of high-quality instructional materials. Consult the [Curriculum Support Guide](#) for support in developing a coherent plan for materials implementation.
- Refocus teacher certification policies to encourage discipline-specific content knowledge and strategies for equitable instruction.

## Teacher- and Student-Centered

- Include teacher and parent/guardian surveys to gauge the degree to which professional learning prepares teachers to design and deliver equitable mathematics and literacy instruction to students. Share results with district leaders along with possible action items.
- Gather data about local education agency policies and practices for remediation and tracking across content areas (for example, math courses and pathways to algebra).
- Spotlight best practice across the state so districts can learn from one another and share innovative and equitable instructional practices and policies.

## Instructionally Relevant and Actionable

- Share models for how districts structure professional learning to enable continuous cycles of learning throughout the year focused on shared content learning, equitable instructional practice, and implications for student learning.
- Read and share this [commentary](#) from Joanne Weiss. Follow recommendations for how states can promote improved literacy instruction.

