

PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE: IDEAS FOR WAYS SCHOOL 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 school 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 that the professional learning that occurs in your building is grounded in an instructional vision and that academic priorities are clear and anchored in college- and career-ready standards, research, and equitable instruction. If they aren't, revise!
- Consider the [Instructional Practice Guide](#) as one way to articulate an instructional vision in mathematics and literacy.
- Support the implementation of high-quality mathematics and ELA/literacy instructional materials for all students so that daily lessons are aligned to a research-based academic vision. Remove resources that are not high quality and do not support the vision. Consult [edreports.org](#) for information about instructional materials alignment, or use a high-quality materials evaluation tool such as the [Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool](#).

Teacher- and Student-Centered

- Set the expectation that all adults in the school building will hold positive views of students' capabilities. Model this expectation through your words and actions and hold others accountable for their words and actions.
- Gather teacher input (for example, focus groups, surveys, observations), student work, and data from high-quality, standards-aligned sources (both real-time and periodic) to inform the priorities for literacy and mathematics professional learning.
- Access resources and training to address diversity and equity inclusion in your schools.

Instructionally Relevant and Actionable

- Reorganize collaborative planning time in your school to be in grade-level, subject-specific teams. Provide abundant opportunities for collaborative planning time in these teams.
- Support models of action research in professional learning communities in which teachers identify a content-focused challenge and investigate, apply, and monitor solutions to address the challenge.
- Complete a review of all initiatives in your school building that require teacher action, training, buy-in, and support. Map out how those initiatives relate to one another and to the instructional vision and academic priorities. Eliminate initiatives that do not relate and/or do not align to the instructional vision and academic priorities.

