

Facilitator Guide

for

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems





Learning Forward
504 S. Locust St.
Oxford, OH 45056

800-727-7288
Fax: 513-523-0638

Email: office@learningforward.org
www.learningforward.org

Citation of report: Jensen, B., Sonnemann, J., Roberts-Hull, K. & Hunte, A. (2016). *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy.

Citation of facilitator guide: Killion, J. (2016). *Facilitator guide for Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

Author: Joellen Killion
Editor: Joyce Pollard
Designer: Jane Thurmond
Photo credits: Thinkstock

©Learning Forward, 2016. All rights reserved.

These materials are copyrighted. Those who download this guide may make up to 30 copies if it is to be used for instructional or advocacy purposes and as long as this work and the publishers are properly cited. Requests for permission to reprint or copy portions of this work for other purposes must be submitted to Christy Colclasure by fax (513-523-0638) or email (christy.colclasure@learningforward.org). View the complete permissions policy at www.learningforward.org/publications/permissions-policy.

Produced with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Learn more at www.learningforward.org

Contents

Introduction	5
Tools Overview	7
Section 1: All Stakeholders	10
Tool 1.1: A quick review.....	11
Tool 1.2: A short course on the report.....	14
Tool 1.2.1: Completing a short course on the report.....	16
Tool 1.3: Deep dive.....	17
Tool 1.3.1: Deep dive preparation.....	19
Tool 1.3.2: Deep dive jigsaw directions.....	20
Tool 1.3.3: Deep dive summary sheet.....	21
Tool 1.4: Current professional learning practices.....	23
Tool 1.4.1: Viewpoint: Investing in professional learning.....	24
Section 2: Teachers and Teacher Leaders	25
Tool 2.1: Improvement cycle windowpane.....	26
Tool 2.1.1: Creating an improvement cycle windowpane.....	28
Tool 2.2: Lesson observations.....	30
Tool 2.2.1: Preparing for planning meeting for lesson observations.....	32
Tool 2.2.2: Lesson observation guide development.....	33
Tool 2.2.3: Paired lesson observation debrief.....	34
Tool 2.2.4: Large-group lesson observation debrief.....	35
Tool 2.3: Professional learning leaders.....	36
Tool 2.3.1: Professional learning leader role assessment.....	38
Tool 2.4: Improvement cycle in learning communities.....	40
Tool 2.4.1: Improvement cycle applications in learning communities.....	41
Tool 2.4.2: Our current learning community practices.....	43
Section 3: Principals	44
Tool 3.1: Principal’s Role in effective professional learning.....	45
Tool 3.1.1: Aligning principal priorities with professional learning goals.....	46
Tool 3.1.2: Principal time log reflection.....	48
Tool 3.2: Improvement cycle and school improvement.....	50
Tool 3.2.1: Current status of improvement cycle.....	51
Tool 3.2.2: Plan of action.....	52
Tool 3.3: School-based professional learning programs.....	54
Tool 3.3.1: Descriptions of professional learning programs.....	56
Tool 3.3.2: School-based professional learning programs.....	58
Tool 3.3.3: Analysis of professional learning programs.....	59
Tool 3.3.4: Improvement planning.....	60
Tool 3.4: Assessing the effects of professional learning.....	62
Tool 3.4.1: Simple logic model for evaluating the effects of professional learning.....	65
Tool 3.4.2: Logic model template for planning to evaluate professional learning.....	66

Section 4: School System Leaders	67
Tool 4.1: Evaluation and accountability levers for professional learning	68
Tool 4.2: Current professional learning policy identification	71
Tool 4.2.1: Current professional learning policies	72
Tool 4.3: Professional learning policy assessment	76
Tool 4.3.1: Policy effectiveness assessment rubric	77
Tool 4.3.2: Policy effectiveness assessment recording sheet	79
Tool 4.3.3: Planning policy revisions.....	82
Tool 4.4: Professional learning policy analysis using Standards for Professional Learning	83
Tool 4.4.1: Current professional learning policy assessment	84
Section 5: State and Provincial Education Leaders	88
Tool 5.1: Role of state and provincial education leaders in professional learning.....	89
Tool 5.1.1: Responsibilities for professional learning	92
Tool 5.2: Improvement cycle in state or provincial education agencies	94
Tool 5.2.1: Improvement framework in state or provincial education agencies	95
Tool 5.3: Professional learning programs in high-performing school systems.....	97
Tool 5.3.1: Professional learning programs in high-performing systems.....	98
Tool 5.3.2: Team preparation guide for reporting on professional learning programs.....	99
Tool 5.4: Professional learning within the education agency	100
Tool 5.4.1: Identifying types of professional learning within the education agency.....	101
Tool 5.4.2: Recommendations for professional learning within the education agency	102
Tool 5.4.3: Summarized list of professional learning priorities	103

Introduction

Facilitator Guide for Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems

complements [Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems](#), the report of a cross-case analysis that was commissioned by the Center on International Education Benchmarking of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) to examine teacher professional learning practices across four high-performing school systems, Singapore, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and British Columbia. This Facilitator Guide suggests ways for unpacking and applying findings from the multinational report to assist education leaders, policymakers, and decision makers in improving the quality of professional learning in schools. The guide specifically offers resources for decision makers at the state and provincial, school system, and school levels.

In *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*, researchers identify, across the four systems, common components of professional learning that are associated with high levels of performance for teachers and students. The research study dives deeply into understanding how schools have entwined professional learning into the routine daily work of teachers as a collaborative process that strengthens instruction and student success. It provides specific examples from the four school systems that demonstrate how the common practices are applied contextually in different ways.

Those specific practices include (a) implementing an improvement cycle to create a culture of continuous professional learning, (b) developing leaders of professional learning, (c) leveraging evaluation and accountability, and (d) creating time for professional learning. The study examines the implementation of professional learning within learning communities and mentoring/beginning teacher initiatives as well as the role of external expertise.

Because the quality of professional learning is the responsibility of all educators, the Facilitator Guide is divided into the following sections:

Section 1: All Stakeholders

This section includes tools that are applicable to any stakeholder group. They focus on general understanding of the report's findings and how the findings relate to current professional practice.

Section 2: Teachers and Teacher Leaders

This section includes tools for teachers working in collaborative teams and teacher leaders who facilitate teams or coach peers to understand the study's findings and their implications for their engagement in professional learning.

Section 3: Principals

This section guides principals in gaining a deeper understanding of their role in professional learning and offers tools to help them critically examine their responsibility for, and the quality and effectiveness of, professional learning within their school.

Section 4: School System Leaders

This section offers tools for those who are responsible for managing, leading, and facilitating professional learning within a school system. They might include superintendents, directors, or other leaders who are local, state/provincial, or federal program managers, curriculum coordinators, professional learning directors, or human capital managers.

Section 5: State and Provincial Education Leaders

This section provides tools for those who work in state or provincial education agencies to establish professional learning policy and to monitor, implement, evaluate, and oversee professional learning in school systems.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation supported the development and dissemination of *Facilitator Guide for Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. Learning Forward is grateful for the guidance provided by Ben Jensen, executive director of Learning First and senior author of the research report.

Tool Overview

Each section of the Facilitator Guide includes tools designed to engage educators in understanding the study, examining their current practice in light of its findings, and discovering ways to use the findings and resources to redesign their current professional learning so it aligns more closely with practices in high-performing school systems. Each tool has guidelines for its use. Facilitators may want to adapt tools or directions for use in a specific situation. Tools are designated with numbers that denote the section of which they are part and the sequence in which they appear in the Facilitator Guide (e.g. Tool 2.1). Some tools have accompanying resources for participants who will be engaged in a task. These resources are noted with an additional designation so they can be aligned with the appropriate facilitator tools (e.g. Tool 2.1.1).

Tool	Tool Title	Description	Page
Section 1: All Stakeholders			
1.1	A quick review	Use this tool to summarize the complete report, <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> .	11
1.2	A short course on the report	Use this tool to study the Executive Summary as a stand-alone text for reading and discussion. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 1.2.1: <i>Completing a short course on the report</i>	14
1.3	Deep dive	Use this tool to engage participants in a jigsaw process to understand and apply key findings of the report. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 1.3.1: <i>Deep dive preparation</i> Tool 1.3.2: <i>Deep dive jigsaw directions</i> Tool 1.3.3: <i>Deep dive summary sheet</i>	17
1.4	Current professional learning practices	Use this tool to analyze current professional learning practices in relation to those cited in the study. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 1.4.1: <i>Viewpoint: Investing in professional learning</i>	23

Tool	Tool Title	Description	Page
Section 1: Teachers and Teacher Leaders			
2.1	Improvement cycle windowpane	Use this tool to learn more about how the improvement cycle supports professional learning. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 2.1.1: <i>Creating an improvement cycle windowpane</i>	26
2.2	Lesson observations	Use this tool to prepare and support teachers and teacher leaders in conducting lesson observations for the purpose of professional learning. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 2.2.1: <i>Preparing for planning meeting for lesson observations</i> Tool 2.2.2: <i>Lesson observation guide development</i> Tool 2.2.3: <i>Paired lesson observation debrief</i> Tool 2.2.4: <i>Large-group lesson observation debrief</i>	30
2.3	Professional learning leaders	Use this tool to examine and apply key findings related to the role of professional learning leaders within high-performing systems. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 2.3.1: <i>Professional learning leader role assessment</i>	36
2.4	Improvement cycle in learning communities	Use this tool to follow the improvement cycle as a guide for team collaborative learning. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 2.4.1: <i>Improvement cycle applications in learning communities</i> Tool 2.4.2: <i>Our current learning community practices</i>	40
Section 3: Principals			
3.1	Principal's role in effective professional learning	Use this tool to examine principal time and how to shift it to increase a focus on professional learning. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 3.1.1: <i>Aligning principal priorities with professional learning goals</i> Tool 3.1.2: <i>Principal time log reflection</i>	45
3.2	Improvement cycle and school improvement	Use this tool to facilitate discussion about how the improvement cycle may be implemented within a school's routine improvement practices. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 3.2.1: <i>Current status of improvement cycle</i> Tool 3.2.2: <i>Plan of action</i>	50
3.3	School-based professional learning programs	Use this tool, first, to analyze principals' professional learning practices. Next, use it to plan to more effective practice based on those described in the study. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 3.3.1: <i>Descriptions of professional learning programs</i> Tool 3.3.2: <i>School-based professional learning programs</i> Tool 3.3.3: <i>Analysis of professional learning programs</i> Tool 3.3.4: <i>Improvement planning</i>	54
3.4	Assessing the effects of professional learning	Use this tool to plan an assessment of the effects of professional learning on teachers' practice and student learning. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 3.4.1: <i>Simple logic model for evaluating the effects of professional learning</i> Tool 3.4.2: <i>Logic model template for planning to evaluate professional learning</i>	62

Tool	Tool Title	Description	Page
Section 4: School System Leaders			
4.1	Evaluation and accountability levers for professional learning	Use this tool to assess the system's accountability levers.	68
4.2	Current professional learning policy identification	Use this tool to identify school system policies related to professional learning and specify the expected results of the policies. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 4.2.1: <i>Current professional learning policies</i>	71
4.3	Professional learning policy assessment	Use this tool to assess the effectiveness of each policy using a policy assessment rubric. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 4.3.1: <i>Policy effectiveness assessment rubric</i> Tool 4.3.2: <i>Policy effectiveness assessment recording sheet</i> Tool 4.3.3: <i>Planning policy revisions</i>	76
4.4	Professional learning policy analysis using Standards for Professional Learning	Use this tool as a framework for examining whether current policies address essential research-based attributes of effective professional learning. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 4.4.1: <i>Current professional learning policy assessment</i>	83
Section 5: State and Provincial Education Leaders			
5.1	Role of state and provincial education leaders in professional learning	Use this tool to unpack the role of education agency staff in professional learning. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 5.1.1: <i>Responsibilities for professional learning</i>	89
5.2	Improvement cycle in state or provincial education agencies	Use this tool to examine how agency leaders apply the improvement cycle in their work and how they might strengthen the effects of their efforts. It contains the following participant tool: Tool 5.2.1: <i>Improvement framework in state or provincial education agencies</i>	94
5.3	Professional learning programs in high-performing school systems	Use this tool to examine how agency leaders leverage each of the programs to support effective professional learning, teacher practice, and student learning and how they might strengthen that application. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 5.3.1: <i>Professional learning programs in high-performing systems</i> Tool 5.3.2: <i>Team preparation guide for reporting on professional learning programs</i>	97
5.4	Professional learning within the education agency	Use this tool to explore how the state or provincial agency applies professional learning as a lever for leadership development, agency improvement, career advancement, and performance measurement. It contains the following participant tools: Tool 5.4.1: <i>Identifying types of professional learning within the education agency</i> Tool 5.4.2: <i>Recommendations for professional learning within the education agency</i> Tool 5.4.3: <i>Summarized list of professional learning priorities</i>	100

All Stakeholders



Improving the effectiveness of school systems, the quality of teaching, and the achievement of students depends on the quality of professional learning. *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* offers findings about professional learning practices within four high-performing school systems. Members of all stakeholder groups may use the tools within this section to facilitate deep understanding of the findings, to infer how the findings relate to their current practices in professional learning, and to identify levers for potential change within their current professional learning systems. The tools can stand alone so facilitators may use each individually; however, they may find greater power in using several tools together to move beyond simply knowing about the study to planning how to improve professional learning.

Tool 1.1 (page 1 of 3)

Facilitator

A quick review

Knowing how to position professional learning to increase school effectiveness requires an understanding of what high-quality professional learning is. For busy educators who want to be abreast of current research related to professional learning, yet who have limited time to read complete research reports, this tool provides the essentials.

Purpose	To provide a quick review of the core findings from <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> .
Materials needed	Blog #1: Lessons from Abroad on Professional Learning (and on pp. 12–13 in this document)
Best uses	In leadership team meetings, with team facilitators, or with policymakers.
Time	20 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Send a [link to the blog](#) to all members of the team and invite them to read the blog for a discussion at the next meeting. The blog also appears on pages 12–13 of this document.

At the meeting: Use a short text-response protocol to initiate discussion about the study.

Step 1	Divide members into groups of about five.	
Step 2	Ask participants in each small group to find a sentence in the blog that resonates with them and to be ready to explain their reason(s) for selecting it.	2 minutes
Step 3	Ask each person to share the sentence and his or her reasons for selecting it.	5 minutes
Step 4	Give other members of the small group an opportunity to comment on the selection and rationale.	5 minutes
Step 5	Ask each member in the small group to craft a question about some aspect of the study he or she wants to explore further. Invite members to share their questions in their small groups.	2 minutes
Step 6	Ask each group to select one sentence and one question to share with the larger group.	1 minute
Step 7	Share the sentences and questions.	5 minutes

Tool 1.1 (page 2 of 3)

Learning First Report: Blog #1 Lessons From Abroad on Professional Learning

What's the biggest change we can make to improve student learning?

A [new study](#) provides useful insights to illustrate specific practices that answer this question. The study — by [Learning First](#), in cooperation with the [Center on International Education Benchmarking](#) and funded by the [National Center on Education and the Economy](#) with support from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) — provides evidence that continuous professional learning deeply embedded into the framework of schools is fundamental to student success.

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems examines teacher professional learning practices and identifies common patterns across four high-performing school systems: Singapore, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and British Columbia. Each of these systems implemented major education reforms that raised student success — and each embedded concomitant professional learning into the routine daily work of teachers.

Here's how they did it.

Improvement cycle

High-performing systems ground professional learning within an improvement cycle that ties professional learning to student learning. The three-step cycle guides continuous, school-based, and collaborative professional learning as a routine practice within the daily work life of teachers.

The three-step improvement process begins with teachers collaboratively analyzing students' learning needs to determine what students need to learn next in their journey toward achieving success. With student learning needs identified, teachers examine their pedagogical practices; acquire or develop new practices; or refine, expand, or extend their existing practice to achieve student learning goals.

In the last step of the improvement cycle, after applying their new learning within their classrooms, observing each other's classrooms, and giving and receiving feedback, teachers evaluate the impact of their professional learning on student learning and use that assessment to adjust subsequent instruction.

The improvement cycle creates a culture of continuous professional learning that recognizes teacher expertise and promotes ongoing school-based research about how to improve student learning.

It emphasizes that school improvement is a process of professional learning. Successful professional learning requires time within the workday for teacher learning, distinct leadership roles within and across schools, and new approaches to accountability and evaluation for performance.

Web of support

High-performing school systems surround schools with a multilayered web of support for effective professional learning. They develop and position professional learning leaders to lead improvement within the schools. These leaders include teachers who provide content and pedagogical expertise within schools to extend professional learning.

Professional learning leaders, most often teachers with advanced expertise and prepared for leadership responsibilities, provide coaching, mentoring, feedback, and team- and classroom-based support for effective professional learning. School administrators, teacher leaders, and teachers are held accountable for the quality of the improvement practices. Supervisory and evaluation procedures place substantive emphasis on educators' role and engagement in professional learning.

Tool 1.1 (page 3 of 3)

At the system level, a team of technical assistance providers supports teachers, teacher leaders, and school administrators in leading and facilitating effective professional learning. School systems deploy professional learning, content, and pedagogy experts who develop the capacity of teacher leaders and school administrators to fulfill their responsibilities related to professional learning. School systems access external expertise to extend school- and system-based professional learning and strive to monitor the quality of external support.

High-performing systems, despite their geographical and cultural differences, use common programs for professional learning, including learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives, and outside courses and workshops provided by external experts. While varied within each system, the programs have commonalities that link them.

The importance of policy and conditions

The improvement cycle, professional learning leadership, and common programs are insufficient alone to increase the effectiveness of professional learning. For the professional learning to work, high-performing school systems implemented policies that place evaluation of and accountability for professional learning as a centerpiece in teacher, principal, and school performance management systems.

Professional learning sits at the center of school improvement efforts. High-performing systems allocate resources such as time and systemic structures alongside leadership and programs to provide the conditions for successful professional learning. School and system efforts build necessary infrastructure for effective professional learning to be routine.

Applying the lessons

Can these lessons inform professional learning in the U.S.? In short: Yes.

There are challenges to address, yet many schools and systems have successfully found work-arounds. One challenge is the time available for professional learning within teachers' workday. Another is the current accountability and evaluation policies that focus on criteria other than effective professional learning.

In the U.S., policies place accountability for individual teacher performance on personnel evaluation systems rather than on school and system leaders for the implementation of effective professional learning as occurs in the high-performing school systems studied. And, given the timing, the study provides useful insights both federal and state education agencies can use to establish new guidelines for professional learning for implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

This report offers not only lessons from high-performing school systems but also accompanying online tools and artifacts gathered during the research. These [resources](#) will be useful to system and school leaders in adjusting their current professional learning practices to increase its impact on teacher practice and student learning.

The *Facilitator Guide for Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*, developed by Learning Forward, enhances study of the research report. It guides a range of stakeholders such as teachers, teacher leaders, principals, system leaders, and policymakers in initiating improvements in their professional learning practices.

As Learning Forward has long advocated, the success of any education reform depends on effective professional learning. Let's use these new lessons to advance results for all of the learners in our school systems and schools.

Tool 1.2 (page 1 of 2)

Facilitator

A short course on the report

Many educators find it challenging to set aside time for deep study of current research or other forms of professional reading. To increase the likelihood that they will become familiar with the results of this study, a short course uses the Executive Summary as a stand-alone text for reading and discussion.

Purpose	To understand the context and major findings of the study.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary in <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> (pp. 3–8) Tool 1.2.1: <i>Completing a short course on the report</i>
Best uses	In small group settings or in larger groups that can be subdivided into groups of five to six.
Time	45–60 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Send each participant to a link to the full report with the Executive Summary along with Tool 1.2.1 and include the following directions:

Please read the Executive Summary on pages 3–8 of the study before our meeting and code the text with the following codes as you read it. Be prepared to engage in a discussion about the findings of the study and their implications for professional learning within your school, school system, agency, or organization.

- S** = **Surprise:** I didn't expect this.
- C** = **Confirmation:** This aligns with our current practice.
- ?** = **Question:** Something I wonder about.
- M** = **More:** Something I want to know more about.
- A** = **Action:** Something I intend to act on immediately.

Tool 1.2 (page 2 of 2)

At the meeting: Invite or assign people to form groups of about five or six.

Step 1	Review the directions below for their discussion and answer any questions. Emphasize that each group will be expected to report out on its discussion.	5 minutes
Step 2	Assign the roles of facilitator, timekeeper, summarizer, and reporter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator ensures the group stays focused and encourages all participants to contribute. Timekeeper reminds the group about how much time remains and helps them move through the discussion. Summarizer shares highlights from the discussion with the group. Groups decide which highlights their reporter will share with the larger group. Reporter shares selected highlights from the group's discussion with the larger group. 	1 minute
Step 3	Discuss the five coded areas in small groups. When participants contribute, they share the specific text reference and the reason for the code. Each participant is expected to contribute to at least three of the five areas. Timetable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surprises (5 minutes) Confirmations (5 minutes) Questions (5 minutes) More (5 minutes) Actions (5 minutes) Review (summarize and select highlights) (5 minutes) Report (share with large group) (5 minutes) 	35–45 minutes (Adjust as needed for the available time.)
Step 4	Reconvene the smaller groups into a larger group and invite reporters to share. If the group is extremely large, several clusters of small groups might come together to share across groups.	15 minutes
Step 5	Ask each participant to turn to a partner and complete the statement below: This study clarifies my understanding of _____, and as a result I intend to _____.	

Tool 1.2.1

Participant

Completing a short course on the report

Please read the Executive Summary on pages 3–8 of *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*.

Before the meeting: Read and code the text with the following codes. Be prepared to engage in a discussion about the findings of the study and their implications for professional learning within your school, school system, agency, or organization.

- S** = **Surprise:** I didn't expect this.
- C** = **Confirmation:** This aligns with our current practice.
- ?** = **Question:** Something I wonder about.
- M** = **More:** Something I want to know more about.
- A** = **Action:** Something I intend to act on immediately.

Be ready to share your codes and the reasons you marked them in a small group of colleagues.

Reflection

After the discussion with your colleagues, please complete the following sentence to share with a partner:

The study clarifies my understanding of _____ ,
and as a result I intend to _____ .

Tool 1.3 (page 1 of 2)

Facilitator

Deep dive

This tool might be used after an introductory discussion using Tool 1.2: *A short course on the report*. It builds on participants' overall understanding of the findings of the research study. It engages participants, in a jigsaw process, first, to deepen their understanding of the key findings and, then, to identify possible considerations for their own school, school system, state or province, or agency.

Purpose	To dive into the specific examples within the study and to generate possible actions that participants may consider implementing within their own school, school system, state or province, or agency.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> • Tools 1.3.1: <i>Deep dive preparation</i> • Tools 1.3.2: <i>Deep dive jigsaw directions</i> • Tools 1.3.3: <i>Deep dive summary sheet</i>
Best uses	In leadership teams whose members have responsibility for the quality of professional learning.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 minutes (with preparation outside of the meeting). • 120 minutes (without preparation outside the meeting). • Sections of this process may be divided into two parts done at separate times.

Directions

Before the meeting: Send each participant the link to the full study and appendices to review in preparation for the deep dive into the report and Tool 1.3.1 that explains their preparation task.

Ask members to identify, after reviewing the report, the section they want to focus more deeply on in conversation with their colleagues. One way to divide the sections among the participants in advance is to ask people to indicate their preference on a shared document such as a Google form so that the groups are nearly even. Another way to handle this is to allow participants to select whichever section they want and adjust at the meeting. Yet another is to go with participants' preferences and allow some sections to be over-represented.

Plan in advance how summary sheets can be collected and shared so that all members have access to everyone's notes. Creating shared documents is one way to do this.

Tool 1.3 (page 2 of 2)

At the meeting: Welcome participants.

Step 1	Review directions for the jigsaw (see Tool 1.3.2) and answer questions that arise.	5 minutes
Step 2	Group members into teams by their area of deeper study. Smaller groups are better than larger groups for this portion, preferably 3–4 members. This may mean that there are multiple groups discussing the same section. Smaller groups are better for the deep dive to allow for more fluid conversation.	2 minutes
Step 3	Discuss each section and complete a summary sheet (see Tool 1.3.3) in preparation for sharing with others.	30 minutes
Step 4	Create small groups of seven members, each who read a different section.	2 minutes
Step 5	Invite each member of the new teams to share the summary sheet about his or her section.	30 minutes
Step 6	Bring the large group back together for summary comments.	2 minutes
Step 7	Invite participants to share their perspectives on the study using the sentence stem below as a starter. If the group is over 20, participants can cluster in small groups to share. Consider how to share members' individual comments by creating a Padlet page, a shared document, a hashtag, or some other means to share. This study is significant for me because ...	10 minutes

Tool 1.3.1

Participant

Deep dive preparation

At our next meeting, we will engage in a deep dive to study the findings from *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. In addition, we will consider the implications of these findings on our own practices in professional learning.

To prepare for the meeting: Please read the study and select one or two areas about which you want to engage in deeper study. The sections are of varying length, yet the information in each is equally significant. You may select the areas that you believe might be those with greater meaning to your daily work.

The sections to read and study are listed below.

Part I	Strategy for improvement	
1	A strategy for improvement	pp. 11–13
2	Developing leaders of professional learning	pp. 13–17
3	Evaluation and accountability	pp. 17–27
4	Creating time for professional learning	pp. 28–30
Part II	Professional learning programs	
5	Learning communities	pp. 33–40
6	Mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives	pp. 41–45
7	External expertise	pp. 46–49

At the meeting or before: You will be assigned to a group that will study one section of the report and prepare to share its contents with others. In most cases, your preference for a particular area of focus will determine your small group, however in some cases you will work in another group to balance membership. You will have time at the meeting to meet with others who are interested in the same section as you to study, discuss, and examine the report and appendices and to prepare a summary that you will share with others.

Tool 1.3.2

Participant

Deep dive jigsaw directions

Today's meeting is divided into two main parts.

The first part of the meeting focuses on discussing the section you selected for deeper study with others who chose the same section. You will also use Tool 1.3.3 to prepare a summary.

The second part of the meeting is for sharing the summaries with others who read and summarized another section.

During the meeting:

Step 1	Gather with others who are interested in your section and find a comfortable place to work.	2 minutes
Step 2	Assign roles to increase the efficiency of your work. Facilitator _____ Timekeeper _____ Recorder _____	1 minute
Step 3	Use Tool 1.3.3, a two-page summary sheet, as a guide for your study of the report and appendices. Be sure each member is comfortable and prepared to share the summary section.	30 minutes
Step 4	Regroup participants in groups of seven, each of whom read and studied a different section.	2 minutes
Step 5	Share summaries. Summary sheets will be shared so members can listen fully and ask clarifying questions without recording notes unless they wish to do so.	30 minutes

Tool 1.3.3 (page 2 of 2)

1. What are we already doing that aligns with these findings? How effective are these current practices and what evidence do we have to support our assessment?

2. Where the biggest gaps between our current practice and the findings? How are those gaps influencing our ability to leverage professional learning as a driver of improvement in our school(s), school system(s), or education agency(ies)?

3. What are logical next steps for us to take related to this section?

Tool 1.4

Facilitator

Current professional learning practices

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems stresses the significance of professional learning as a vehicle for improving teaching and student learning. It provides examples of professional learning practices within high-performing school systems. This tool is designed to guide individuals or teams of individuals in analyzing their current professional learning practices in relation to those cited in the study.

Purpose	To analyze the extent to which current professional learning practices contribute to teacher and student learning as compared to those cited in the study.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary in <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> (pp. 3–8) Tool 1.4.1: <i>Viewpoint: Investing in professional learning</i>
Best uses	In leadership teams whose members are responsible for professional learning.
Time	45 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Ask participants to read the Executive Summary of the report on pages 3–8.

During the meeting:

Step 1	<p>Engage participants in a discussion about the reading using the questions below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how high-performing systems leverage professional learning to improve teaching and student learning. Cite specifics from the text. High-performing systems make a substantial investment in professional learning. How are the returns of your local investments in professional learning? What evidence do you have to support your response? Based on what the authors of this study report about professional learning in high-performing systems, what factors are present in the high-performing systems that are not present in your system? What are potential strategies and tactics to increase the return on the investment in professional learning in your system? 	30 minutes
Step 2	<p>Invite participants to summarize the discussion and their views, write a paragraph of no more than 200 words to share with a parent or community advocacy group. Explain in non-technical language the key reasons for investing in professional learning. Invite several members to share their first drafts. Encourage them to post their paragraphs on the school or school system website, share them in parent or community communications, and then use them to engage parents and community members in rethinking their investment in professional learning.</p>	15 minutes

Teachers and Teacher Leaders



Teachers make up the majority group with the most potential to be affected by the finding of *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. The study of high-performing systems describes a significant part of teacher daily work as collaborative professional learning that focuses on refining, extending, expanding, and improving teachers' pedagogy as a means of increasing student success. Teachers, however, do not operate alone in this work of professional learning. Conditions, culture, and colleagues influence their ability to engage in the type of professional learning described in the high-performing systems studied. To be advocates for their own professional learning, to increase their skillfulness in collaborating with peers for the purpose of growing as professionals, and to commit to continuous learning and change, teachers require supportive conditions, expertise in collaborative professional learning, and a strong sense of moral purpose. This section of the Facilitator Guide focuses on helping teachers and teacher leaders understand the findings of the study and determine ways to apply the findings within their own work.

Teachers are educators who work directly with students. They may have roles and responsibilities to serve as a resource to other teachers such as mentors or coaches. In this case, they serve students indirectly by working with other teachers' classrooms.

Teacher leaders are educators who may have direct instructional responsibility, yet assume some of the duties of professional learning leader described in the study. They may be grade-level or division chairs, master teachers, coaches, mentors, or others who have responsibility for leading, facilitating, or developing other teachers.

Improvement cycle windowpane

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems describes an improvement cycle that establishes a strategic approach to effective professional learning. This cycle is common across the four high-performing school systems studied. This tool outlines a process for learning more about how the improvement cycle supports professional learning.

Purpose	To understand how the improvement cycle provides the infrastructure for effective professional learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> • Tool 2.1.1: <i>Creating an improvement cycle windowpane</i>
Best uses	In teacher learning communities, school leadership teams, or in-school or cross-school teams of teacher leaders.
Time	60 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite participants to read *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. Examine closely at least one example of the improvement cycle described in the study, such as the section on learning communities beginning on p. 33.

At the meeting: Post physical charts or create electronic posters that depict the stages of the improvement cycle.

Tool 2.1 (page 2 of 2)

Step 1	Review the task directions on Tool 2.1.1 and answer any questions.	2 minutes				
Step 2	Divide participants into three, six, or nine groups depending on the size of the larger group. The best size for the smaller groups is three to five people.	3 minutes				
Step 3	<p>Assign or invite each small group or several small groups to focus on one component of the improvement cycle and to represent visually its essential elements by creating a windowpane that represents the information described below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="334 661 1243 1304"> <tr> <td data-bbox="334 661 789 982"> <p>PANE 1: What is this component? What is involved in it?</p> </td> <td data-bbox="789 661 1243 982"> <p>PANE 2: Explain how this component contributes to effective professional learning focused on improving teaching and student learning.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="334 982 789 1304"> <p>PANE 3: Drawing from the descriptions of the three major professional learning programs in Part II — learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher programs, and external expertise — what does this step look like in action in various professional learning programs?</p> </td> <td data-bbox="789 982 1243 1304"> <p>PANE 4: What are some equivalent practices that teachers in your school do that would be similar to these practices?</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>PANE 1: What is this component? What is involved in it?</p>	<p>PANE 2: Explain how this component contributes to effective professional learning focused on improving teaching and student learning.</p>	<p>PANE 3: Drawing from the descriptions of the three major professional learning programs in Part II — learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher programs, and external expertise — what does this step look like in action in various professional learning programs?</p>	<p>PANE 4: What are some equivalent practices that teachers in your school do that would be similar to these practices?</p>	20 minutes
<p>PANE 1: What is this component? What is involved in it?</p>	<p>PANE 2: Explain how this component contributes to effective professional learning focused on improving teaching and student learning.</p>					
<p>PANE 3: Drawing from the descriptions of the three major professional learning programs in Part II — learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher programs, and external expertise — what does this step look like in action in various professional learning programs?</p>	<p>PANE 4: What are some equivalent practices that teachers in your school do that would be similar to these practices?</p>					
Step 4	Appoint a member of each team to present the windowpane to the larger group. In the case where there are multiple groups working on the same component, invite each smaller group to share one pane.	20 minutes				
Step 5	<p>Invite either the whole group or smaller groups to discuss some or all of the questions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of professional learning in school improvement, effective teaching, and student success? • How do your current opportunities for professional learning compare with the improvement cycle described? • What gets in the way of implementing the improvement cycle? • What are the three most essential changes needed to make the improvement cycle a routine practice for all teachers? • Whose responsibility is it to ensure that the improvement cycle is enacted in schools? • What is one action you can take to make the improvement cycle a routine part of your daily work? 	15 minutes				

Teachers and Teacher Leaders

Tool 2.1.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Creating an improvement cycle windowpane

This task is designed to examine the components of the improvement cycle for professional learning. It will combine small group examination of the components with opportunities to learn about all components and to consider how the improvement cycle compares with current practices. Lastly, it will give you an opportunity to consider how to implement it into practice in your school.

Set up	5 minutes
Visual representation of one component	20 minutes
Sharing of all three components	20 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes

Part 1: Create a windowpane of your component that includes visual representation of the information below.

<p>PANE 1: What is this component? What is involved in it?</p>	<p>PANE 2: Explain how this component contributes to effective professional learning focused on improving teaching and student learning.</p>
<p>PANE 3: Drawing from the descriptions of the three major professional learning programs in Part II — learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher programs, and external expertise — what does this step look like in action in various professional learning programs?</p>	<p>PANE 4: What are some practices that teachers in your school do that would be similar to these practices?</p>

Teachers and Teacher Leaders

Tool 2.1.1 (page 2 of 2)

Part 2: Identify a spokesperson for your group and use the note-taking guide to jot notes about the components.

Part 3: Join in the discussion about the improvement cycle:

- What is the role of professional learning in school improvement, effective teaching, and student success?
- How do your current opportunities for professional learning compare with the improvement cycle described?
- What gets in the way of implementing the improvement cycle?
- What are the three most essential changes needed to make the improvement cycle a routine practice for all teachers?
- Whose responsibility is it to ensure that the improvement cycle is enacted in schools?
- What actions might you take to make the improvement cycle a routine part of your daily work?

Note-taking Guide based on *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*

Stage of Improvement Cycle	Description of stage	Contribution to effective professional learning focused on improving teaching and student learning	Examples in major programs (i.e. learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher programs, and external expertise)	Equivalent practices in your school
Assess students' learning to identify their next stage of learning (at either the individual or school level).				
Develop the teaching practices that will provide the next stage of student learning (and being clear what evidence supports this).				
Evaluate the impact of new practices on student learning so that teachers can refine their practice.				

Lesson observations

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems indicates that the high-performing systems have an open-door culture in which teachers have time to watch and learn from others to develop the deep knowledge and expertise of a teaching professional. This tool examines the various ways lesson observations contribute to professional learning. It also prepares and supports teachers and teacher leaders in conducting lesson observations for the purpose of professional learning. For many teachers the opportunity to observe and learn from peers is infrequent, yet it is a powerful means to build a culture of collaboration and to grow professionally.

Purpose	To (a) participate in lesson observations both as an observer and an observed teacher, (b) create observation guides and (3) engage in paired and large-group discussions about their individual observations and the lesson observation process as a form of professional learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i>, particularly pages 39–40 • Tool 2.2.1: <i>Preparing for planning meeting for lesson observations</i> • Tool 2.2.2: <i>Lesson observation guide development</i> • Tool 2.2.3: <i>Paired lesson observation brief</i> • Tool 2.2.4: <i>Large-group lesson observation debrief</i>
Best uses	Within learning communities, grade levels, departments, or cross-disciplinary teams of teachers.
Time	<p>Approximately three to four hours total:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation approximately 55 minutes (Parts 1–3) • Observation approximately 40–80 minutes (Part 4) • Debriefing approximately 80–95 minutes (Parts 5–6)

Directions

This process occurs over multiple sessions. There are several parts to this task and **they may take two to four weeks to complete.**

Tool 2.2 (page 2 of 2)

Part 1	Prepare for the planning meeting by inviting participants to review Chapter 5, particularly pages 39–40. Share the directions in Tool 2.3.1.	Individually
Part 2	Discuss the reading and develop a lesson observation guide to use in lesson observations with colleagues.	45 minutes
Part 3	Coordinate and schedule lesson observations.	10 minutes
Part 4	Conduct lesson observations.	two 20–40-minute periods
Part 5	Debrief the lesson observation between the observing and the observed teachers.	two 25-minute periods
Part 6	Debrief with the entire learning community or all teachers who participated in lesson observations.	30–45 minutes

Possible questions to use during the large-group debrief include the following:

- What strengths did we notice in student learning processes in our observations? Cite specific examples and explain the rationale for naming this as a strength.
- How does observing each other’s practice enhance our own individual practice and our students’ success?
- What lessons did we learn that will influence our own teaching from the lesson observation process?
- What new opportunities do we have for working collaboratively as a result of the lesson observation process?
- How might we continue this process and strengthen its effect on us as teaching professionals and on our students’ learning?

Tool 2.2.1**Participant**

Preparing for planning meeting for lesson observations

In preparation for the meeting: Study Chapter 5: Learning Communities in *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* (pp. 33–40), paying particular attention to the different ways lesson observation occurs within high-performing systems (pp. 39–40). Consider the following questions as you review the text on lesson observation:

- What are the benefits of lesson observation for those in the teaching profession?
- What might be some particular benefits for you at your current career stage?
- What are the potential challenges of lesson observation in your school? How might they be overcome?
- What are some areas related to student learning in your classroom you'd be interested in having a peer observe and discuss with you?
- What are some areas related to teaching that you'd want to observe and discuss with a peer?

During the lesson observation planning meeting: We will, first, discuss the reading and the questions in small groups of approximately five. Next, we will design one or more lesson observation guides to use during lesson observations. You will select a partner and schedule your lesson observations. We will discuss how to debrief the observations and share a timeline for the lesson observations, your debriefing, and our next meeting as a whole group.

Tool 2.2.2**Participant**

Lesson observation guide development

Time: 55 minutes

Before observing a lesson, it is helpful to have a lesson observation guide to use for notetaking and conversation about the lesson after the observation. First, each observation partner will decide the topic on which he or she wants feedback. Next, they will work together to develop an observation template or note-taking guide that takes into consideration what we have discussed. The purpose of each guide is to inform the discussion; any notes recorded will be given to the teachers observed.

In developing the template, consider the following questions:

- What are the elements of teaching and student learning that we want to observe during our lesson observations?
- Which are most directly connected to our school and team goals? Select two to three to focus on during our lesson observations.
- How might we record notes during our observations of the elements that we selected so that we can share the notes and discuss them later?
- How will we note both teaching and student behaviors to see the connection between them? It will be helpful to have as many details as possible to enhance our discussion.
- What special considerations do we want observers to note about our individual classrooms?

Tool 2.2.3**Participant**

Paired lesson observation debrief

The learning for the observing partner usually occurs when discussing the lesson with the observed teacher to understand the teacher's decisions and thought process. Meet with your observation partner to discuss your observation notes and answer any questions your colleague may have. Focus the discussion on areas within the lesson observation guide.

Time: Approximately 25 minutes per lesson observation

Use the following questions as an organizational structure:

The observing teacher shares his or her notes with the observed teacher and invites discussion using the following prompts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you notice here? What do these notes suggest are strengths of the portion of the lesson I observed for both you and students? • What questions do you have about the notes I took? • What are you learning about yourself, your teaching practice, and your students from this experience?
The observing teacher might add additional comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths: "I observed these teacher and student practices that I considered strengths. My evidence is ...". Be specific. • Clarifying questions: Tell me more about ... Refrain from making a judgment within a clarifying question. • Wonderings: I am curious about ... I wonder about ... Refrain from giving advice disguised as a wondering. • Learnings: I learned ... I am going to consider using ... I want to try ...
The observed teacher may also ask:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying questions about what the observing teacher shares and • Other questions about his or her practice and students' responses that do not ask the observer to pass judgment or give advice.
The observing teacher gives any notes to the observed teacher to bring to the large-group meeting (learning community, department meeting, whole-school faculty meeting, cross-team meeting, etc.) to use as a reference during the discussion of the lesson observation process.	

Tool 2.2.4

Participant

Large-group lesson observation debrief

As you meet with the team of teachers who had the opportunity to observe each other's professional practice, consider the questions below to guide your discussion.

- What are the key learnings we are taking away from our respective observations?
What are we clearer about related to teaching and student learning?
- How will we use the learnings to strengthen our professional practice?
- What questions do we still have about teaching and student learning that future lesson observations might help us address?
- What do we want to remember that will enhance our lesson observation practices in the future?
- What advice would we give to teachers who have not yet observed each other's practice?
- How does observing each other's professional practice enhance the culture of professionalism and collaboration within our school?

Professional learning leaders

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems highlights the significant role of professional learning leaders within the high-performing school systems. These leaders are most often teachers who advance along a career track and assume responsibility for contributing to the professional learning of others. This tool helps teachers and teacher leaders in examining the roles of professional learning leaders within the high-performing systems, comparing them with current roles within their own systems, and identifying ways to focus the roles more specifically on professional learning leadership.

Time: 85 minutes. The task described may be divided into several meetings.

Purpose	To facilitate conversation about the roles and responsibilities of professional learning leaders within high-performing school systems and within their own school or school system. To consider ways to strengthen and expand the role of teacher leaders so that they focus more specifically on professional learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for Learning Schools • Tool 2.3.1: <i>Professional learning leader role assessment</i>
Best uses	Within teams of teacher leaders and within school and district leadership teams.
Time	85 minutes

Directions

In preparation for the meeting: Invite participants to read the [Tools for Learning Schools](#) and review *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* ([link](#))

Tool 2.3 (page 2 of 2)

At the meeting:

Step 1	<p>Ask participants in table groups to identify which ways teachers serve as professional learning leaders in the high-performing schools and to note which way currently exist within their schools or school systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a chart labeled with the title for each role that currently exists; list on each the major functions of each role and the primary audience for each role. Participants may want to add other information such as funding source, supervisor or persons responsible for the role, etc. to each chart if the information is available. • Invite participants to identify other roles not identified in the study that currently exist in their schools or school system that provide support for professional learning. Create charts for each of these additional roles. • To facilitate sharing, create electronic templates or wall charts of the criteria score sheet for small groups to use. 	15 minutes
Step 2	Divide group members among the roles that exist within the school or school system.	3 minutes
Step 3	Ask each small group to assess the viability and potential impact of each professional learning leader role for transforming teaching and student learning using the following criteria and assessment guide in Tool 2.3.1. Emphasize the importance of using evidence when possible to support their assessment. After the assessment is completed, ask each group to consider the questions for strengthening the role.	30 minutes
Step 4	Reconvene in the large group to share the results of the small group work.	15 minutes
Step 5	Determine next steps as a group to advance the recommendations.	20 minutes

Tool 2.3.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Professional learning leader role assessment

Assess the role based on the following criteria. Feel free to adapt the criteria if desired. While it is helpful to have data to support assessments, teams may find that they do not have specific evidence and must rely on professional judgment or experience rather than specific data to support their assessment

Role: _____ Overall effectiveness score: _____

Criteria	Score range: 1–3	Score
1. Those in this role work directly with teachers within the school or school system.	1 (low, less than 5% of the teachers) to 3 (50% of the teachers or more)	
2. The majority of time of those in this role is focused on improving teaching and student learning.	1 (low, less than 20%) to 3 (80% or more)	
3. The school system has established sustained funding to support this role.	1 (low, funding tied to temporary income or external resources) to 3 (line item in the staffing budget)	
4. Those serving in this role have defined performance criteria for their evaluation.	1 (low, no criteria or currently using standards for another role) to 3 (defined performance standards and appraisal process specific to job responsibilities)	
5. Those serving in this role are thoughtfully selected based on criteria that include performance, experience, and readiness.	1 (low, no established selection or advancement process defined) to 3 (career track defined with ongoing opportunities to prepare for and advance into the role of professional learning leader)	
6. All teachers have access to professional learning that prepares them for this role.	1 (low, no preparation available) to 3 (ongoing preparation programs available to all teachers)	
7. Professional learning leaders have coaching, ongoing support, and supervision to increase the effectiveness of their work.	1 (low, no coaching available or only supervision) to 3 (regular coaching, ongoing professional learning, and support required for all serving in this role)	
8. Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the role (not the person) in achieving school system, school, teacher, and student improvement goals.	1 (low, no evaluation of the role conducted) to 3 (scheduled evaluation of the role using multiple sources of evidence including feedback from teachers being served)	

Tool 2.4

Facilitator

Improvement cycle in learning communities

Learning communities are vehicles for continuous professional learning, yet too often they spend less time on refining, expanding, and developing teaching practices and more time on managerial tasks or reinforcing current practice. The improvement cycle found in the high-performing school systems guides what learning communities do. This tool supports facilitators and members of learning communities to use the improvement cycle as a guide for their collaborative learning.

Purpose	To apply the improvement cycle to guide what learning communities do.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i>, particularly Chapter 5: Learning Communities (pp. 33–40) • Tool 2.4.1: <i>Improvement cycle applications in learning communities</i> • Tool 2.4.2: <i>Our current learning community practices</i>
Best uses	Teams of learning community facilitators and members of learning communities.
Time	75 minutes to study and plan a series of meetings.

Directions

In preparation: Ask participants to read *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. An alternative is to assign various parts of the reading to different people and ask them to come prepared to share what they read with others. Facilitators might use the reading assignments included in Tool 1.3.1: Deep dive preparation. Participants should read closely pages 33–40 on Learning Communities.

At the meeting:

Step 1	Invite teams of participants to summarize various applications of the improvement cycle within learning communities. Assign participants to four groups based on the descriptions within the report (see Part II Learning Communities, pp. 33–40): learning communities in Singapore; inquiry groups in British Columbia; Shanghai research and lesson planning; and collaborative lesson planning in Hong Kong. A possible format for the product of each team's work appears in Tool 2.4.1: <i>Improvement cycle applications in learning communities</i> .	30 minutes
Step 2	After each team summarizes its approach to the improvement cycle, invite teams to share them with the larger group. Plan to collect the documents and make them available as a resource for all teams to use	20 minutes
Step 3	Assign participants to new small groups to consider their current practices in learning communities and to consider how to apply the improvement cycle to their work on current goals using Tool 2.4.2: <i>Our current learning community practices</i> .	25 minutes

Tool 2.4.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Improvement cycle applications in learning communities

Learning community application for (name school system and specific process):

Overview

Provide a brief overview of the application.

Purpose

Identify the purpose of the process.

Benefits

Identify the cognitive and socioemotional benefits for teachers and the academic benefits for students.

Teachers and
Teacher Leaders

Tool 2.4.1 (page 2 of 2)

Steps

List the steps of this process in sequence with an estimate of the time needed for each. Also indicate how each step is related to the improvement cycle.

Resources for reference

Cite specific pages or other resources that would support implementation of this application.

Cautions

Identify potential challenges to be aware of when using this application.

Advice

Offer recommendations for successful implementation of this application.

Tool 2.4.2

Participant

Our current learning community practices

1. How does our current learning community practice align with the stages of the improvement cycle and the applications we studied?

2. Which of the applications most closely aligns with our current learning community practice? What is similar and what is different?

3. Which of the applications is the most different from our current learning community practice? Under what conditions might we consider this application or what parts of it might we consider implementing?

4. Given our current learning community goal of _____, which of the applications might accelerate or enhance our efforts to achieve that goal? Explain. Which applications might detract from or convolute our efforts to achieve that goal? Explain.

Principals



Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems emphasizes school-based professional learning for teachers that improves teaching and student learning. It also confirms that a significant responsibility of principals is to ensure high-quality professional learning for every teacher within the school. This shift transfers responsibility from education leaders in school system offices to principals in school buildings and requires that principals be ready to accept this responsibility.

This section of the facilitator's guide focuses on the roles and responsibilities of principals related to professional learning for teachers within their schools.

Principals are educators who are accountable and responsible for student and staff success by ensuring that teachers experience effective professional learning. They ensure that teachers take an active role in contributing to their own and others' professional learning. They work closely with teacher leaders and a school leadership team who share responsibility for professional learning within the school. They also supervise and support teacher leaders, such as coaches, mentors, grade, division, and department chairs, who have responsibility for leading and facilitating professional learning of teachers within the schools.

Tool 3.1

Facilitator

Principal's role in effective professional learning

Principals are a vital link in establishing and maintaining effective professional learning for teachers within their schools. When principals focus effort and energy on professional learning that aligns with the school's improvement goals and high-quality teaching, they are able to support teachers in meeting professional goals for continuous improvement. Their efforts require a shift of priorities and assumptions. This tool will guide principals in examining how they spend their time currently and how to shift it to increase a focus on professional learning.

Purpose	To engage principals in examining their assumptions about their role in professional learning and to inform adjusting their priorities and time allocation.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i>, particularly Chapters 3–5 • Tool 3.1.1: <i>Aligning principal priorities with professional learning goals</i> • Tool 3.1.2: <i>Principal time log reflection</i>
Best uses	In teams of principals from the same level of schools or individually.
Time	60 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite principals to keep a log of how they spend their time using Tool 3.1.1. Ask principals to bring a completed log to a meeting of peers to discuss in small groups.

At the meeting: Group principals into triads.

Step 1	Ask principals to meet in small groups of three or four and to share their logs. As a process for sharing, ask each one to choose one day, share the allocation, and explain the reasons for the allocation.	10 minutes
Step 2	Set aside five minutes to allow principals to jot some notes individually in response to the questions on Tool 3.1.2. Invite the small groups to discuss the questions.	30 minutes
Step 3	Reconvene as a large group to share adjustments considered and insights generated from the discussion.	20 minutes

At a subsequent meeting, participants share the effects of adjustments they enacted.

Tool 3.1.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Aligning principal priorities with professional learning goals

Principals, according to *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*, share both accountability and responsibility for effective professional learning within their schools. They not only ensure that the professional learning is of the highest quality, they also create the time for teacher collaboration and supervise teacher leaders and teachers so that they are engaged in their own and one another's professional growth. These responsibilities require principals to shift some of their priorities away from other areas to make more time for tasks associated with professional learning.

Awareness of how principals allocate their time among a widely disparate range of priorities is the first step in realigning their priorities to achieve effective professional learning for teachers within their schools. This tool engages principals in studying how their time is allocated to specific tasks.

Describing the complexity of a principal's workday and categorizing tasks is not easy. Reflecting on the purpose of any task and its overall relationship to the priorities of the school is helpful in understanding how assumptions influence actions and how actions convey meaning to others. The table below identifies five major areas of focus for principals' work. Use the table on the following page to reflect on how time was allocated to each by estimating the percentage of each day is devoted to each area. Add any other areas that may not be reflected here and jot notes to contribute to the week's end analysis.

Area of focus	Description	% of time
Student focus	Student behavior, student activities, meeting with individual students, etc.	
Instruction focus	Classroom visits, supervising teachers, coaching and mentoring focused on instruction and student learning, reviewing student learning data, reviewing instructional plans, planning or coordinating student academic interventions, etc.	
Professional learning	Facilitating or visiting teacher learning teams, engaging in own professional learning, meeting with team leaders, coordinating or leading schoolwide professional learning, meeting with teachers about their learning goals, etc.	
Community focus	Parent or community meetings, parent communications, individual parent meetings, community advocacy, etc.	
Management focus	Budget, facilities, organizing school noninstructional activities, supervising support staff, district meetings, etc.	
Other		
Other		
Other		

Tool 3.1.1 (page 2 of 2)

Principal Time Allocations

Day	Student focus	Instruction focus	Professional learning	Community focus	Management focus	Other
M						
Tu						
W						
Th						
F						
Mean						
Ideal						

Calculate the mean for each area and write in the next to the last row.

Tool 3.1.2 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Principal time log reflection

1. Identify your ideal time allocations. If nothing interfered with how you allocated your time, how would you want to allocate your time? In the last row of the table on page 47, write in your ideal time allocations. What criteria or factors did you consider as you identified your ideal time allocations? How would the allocations vary based on different criteria?

2. How closely aligned are the results to your ideal allocation of time? What might be contributing to the current alignment?

3. What responsibilities do the authors of *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* suggest are essential for principals to undertake to implement the improvement cycle and leverage it to improve professional practice and student learning?

4. What do the time allocations suggest are your priorities? What messages might the current allocation convey to others such as teachers, students, parents, and your supervisor?

Tool 3.1.2 (page 2 of 2)

5. What beliefs or assumptions might explain the current time allocation results?

6. What changes are necessary to move close to your ideal allocation and to incorporate the responsibilities for leading effective professional learning?

7. What insights are you gaining as a result of this reflection?

Tool 3.2

Facilitator

Improvement cycle and school improvement

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems identifies the improvement cycle as a common element in the high-performing school systems. This tool is designed to facilitate discussion on the various ways the improvement cycle is implemented within the school's routine improvement practices and to identify opportunities for increasing the explicit application of the improvement cycle.

Purpose	To analyze current applications of the improvement cycle and identify opportunities for strengthening its use.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary in <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> (pp. 3–8) with specific emphasis on sections related to Chapter 2: Developing Leaders of Professional Learning, Chapter 3: Evaluation and Accountability, and Chapter 4: Creating Time for Professional Learning Chapter 5: Learning Communities Tool 3.2.1: <i>Current status of improvement cycle</i> Tool 3.2.2: <i>Plan of action</i>
Best uses	In school leadership teams, individually, or in teams of principals.
Time	90 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite team members to read the Executive Summary and Chapter 5: Learning Communities of *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* to develop an understanding of principals' roles in effective professional learning.

At the meeting:

Step 1	Ask participants to use Tool 3.2.1 to discuss the key ideas they took away from the reading, their current applications of the improvement cycle in their school improvement efforts, and ways to strengthen each component of the cycle.	45 minutes
Step 2	Have participants use Tool 3.2.2 to create a plan of action to implement one or more of the recommendations for strengthening the component. Or they may use the tool to plan for the overall implementation of the improvement cycle.	45 minutes

Tool 3.2.1

Participant

Current status of improvement cycle

Use the table below to identify and analyze current practices related to each component of the improvement cycle. Look across all routine schoolwide and classroom practices for specific applications.

Then, consider the effectiveness of current practices, describe evidence that supports your decision, and make recommendations for strengthening, replacing, remodeling, or transforming each practice so that the aggregated practices model full implementation of the improvement cycle.

Finally, prioritize recommendations in each area.

Components of the improvement cycle	Current practices evident within the school and/or classrooms	Effectiveness of each practice	Evidence of impact	Recommendations for strengthening
Assess students' learning to identify their next stage of learning (at either the individual or school level).				
Develop the teaching practices that will provide the next stage of student learning (and being clear what evidence supports this).				
Evaluate the impact of new practices on student learning so that teachers can refine their practice.				



Tool 3.2.2 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Plan of action

Use the template below to plan specific tactics to implement prioritized recommendations.

Recommendations to implement	Specific tactics	Timeline for each tactic	Indicator of success	Persons responsible/involved	Outcome desired

Principals

Tool 3.2.2 (page 2 of 2)

Resources needed to accomplish plan:

Challenges to overcome:

Progress monitoring:

Describe how and when you will monitor progress on implementation of the recommendations.

School-based professional learning programs

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems identifies four professional learning programs common in the high-performing school systems studied. Those professional learning programs are equivalent to Learning Forward's professional learning designs, and they include learning communities, mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives, use of external experts, and courses and workshops. The study also includes the importance of lesson observation as a means to support professional learning for teachers. This tool engages principals in analyzing their current professional learning practices and planning ways to improve the effectiveness of each using the examples of application of each practice described in the study.

Purpose	To analyze current professional learning practices within the school and identify a plan for improving the effectiveness of each.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> • Tool 3.3.1: <i>Descriptions of professional learning programs</i> • Tool 3.3.2: <i>School-based professional learning programs</i> • Tool 3.3.3: <i>Analysis of professional learning programs</i> • Tool 3.3.4: <i>Improvement planning</i> • Related appendices and resources in NCEE-developed toolkits that accompany the report
Best uses	In school leadership teams, in teams of principals, or individually.
Time	180 minutes (may be divided into several meetings).

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite all participants to read the report and review online tools and appendices.

At the meeting(s): Team members work through a five-step process to study high-performing systems' professional learning programs and to analyze their current professional learning programs. The first step focuses on summarizing the study's description of each of the professional learning programs. In the second step participants identify what currently exists in relationship to each of the programs identified in the study. The third step involves analyzing current status by comparing the current practice to the programs described in the study. In the fourth step participants identify and plan for strengthening each of their programs to achieve greater results for teachers and students. The final and continuous step is monitoring progress and results.

Tool 3.3 (page 2 of 2)

Step 1	<p>Summarize practices in high-performing systems. Understanding how high-performing systems implement the professional learning programs serves as a foundation for this task. The study, appendices, and toolkit provide exemplars of the programs in action. Divide the team into five groups to review the programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning communities • Mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives • Use of external experts • Course and workshops • Lesson observation <p>Group members use Tool 3.3.1 to summarize insights about the practices. After the small groups complete their summary, invite them to share the descriptions so that each member of the larger group understands how the programs look in practice. If possible, share the notes from each small group's summary during Step 3.</p>	45 minutes
Step 2	<p>Identify current status. Use Tool 3.3.2 to collect information about each of the five programs within the school or school system. Invite members of the team to talk with teachers to gather information from outside the team or engage teachers in a meeting in which they contribute to the data gathering. Record data to use in the next step.</p>	45–60 minutes
Step 3	<p>Analyze current status. Use the descriptions to compare current practices in the school or system to the descriptions of those in high-performing systems recorded in Step 1. If there are discrepancies, provide explanation about what might be contributing to the gaps. Use Tool 3.3.3 for this analysis.</p>	60 minutes
Step 4	<p>Plan improvements. Using the analysis data, identify improvements needed in the school's professional learning practices to increase their effectiveness and results. Use Tool 3.3.4 to plan improvements.</p>	60 minutes
Step 5	<p>Monitor progress and results. Use Tool 3.3.4 to regularly revisit the plan and monitor progress on the planned actions and results. Make adjustments as needed based on data.</p>	Ongoing

Tool 3.3.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Descriptions of professional learning programs

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems identifies five common professional learning programs, or learning designs, present in the high-performing school systems studied.

Use this tool to record data collected about the current status of those programs within your school.

Learning Communities	Characteristics evident in high-performing systems described in the report, appendices, and toolkits
<p>“[L]earning communities—“are cornerstone program for effective professional learning.” “These learning communities are not, however, simply a platform for exchange and coordination of teaching plans and materials.”</p> <p>“[W]hen well organized, learning communities help to initiate a cultural shift towards creating expectations for improvement within schools and teachers.” (p. 33).</p>	
Mentoring and Beginning Teacher Initiatives	
<p>“Effective mentoring is much more than just administrative or emotional support... Effective mentors encourage teachers to measure the impact of their teaching practices on student learning... Through regular classroom observation and feedback, mentors help teacher identify and address key areas for improvement... Mentoring... is a part of the professional identify, for beginning and more experienced teachers alike... Mentoring is a significant driver of professional learning... (p. 41)</p>	
External Expertise	
<p>“The engagement of consultants and external experts is a feature of all education systems, high-performing or otherwise... External expertise covers a diverse range of institutions and services that some systems engage more thoroughly and effectively than others.” (p. 46) (See models of external expertise in Figure 16 on p. 46.)</p>	

Principals

Tool 3.3.1 (page 2 of 2)

Workshops and Courses	Characteristics evident in high-performing systems described in the report, appendices, and toolkits
<p>“Another dimension to external expertise in quality professional learning is ... off-site teacher training provided by externally administered programs and institutions... In designing professional learning options, high-performing systems encourage teacher uptake of both in-school and external courses, workshops and further certifications in order to expose teachers to the fullest range of innovative and effective practices.” (p. 48) “But all high-performing systems still grappling with how to ensure the quality and relevance of courses and workshops is sufficiently high... Efforts are made to ensure it is tied into within-school professional learning to start and end with student learning in the school.” (p. 49)</p>	
Lesson observation	
<p>“[S]chools operating in high-performing systems cultivate an open-door culture. Teachers need time to others to develop the deep knowledge and expertise required of a teaching professional. Lesson observation helps break down the expectations that teaching is something simply done ‘in your own classroom.’ Being observed by peers, superiors, or in ‘walk-through’ days for school leaders helps build a culture of collaborative practice... Lesson observation is used for a variety of purposes ranging from purely developmental (peer lesson observation and feedback through to teacher appraisal... A key distinguishing feather of effective lesson observation is that it focuses on the students, not just the teachers.” (p. 39)</p>	

Tool 3.3.2

Participant

School-based professional learning programs

Use this tool to record data collected about the current status of learning programs, or learning designs, within your school or system. Seek input from multiple teachers. Gather specific examples and evidence of effectiveness.

Professional learning programs	Specific examples and descriptors (drawn from teacher input)	Percentage of teachers engaged
Learning communities		
Mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives		
External expertise		
Courses and workshops		
Lesson observation		



Tool 3.3.3

Participant

Analysis of professional learning programs

Compare the existing professional learning programs, or learning designs, within your school or system to the descriptors from high-performing systems listed in Tool 3.3.1. Individually rate each based on the alignment of the descriptions using the following rating scale. Note evidence that supports your rating. Share ratings and reach consensus on the rating using your evidence.

- 0** = no evidence of this program in our school
- 1** = occasional use of this program with fewer than 50% of teachers participating on a voluntary basis; no evidence collected to assess its effectiveness
- 2** = routine use of this approach by 50–67% of teachers on a voluntary basis; individual accountability for participation
- 3** = routine use of this approach by more than 75% of teachers on a voluntary basis; some schoolwide data about effectiveness collected
- 4** = clear expectation for 100% of teachers to participate in this approach; majority of teachers participating; some schoolwide data about effectiveness collected and shared
- 5** = 100% of teachers participating routinely in this approach; regular collection of data about effectiveness collected, shared, and used to inform improvements

Professional learning programs	Individual rating	Evidence to support rating	Consensus rating
Learning communities			
Mentoring and beginning teacher initiatives			
External expertise			
Workshops and courses			
Lesson observation			

Principals

Tool 3.3.4 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Improvement planning

Use this form to plan for improvements in the implementation of professional learning programs, or learning designs, in your school.

Consider the rating in Tool 3.3.3. Recommend improvements for one or more of the professional learning programs. Prioritize the recommendations to select three that are likely to have the greatest leverage in improving the implementation and effectiveness of professional learning programs.

Prioritized recommendations for improving professional learning programs	Specific tactics	Timeline for each tactic	Indicator of success	Persons responsible/involved	Outcome desired

Principals

Tool 3.3.4 (page 2 of 2)

Resources needed to accomplish plan:

Challenges to overcome:

Progress monitoring:

Describe how and when you will monitor progress on implementation of the recommendations.

Assessing the effects of professional learning

Professional learning is the primary vehicle for improving teaching and student learning. One of principals' responsibilities is assessing the effects of professional learning and developing teachers' expertise to assess the effects of professional learning on their teaching practice and on student learning. This tool guides principals and teachers in planning how to assess the effects of professional learning on teachers' practice and student learning.

Purpose	To develop principal and teacher capacity to assess the effects of professional learning on teaching practice and student learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool 3.4.1: <i>Simple logic model for evaluating the effects of professional learning</i> • Tool 3.4.2: <i>Logic model template for planning to evaluate professional learning</i>
Best uses	In principal-teacher performance appraisal and coaching meetings and with learning communities to develop their evaluation expertise.
Test	60 minutes to plan and ongoing to conduct the assessment.

Directions

Before planning to assess the effects of professional learning: Read the designated sections to develop background understanding about the importance of collecting data about the effects of professional learning and how and when to do so. Use the questions below to reflect on the reading:

- *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* discusses the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of professional learning and cites the roles of various leaders including teacher leaders, principals, system leaders, and ministry or state education agency leaders in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of professional learning. What are the primary reasons for evaluating professional learning and how do the high-performing systems address evaluation and accountability for effective professional learning?

- Most schools and school systems do not have adequate data about the effectiveness of professional learning. If this is true in your school, what might be some reasons for this?

Tool 3.4 (page 2 of 3)

- Who is responsible and accountable within your school for evaluating professional learning?
How are accountability and responsibility monitored?

- How is professional learning evaluated within your school?

- What are some tactics described that the high-performing systems use that might facilitate stronger evaluation and accountability for effective professional learning within your school?

In planning the evaluation of professional learning, the primary challenge has been focusing on the activity rather than on the expected outcomes. In other words, professional learning leaders are more interested in the logistics such as the workshop location and whether people enjoyed the learning experience than in the learning people acquire and their application of it.

A logic model is a useful tool for planning and conducting an evaluation of professional learning. It requires that there are defined outcomes for professional learning and that there is an intention to gather evidence to measure achievement of the outcomes. The logic model below describes the evaluation of the professional learning within a teacher learning community.

Overall school improvement goal:

- Increase student writing performance in the area of explanation and argumentation by at least 15% on district writing assessments in the next year.

Teacher professional learning goals:

- Increase the frequency and variety of student writing tasks implemented in all disciplines and classrooms to align with new schoolwide guidelines.
- Develop the capacity to design, implement, and assess student writing and use data to adjust instruction.
- Collaborate with peers to calibrate writing tasks and scoring to build consistency in expectations across classrooms.

Tool 3.4 (page 3 of 3)

Simple logic model for evaluating professional learning

Inputs (Resources needed)	Activities to achieve the outcomes	Outputs from the activities	Short-term outcome(s)	Evidence of achievement of short-term outcome(s)	Long-term outcome(s)	Evidence of achievement of outcome(s)
Time for faculty meeting; facilitation by principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop schoolwide guidelines on the frequency and type of student writing tasks 	School guidelines	Increase the frequency and variety of writing tasks students experience in all disciplines	Weekly logs about the frequency and variety of student writing tasks	Increase student writing performance in the area of explanation and argumentation by at least 15% on district writing assessments in the next year	Student pre- and post-scores on benchmark writing assessments
Literacy coach and time for workshop; learning community meeting time; coaching by literacy coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct series of workshops on attributes of effective explanatory and argumentative writing; designing explanatory and argumentative writing tasks to increase the frequency of explanatory and argumentative writing and implementing these forms of writing as a routine part of instruction Engage learning communities in developing, assessing, and revising explanatory and argumentative writing tasks based on the content standards, curriculum, and student data Focus individual teacher coaching on implementing explanatory and argumentative writing within instruction and on using student data to adjust instruction 	Workshop materials, attendance, assignments created, revised lessons, student data on writing tasks	Increase teachers' ability to design and apply a variety of student writing tasks, assess tasks, and use data to adjust instruction and revise tasks	Portfolio of teacher writing tasks with at least one pre-professional learning task and one post-professional learning task; teacher description of how a lesson was revised based on student data		

Principals have multiple sources of evidence to determine if there is progress toward the schoolwide improvement goal and in teacher professional learning objectives. By engaging in conversations with teachers and students about their efforts in writing, by reviewing weekly logs about the frequency and types of writing students are experiencing in classrooms; by meeting with individual teachers and learning communities to examine student work samples; by reviewing benchmark assessment data; and by facilitating teacher revisions in lesson plans and tasks based on the data, principals conduct ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of professional learning and the expectation for each teacher and learning team to engage in ongoing evaluation of the application of their learning.

Use the template in Tool 3.4.1 to plan a simple logic model for evaluating the effects of professional learning.

Tool 3.4.1

Participant

Simple logic model for evaluating the effects of professional learning

To plan a logic model, start with the long-term outcome and work backwards. This means beginning with the end in mind. The long-term outcome is stated in terms of student learning (see column, “Long-term outcome”).

Next identify what changes teachers will need to make to achieve the student-learning outcome. Teacher changes are the short-term outcomes, what teachers do in order to achieve the student outcomes (see column, “Short-term outcome(s)"). These changes inform the content (knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors) of teacher professional learning.

Once the long- and short-term outcomes are identified, then activities needed to achieve them are planned (see column, “Outputs of activities”). Outputs are the evidence that the activity has been **completed**, but **not** an indicator that the outcomes **have been achieved**. In other words, holding the workshop, which is the output, will not provide evidence that teachers know how to implement practices. For that evidence, teachers will need to look for qualitative and quantitative data that measure the short- and long-term outcomes. Examples of respective outcome measures are observation logs (see column, “Evidence of achievement of short-term outcomes”) and student work or test scores (see column, “Evidence of achievement of outcomes”).

Once the activities are planned, then it is possible to determine the resources necessary to accomplish the outcomes (see column, “Inputs [Resources needed]”).

Overall school improvement goal(s) stated in terms of student success:

Teacher professional learning goals stated in terms of the changes teachers will make to accomplish the student goal:

Tool 3.4.2

Participant

Logic model template for planning to evaluate professional learning

Inputs (Resources needed)	Activities to achieve the outcomes	Outputs from the activities	Short-term outcome(s)	Evidence of achievement of short-term outcome(s)	Long-term outcome(s)	Evidence of achieve- ment of outcome(s)

Principals

School System Leaders



School system leaders include those with responsibility for managing, supervising, leading, facilitating, coordinating, or supporting professional learning. They may include superintendents, executive directors, chief academic officers, local and federal program directors, curriculum directors, subject-area specialists, trainers, coaches, and others who work at the system rather than school level.

As *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* makes clear, their engagement in and support of effective professional learning in schools are paramount in ensuring continuous growth among teachers and principals. According to the study, accountability for effective professional learning is a core responsibility of all educators, but especially those in school system leadership roles. Such responsibilities include establishing policies and resources to support effective professional learning in schools; building the capacity of school leaders to implement effective professional learning and evaluate its impact; and embedding professional learning as a core element in teacher and principal evaluation and school accountability measures. The tools in this section are designed to facilitate review and revision of school system policy and procedures related to professional learning.

Evaluation and accountability levers for professional learning

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems addresses the intersection of accountability and evaluation. In particular, it requires school system leaders to collect and use data about the effectiveness of professional learning to manage accountability. Tool 4.4: *Professional learning policy analysis using Standards for Professional Learning* will help school system leaders assess the system’s accountability levers.

Purpose	To assess the school system’s accountability levers for professional learning.
Materials needed	<i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> , particularly pages 11–27.
Best uses	In district leadership teams.
Test	75 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Request that participants review the report and read closely the designated pages.

At the meeting: Engage participants in a discussion of the questions below. Record highlights of the conversation to provide a summary of key points.

- The report states:

The arguments for the positive impact of accountability on teacher professional learning runs counter to many of the debates about accountability policies, such as *No Child Left Behind* in the United States. In essence, one side of the debate focuses on the use of accountability incentives (with an emphasis on school and student performance measures) to bring about changes in schools. Opponents on the other side of the debate claim that these policies distort effective education and instead argue for the focus to be on professional development. The debate treats these as alternative and mutually exclusive policy pathways. (p. 18)

What is the district’s stance on accountability? How is that stance publicly communicated?

Tool 4.1 (page 2 of 3)

- The report states:

However, the focus of accountability in these systems is different. It is not weaker, nor does it shy away from difficult decisions. There are career consequences for teachers and school leaders who are not effective at improving the professional learning of other educators. (p. 18)

How do high-performing school systems leverage performance evaluation and accountability to achieve effective professional learning? Give specific examples from the text.

- What tools do high-performing school systems use to integrate evaluation and accountability for professional learning? Cite them specifically.

- The report states:

A recent U.S. study found that teachers considered professional collaboration as a separate activity, removed from daily teaching practice and not integral to improving student learning. Internationally, the OECD found that, on average, more than 40 percent of teachers reported that they have never taught a class jointly, observed classes or provided feedback. (p. 4–5)

Teachers regularly report that their professional learning is of variable quality, not suited to their development needs and not linked to their classroom teaching. It raises the question of to what degree school, district, and state leaders are held accountable for the effectiveness of teacher professional learning. (p. 17)

Making these changes can be difficult in schools where collaboration is low: while 70 percent of U.S. teachers reported that they spent time on collaborative work, only 17 percent reported significant cooperation among staff. (p. 38)

In what way do high-performing systems' school performance evaluation processes integrate professional learning as a criterion for performance review?

- The report states:

Figure 3 identifies key reform areas that high-performing systems use to improve professional learning. These are: developing leaders of professional learning at both the school and district or system level; ensuring evaluation and accountability mechanisms recognize and reward effective professional learning; and creating time for teachers to pursue professional learning throughout the working week. (p. 11)

Tool 4.1 (page 3 of 3)

How do career advancement and leadership pipelines prepare, support, and evaluate professional learning leaders to undertake these responsibilities for effective professional learning?

- The report states:

Any reforms to broaden evaluation and accountability require changes to the data collected. This is not a trivial matter. The choice of data collected sends a clear signal to schools about what is important and allows systems to reinforce effective professional learning through evaluation and accountability. The practical questions of what data to collect and how to collect it are therefore critical. (p. 24)

What types of data do high-performing school systems collect and use for evaluation and accountability? What types of data are collected to measure the effectiveness of professional learning and its impact on teaching practice and student learning within our system? How are those data used to inform decisions related to professional learning? What additional data are needed to strengthen evaluation and accountability levers about professional learning?

- The report states:

Wider evaluation and accountability mechanisms — such as school accountability and teacher and school leader performance management — can then be structured to ensure people take responsibility for the quality of professional learning.

While there are variations across the systems analyzed in this report, broad evaluation and accountability policies continuously reinforce effective professional learning through a focus on:

- Student performance
- The quality of instruction
- The quality of professional learning

These systems hold schools accountable for professional learning. While the ultimate measure of the effectiveness of professional learning is its impact on students, the first measure of effectiveness is how much it improves instruction in classrooms. (p. 18)

Based on our discussion, what actions might the school system take to strengthen the intersection of evaluation and accountability to increase the effectiveness of professional learning?

Tool 4.2

Facilitator

Current professional learning policy identification

School system policies establish the conditions for effective professional learning in schools. Reviewing and revising policies that advance and potentially interfere with effective professional learning is an ongoing responsibility of school system leaders and policymakers. Tools 4.2–4.4 may be combined to conduct a comprehensive policy identification, assessment, and revision or replacement. This tool provides a resource for identifying school system policies related to professional learning and specifying the expected results of the policies.

Purpose	To identify current professional learning policies and their impact on professional learning practices within the school system.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> • School system policies, regulations, procedures, guidance documents, manuals, etc. • Tool 4.2.1: <i>Current professional learning policies</i>
Best uses	In district leadership team meetings or professional learning policy review teams.
Time	90 minutes; To abbreviate the time for the review, a small team can research the existing policies in advance of the meeting, present their research to the participants, and invite them to review the list and add others that might not be included.

Directions

Before the first meeting: Invite participants to review *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High Performing Systems* and designated existing policies, regulations, documents, etc.

Prepare a template, using the format in Tool 4.2.1, of existing policies, regulations, or guidance documents related to professional learning.

At the meetings: Follow the steps outlined below.

Step 1	<p>Review the identified policies, regulations, and guidance documents related to professional learning.</p> <p>Ask participants to add others that may not be included. Be certain to verify that the policies exist by identifying their sources. One way to accomplish the review is to divide the identified policies among pairs of team members, invite pairs to read the assigned policies and note policies that specifically support the improvement cycle, and prepare to report the essence of policy to others.</p>	30 minutes
Step 2	<p>Invite participants to complete Tool 4.2.1 for each existing policy, regulation, or guidance document.</p> <p>If any participants ask about revising policies, remind them that Tool 4.3.3 (see p. 83) supports a systemic process to assess, revise and implement change.</p>	60 minutes

Tool 4.2.1 (page 1 of 4)

Participant

Current professional learning policies

Use this worksheet to record and assess current professional learning policies as follows:

1. Identify existing policies in each policy area.
2. Record the name of the policy.
3. In the next column, record its identification code or statute number.
4. Note the reference location, the focus site and educators, and summary notes for each policy.
5. Identify the level (state, districts, or school) and focus audience (teacher, administrators, or other) for the policy.
6. Note the changes of benefits the policy intends to achieve.
7. Adapt this form (Killion, 2012, pp. 49–54) to meet the specific purpose and goals of the policy review and to record more information as needed.

[Open MS Word version of Tool 4.2.1](#)

Policy Areas	Current Policy(ies)	Code/ Identifier (statute number, regulation number, etc.)	Reference (website, document, page, etc.)	Focus site and educators (S=state; D=district; Sc=school; T=teachers; A=administrators; O=other members of education workforce)						Impact What changes in practice do we hope to realize from this policy? What are the benefits we expect to gain?	Notes
				S	D	Sc	T	A	O		
1. 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.											
2. 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.											

Tool 4.2.1 (page 2 of 4)

Policy Areas	Current Policy(ies)	Code/ Identifier (statute number, regulation number, etc.)	Reference (website, document, page, etc.)	Focus site and educators (S=state; D=district; Sc=school; T=teachers; A=administrators; O=other members of education workforce)						Impact What changes in practice do we hope to realize from this policy? What are the benefits we expect to gain?	Notes
				S	D	Sc	T	A	O		
3. 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.											
4. Governance for professional learning: Delineates lines of authority for professional learning and defines processes for decision making.											
5. Roles and responsibilities for professional learning: Delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and other contributors to effective professional learning.											
6. Leadership for professional learning: Requires leaders and facilitators of professional learning to be well prepared for their leadership roles.											
7. 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.											

Tool 4.2.1 (page 3 of 4)

Policy Areas	Current Policy(ies)	Code/ Identifier (statute number, regulation number, etc.)	Reference (website, document, page, etc.)	Focus site and educators (S=state; D=district; Sc=school; T=teachers; A=administrators; O=other members of education workforce)							Impact What changes in practice do we hope to realize from this policy? What are the benefits we expect to gain?	Notes
				S	D	Sc	T	A	O			
8. Dedicated funding for professional learning: Requires set aside and/or adequate funding to ensure application of learning to achieve full implementation.												
9. Other resources: Requires other resources such as staff, technology, and materials to increase access to, efficiency of, and effectiveness of professional learning.												
10. Job-embedded collaboration: Promotes job-embedded collaboration among peers within professional learning and during application and refinement of practice.												
11. Evaluation of professional learning: Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for both accountability and improvement.												
12. 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.												

Tool 4.2.1 (page 4 of 4)

Policy Areas	Current Policy(ies)	Code/ Identifier (statute number, regulation number, etc.)	Reference (website, document, page, etc.)	Focus site and educators (S=state; D=district; Sc=school; T=teachers; A=administrators; O=other members of education workforce)							Impact What changes in practice do we hope to realize from this policy? What are the benefits we expect to gain?	Notes
				S	D	Sc	T	A	O			
Additional Policy Area												
Additional Policy Area												
Additional Policy Area												

Adapted from *Professional learning policy review: A workbook for states and districts* by Joellen Killion, copyright 2012 Learning Forward, pp. 49–54.

Tool 4.3

Facilitator

Professional learning policy assessment

This tool supports the assessment of the effectiveness of each policy using a policy assessment rubric.

Purpose	To review existing professional learning policies and identify and plan for needed revisions.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of policy identification using Tool 4.2.1 • Tool 4.3.1: <i>Policy effectiveness assessment rubric</i> • Tool 4.3.2: <i>Policy effectiveness assessment recording sheet</i> • Tool 4.3.3: <i>Planning policy revisions</i>
Best uses	In district leadership team or in policy review team.
Time	60 minutes

Directions

- Review the policies identified as a result of completing Tool 4.2.1.
- Apply the rubric in Tool 4.3.1 to assess each policy listed in Tool 4.2.1.
- Record results of policy assessment in Tool 4.3.2.
- Discuss assessment results using Tool 4.3.3. Consider the following questions as a guide:
 - Which policies are producing the results intended? What contributes to this?
 - Which policies are not producing the results we expect? What contributes to this?
 - Which policies require revision in order to produce the intended results?
 - Which policies might we consider deleting?
 - In what areas we might consider developing policies to create supporting conditions to strengthen professional learning?

Tool 4.3.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Policy effectiveness assessment rubric

This rubric (Killion, 2012, pp. 35–36) is designed to assess current professional learning policies based on four attributes of policy effectiveness. The purpose of this analysis is less about getting the “right” score, and more about understanding how the policies influence practice, effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and results of professional learning.

Policy Attributes	4	3	2	1
Stability The extent to which the policy has been in place a long time.	This policy has been in place for five or more years with stable leadership (state chief, elected officials, superintendents, principals, teacher leaders, etc.) with consistent support for implementation.	This policy has been in place for five or more years; however, leadership (state chief, elected officials, superintendents, principals, teacher leaders, etc.) is changing resulting in uneven support for implementation.	This policy has been in place two-four years and leadership is new since the policy was introduced resulting in less emphasis on implementation of the policy.	This policy is less than a year old.
Consistency The extent to which the policy is coherent with other policies and sends a common message to implementers.	This policy aligns with other related policies and reinforces and supports other policies to create a coherent, comprehensive education system.	This policy aligns with other related policies.	Aspects of this policy align with other related policies.	This policy is inconsistent with one or more other policies.
Specificity The degree to which the policy is clear and promotes common understanding of the policy’s intent.	This policy provides or is accompanied by clear, detailed guidance or specific criteria for guidance about expected practices required for full implementation.	This policy requires that each individual district or school develop guidance for implementation without explicit criteria for full implementation.	This policy requires guidance for implementation; however, one does not yet exist.	This policy provides no or unclear guidance about expected practices associated with full implementation.

Tool 4.3.1 (page 2 of 2)

Policy Attributes	4	3	2	1
<p>Authority</p> <p>The extent to which the policy is accepted by and persuasive to those who are required to implement it.</p>	<p>This policy is supported by diverse stakeholder groups including influential institutions, organizations, and individuals and is evident in professional practice and norms.</p>	<p>This policy is supported by influential institutions, organizations, and individuals and is evident in professional practice and norms.</p>	<p>This policy is supported by influential institutions, organizations, or individuals.</p>	<p>This policy lacks diverse stakeholder backing and support.</p>
<p>Power</p> <p>The extent to the policy includes sanctions, consequences, and/or rewards.</p>	<p>This policy includes consequences and rewards for compliance, implementation, and accountability.</p>	<p>This policy has increasingly more serious consequences over time for non-compliance.</p>	<p>This policy has consequences for non-compliance.</p>	<p>This policy has neither consequences nor rewards for compliance, implementation, and accountability.</p>

Adapted from *Professional learning policy review: A workbook for states and districts* by Joellen Killion, copyright 2012 Learning Forward, pp. 35–36.

Tool 4.3.2 (page 1 of 3)

Participant

Policy effectiveness assessment recording sheet

Record the results of the policy assessment (Killion, 2012, pp. 57–61) below.

[Open MS Word version of Tool 4.3.2](#)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?	Impact What are typical effects for educators and students that result from this policy?	
								Educators	Students
		4 = high; 1 = low							
1. 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.									
2. 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.									
3. 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.									
4. Governance for professional learning: Delineates lines of authority for professional learning and defines processes for decision making.									

Tool 4.3.2 (page 2 of 3)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?	Impact What are typical effects for educators and students that result from this policy?	
								4 = high; 1 = low	4 = high; 1 = low
5. Roles and responsibilities for professional learning: Delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and other contributors to effective professional learning.									
6. Leadership for professional learning: Requires leaders and facilitators of professional learning to be well prepared for their leadership roles.									
7. 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.									
8. Dedicated funding for professional learning: Requires set aside and/or adequate funding to ensure application of learning to achieve full implementation.									
9. Other resources: Requires other resources such as staff, technology, and materials to increase access to, efficiency of, and effectiveness of professional learning.									

Tool 4.3.2 (page 3 of 3)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?	Impact What are typical effects for educators and students that result from this policy?	
								Educators	Students
		4 = high; 1 = low							
10. Job-embedded collaboration: Promotes job-embedded collaboration among peers within professional learning and during application and refinement of practice.									
11. Evaluation of professional learning: Requires formative and summative evaluation of the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of professional learning for both accountability and improvement.									
12. Third-party providers: Create criteria for engaging third-party professional learning providers to ensure their effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and alignment with specified outcomes.									
Additional Policy Area									
Additional Policy Area									

Adapted from *Professional learning policy review: A workbook for states and districts* by Joellen Killion, copyright 2012 Learning Forward, pp. 57–61.

Tool 4.3.3**Participant**

Planning policy revisions

Complete the following steps to propose and enact policy changes based on the analysis.

Step 1	Based on the assessment, review the policies that you identified to revise, delete, or create. Propose a timeline for completing the work on the policies and identify who will have responsibility for facilitating or leading the work.	20 minutes
Step 2	Reconvene the team to review and modify the revised or new professional learning policies and consider their potential for strengthening the effectiveness of professional learning.	60 minutes
Step 3	Plan and implement a dissemination of the policy changes and the policy implementation procedures.	60 minutes
Step 4	Complete the process of policy revision, adoption or deletion through authorized channels (based on school system requirements).	Based on school system requirements
Step 5	Revisit the policy changes in one year by applying the rubric from Tool 4.3.1 to the revised policy to assess the contribution to effective professional learning and identify adjustments need in implementation procedures.	60 minutes

Tool 4.4

Facilitator

Professional learning policy analysis using Standards for Professional Learning

Many school systems have adopted standards for professional learning. Analyzing policies in light of the standards is a useful way to examine critically current policies and practices in professional learning. Tool 4.4.1 (Killion, 2012, pp. 62–65) uses *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011) as a framework for examining current policies to determine if those policies address essential research-based attributes of effective professional learning. Reviewers might use this policy analysis tool in place of or in addition to Tool 4.3. It uses the same framework as Tool 4.3, although it uses, as criteria, the seven standards of effective professional learning, which are drawn from research. Each standard has three core components.

Purpose	To assess the effectiveness of professional learning policies based on Standards for Professional Learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools 4.2.1 and 4.3.2, if completed • Tools 4.4.1: <i>Current professional learning policy assessment</i> • Standards for Professional Learning
Best uses	In district leadership teams or in policy review teams as an alternative or in addition to Tool 4.3.
Time	60 minutes

Directions

- Review the policies identified as a result of completing Tool 4.2.1 and Tool 4.3.2, if completed.
- Complete the analysis of current professional learning policies based on standards of professional learning using Tool 4.4.1
- Discuss assessment results using the following questions as a guide:
 - Which standards do our current policies address? How effectively do they address those policies? What adjustments might be needed to strengthen them?
 - Which standards do our current policies not address? What do we want to do to ensure that these standards are addressed in our policies?

Tool 4.4.1 (page 1 of 4)

Participant

Current professional learning policy assessment

[Open MS Word version of Tool 4.4.1.](#)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?
		4 = high; 1 = low					
Learning Communities							
Continuous improvement							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of defined cycle for improvement efforts; cycle repeats over time and includes using data, ongoing goal setting, learning, application to practice, evaluation of results, and reflection; Ongoing individual, team, school, system, and state improvement process that includes professional learning for continuous improvement 							
Collective responsibility							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All responsible for student success—educators, students, policymakers, families; peer support and accountability 							
Alignment and accountability							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional learning is aligned with individual, school, system, and state goals; System alignment; Individual, peer and system accountability 							
Leadership							
Capacity for learning and leading							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define high expectations; Develop and/or provide for widespread knowledge and skills to facilitate/lead professional learning 							
Advocacy for professional learning							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link professional learning and student success; Engage with stakeholders in and out of school; Participate in professional learning internally and externally 							
Create support systems and structures							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with policy and decision makers; Create policies about professional learning; Provide guidelines for effective professional learning; Articulate expectations for professional learning 							

Tool 4.4.1 (page 2 of 4)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?
		4 = high; 1 = low					
Resources							
Prioritize human, fiscal, material, technology, and time resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources for professional learning; • Require a reasonable amount of time for professional learning; • Provide for stability in resources for professional learning 							
Monitor resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and analyze investments in professional learning; • Assess effectiveness of resources; • Focus resources on greatest area of need 							
Coordinate resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize use of resources; • Engage stakeholders in decisions about resources; • Assess the investment of resources to achieve intended results 							
Data							
Analyze student, educator, and system data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use multiple sources about student achievement, educator performance, and system performance to determine learning needs for students and educators; • Include demographic, achievement, process, and perception data; • Include analysis of inputs, outputs, and outcomes 							
Assess progress toward goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use data in ongoing manner; • Inform continued improvement; • Sustain momentum; • Measure progress 							
Evaluate professional learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure professional learning against standards; • Conduct internal and external evaluation; • Use evaluation results to inform decisions about professional learning 							

Tool 4.4.1 (page 3 of 4)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?
		4 = high; 1 = low					
Learning Designs							
Apply learning theories, research, and models							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include theories of change and logic models; • Consider job-embedded designs; • Use face-to-face, hybrid, and online designs appropriately 							
Select learning designs							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use multiple designs (formal and informal); • Align designs to intended outcomes; • Promote educator engagement in selecting and constructing learning design 							
Active engagement							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage educators to exhibit voice and choice in learning processes and products/ evidence of learning; • Support collaboration during learning; • Provide motivation to learn and change 							
Implementation							
Apply change research							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate change research to initiate and sustain implementation; • Identify implementation challenges and make appropriate refinements to increase results; • Understand how individuals and organizations respond to change 							
Sustain implementation							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that formal and informal professional learning develops and expands knowledge and skills; • Provide opportunities to deepen understanding and address problems of practice; • Support ongoing individual or collaborative learning through coaching, reflection, and reviewing results 							
Provide constructive feedback							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback from multiple sources for educators to refine practices; • Define behaviors; acknowledge progress toward expectations, and guidance toward implementation; • Facilitate two-way communication that is respectful and nonjudgmental; • Generate feedback to support continuous improvement 							

Tool 4.4.1 (page 4 of 4)

Policy Areas	Policy (Yes/No) (type/where)	Stability	Consistency	Specificity	Authority	Power	Evidence What evidence supports the ratings?
		4 = high; 1 = low					
Outcomes							
Meet performance standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use standards that delineate expectations for preparation, assessment, licensure, professional learning, practice, and evaluation 							
Address learning outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus professional learning for educators on student learning; • Use learning outcomes as the core content for educator professional learning 							
Build coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align professional learning to student content standards; • Sustain professional learning over time; • Provide for cumulative growth over time 							

Adapted from *Professional learning policy review: A workbook for states and districts* by Joellen Killion, copyright 2012 Learning Forward, pp. 62–65.

State and Provincial Education Leaders



State and provincial education leaders have significant responsibility for establishing the conditions and policies for professional learning. Their engagement in and support of effective professional learning in school systems and schools are paramount to ensuring continuous growth among teachers and principals. *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems* emphasizes the role of state and provincial education agencies in establishing policies that govern accountability and evaluation and that create conditions such as time and other resources for effective professional learning.

Like school system leaders, those at the state and provincial education agencies are responsible for defining professional learning in terms of the improvement cycle, establishing policies and resources to support effective professional learning in schools; building the capacity of school and school system leaders to implement effective professional learning and evaluate its impact; and embedding professional learning as a core element in teacher, leader, and school performance measures. The tools in this section are designed to engage leaders in reviewing policy and procedures related to professional learning. In addition, state and provincial leaders also may use Tools 4.2 and 4.3 to identify and assess the effectiveness of policies that affect professional learning.

Role of state and provincial education leaders in professional learning

Education laws and regulations at the state and provincial levels vary. Understanding those laws and regulations and the role of education agencies in professional learning is the first step before making any adjustments. The questions in Tool 5.1 provide an opportunity to unpack the role of education agency staff in professional learning.

Purpose	To understand the current state and provincial policies about and the agency's role in professional learning.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i>, particularly Chapter 3: Evaluation and Accountability (pp. 17–27) • Tool 5.1.1: <i>Responsibilities for professional learning</i>
Best uses	In leadership teams, with professional learning department or office staff, or among leaders of departments engaged in professional learning.
Time	75 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite participants to read the selected text and to review the discussion questions in advance.

At the meeting: Engage participants in discussion using the following questions as a guide.

Step 1	Invite participants to list individually what they consider to be the education agency's current top three to five beliefs about the role of professional learning in school, educator, and student success. Ask them to think about what drives the agency's actions and evidence from practice that supports the beliefs are drivers. After giving members time to work individually, invite them to join a triad to share their thoughts and the evidence that supports it.
Step 2	<p>The report states,</p> <p>Teachers regularly report that their professional learning is of variable quality, not suited to their development needs and not linked to their classroom teaching. It raises the question of to what degree school, district and state leaders are held accountable for the effectiveness of teacher professional learning.</p> <p>Evaluation and accountability mechanisms that ensure people throughout the system are held responsible for the quality of professional learning can in part redress these issues. These mechanisms range from quality-control measures for external courses and workshops. (p. 17)</p> <p>Use Tool 5.1.1 to delineate the person, office, department, etc. who has accountability and responsibility for various aspects of professional learning within your state or province.</p>

Tool 5.1 (page 2 of 3)

<p>Step 3</p>	<p>The passage below from the report describes the role of school and school system performance measures and how both are held accountable for success.</p> <p>Incorporating professional learning into evaluation and accountability policies has important implications for the sorts of data collected (discussed below), particularly for the reliance on professional judgment. Accountability systems that rely exclusively on school performance measures normally rely on student test score data. Incorporating a focus on professional learning requires a reliance on perception data and professional judgment (e.g., inspectors and district officials making a judgment on the quality of professional learning in a school). This is a profound shift for many systems given the efforts to develop precise school performance measures over the past few years. It requires faith and trust in the people making professional judgments. Two elements illustrate how this can operate effectively.</p> <p>The first is the extent and level of accountability that is applied at all levels of the system. For example, a state policymaker may feel concerned about the consequences of professional judgments made by a district or regional/cluster leader. This level of anxiety might be exacerbated if that district leader is not held accountable for those professional judgments. This engenders a low level of trust within the system.</p> <p>In contrast, in Shanghai, evaluation and accountability regularly relies on the professional judgments of district leaders. The leaders are expected to know their schools, their strengths and weaknesses, and the quality of professional learning. The leaders are therefore expected to exercise their professional judgment on a regular basis and have been promoted to that position because they are good at doing so. The district leader is held accountable for both the performance of their district and the quality of professional learning in the district. Among other things, their 360-degree performance evaluation stretches across different levels of the system. So, the system builds in a relationship of trust that supports accountability between levels of the system.</p> <p>Second, professional judgments are not replacing student and school performance measures. They complement performance measures to emphasize both student learning outcomes and the key drivers of improved teaching and learning.</p> <p>Overall, the system sends a clear message to schools: student learning is what matters most, effective professional learning is the best way to improve student learning, and evaluation and accountability will help embed the professional learning in schools and ensure its quality. (pp. 18–19)</p> <p>How does the education agency hold school systems and schools accountable for student and educator success? What role does professional learning play in the school and school leader accountability process? Cite specific examples or references to support your response.</p>
----------------------	---

Tool 5.1 (page 2 of 3)

Step 4	How do government education agencies in the high-performing school systems studied leverage performance appraisal and preparation and career advancement systems to support effective professional learning? How do current systems in your state or province compare to those in systems studied? What is the same and what is different? Based on this comparison, what changes might you consider to the current system?
Step 5	Chapter 3 describes the school accountability, across-school accountability, and performance management systems used in high-performing school systems and systems for dealing with under-performing schools. What procedures, requirements, or programs exist in your state or province that compare to these systems? How effective are these systems in improving school performance? What evidence exists that supports your assessment? What aspects of the systems in high-performing systems might be worth considering for your system?
Step 6	Based on our discussion, what are potential improvements needed in our professional learning system?

Tool 5.1.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Responsibilities for professional learning

Consider some common areas related to professional learning. Identify who holds authority and responsibility for each area. Use the chart on the next page to add other relevant areas as needed. Consider these key stakeholders as you identify levels of responsibility and authority:

- Teachers;
- Principals;
- School system leaders;
- School system policymakers (school boards/trustees);
- Universities and colleges;
- State/provincial education agencies;
- State school board/ministry officials;
- External partners;
- Teacher associations; and
- Principal associations.

Tool 5.1.1 (page 2 of 2)

Areas	Responsibility/Authority (NOTE: They may differ.)
Quality of professional learning	
Amount of professional learning	
Content of professional learning	
Function of professional learning	
Time for professional learning	
Funding for professional learning	
Assessment of the quality of professional learning	
Results of professional learning	
Assessment of the results of professional learning	
Rewards/incentives or recognition for professional learning	
Management of professional learning records	
Professional learning planning	
Implementation of professional learning plans	
Governance of professional learning	
Requirements for professional learning in specific areas	
Learning designs for professional learning	
Managing and monitoring services of external partners	
Others	

Tool 5.2

Facilitator

Improvement cycle in state or provincial education agencies

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems delineates an improvement cycle as a core process for effective professional learning that improves the quality of teaching and student learning. This cycle, according to the report, serves as a fundamental theory of change and a practical process. This tool engages state or provincial education agency staff in examining how they apply the improvement cycle in their work and to identify possible areas for strengthening the effects of their efforts.

Purpose	To examine how the state or provincial education agency implements the improvement cycle in its routine practices.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary in <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> (pp. 3–8) Chapter 3: Evaluation and Accountability in <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> (pp. 17–27) Tool 5.2.1: <i>Improvement framework in state or provincial education agencies</i>
Best uses	In leadership teams or in department teams.
Time	60 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite participants to read report or at least the Executive Summary and Chapter 3.

At the meeting:

Step 1	Divide the participants into small groups to complete Tool 5.2.1.	20 minutes
Step 2	Share the work from each team.	20 minutes (or longer depending on the number of teams)
Step 3	Reconvene to identify possible actions to take to strengthen the application of the improvement cycle in the state's or province's efforts to improve schools, the quality of teaching, and student learning through professional learning.	20 minutes

Tool 5.2.1 (page 1 of 2)

Participant

Improvement framework in state or provincial education agencies

Review the three components of the improvement cycle. As a small group discuss how the state or provincial education agency currently applies the improvement cycle. Cite as many examples as possible. Be ready to share several of your examples with other groups.

Improvement cycle components	Specific examples from our practice. Determine if these practices are widespread throughout the agency or limited to a particular department or group within the agency. Identify which department has primary responsibility for the examples noted.
Assess students' learning to identify their next stage of learning (at either the individual or school level)	
Develop the teaching practices that will provide the next stage of student learning (and clearly identifying what evidence would support this)	
Evaluate the impact of new practices on student learning so that teachers can refine their practice	

Tool 5.2.1 (page 2 of 2)

As a whole group, consider the following questions:

1. What patterns are evident in our examples? Which departments, divisions, offices, etc. within the agency have greater fidelity to the improvement cycle? How does this fidelity reflect in the department’s ability to conduct its work?

2. What might account for the differences in application of the improvement cycle across the agency?

3. In which components is our application of the improvement cycle strongest? What evidence supports this assessment?

4. Where is there opportunity for improvement?

5. Given the opportunities for improvement, what changes are needed and might be some ways to bring about those improvements?

6. What conclusions can we draw from the examples cited by the small groups of the application of the improvement cycle in our education agency?

Tool 5.3

Facilitator

Professional learning programs in high-performing school systems

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems identifies common professional learning programs in the high-performing systems. This tool engages state or province leaders in examining how they currently leverage each of the programs to support effective professional learning, teacher practice, and student learning and in proposing tactics for strengthening their application of the programs.

Purpose	To examine how state and provincial education agencies currently leverage various professional learning programs to support teacher practice and student learning and to propose tactics for strengthening application of the programs.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> Part II: Chapters 5–7 • Tool 5.3.1: <i>Professional learning programs in high-performing systems</i> • Tool 5.3.2: <i>Team preparation guide for reporting on professional learning programs</i>
Best uses	In leadership teams or in department teams.
Time	Approximately 90–120 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Assign participants to one of the three teams, each focused on one common program of professional learning across the high-performing systems. Ask them to use Tool 5.3.1 to prepare for the meeting.

At the meeting: Use Tool 5.3.2 to guide teams in their work.

Step 1	Invite each team to describe how high-performing systems enact their assigned program to improve professional practice and student learning; to identify current practices with specific examples related to their assigned program area; and to prepare a short presentation (approximately 8–10 minutes with an additional 5 minutes for clarifying questions) about their findings and the practices within the high-performing systems with other teams. After the presentations, the whole group will generate suggestions for strengthening current practices related to each program.	35 minutes
Step 2	Invite each team share its findings and encourage other team members to ask clarifying questions.	45 minutes
Step 3	Work together as a large group to generate ideas for strengthening current practices with each program. As an alternative, use a carousel brainstorm process to invite participants to suggest ways to strengthen current practices. Subsequent to this meeting, participants might want to prioritize suggestions and consider which they want to undertake collectively or individually to advance the quality of professional learning. This process might be formalized by using a weighted voting process to identify the top suggestions and by creating action plans to implement the suggestions and monitor, and evaluate implementation.	20 minutes

Tool 5.3.2

Participants

Team preparation guide for reporting on professional learning programs

Time: You will have approximately 25 minutes to prepare for your presentation.

Use the template below to organize your discussion and to prepare the presentation. Your presentation will be no more than 10 minutes. Following it, other team members may ask clarifying questions related to your assigned program. After all presentations are completed, all participants will be able to offer suggestions for improving current practices in all three program areas.

Professional learning program: _____

Describe this program.	
Describe specific examples of this program in high-performing systems and how they use it to improve professional practice and student learning.	
Cite specific examples of how this program is currently implemented within the state/ province. If possible, identify the known effects of this program using evidence whenever it is available.	
Identify possible ways to strengthen current applications of this program to increase its overall effectiveness and results.	

Tool 5.4

Facilitator

Professional learning within the education agency

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems indicates that professional learning is the responsibility of everyone. It specifies that policies that support effective professional learning “operate across different levels of the system so district and government officials are held accountable for the quality of professional learning across the system” (p. 18). The report also describes how career advancement tracks support educator career growth and leadership development. This tool explores how the state or provincial agency positions professional learning for its employees as a lever for leadership development, agency improvement, career advancement, and performance measurement.

Purpose	To analyze how the education agency employs professional learning for leadership development, agency improvement, career advancement, and performance measurement.
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems</i> • Tool 5.4.1: <i>Identifying types of professional learning within the education agency</i> • Tool 5.4.2: <i>Recommendations for professional learning within the education agency</i> • Tool 5.4.3: <i>Summarized list of professional learning priorities</i>
Best uses	In leadership team, cross-department teams, or improvement committees.
Time	60–75 minutes

Directions

Before the meeting: Invite participants to read the report.

At the meeting:

Step 1	Engage the participants in examining how the education agency employs professional learning for its own staff to develop leadership, improve the agency, advance careers, and measure performance. Use Tool 5.4.1 to record examples of current practice.	30 minutes
Step 2	Using the discussion of specific examples in place, generate possible additions or revisions for consideration and further study. Use Tool 5.4.2 to prioritize recommended ideas.	30 minutes
Step 3	Use Tool 5.4.3 to summarize prioritized recommendations.	10 minutes

Tool 5.4.1

Participant

Identifying types of professional learning within the education agency

Use this tool to identify how the education agency uses professional learning for each purpose. Cite specific examples and use names of programs when appropriate.

Leadership development	Career advancement	Agency improvement	Performance measurement

In what other ways does the education agency leverage professional learning for its staff?

What are some examples?

Based on what we have identified, what are possible recommendations for strengthening how professional learning contributes to the agency’s success. Prioritize the list using Tool 5.4.2.

Tool 5.4.2

Participant

Recommendations for professional learning within the education agency

Discuss the list of recommendations generated in Tool 5.4.1. Reduce the list to distinct ideas that are clear and understood by all participants. List them in the table below.

Establish a set of criteria to use for prioritizing the ideas. Some possible criteria might include:

- Potential for the greatest impact on educators;
- Potential for the greatest impact on student learning;
- Can be established/accomplished without additional cost;
- Will require substantial change in policy;
- Can be established/accomplished within the current policy landscape; etc.

Use the criteria table to assess each recommendation for its fit with each criterion and to prioritize the recommendations. Record the prioritized list of recommendations and additional explanation and information in Tool 5.4.3.

Recommendations	Criterion #1	Criterion #2	Criterion #3	Criterion #4	Criterion #5	Criterion #6	Etc.

Tool 5.4.3

Participant

Summarized list of professional learning priorities

Priority	Recommendation	Details