



ACTION STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING **Standards for Professional Learning**

BY LEARNING FORWARD

Standards for Professional Learning set the vision for high-quality professional learning by defining the content, processes, and conditions that lead to great teaching and learning for all students and educators.

When states, provinces, school systems, and other jurisdictions adopt Standards for Professional Learning in policy and tie adoption to the actions that impact practice — for

example, integrating standards into educator performance processes or requiring standards alignment in district planning — practice changes as a result. And when policymakers are convinced by compelling evidence that standards strengthen outcomes in schools, they adjust policy to reinforce their use.

Learning Forward believes that all educators have a role to play in advocating for Standards for Professional Learning adoption and

implementation, no matter their role or positional authority. This tool is designed to help you plan the action steps that make sense for your role and stage of implementation.

For more information on standards policies and practices, visit **standards.learningforward.org**, where you'll find Action Guides by role, an explanation of how standards lead to change, and many more resources. More detailed guidance for adopting standards into policy will be available soon.

ACTION STEPS FOR SYSTEMS THAT HAVE ADOPTED THE STANDARDS

Adoption of Standards for Professional Learning creates alignment and coherence across the system. At the state level in the U.S., state boards of education adopt Standards for Professional Learning in formal policy. In some states, the standards are written into state regulations and code, either with the full list of standards or referencing the publication and website. Districts may also adopt the standards.

If your state, province, or district has adopted the standards, you can use them as a catalyst for immediate action. Review the following action steps and note which you have already done, are beginning to do, should consider doing, or are not ready to consider.

Action step	Already done	Beginning to do	Consider doing	Not ready to consider
Convene a panel of leaders from education associations to build their understanding of Standards for Professional Learning and endorse their use with their stakeholders.				
Launch a statewide professional learning academy for staff from the state education agency, institutions of higher education, educator associations, and the regional education agencies.				
Establish a protocol for annual review of professional learning statewide, using the standards as the framework, with an opportunity for an open comment period.				
Use the standards as a tool to align the use of federal funds for implementation and monitor high-quality state and district professional learning initiatives.				
Deploy the Standards Assessment Inventory to gather data about how well district and school activities are aligned to the standards to identify professional learning priorities, successes, gaps, trends, and growth areas.				

OTHER ACTION STEPS FOR STATE AND PROVINCIAL POLICY

In addition to adopting Standards for Professional Learning as policy, states and provinces can use and embed the standards into policy in other ways. Review the following actions and mark whether your state or province has already done this, is beginning to do this, should consider doing this, or is not ready to consider this.

Action step	Already done	Beginning to do	Consider doing	Not ready to consider
Align educator and school leader professional standards and evaluation processes to Standards for Professional Learning.				
Ensure that regional service centers map their programs to the standards.				
Use the standards as a framework for grants to districts and schools to incentivize a systemic approach to improving professional learning.				
Use the standards as the framework for a statewide professional learning advisory committee.				
Embed the standards in state recertification requirements or evaluation systems.				
Inform any formal or ad hoc legislative or state agency committees about the importance and impact of the standards.				

TOOLS

OTHER ACTION STEPS FOR DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

If Standards for Professional Learning have not been adopted at the state or province level, there are still many ways to embed the standards within systems. Review the following actions and mark whether your district, state, or province has already done this, is beginning to do this, should consider doing this, or is not ready to consider this.

Action step	Already done	Beginning to do	Consider doing	Not ready to consider
Develop a professional learning plan to delineate how educator capacity building will align to and support the district or school strategic plan.				
Define how district central office leaders, school leaders, and coaches will build their capacity to lead, facilitate, and monitor professional learning for others.				
Embed standards into all district policy regarding professional learning.				
Focus a collective review of standards by all staff to inform the articulation of short- and long-term school-based professional learning needs and goals.				
Provide common language and expectations across district departments and programs, and ensure consistent ways of designing, implementing, and measuring outcomes across all professional learning.				
Require that external providers align their contracts and services to the standards.				
Design professional learning modules aligned to the standards for school principals and instructional coaches, who in turn build the capacity of all teachers.				

ACTIONS EDUCATORS CAN TAKE AS POLICY LEADERS AND ADVOCATES

If formal policy is not within their sphere of influence, educators can still use Standards for Professional Learning as frameworks and guidance in a variety of ways and advocate for their adoption. Classroom educators, team leaders, and coaches can increase the likelihood of standards adoption by reaching out to policymakers with documentation of their impact. Review the following first steps and consider where you stand with each of them.

Action step	Already done	Beginning to do	Consider doing	Not ready to consider
Familiarize yourself with the standards enough to feel comfortable talking about them and integrating them into your own practice.				
Choose professional learning that aligns to the standards.				
Provide feedback to supervisors about whether the professional learning available to you reflects an understanding of and alignment to the standards.				
Identify examples of standards-aligned professional learning from your own experience, reading, peer networking, and other sources.				
Document the impact of standards-aligned professional learning on your practice and share it with supervisors and decision-makers.				