

A Professional Learning Pop Quiz and Summer Homework

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Effective professional learning should be at the top of everyone's list to ensure successful implementation of [Common Core State Standards](#), a growth-oriented teacher evaluation culture, and new student assessments. Because the [revised Standards for Professional Learning](#) were introduced in 2011, more information than ever is at hand about professional learning that changes practice.

So here's a quick pop quiz you can take for yourself to determine if your school or system is on the right track in how it approaches professional learning. Mentally check each statement that applies to your school or system.

- Most educators invest a majority of their professional learning time with a learning team that engages in a cycle of continuous improvement that is driven by data to improve outcomes for both educators and students.
- Most educators share responsibility for the success of all students with the other members of their learning teams.
- Systems provide teachers opportunities to develop the leadership skills essential to implementing effective professional learning.
- Educators at all levels in the organization are advocates for effective professional learning.
- Adequate time, dollars, and support are available for professional learning.
- Professional learning priorities are identified, supported, and assessed for impact.
- Student, educator, and system data inform professional learning planning and evaluation.
- Learning theories and design are aligned to learner needs and intended outcomes.
- Ongoing feedback, coaching, and other support mechanisms key to effective implementation of new practices accompanies all major initiatives.
- Outcomes for profession in standards for student performance, teaching, and leadership.

How many of the above statements applied to your school or system? If you are feeling uncomfortable with your results, I recommend the following homework assignment to prepare for student success for the 2013-14 school year.

Immerse yourself in the freely available information on the standards. Research has documented that effective professional development may lead to better practice and student outcomes when it meets research standards. Unfortunately, too few system school leaders have immersed themselves as well as hold members accountable for ensuring teachers only have access to the professional learning that meets the standards.

Enlist others to study with you. Consider your professional development experience and what distinguished what was helpful and what was not. See how the standards align to your most helpful experiences (if not, please contact me to share your experiences). Enlist others to identify ways to protect the resources of time and money that are allocated toward the professional learning that will have the greatest impact. The standards can show the path and hopefully next year at this time, you will score 100.

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