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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

Professional Learning Guidance

COLLEGE AND CAREER READY
A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION FOR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

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## DoDEA Professional Learning Guidance Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a systemic approach to professional learning for all Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) educators (teachers, administrators, specialists and student support providers). DoDEA's professional learning system encompasses five elements, which are the systemic definition for professional learning standards, expectations, planning process and a model for evaluation. The intent is that any provider of professional learning will adhere to this guidance.

Professional Learning System for DoDEA

Professional Learning System → Systemic Definition → Standards → Expectations → Planning Process → Model for Evaluation → Systemic Implementation
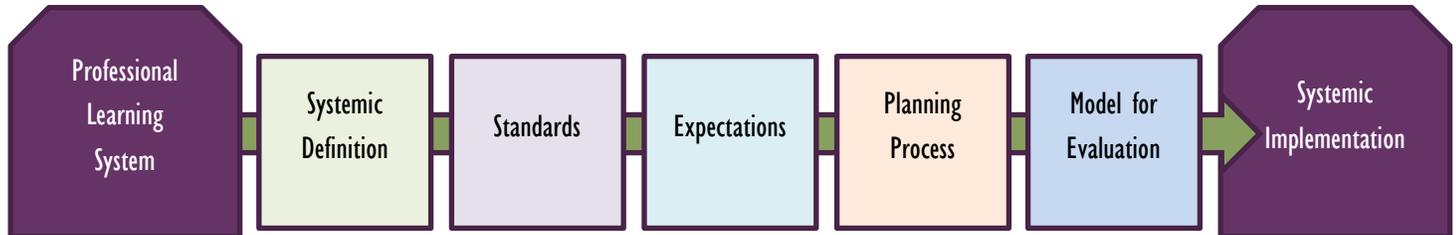
Systemic Definition

DoDEA has shifted from the use of the term 'professional development' to 'professional learning.' This shift highlights the focus on DoDEA being a learning-centered organization.

Professional learning is a process that continues over time and expects change in practice for educators and results for students. Professional learning is ongoing, relevant and job-embedded. Professional learning provides opportunities for individual and collaborative professional dialogue, analysis, application and reflection aligned to ongoing improvements in professional practice and student achievement.

Standards for Professional Learning

Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council), a leading contributor to defining high-quality professional development for educators, developed the Standards for Professional Learning with the contribution of 40 professional associations and education organizations, including the National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers. These standards make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices and dispositions they need to help students perform at higher levels. Over 35 states have adopted the Standards for Professional Learning and are implementing a coherent system of support for educators' continuous growth, particularly relating to the successful implementation of standards and assessments.

DoDEA has adopted the Standards for Professional Learning as a guide to the development of a system of supports to provide job-embedded professional learning, enhance instructional leadership capacity, create collaborative networks of support and encourage the innovative practice and instructional shifts necessary to help every military-connected child be ready for college and career.

The Standards for Professional Learning are:

Standard		Description
I	Learning Communities	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility and goal alignment.
II	Leadership	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate and create support systems for professional learning.
III	Resources	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring and coordinating resources for educator learning.
IV	Data	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students, and uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator and system data to plan, assess and evaluate professional learning.
V	Learning Designs	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
VI	Implementations	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students, applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
VII	Outcomes	Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students and aligns its outcomes with educator performance (competencies) and student curriculum standards.

For detailed information, visit http://learningforward.org/standards.

DoDEA Expectations for Professional Learning

DoDEA must expect more from its investment in professional learning. A review of literature primarily from R. DuFour, S. Hord, M. Fullan, T. Kanold, and D. Kirkpatrick clearly indicates what works when developing a professional learning system. These expectations will guide the design, development, implementation and sustainment of a high-quality professional learning system that focuses on results for students. The expectations are aligned to the Standards of Professional Learning.

The expectations are:

Expectation	Description	Alignment
1. Planning for Professional Learning	DoDEA's professional learning incorporates a systematic process for planning that includes analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation. This planning process addresses DoDEA's priorities, is developed at every level of the organization, aligned to districts' and schools' continuous improvement plans and program needs and specifies changes in educational practice and student growth.	Standard V
2. Alignment to Goals and Priorities	DoDEA's professional learning is aligned to school, district, and/or DoDEA goals and priorities for student achievement (content, pedagogy, pedagogical content knowledge and student programs).	Standard VII
3. Clear Goals and Learning Outcomes	DoDEA's professional learning consists of clear goals and learning outcomes relevant to educator competencies and desired student outcomes for all learners.	Standard VII
4. Design based on Student Data	DoDEA's professional learning is designed using multiple types and sources of student and professional learning data and explains how the data analysis determines student learning needs and professional learning outcomes.	Standard IV
5. Models Adult Learning Practices	DoDEA's professional learning models good pedagogical practice and applies knowledge of adult learning theory to engage educators.	Standard V
6. Professional Learning Communities	DoDEA's professional learning stimulates a culture of collaboration and partnerships among educators within and across school, district, regional and Headquarters communities. These communities are united in their commitment to improvement of student performance, continuous growth of professional practice and the achievement of district and school improvement goals.	Standard I
7. Regular Opportunities Led by Well-prepared Facilitators	DoDEA's professional learning occurs regularly as job-embedded, virtual, or face-to-face learning and is facilitated by well-prepared educators.	Standard II
8. Supports Integration of Content Areas	DoDEA's professional learning supports integration across content areas and other strategies across curriculum standards and assessment.	Standard V
9. Supports the Needs of All Learners	DoDEA's professional learning supports the needs of all learners through differentiation of instruction.	Standard V
10. Resources Aligned to Professional Learning Needs	DoDEA's professional learning makes use of relevant resources and routinely safeguards the alignment of resources of time, talent (internal and external to DoDEA) and funding to ensure that the identified goals and outcomes are met.	Standard III
11. Advances Application of Learning to Job	DoDEA's professional learning advances educators' ability to apply acquired knowledge, skills, and strategies to their particular content and/or context.	Standard VI
12. Research-based Approaches	DoDEA's professional learning uses current research and evidence to select or create professional learning structures and implementation support appropriate for the learning outcomes.	Standard VI
13. Goal-oriented and Ongoing Evaluation	DoDEA's professional learning is evaluated based on the Kirkpatrick Model (described on page 8), and all professional learning shall have Levels 1 and 2 evaluations and include Levels 3 and 4 evaluations whenever relevant to school, district or system learning goals. All levels of evaluation of professional learning shall be transparent, shared with participants, and utilized for ongoing program improvement.	Standard IV

DoDEA Professional Learning Planning Process

To be effective, professional learning must be relevant to educators' needs and designed with the adult learner in mind. A systematic process to plan professional learning ensures that the Standards for Professional Learning are achieved. The planning process meets the Expectations for professional learning by building of knowledge and skills which results in the ability to transfer the learning into professional practice. The model adapted by DoDEA is based on a five-phase process, which is commonly referred to as the ADDIE Model. ADDIE is an acronym for: analyze, design, develop, implement and evaluate.
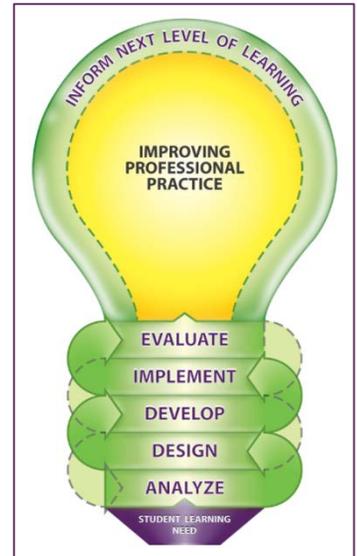
Professional Learning Planning Components (ADDIE Model)

Analyze:
- Use a variety of data to identify the learning problem.
- Conduct a learner analysis to identify the learner's needs and existing knowledge.
- Identify constraints to determine delivery options.
- Create a professional learning plan inclusive of roles, responsibilities and a timeline.
- Create professional learning objectives and align them to the professional job competencies of the learner.
- Establish professional learning outcomes that will improve professional practice and student learning. These outcomes must be based on student learning expectations and current student data (Kirkpatrick Model Levels 3 and 4).

Design:
- Specify learning objectives and design a detailed professional learning plan document.
- Create a professional learning overview that includes the scope and sequence of the content, taking into account the learning outcomes, activities and scheduled delivery time.
- Create an evaluation plan based on the Kirkpatrick Model for professional learning.

Develop:
- Create/produce learning materials and any readiness activities, based on the design phase.
- Develop follow-up activities to ensure application of learning.
- Support ongoing feedback between the designer and applicable subject-matter experts to ensure the professional learning plan will meet the outcomes established.
- Develop evaluation tools based on the Kirkpatrick Model.

Implement:
- Address logistical needs of delivery.
- Ensure provisioning of resources.
- Implement the professional learning plan as designed.
- Prepare environment to support learning.
- Engage the learner throughout the session.
- Disseminate readiness and follow-up activities.
- Use multiple formative assessment strategies to monitor learning and adjust the instruction.
- Collect professional learning session evaluation data (Kirkpatrick Model Levels 1 and 2).

Evaluate:
- Measure the effectiveness of professional learning using the four levels defined within the Kirkpatrick Model for evaluation.
- Utilize the data to improve the program, maximize transfer of learning to behavior and subsequent organizational results and to determine the value of the training and professional development to the organization.

Considerations when Planning Professional Learning:

1. Ensure alignment to professional learning standards, DoDEA priorities, needs and requirements.
2. Professional learning plans should be driven by continuous improvement processes.
3. Carefully consider facilitation; an effective facilitator is critical.
4. Plan to differentiate based upon the current learning levels of the intended participants.

Evaluating the Impact of Professional Learning (Kirkpatrick Model)

Evaluations of professional learning historically only assess the participants' satisfaction and their opinions of their professional learning experiences. Evaluations of professional learning must look at how to better understand its influence on teachers and document the impact on student learning. In order to assess the level of impact, DoDEA has adopted a model to evaluate professional learning —the Kirkpatrick Model. The model consists of the following evaluation levels:

- **Level 1**: Evaluates how participants respond to the professional learning.
- **Level 2**: Measures if the participant actually learned the material.
- **Level 3**: Considers if the participant is implementing what he/she learned.
- **Level 4**: Evaluates if the training positively impacted the organization.

The Four Levels of Evaluation Defined

Level	Definition
Level 1: **REACTION**	The degree to which participants find the professional learning favorable, engaging and relevant to their jobs. • **Customer Satisfaction**: The degree to which participants are satisfied with the professional learning. • **Engagement**: The degree to which participants are actively involved in and contributing to the learning experience. • **Relevance**: The degree to which the participants will have the opportunity to use or apply what they learned.
Level 2: **LEARNING**	The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the professional learning. • **Knowledge**: *"I know it."* • **Skill**: *"I can do it right now."* • **Attitude**: *"I believe this will be worthwhile to do on the job."* • **Confidence**: *"I think I can do it on the job."* • **Commitment**: *"I intend to do it on the job."*
Level 3: **BEHAVIOR**	The degree to which participants apply what they learned during professional learning when they are back on the job. In order for this behavior to occur, required processes and systems that reinforce, encourage and reward the performance of critical behaviors on the job must be in place (also known as **required drivers**).
Level 4: **RESULTS**	The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the professional learning and subsequent reinforcement and support. These results may not be immediately apparent, therefore use leading indicators. • **Leading Indicators**: Short-term observations and measurements suggesting that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on desired results (collaborative leadership effort and evidence collection).

Foundation Principles for Evaluation

For maximum impact, the Kirkpatrick Model should be implemented using the Kirkpatrick Foundational Principles.

1. *Begin with the end in mind.*
   Establish the value of the professional learning before the program starts. It is important that the results are defined in measurable terms so that all involved can realize the ultimate outcomes of the professional learning plan. Clearly defined results will increase the likelihood that resources will be used most effectively and efficiently to accomplish the mission.

   All four levels of evaluation need to be considered at every step in the program design, execution and measurement.

2. *Return on expectations is the ultimate indicator of value.*
   Many learning professionals start designing and developing suitable programs without knowing the results and behavior changes expected of participants attending the professional learning. Stakeholder expectations define the value that professional developers are responsible for delivering.

   Learning professionals must ask the stakeholders questions to clarify and refine their expectations on all four Kirkpatrick evaluation levels, starting with Level 4 results. This is a negotiation process in which the professional developers make certain that the expectations are satisfying to the stakeholder and realistic to achieve with the resources available.

   Once stakeholder expectations are clear, learning professionals then need to convert those typically general wants into observable, measurable success outcomes by asking the question, "What will success look like to you?" Those outcomes then become the Level 4 results — the targets to which you can sharply focus your collective efforts to accomplish return on expectations.

3. *Partnership is necessary to bring about positive return on expectation.*
   Research has validated that professional learning events typically produce about 15% on-the-job application. To increase application and therefore program results, additional actions need to occur before and after formal professional learning.

   Producing return on expectations, however, requires a strong Level 3 execution plan. Therefore, it is critical not only to call upon partners to help identify what success will look like, but also to design a cooperative effort throughout the learning and performance processes in order to maximize results.

   Before professional learning, learning professionals need to partner with district (instructional systems specialists) and school leadership (principals, assistant principals, and teachers) to prepare participants for professional learning. Even more critical is the role of the school leader after the professional learning. They are the key people to reinforce newly learned knowledge and skills through support and accountability. The degree to which this reinforcement and coaching happens directly correlates to improved performance and positive outcomes.

4. *Value must be created before it can be demonstrated.*
   Reinforcement that occurs after the professional learning event produces the highest level of learning effectiveness, followed by activities that occur before the learning event. Time spent on the pre-training and follow-up activities that translate into the positive behavior change and subsequent results (Levels 3 and 4) are what an organization seeks.

Formal professional learning is the foundation of performance and results. To create ultimate value and return on expectations, strong attention must be given to Level 3 activities. To create maximum value within the organizations, it is essential that learning professionals redefine their roles and extend their expertise, involvement and influence into Levels 3 and 4.

5. *A compelling chain of evidence demonstrates your bottom-line value.*
Following the Kirkpatrick Foundational Principles and using the Kirkpatrick levels of professional learning, evaluation will create a chain of evidence that shows the value of the entire partnership with leadership effort. The evidence consists of *quantitative and qualitative data* that sequentially connect the four levels and show the ultimate contribution of learning and reinforcement.

When workplace learning professionals work in concert with the leadership partners, this chain of evidence supports the professional learning effort and produces the value of working as a team to accomplish the overall mission. The chain of evidence serves to unify the learning functions, not to isolate professional learning or set it apart. This unity is critical for Level 3 execution, where business value is produced.

Systemic Implementation of Professional Learning

Full implementation of professional learning design requires that leaders and learners understand that each level of the organization has a role and responsibility in capacity building. While professional learning can be designed and delivered for a variety of formats, all professional learning embraces continuous improvement and promotes a growth mindset. Building a learning culture that focuses on results is best developed, supported, and sustained in effective professional learning communities (*see DoDEA PLC Guidance, January 2017*). As a system, each group has a role and a responsibility in professional learning as well as for systemic student achievement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Policy/Guidance/Planning

	Headquarters (HQ)	Center for Instructional Leadership (CIL)	District	School
Policy/Guidance/Planning	▪ Provides leadership, guidance, and sets the system priorities. ▪ Removes and reduces barriers that keep the work from moving forward. ▪ Uses data and reports from strategy groups to inform decision-making on priorities. ▪ Establishes policy and guidance to support professional learning plan development for ALL levels of the organization. ▪ Develops a systemic annual professional learning plan that is aligned to DoDEA priorities and continuous improvement needs. ▪ Ensures that professional learning supports integration across content and program areas and subpopulations.	▪ Develops a CIL annual professional learning plan that integrates and supports DoDEA priorities, district and school improvement and professional learning plans, and educator and student learning needs. ▪ Reviews multiple forms of district-wide and school-level student achievement data and educator learning needs to annually assess support requirements.	▪ Develops a district-wide, annual professional learning plan that integrates and supports DoDEA priorities; district and school improvement needs and student learning needs, with specific attention to achievement gap data.	▪ Leadership Team develops the school professional learning plan consistent with research and best practices that supports integration across content areas, including special populations. Professional learning should align with district goals. ▪ Aligns resources (time, talent, and funding) to support student achievement and professional learning needs.

Capacity Building

	HQ	CIL	District	School
Capacity Building	▪ Provides professional learning for the CIL. ▪ Provides program-specific professional learning for instructional systems specialists.	▪ Establishes a cadre of professional learning facilitators to build capacity of district staff and school and teacher leaders. ▪ Conducts coaching and mentoring and facilitates professional learning communities (PLCs) at the CIL, district, and school leader levels.	▪ Supports building administrators in the development of school professional learning and continuous improvement plans. ▪ Provides leadership and professional learning to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of PLCs. ▪ Shares and implements best practices and lessons learned for College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS). ▪ Conducts coaching and mentoring for CCRS and program implementation.	▪ Engages in professional learning communities that focuses on CCRS implementations. ▪ Develops in-house capacity of teacher leaders to lead content and grade-level specific strategies. ▪ Provides support on the use of data and data analysis to inform the effectiveness of instruction and assists in school-wide data analysis.

Development

	HQ	CIL	District	School
Development	▪ Develops or secures systemic professional learning (modules, blended in a train-the-trainer approach) that is robust, differentiated and embedded.	▪ Develops professional learning that is aligned to DoDEA's priorities and meets the needs of the districts and schools. ▪ Aligns and disseminates resources to support professional learning.	▪ Liaises with CILs to develop professional learning for district specialists and school leadership.	▪ Collaborates with district and CIL staffs to provide professional learning for school leadership teams, teacher leaders and teachers. ▪ Develops professional learning that is aligned to continuous improvement.

Delivery

	HQ	CIL	District	School
Delivery	▪ Delivers systemic professional learning (modules, blended in a train-the-trainer approach) that is robust, differentiated, and embedded.	▪ Delivers systemic professional learning, with a focus on the instructional leadership needed to achieve learning outcomes.	▪ Delivers CCRS and program professional learning, with a focus on the instructional shifts needed to achieve learning outcomes.	▪ Delivers professional learning that is aligned to continuous improvement and is robust, differentiated and embedded.

Monitor

	HQ	CIL	District	School
Monitor	▪ Monitors a formative and summative professional learning evaluation process and data that informs change in practice and student achievement results.	▪ Monitors and evaluates systemic professional learning, with a focus on the instructional leadership needed to achieve learning outcomes. ▪ Ensures consistency and fidelity of implementation of professional learning initiatives. ▪ Collaborates with district leadership to review current state and progress through school walk-throughs. ▪ Monitors CIL-led professional learning evaluation data for leadership practice, and disseminates implications for change in practice. ▪ Monitors CIL-led professional leaning for leaders that supports the implementation of systemic initiatives	▪ Monitors and evaluates CCRS and program professional learning, with a focus on the instructional shifts needed to achieve learning outcomes. ▪ Collaborates with school leaders and teacher leadership to review current state and progress through school walk-throughs. ▪ Ensures consistency and fidelity of implementations by sharing across schools about what works in continuous improvement and CCRS implementation. ▪ Monitors professional learning evaluation data for improvement in instructional practice, and disseminates implications for change in practice.	▪ Reviews multiple forms of formative and summative student achievement data and assesses educator learning needs to develop continuous improvement and professional learning plans. ▪ Evaluates professional learning sessions to determine ongoing support through change in practice and student achievement data.

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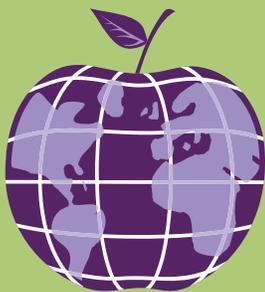
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