Delaware
Department of Education

Backmapping Model for Planning PD

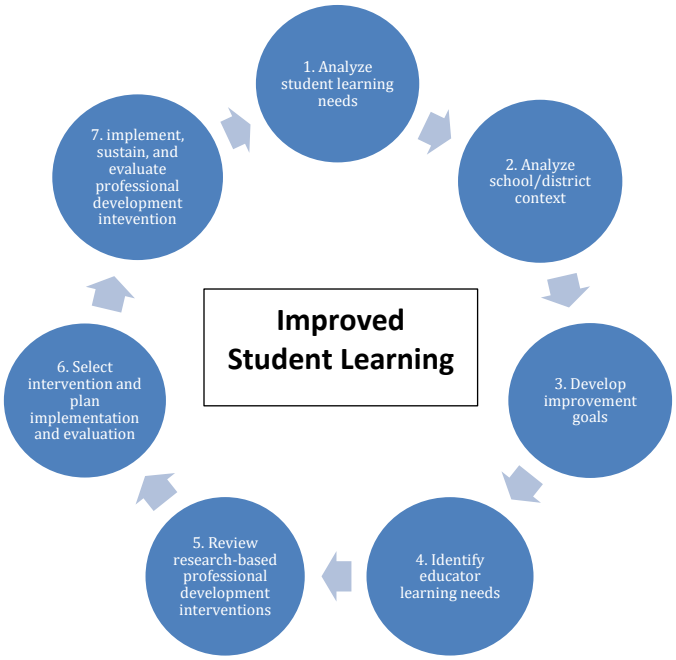
Effective Professional Learning in Delaware:
Establishing a Shared Vision for Educator Support and Development

Backmapping Model for Planning Professional Development

The Backmapping Model:

The Backmapping Model for Planning Professional Learning describes a seven-step process for planning professional development (Killion, 1999). A district, school, department, or grade level can use this process, but when analysis and planning take place at the school and/or department level, a closer alignment with student learning needs is more likely to occur.

Some of these steps may seem familiar for they are similar to most school improvement planning models. In fact, school improvement and professional development should complement and be aligned with each other. School improvement identifies student learning goals while professional development assists educators to acquire new knowledge and skills in order to accomplish those same student learning needs. Depending on the current school/district improvement process, this planning model may suggest a few additional steps to ad to established processes.



Adapted from: Standards into Practice: School-Based Roles Innovation Configuration Maps for Standards for PL (Learning Forward, 2012)

Attachment D

Selected Terms and Concepts:

A. Learning Communities

Educators undertaking the seven steps of continuous improvement:

- Analyze educator, student, and school data to identify student learning needs.
- Define educator professional learning goals based on student learning needs
- Select and implement evidence-based designs for professional learning to achieve professional learning goals.
- Provide job-embedded coaching and other forms of assistance to support transfer of learning.
- Assess and evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning.
- Inform ongoing improvement in teaching, leadership, and learning.
- Tap external assistance when necessary.

B. Learning Designs

What are high-quality learning designs?

- Outcomes aligned with performance standards and student learning outcomes;
- Active engagement;
- Reflection;
- Metacognition; and
- Ongoing support.

1. Learning Environments

A range of learning environments are possible for high-quality learning designs:

- Online (dynamic, i.e., social networking, and static, i.e., online courses, repositories of information, video cases, etc.);
- In-person (or face-to-face); and
- Hybrid (or blended).

2. Types of Learning Designs

(Note: Frequently multiple designs are coupled together in a single learning experience)

- Peer coaching
- Coaching
- Collaborative learning communities
- Action research
- Examining student work, e.g., assessment results, work products, assignments, etc.
- Examining educator work, e.g., assignments, assessments, communications, learning tools, etc.
- Co-construction of learning tools, i.e., lesson plans, common assessments, units, etc.
- Participating in online communities and networks
- Courses (online, in-person, hybrid)
- Workshops (usually shorter in length than courses)

- Instructional rounds
- Walk-throughs
- Co-teaching
- Lesson study
- Video reviews and critiques
- Observing or presenting demonstrations
- Observing peers and/or students
- Discussion/Dialogue groups
- Socratic seminars
- Cooperative learning
- Data analysis
- Reading research and scholarly papers, books, etc.
- Attending conferences
- Writing papers for publication
- Case studies

3. Factors that Influence the Selection of Learning Designs

Educators must consider a range of factors when they decide which learning designs to use for a given situation.

a. Individual Factors
   - Learning preference
   - Experiences in education
   - Experiences outside of education
   - Personal background and beliefs (beliefs, attitudes about learning and change, culture, language, etc.)
   - Previous experience with content
   - Experience with change
   - Initial level of understanding and use of the content
   - Perceived need and urgency
   - Perceived value and purpose
   - Opportunity to contribute to design and content of learning
   - Experience with learning designs employed

b. School and System Factors
   - Established need and urgency
   - Clear, consistent, and shared vision and goals
   - Experience with previous change efforts
   - Culture for risk-taking and learning
   - School's and system's experience with past change efforts
   - Stability of leadership
   - Time available for professional learning
   - Availability and opportunities for sustained support, practice, coaching, and feedback
   - Expectation about the degree of fidelity of implementation

- Monitoring system
- Sufficiency of resources (staff, time, materials, technology, and funds) to support learning

c. Content-Related
   - Complexity of the learning outcomes
   - Degree of change expected
   - Type of learning outcomes (e.g., awareness, application, mastery, etc.)