Content and Pedagogy

Quality professional learning enhances educators’ expertise to increase students’ capacity to learn and thrive.

Quality professional learning focuses on the knowledge and skills that educators need in order to help students bridge the gaps between their current level of knowledge, skill, and understanding and expected student outcomes. Therefore, opportunities for professional learning must focus educators’ learning on teaching specific curriculum. In addition, skillful educators must have a deep understanding not only of the disciplines they teach, but also of the progression of subject matter across grade levels, and of the ways students learn the content and apply it to engaging and challenging problems.

Educators must build a repertoire of instructional strategies that enable them to address new student standards—standards that require deeper, specialized knowledge of instructional strategies that are based in research, new technologies, better formative assessments, and improved ways of serving California’s diverse student population. Professional learning also requires educators to develop expertise in designing and modifying curricula and instruction based on evidence of student progress; monitoring and adjusting implementation and change processes; learning how to collaborate with colleagues and experts; and providing constructive feedback.

Element A: Curriculum Content and Materials

Quality professional learning builds educators’ knowledge and understanding of subject-matter curricula and materials so that all students meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers.

INDICATORS

Quality professional learning:

1. Focuses on learning the content required in meeting state and district outcomes for students.

The Quality Professional Learning Standards are available online at: http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/documents/caqpls.pdf
2. Deepens and extends subject-matter knowledge within educators’ own discipline and across other disciplines.

3. Builds educators’ capacity to use curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, equipment, and technology that support the teaching and learning of subject-matter content.

4. Increases educators’ use of universal and linguistically and culturally responsive materials.

**Element B: Pedagogy**

Quality professional learning expands educators’ instructional and assessment skills, practices, and behaviors so that all students meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers.

**INDICATORS**

Quality professional learning:

1. Builds educators’ repertoires of evidence-based instructional approaches for various content areas and diverse student learning needs.

2. Creates multiple opportunities, in different settings, for educators to practice and receive feedback on new skills.

3. Uses instructional techniques and strategies that educators then use with students.

4. Develops educators’ abilities to use formative and summative assessment information to plan and modify content and instruction.
Element C: Learning Support

Quality professional learning develops educators’ attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions to ensure that all students have differentiated support to meet content and performance expectations and are ready for college and careers.

INDICATORS
Quality professional learning:

1. Demonstrates how to modify and scaffold instruction based on data and knowledge of how students learn and develop.

2. Supports educators in building flexible learning pathways and processes for students; inclusive classrooms; and alternative programs.

3. Develops knowledge of, and skills for, how to address students’ academic, cultural, social, physical, and emotional well-being.

4. Increases educators’ capacity to strengthen students’ participation, engagement, connection, and sense of belonging.