



How to Use PVAAS to Plan Professional Learning

How can PVAAS help me in my work in developing professional learning opportunities to enhance the professional growth of educators?

Planning and providing professional learning opportunities on an annual basis targeted to school level needs is critical to enhancing performance results for all students. Targeted professional learning at the school level, coupled with a focus on district/LEA level priorities, is key to enhancing the professional growth of all educators and an important role for school and district leaders.

Planning effective professional learning opportunities requires a focus on data to inform needs and targeted supports. PVAAS reports provide essential data that can be used at the beginning of the school year, as well as throughout the school year, to inform professional learning needs!

Defining Professional Learning

As defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and in our current education literature, professional learning is “an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing educators...with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards.” A critical part of the definition states that professional learning is “sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused” ([Learning Forward Professional Learning Association](#)).

With that understanding, leaders must plan for professional learning to occur in a variety of ways, including formal presentations and workshops, but also by creating and/or enhancing professional learning opportunities in the daily operation of the district and school. Thinking “outside the box” is the key to creative and effective planning for professional learning opportunities!

Some potential opportunities may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Planned in-service time, LEA/district days and school-based days
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Differentiated supervision options
- Peer coaching

- Instructional coaching
- Collaborative data analysis meetings/protocols
- Webinars and online learning opportunities
- Literature reviews and book studies
- Lesson study
- Collaborative work (collaborative planning, collaborative data analysis, etc.)
- Committee work
- Action research projects
- SLOs

Professional learning opportunities are most effective when they are informed by data – and PVAAS is an important source of that data, available throughout the year!

Key PVAAS Reports to Inform Planning for Professional Learning

1. School Launchpad report
 - a. School Value-Added report
 - b. School Diagnostic report(s)
2. Growth of Student Groups report

Benefits of Using PVAAS to Inform Planning for Professional Learning

Planning professional learning with PVAAS (and other) data in mind offers:

- An intense focus on the importance of considering growth in continuous improvement efforts
- The enhancement or development of district and school culture that embraces data to inform all decisions, including professional learning planning
- Alignment with school as well as LEA/system goals and priorities, from both a growth and achievement perspective
- A focus on the subject(s) that are highest priority relative to growth
- A focus on specific grade levels to support grade level efforts and goals relative to growth
- A common focus on initiatives, rather than an array of topics and scattered, unrelated content, moving the district and school to shared goals and accountability for improved student performance results
- A focus on specific variables (e.g., curriculum, instruction, assessment, organization) most likely to be root causes of achievement and growth results
- An opportunity to empower educators to take responsibility for their own learning as informed through analysis of relevant data

Considering Both School and District/LEA Priorities in Planning Professional Learning

School leaders typically have the responsibility to plan professional learning opportunities for staff that encompasses needs specific to the school level, and also acknowledges and provides opportunities for support and/or focus on LEA/district level professional learning initiatives and related activities.

To that end, time allocation in finding opportunities is an important variable in determining how to address both levels of learning. School leaders must frequently find creative ways to establish additional time for professional learning opportunities, which often can be infused into already existing activities, meetings, forums, etc. Recognizing that professional learning is much more than an event, or an established in-service day is key to developing effective professional learning opportunities. Taking advantage of formal time set-aside for school based professional learning, as well as embedding the focus areas into a variety of aspects of the school can result in more effective professional learning planning and delivery!

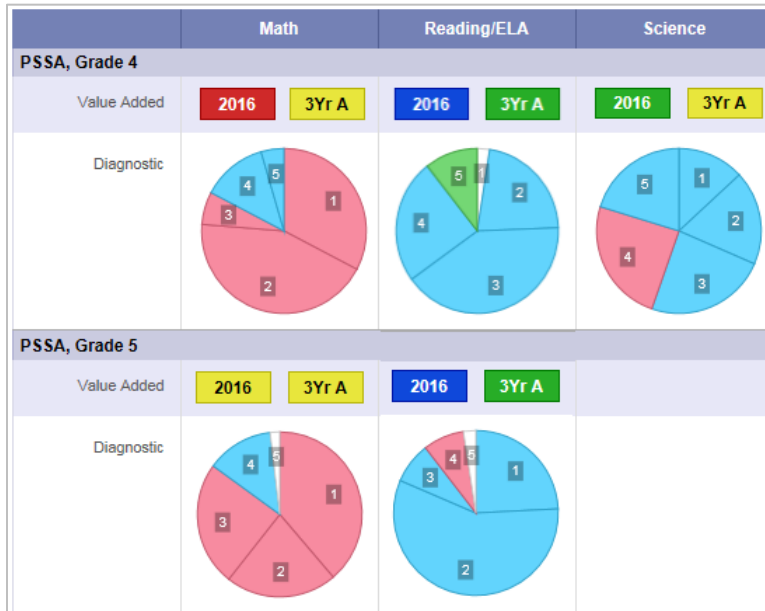
How to Plan Professional Learning

1. Determine timeline for planning the school's professional learning plan
 - a. Tied to release of PVAAS data, and use of historical data (e.g., PVAAS Launchpad provides a three-year average for school growth; a more detailed history of student growth is included on the PVAAS School Value-Added report and the School Diagnostic reports)
 - b. Examine district professional learning plan to gain "big picture"
2. Identify time blocks available to school leaders for school planning
3. Determine what PVAAS reports will be used in identifying professional learning content
 - a. PVAAS School Launchpad
 - PVAAS School Value-Added report
 - PVAAS School Diagnostic report(s)
 - b. Growth of Student Groups
 - c. Other data/reports as appropriate
4. Create opportunities to share PVAAS reports, along with other data, with staff to provide focus and establish expectations for a common and tight focus
5. Provide opportunities for staff to collaborate on possible activities and avenues for professional learning
6. Guide and support teacher leaders, and all staff, to integrate the identified professional learning targets into their everyday work
7. Plan for revisions to the school-based professional learning plan, based on new data as it becomes available during the year, and based on a return to PVAAS reports to further refine plans and opportunities
8. Plan for end-of-year evaluation based on staff feedback. Use feedback in future planning.

Examples

Elementary School Example: Planning Professional Learning

School Launchpad (Value-Added & Diagnostic Reports)



The School Launchpad tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. Students in Grades 4 and 5 Math “fell behind,” and historically the 3-year average shows the same
2. Students in Grades 4 and 5 ELA “gained” in SY15-16, with a 3-year average of “maintaining”
3. Students in Grade 4 Science “maintained” in SY15-16
4. Grades 4 and 5 Math students in lowest and middle achieving groups (students in quintiles 1, 2, and 3) “fell behind,” (i.e., on average, that group “fell behind” in Math, contrasted with that same group in ELA)

Note: Go to the Diagnostic report to see historical pattern of growth by achievement groups

Growth of Student Groups: Students with IEPs

Students with IEPs

▶ Expand

Subject	Growth Measure	Standard Error	Growth Index
▶ Math			1.41 LB
▶ English Language Arts			0.13 G
▶ Science			-1.41 Y

The Growth of Student Groups report for students with IEPs tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. Students with IEPs are “falling behind” in Science. This is in contrast to “gaining” in Math and “maintaining” in ELA.

PVAAS reports at this elementary school illustrate:

1. A need for a priority focus on Math versus ELA, across both Grades 4 and 5
2. A need for a priority focus on middle to lower achieving students in Math
3. A need for a priority focus in Science for students with IEPs

Possible Professional Learning Planning

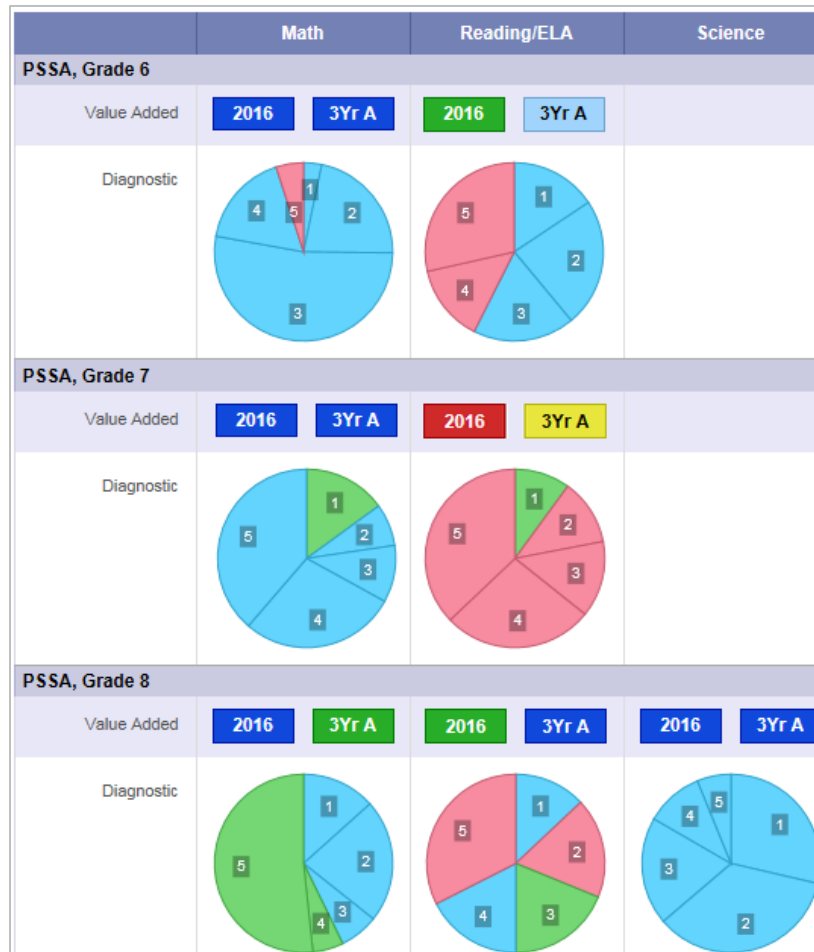
- Using the *Digger Deeper into Content Areas* and *Digging Deeper: Students with a History of Lower Achievement* documents, teachers collaboratively agree on potential root causes and professional learning needs
- Teachers and School Leader(s) collaborate on determining variety of opportunities for professional learning in area of mathematics and science

Examples:

- Teacher committee develops math protocol for data team meetings
- PLC meetings are focused on math pedagogy
- Book/research study focuses on best practices in math instruction
- Grade level meetings focus on co-planning and analysis of student work samples
- Teachers participate in local professional learning opportunities through IU and PaTTAN
- Faculty meetings have a “math sharing” activity each month
- Teachers have option to participate in Lesson Study group for Act 48 hours
- Induction program includes a session on effective math instructional practices
- School based walkthrough team collects data on student engagement in math block
- School based in-service time (Act 80 day) is focused on math, using both outside and teacher leaders as presenters
- Teachers, core and special education, participate in professional development sessions on use of manipulatives in the teaching of mathematics
- Teachers, core and special education, participate in professional learning opportunities relative to scaffolds and supports for students in the Science content area

Middle School Example: Planning Professional Learning

School Launchpad (Value-Added & Diagnostic Reports)



The School Launchpad tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. There are more significant needs relative to growth in ELA than Math and Science
2. Grade 7 ELA students “fell behind” in the most recent year; the 3-year average also indicates a history of “falling behind”
3. Grade 7 ELA students in highest, middle, and lower quintiles “fell behind”; the lowest quintile students are “maintaining”
4. Grades 6 & 8 ELA students “maintained”; 3-year history suggests looking more deeply at the PVAAS Diagnostic report to see 3 year trends as 3 year average indicates “gaining”
5. Highest quintile students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 ELA “fell behind”
6. Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 Math “gained”; students of varying achievement levels are also “maintaining” and/or “gaining” (with the exception of highest quintile in Grade 6)
7. Students in Grade 8 Science “gained”

Growth of Student Groups: Economically Disadvantaged

Economically disadvantaged

▶ Expand

Subject	Growth Measure	Standard Error	Growth Index
▶ Math			-0.92 G
▶ English Language Arts			-1.04 Y
▶ Science			7.71 DB

The Growth of Student Groups report, for students who are economically disadvantaged, tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. Students who are economically disadvantaged are “falling behind” in ELA. This is in contrast those students “gaining” in Science and “maintaining” in Math.

PVAAS reports at this middle school illustrate...

- A need for a priority focus on ELA across all grade levels as compared to Math and Science
- A need to specifically target action planning for the highest achieving students in ELA across all grades
- A need for increased focus and support for Grade 7 ELA
- A need for Science teachers to maintain practices in Science, with focus on how to support ELA eligible content in the Science class
- A need for Math teachers to maintain practices in Math, with additional focus on how to support ELA eligible content in Math
- A need for Math teachers in Grades 6, 7, 8 to maintain quality of instructional program with focus on improving instructional program for highest quintile students in Grade 6, lowest quintile students in Grade 7, and students in above average and highest quintiles in Grade 8
- A need for increased focus on practices known to be effective with economically disadvantaged student groups

Possible Professional Learning Opportunities: Customized PD Planning at Subject and Grade Levels

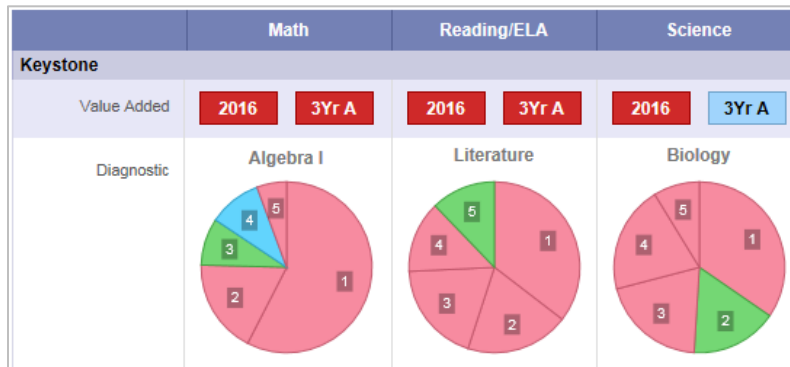
- Plan for focus on subject priority at the school level, with sharing ownership across all subject area teachers
- Plan for differentiated professional learning opportunities for ELA, Math, Science, and non-core subject area teachers, focusing on common needs across grade levels (vertical teaming) as well as specific grade level/subject level needs
- Use *Digging Deeper into Content Areas* to empower teachers to identify areas of professional growth needs
- Use *Digging Deeper: Students with a History of Lower Achievement*

Examples:

- School-based in-service/Act 80 time devoted to vertical and horizontal teams of ELA teachers working collaboratively on curriculum, instruction, assessment, organization variables identified as potential root causes
- Middle School teachers (across subject areas) participate in building level committee to evaluate master schedule to increase allocated time for tiered supports (intervention and enrichment) for ELA and Math
- Grade level PLCs are organized by subject, with opportunities for both horizontal and vertical teaming to focus on identified needs (e.g., analysis of common assessments, lesson study, etc.)
- Non-core teachers as well as Math, Science, and Social Studies teachers are engaged in determining strategies to incorporate close reading and writing in their subject areas
- Professional learning focus is on building background knowledge and research-based vocabulary instruction in all subjects

High School Example: Planning Professional Learning

School Launchpad (Value-Added & Diagnostic Reports)



The School Launchpad tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. On average, students “fell behind,” (i.e., did not perform as expected in Algebra, Biology, and Literature)
 2. The 3-year averages in Algebra and Literature also indicate that, on average, students “fell behind”; this is contrasted with 3-year average in Biology where students “gained ground”
- Note: Go to the Diagnostic report to see historical growth patterns; specifically examine Keystone Biology in light of change from 3-year average.*

Growth of Student Groups: English Learners

English Learners

▶ Expand

Subject	Growth Measure	Standard Error	Growth Index
▶ Math			2.47 DB
▶ English Language Arts			-1.44 Y
▶ Science			1.03 LB

The Growth of Student Groups report, for students who are English learners, tells me (observation statements/patterns) the following.

1. Students who are English Learners are “gaining” in Math and Science, but “falling behind” in ELA

PVAAS reports at this high school illustrate...

- A need for focus on relevant CIAO (curriculum, instruction, assessment, organization) variables (*Digging Deeper into Content Areas*) related to Keystone Algebra, Literature and Biology
- A need to provide additional supports for students identified as English Learners
- A need to provide supports to lower achieving students in all three content areas
- A need for focus on research-based practices known to be effective with English Learners

Possible Professional Learning Opportunities:

- Using the *Digging Deeper into Content Areas* guide (school level section), teachers collaboratively determine likely root cause(s) and develop action plans for current year
- Use *Digging Deeper: Students with a History of Lower Achievement* guide to identify strategies relevant to English Learners
- Principal/school leader conferences with each Keystone teacher to self-assess using questions in teacher section of *Digging Deeper* guide
- Form committee to study MTSS at high school level to determine how additional supports can be provided at tiered levels
- Dedicate time during school in-service/Act 80 days to formative assessment for all Keystone course staff
- Create committee to review alignment of LEA/district curriculum with PA assessment anchors and eligible content
- Use scheduled time to collaboratively analyze common unit assessment results and co-plan re-teaching lessons
- Facilitate peer observations/peer coaching based on identified areas for improvement