



Using PVAAS and Other K-12 Data to Inform 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 LEA/district level priorities, is key to enhancing the professional growth of all educators and an important role for school and LEA/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, one-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, and by creating and/or enhancing professional learning opportunities in the daily operation of the LEA/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)
- Options within differentiated supervision
- Peer coaching

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

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. LEA/District and School Value-Added reports
2. LEA/District and School Diagnostic reports
3. LEA/District and School Growth of Student Groups reports
4. LEA/District and School Teacher Value-Added Summary reports

Benefits of Using PVAAS to Inform Planning for Professional Learning

Planning professional learning with PVAAS and other K-12 data in mind offers:

- An intense focus on the importance of considering growth in continuous improvement efforts
- 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
- The enhancement or development of LEA/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 common focus on initiatives, rather than an array of topics and scattered, unrelated content, moving the LEA/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 the 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 LEA/District 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 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 when available.
 - b. Examine LEA/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. Value-Added
 - b. Diagnostic
 - c. Growth of Student Groups
 - d. Teacher Value-Added Summary
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.