

The West Virginia Board of Education Definition of and Standards for Professional Learning

In late 2012 the WVBE approved a definition and standards to guide providers and educators as they facilitate and engage in professional learning. The definition states,

Professional learning includes *sustained* experiences that lead to the development of knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions educators need to help students perform at higher levels and achieve college and career readiness.

At that same time, the WVBE adopted the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning,¹ which together create a framework for professional learning leading to continuous improvement, especially at the school and district levels. According to the standards, ***professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students—***

- Occurs within ***learning communities*** committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- Requires skillful ***leadership*** to develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating ***resources*** for educator learning.
- Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system ***data*** to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
- Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning into ***learning designs*** to achieve its intended outcomes.
- Applies research on change and sustains support for ***implementation*** of professional learning for long-term change.
- Aligns its ***outcomes*** with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

The adoption of the new definition and standards signaled the beginning of a major, long-term shift in perspective as we reinvigorate professional learning communities statewide and embrace a system of continuous improvement.

¹ For more about the Learning Forward standards, including publications and other resources, visit <http://learningforward.org/standards>