

Backmapping Model for Planning Professional Learning

The Backmapping Model in Figure 2 outlines a seven-step process for planning professional learning. Some of the steps may seem familiar. They are, in fact, steps included in most state, school system, and school improvement planning processes. Improvement plans and professional learning plans complement one another and are essentially nested together.

Professional learning is a primary means for improving schools. Improvement plans identify student learning goals; professional learning plans identify what educators learn to achieve those goals.

The entire Backmapping process integrates the Standards for Professional Learning. The delineation of the stages below identifies the relevant standards. A core premise of the Standards for Professional Learning is the interrelationship among the standards. The standards work in unison to describe the attributes of research-based professional learning.

The Backmapping Model guides educators in planning professional learning that improves student success.

- **Step 1** engages educators in identifying student learning needs (Data standard).
- **Step 2** involves analyzing the department, school, school system, state, and federal context (Data and Learning Communities standards).
- **Step 3** involves development of an improvement goal that specifies improved student achievement as the end result (Outcomes standard).
- **Step 4** focuses on using data about educators to identify their learning needs in light of student learning needs and the established educator learning goals (Data and Outcomes standards).
- **Step 5** involves reviewing research and evidence about the content and professional learning designs and the requisite organization conditions that are successful in increasing educator effectiveness and student learning under similar circumstances as those identified (Learning Communities, Leadership, Resources, Learning Designs, Implementation, Outcomes standards).

- **Step 6** engages the planning team in selecting, adapting, or creating professional learning to meet identified goals, as well as planning for its implementation and evaluation (Learning Communities, Leadership, Resources, Data, Learning Designs, Implementation, Outcomes standards).
- **Step 7** involves implementing, sustaining, and evaluating professional learning (Learning Communities, Leadership, Resources, Data, Learning Designs, Implementation, Outcomes standards).

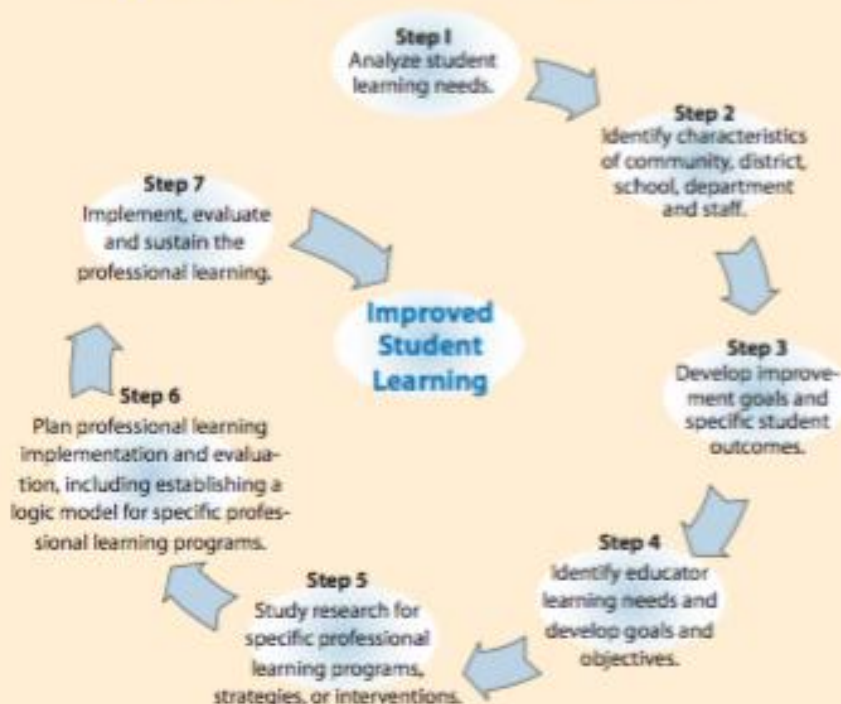


Figure 2. Backmapping model diagram

Tool for Studying Professional Learning Plans

Tool	Tool Title	Description
i	Websites to sample professional learning plans	These web-based resources give examples of different structures of state, school system, school, and individual professional learning plans.