

**NEW
TEACHER
CENTER**

DESIGNING FOR IMPACT

A tool for planning, monitoring, and assessing professional learning

What happens if we plan professional learning around measurable expectations for all the stakeholders involved in a project or program – students, teachers, mentors, coaches, specialists, PLC leaders, administrators, and organizations – from the design of the first session to the end of the year?

Did teachers find the learning opportunity beneficial? • Did they really learn anything? • What’s going to happen in the weeks and months ahead? • How can we know if transfer to classroom practice occurs? • Who is going to support and assess that transfer? • What organizational levers need to be in place? • What can we realistically expect to see in terms of specific student outcomes?

We can’t leave the answers to these questions to chance. Too often, instructional leaders have to rely on assumptions and intuition with limited data to guide professional learning design and decision-making. It can also be fairly difficult to assess the quality and impact of the learning experience.

Based on New Teacher Center’s experience supporting educators in the field and the work of [Dr. Thomas Guskey](#), DESIGNING FOR IMPACT defines an intentional process to cultivate the enabling conditions for effective, evidence-based professional learning.

Working backward from desired student outcomes, Guskey’s [five levels of evaluation](#) support effective professional learning design by asking planners to think through necessary program components in terms of who needs to do what (and how to measure it). Success at one level is necessary for success at the next.

Dr. Thomas Guskey is a professor emeritus and former professor of educational psychology at the University of Kentucky and a widely cited expert and author on the evaluation of professional learning for educators. His research, specifically the five levels of evaluation data, is aligned with NTC’s theory of change — professional support of educators leads to improved student learning and experiences through a logical sequence of events and supporting conditions.

“

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate the professional learning.”

—Thomas Guskey

Who needs to be involved?



Identify critical stakeholders

To get started DESIGNING FOR IMPACT, the first step is to **identify critical stakeholders**.

Critical stakeholders are those who are...

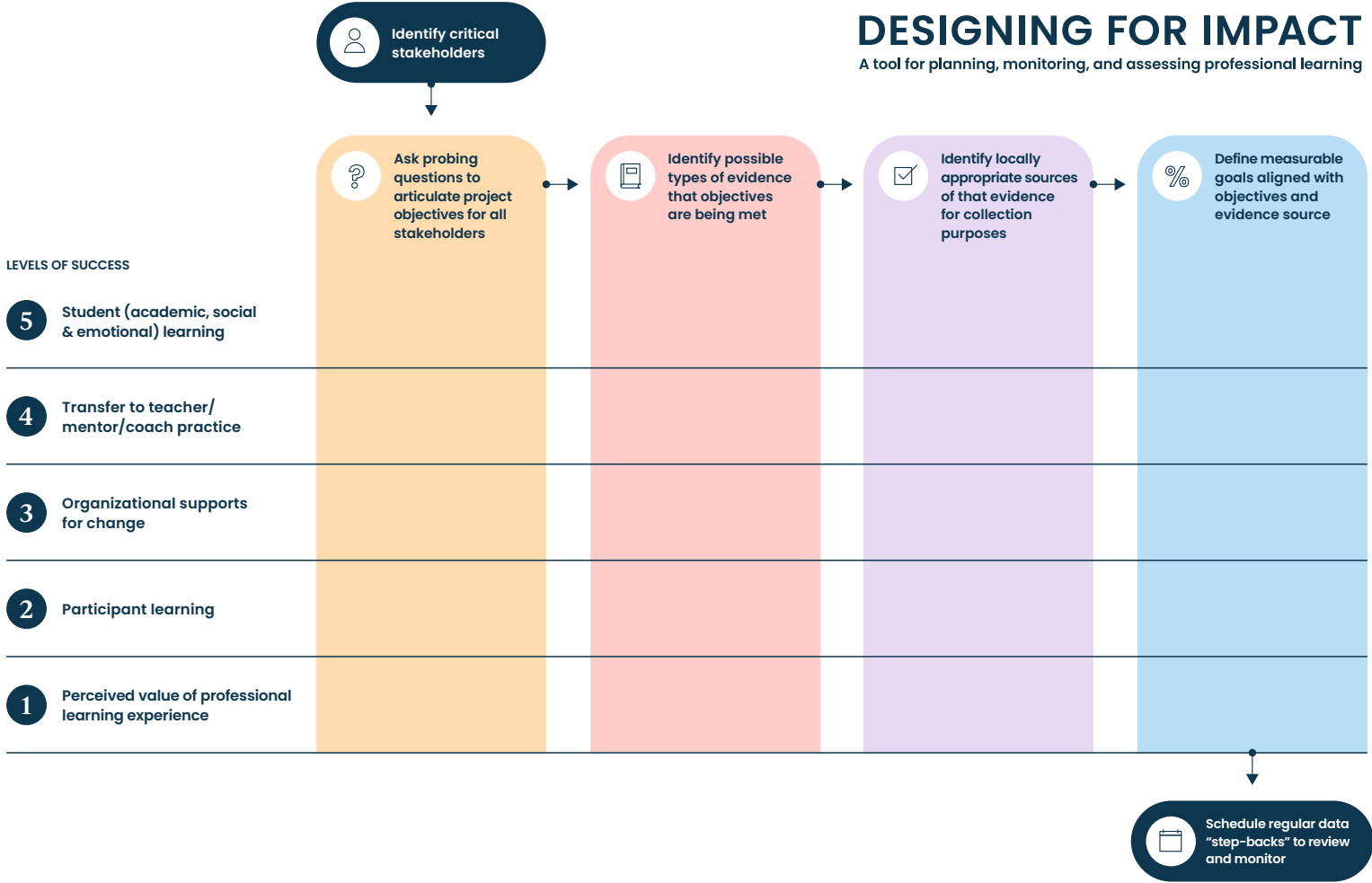
- directly impacted by the work (e.g., students, families, staff)
- active participants (e.g., teachers, PLCs, mentors/coaches)
- designers and facilitators of professional learning and leadership accountable for the program (e.g., program and school/district leaders, coaches and mentors, principals, specialists, and other instructional leaders)

We encourage partners to consider a broader group of stakeholders than might be typical.







NTC's impact strategy leverages evidence collected from school and classroom observations, coaching tools and protocols, observations of coaching practice, and feedback from students, teachers, mentors, coaches, and school and district leaders to evaluate progress toward goals in key areas that research suggests are important aspects of successful professional learning.

The next step is to draft out a plan aligned with each of the five levels using a conversation protocol that looks like this. In the pages that follow, we'll walk you through it.



DESIGNING FOR IMPACT Planning Protocol

LEVELS OF SUCCESS	 Ask probing questions to articulate project objectives for all stakeholders	 Identify possible types of evidence that objectives are being met	 Identify locally appropriate sources of that evidence for collection purposes	 Define measurable goals aligned with objectives and evidence source
5 Student (academic, social & emotional) learning	<p>How will students benefit from the focus of the professional learning? What changes do we expect to see in terms of student well-being, attitudes, behaviors, skills, performance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student work samples • Assessment results • Observations • Student surveys or self-assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly learning walks or walkthroughs • District benchmark assessments • Fall and spring coach observations • Student climate survey • Goal-setting documents in portfolios 	<p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between February and April, at least 45% of collected assignments will reflect... • By the end of the year, at least 80% of students will report feeling...
4 Transfer to teacher/mentor/coach practice	<p>What shifts in practice will drive student outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations • Lesson plans • Student work • In-field coaching • Self-assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning walks/walkthroughs • Lesson plan and work sample review • In-field coaching sessions • Educator surveys 	<p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of classroom observations reflect the majority of the lesson is spent... • 85% of teachers report... • 60% of reviewed lesson plans indicate...
3 Organizational supports for change	<p>What conditions will support or hinder the shifts above?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindsets and self-efficacy assessments • Attendance at professional learning • School leader support • Sanctioned time • Materials and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator surveys • Professional learning session rosters • Schedules/calendars • Focus groups/interviews 	<p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of mentors/teachers will have 1 protected hour per week... • By MOY, 100% of teachers and coaches will have engaged in 3 days of training on... • By EOY, 100% of coaches complete 4 coaching cycles reflecting the PL objectives
2 Participant learning	<p>What do participants need to learn in order to accomplish the objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific learning objectives for training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-session surveys • End-of-year surveys 	<p>EXAMPLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of teachers say they feel confident or very confident implementing strategies used in the PL
1 Perceived value of professional learning experience	<p>How will you know participants value the professional learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant feedback • Program and school leader feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant post-session surveys • End-of-year participant surveys • End-of-year school leader surveys 	<p>EXAMPLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of participants would recommend the learning session to a colleague



Ask probing questions to articulate project objectives for all stakeholders

Starting with the changes you want to see for students and identifying what the research says teachers need to do to support that development, ask probing questions for each level of evaluation.



Identify possible types of evidence



Identify locally appropriate sources of that evidence



Define measurable goals

LEVELS OF SUCCESS

<p>5 Student (academic, social & emotional) learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are one or two key things you would like to see happen for students? • Where might we see those student learning outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical and emotional well-being (e.g., happier, more engaged) • behaviors and skills (e.g., better attendance, goal-setting, problem-solving) • attitudes and dispositions (e.g., confidence as learners) • performance and achievement (e.g., demonstrating growth, understanding, proficiencies)
<p>4 Transfer to teacher/mentor/coach practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think teachers, mentors/coaches, and school leaders need to be doing in order to accomplish these goals for students? • What are the key practices we are striving for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What shifts in teacher practice will drive student outcomes? • What shifts in teacher support will drive teacher-specific student outcomes? • What shifts in leadership practices will catalyze those outcomes?
<p>3 Organizational supports for change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are school and district leaders informed and engaged? • What kinds of organizational support and/or organizational shifts will be important? • What conditions will support or hinder the shifts above? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is implementation facilitated and supported? • Is the support public and overt? • Are problems addressed quickly and efficiently? • Are sufficient resources, including time, made available? • Are roles and responsibilities clear? • Are successes recognized and shared? • What is the potential impact on the organization? • Might it affect organizational climate or procedures?
<p>2 Participant learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do teachers, coaches, and/or school leaders need to know/be able to do? • Are there specific professional learning objectives we should strive for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do participants need to learn in order to accomplish the objectives? • Did participants acquire the intended knowledge or skill? • What shifts do you expect to see?
<p>1 Perceived value of professional learning experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you know participants value the professional learning? • What will that look like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did participants like it? • Was time well spent? • Did the material make sense? • Will it be useful? • Was the presenter knowledgeable? • Did the physical conditions of the activity support learning?



Ask probing questions



Identify possible types of evidence that objectives are being met

Brainstorm the types of artifacts and activities that are appropriate for assessing progress toward program goals. Here are some examples:



Identify locally appropriate sources of that evidence



Define measurable goals

LEVELS OF SUCCESS

5 Student (academic, social & emotional) learning

- Work samples
- Assessment results
- Classroom observations
- Student surveys or self-assessments

4 Transfer to teacher/mentor/coach practice

- Classroom observations
- Lesson plan samples
- Student work assignments
- In-field coaching observations
- Self-assessments from teachers, coaches/mentors, school leaders, ILTs

3 Organizational supports for change

- Teacher and coach mindsets and self-efficacy assessments
- Attendance at professional learning
- School leader support for coaching/mentoring
- Time for coaching/mentoring
- Materials and resources

2 Participant learning

- Specific learning objectives for training

1 Perceived value of professional learning experience

- Participant feedback
- Program leader and school leader feedback



Ask probing questions



Identify possible types of evidence



Identify locally appropriate sources of that evidence for collection purposes

Where can you find that evidence? It's likely that it already exists. If not, what can you do to gather that information? Here are some examples:



Define measurable goals

LEVELS OF SUCCESS

<p>5 Student (academic, social & emotional) learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly learning walks or walkthroughs • District benchmark assessments • Fall and spring coach observations • Fall and spring classroom observations • Student climate surveys • Goal-setting documents in portfolios
<p>4 Transfer to teacher/mentor/coach practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly learning walks or walkthroughs • Fall and spring lesson plan and work sample review • Fall and spring in-field coaching sessions • Fall and spring classroom observations • End-of-year educator surveys
<p>3 Organizational supports for change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-of-year educator surveys • Professional learning session rosters • School schedules/calendars • Focus groups/interviews • Stakeholder surveys
<p>2 Participant learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant post-session surveys • End-of-year participant surveys
<p>1 Perceived value of professional learning experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant post-session surveys • End-of-year participant surveys • End-of-year school leader surveys



Ask probing questions



Identify possible types of evidence



Identify locally appropriate sources of that evidence



Define measurable goals aligned with objectives and evidence source

Start with level 5 to identify desired student outcomes and work backwards to level 1. Here's are some examples of types of outcomes for each level:

LEVELS OF SUCCESS

<p>5 Student (academic, social & emotional) learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between February and April, at least 45% of collected assignments will reflect... • By the end of the year, at least 80% of students will report feeling... • 90% of spring classroom observations receive ratings of 3 or higher on the student indicator for...
<p>4 Transfer to teacher/mentor/coach practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of classroom observations reflect the majority of the lesson is spent... • 85% of teachers report... • 60% of lesson plans reviewed indicate...
<p>3 Organizational supports for change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of mentors/teachers will have 1 protected hour per week in their schedules for 1-to-1 check-ins • By MOY, 100% of teachers and coaches will have engaged in 3 days of training on... • By EOY, 100% of coaches complete 4 pre-observation, observation, and feedback cycles reflecting the PL objectives
<p>2 Participant learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of teachers say they feel confident or very confident implementing strategies used in the PL
<p>1 Perceived value of professional learning experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of participants would recommend the session to colleagues

What's next?



Schedule regular data
"step-backs" to review
and monitor

The final step of DESIGNING FOR IMPACT is to determine who, how, and when teams will review the evidence together to monitor progress. We recommend scheduling step-backs at least quarterly to monitor progress toward

measurable goals and to more effectively pinpoint where obstacles have popped up and make adjustments along the way.

Our partners have found our tools for professional learning planning and progress monitoring help them to better define their goals, which leads to better program design. We've also found that stakeholders are eager to engage in evidence-based discussions to monitor and manage their work.

“

We were able to have intentional conversations around data, while also being nimble and responsive in adjusting our approach as we continued our work.”

School leaders want to engage. There is increased investment.”



**Want to learn more about
NTC's Impact support?**

[Impact by Design](#)

info@newteachercenter.org

**NEW
TEACHER
CENTER**

newteachercenter.org
(831) 600-2200