

About the Self-Assessment

Dear State Leaders,

The LINCS Professional Development Center developed a State Leadership Self-Assessment Tool that will help states gauge their priorities and implementation readiness for meeting the state leadership activity requirements in Section 223 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We hope that you will use this tool to support planning in establishing or operating a high-quality professional development (PD) program.

States’ self-assessment results can help guide participation in introductory and in-depth capacity-building activities sponsored by the LINCS PD Center. Technical assistance activities include webinars, training and train-the-trainer opportunities, and collaborative learning groups. State needs and priorities will inform topics for the collaborative learning groups (such as evaluating effectiveness of PD, developing instructional leaders, supporting professional learning communities, and using technology to deliver PD).

Collaborative learning groups:

* Are facilitated by topical subject matter experts
* Focus on common concerns of state leaders
* Incorporate opportunities for one-to-one consultations
* Provide opportunities for community engagement and peer sharing

We hope that you will find the Self-Assessment Tool useful and look forward to your participation in the activities sponsored by the LINCS PD Center. Contact the LINCS PD Center at [pdcenter@lincs.ed.gov](mailto:pdcenter@lincs.ed.gov).

**Background to Self-Assessment Tool**

The self-assessment tool was informed by a review of the existing literature on state PD programs and systems, knowledge gleaned from the 2014–15 National Reporting System narratives, and interviews with state leaders from nine diverse states on existing PD programs. States were selected to represent each region and a variety of governance systems, demographics (urban/rural, learner population, geographic size), numbers and types of student enrollment, number and status (FT/PT/volunteer) of teachers.

The literature review looked at the available studies for adult education and to relevant research from K–12 and other fields to supplement the limited research in the adult education field. Additionally, samples of PD survey questions and worksheets from states, associations, and national workgroups were gathered during the review.

**Key Findings**

The research identifies foundational components that provide the structural supports for effective PD systems, and key features of high-quality PD that should guide the design and implementation of PD activities. States need to address both the PD components and features as they are establishing or operating a PD program.

The elements that were identified through the literature review are reflected in the individual state NRS narratives and in the analysis of the nine state interviews. This is encouraging, as states can build on what they have in place to strengthen their PD programs. The self-assessment tool provides states an opportunity to identify what is in place and to what degree, and to identify gaps and determine priorities for next steps within the state context.



State Leadership Self-Assessment

# Introduction to the Self-Assessment

This State Leadership Self-Assessment is intended to support states in tracking their progress toward meeting the state leadership activity requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 223. States can use the tool to monitor their compliance with Section 223 requirements and to build a strong statewide PD program.

**What the Tool Includes**

The self-assessment tool has two parts:

* Part I. State Leadership Activities: This checklist focuses on the specific state leadership activity requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 223.
* Part II. Quality of Professional Development: This checklist ensures that the PD program aligns with current research and best practices in professional development in adult education.

Each part ends with a set of guiding questions that provide state leaders with an opportunity to reflect on their responses and assist in identifying priorities for further implementation activities. In the accompanying Asset Map tool, states can use their findings to develop a plan for next steps.

The items in the self-assessment checklists include links to examples where they are relevant across contexts. Further examples that are specific to a state or program context may be available through technical assistance offered by the LINCS PD Center. LINCS is also prepared to support states in using the results of this self-assessment to prioritize and plan next steps.

**Using the Tool**

This self-assessment tool should be completed by the key stakeholders who have the relevant information for each Part. Ideally, this would include the State Director and staff who are involved in planning and implementing PD for the state. State leaders may want to use a team approach for completing the tool in order to understand the state’s PD program from a variety of perspectives. The team might include state staff who oversee state leadership activities, PD providers at the state or regional levels, and representative program administrators and instructional leaders who can help to provide a comprehensive picture of the state’s PD implementation.

In addition to using the tool to track compliance and PD implementation, states may want to use this tool to:

* assess the strength of the foundational components of their PD programs
* inventory their PD strengths and areas for improvement
* support PD planning
* share with core WIOA partners
* align state leadership activities and the work of PD providers
* orient the field to WIOA state leadership requirements
* facilitate dialogue with the field about professional development offerings

# Part I. State Leadership Activities

The Part 1 checklist lists out the state leadership activity requirements named in WIOA Section 223 and can be used to self-monitor compliance with that Section. The response columns invite state agencies to list or describe the processes they are using to implement and document the leadership activities they have in place. This section should be completed by state staff, as the state is responsible for implementing and documenting state leadership activities.

1. ACTIVITIES
2. REQUIRED ACTIVITIES: Each eligible agency must use State leadership funds for the following adult education and literacy activities or enhance its adult education system.

| Item | Notes: List or describe the activities underway. | Notes: What documentation verifies that this activity is being carried out? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Adult education and literacy activities are aligned with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the unified or combined State plan. This includes the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals taking part in adult education and literacy activities. |  |  |
| 1. There are high quality professional development programs[[1]](#footnote-1) to improve instruction related to local activities required under section 231(b). This includes:  * instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as they relate to adults, |  |  |
| * instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, |  |  |
| * instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and |  |  |
| * dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs. |  |  |
| 1. Technical assistance is provided to adult education and literacy providers receiving funds under Title II, including: 2. assistance related to the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; |  |  |
| 1. assistance related to the role of eligible providers as one-stop partners to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and |  |  |
| 1. assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies. |  |  |
| 1. There is monitoring and evaluation of the quality of and improvement in adult education and literacy activities. |  |  |
| There is dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State. |  |  |

1. PERMISSABLE ACTIVITIES: Each eligible agency may use State leadership funds for one or more of the following adult education and literacy activities.

| Item | Notes: List or describe the activities underway. | Notes: What documentation verifies that this activity is being carried out? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers. |  |  |
| 1. The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including PD to support the use of instructional technology. |  |  |
| 1. The development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as they relate to adults. |  |  |
| 1. The development of content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. |  |  |
| 1. Providing assistance in:  * Developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of Title II; and |  |  |
| * Measuring progress toward those objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3). |  |  |
| 1. The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education (including linkages with postsecondary or higher education institutions). |  |  |
| 1. Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. |  |  |
| 1. Activities to promote workplace education and literacy activities. |  |  |
| 1. Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that— 2. specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition; and |  |  |
| (ii) take into consideration the following:  (I) state-adopted academic standards. |  |  |
| (II) the current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area. |  |  |
| (III) the primary indicators of performance described in section 116. |  |  |
| (IV) Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary or higher education institutions supported by the State or outlying area. |  |  |
| (V) Where appropriate, the content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State or outlying area. |  |  |
| 1. Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention. |  |  |
| 1. The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may:  * include new research-based assessment tools and strategies and |  |  |
| * identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels. |  |  |
| 1. Outreach to instructors, students, and employers. |  |  |
| 1. Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title. |  |  |

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

1. COLLABORATION: In carrying out this section (Section 223), eligible agencies shall collaborate where possible, and avoid duplicating efforts, to maximize the impact of state leadership activities.

| Item | Notes: List or describe the activities underway. | Notes: What documentation verifies that this activity is being carried out? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| In what ways are eligible partner agencies collaborating? |  |  |
| How is the state collaborating with federal offices and initiatives that support technical assistance (Examples: [LINCS](https://lincs.ed.gov), [WorkforceGPS](https://www.workforcegps.org/))? |  |  |

Key Takeaways for Part I: State Leadership Activities

These guiding questions provide state leaders an opportunity to reflect on their responses in Part 1 and assist in identifying priorities for further implementation activities. Designed as a self-assessment, these questions are deliberately reflective and do not lead into planning for next steps. Ideas for next steps might be noted for future reference.

Review the responses to Part I of the State Leadership Self-Assessment Tool. Then use these questions to reflect on the state’s progress toward meeting the state leadership activity requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 223.

1. What three activities stand out as activities that the state is doing well?
2. What three activities stand out as needing more attention?
3. Summarize what was learned overall about the strengths and areas needing attention.
4. How fully is the state documenting the leadership activities that are being implemented? Where is there a need for more complete documentation?
5. How might resources need to be reallocated to ensure that the required state leadership activities are being implemented and documented?

# Part II. Quality of Professional Development

The Part II checklist elaborates WIOA Section 223’s call for “high quality professional development programs” that is footnoted in Part I (item (a)(1)(B). It describes the research- and evidence-based elements of high-quality PD programs. These are divided into two sections: **(Part A) the foundational *components* of a high-quality PD program** (the key pillars of a PD system) and **(Part B) the *features* of high-quality PD activities**. Having strong PD program components in place enables states to support high-quality PD activities.

Use the scale below to check the status of each item described in the first column. The two right-hand columns invite respondents to list or describe the activities states have in place and the evidence of their effective implementation.

## A. Foundational Components of a High-Quality PD Program

These components of a high-quality PD program provide the structure for the PD program. The components also ensure that there are policies and guidelines to support the PD program and that there are people and resources committed to accomplishing the work. The components are foundational pillars that support the offering of high-quality PD activities as described in Part B.

### Continuous Program Improvement

The PD program uses collaborative, data-driven planning and evaluation processes that support continuous improvement.

| Component descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this component is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| There is a process for establishing a shared vision among state staff, program administrators, and teachers for PD that aligns to the state plan, local program and practitioner needs, current research, and national initiatives and policies. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| There is a coherent framework that guides the PD system (Examples: professional learning standards, [Association of Adult Literacy Professional Developers Professional Development Standards](http://aalpd.weebly.com/pd-standards.html), [Adult Education Teacher Competencies](https://lincs.ed.gov/programs/teachereffectiveness/competencies)). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state articulates the guiding framework to the field and makes explicit the connection between PD activities and that framework. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| There is a process to track and share data on PD participation, activities, and impact on multiple levels (e.g., classroom practices, attitude change, local program improvement, and change in the broader field). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| There is a process to use PD data for planning and continuous improvement toward the prioritized state PD goals. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state strengthens local program capacity to understand, capture and use the full range of PD data, including the use of teacher and local program self-assessment tools, to inform local and state PD planning (Examples: the [Adult Education Teacher Competencies Self-Assessment](https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/te/self-assessment.html), the [Program Conditions for Success](https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/te/conditions.pdf)). |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Communication System

The PD program has a system to manage PD communication, coordination, and dissemination.

| Component descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this component is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| There are people and resources in place to coordinate and manage the scheduling, recruitment for, and tracking of state-sponsored PD activities. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state uses targeted messaging to communicate PD activities to intended practitioner groups. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state maintains a user-friendly online portal that facilitates communication and offers opportunities for practitioners across the state to connect (e.g., through discussion boards, communities of practice). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state facilitates shared PD across systems (e.g., workforce, K–12) on boundary-crossing topics (e.g., career advising, College and Career Readiness Standards, proficiency-based high school graduation planning). |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Access to PD

The PD program has the support and resources to ensure access to PD opportunities for all adult educators.

| Component descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this component is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| In collaboration with WIOA partners, the state provides support through policies, guidance, and resources to ensure access to PD opportunities for all adult educators. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state assists programs in developing a supportive climate and uses strategies to promote participation in high-quality PD (Examples: incentives, use of technology, class substitutes, varied scheduling). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state fosters program-based instructional leaders to strengthen local program capacity and support teacher retention. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state PD program makes use of [LINCS](https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/te/conditions.pdf) and other national resources and supports the development of trainers, local program administrators, mentors, and instructional leaders to adapt such resources to serve the needs of local contexts. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## B. Features of High-Quality PD Activities

High-quality professional development activities reflect five features. The descriptors listed below for each feature offer guidance on how to ensure that high quality. State leaders might find it useful to use the checklist to not only assess the quality of the overall PD program, but also each PD offering or activity.

### Connected to Practice

PD activities are intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice (job-embedded)

| Feature descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this feature is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The methods for delivering PD are guided by the purpose, desired outcomes, timeframe, and opportunities to follow-up the activities. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| PD activities focus on application of learning and reflection on practice. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| PD activities include opportunities to share with peers (e.g. through demonstration, critical friend groups, peer observation) what’s been learned and how it has been applied. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Content Focused

PD activities focus on specific academic and programmatic content.

| Feature descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this feature is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The state PD program is prepared to provide activities that address:   * How to collaborate with WIOA core programs and Career Center/Workforce Board partners to implement the state plan, including career pathways and Integrated Education and Training models. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * How to plan and deliver high-quality evidence-based instruction on: * components of reading instruction and needs of adult learners |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * evidence-based instructional practices in reading, writing, speaking, math, ESL, distance education, and staff training |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * use of technology to improve system efficiencies, including training |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * transitions to post-secondary education (curricular and policy alignment) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * integrated ESL and occupational training |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * workplace education |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * standards-based instruction |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * assessment and the NRS |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * the needs of adults with learning disabilities |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * integrating technology into instruction |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * employer engagement |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * monitoring and managing student learning and performance through data |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * effectively communicating to motivate and engage learners |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Collaborative Learning

PD activities build knowledge and peer relationships through collaborative learning.

| Feature descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this feature is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The state builds the capacity of the field to use digital tools for PD, networking meetings and COPs that allow practitioners to work collectively. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state monitors the field’s use of digital tools for PD, networking meetings and COPs that allow practitioners to work collectively. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state supports teacher development through PD offerings that include collaborative problem-solving and peer learning. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state fosters teacher agency through activities that engage instructors in supported practice with clear feedback, reflection, analysis of data, and self-assessment. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Differentiated PD

PD activities are differentiated to address the varied needs of practitioners.

| Feature descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this feature is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The state PD program uses varied strategies to address the diverse contexts and learning preferences of the field through:   * varied formats (Examples: workshops/state conferences, job-embedded activities, mentoring, blended PD, self-paced courses, peer coaching, professional learning groups) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * use of technology (Examples: virtual training and online courses, COPs, online resource repositories) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * varied intensity (Examples: intensive tracks, short webinars, introductory awareness-building workshops) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state organizes PD that responds to the needs of the field by:   * content area |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * job role (e.g., teacher, administrator, and counselor) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * volunteer role |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * level of experience |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * digital literacy level |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state offers a broad scope of PD activities that balance breadth and depth. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Teacher Feedback

Teachers are provided clear feedback on their performance and progress in serving students.

| Feature descriptors | Not currently implemented | Planning to implement | Partially implemented | Fully implemented | Notes: List or describe the types of activities underway. | Notes: What does the state look for to know whether this feature is being implemented? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The state supports the use of professional self-assessment tools (Examples: professional standards, teacher competencies) to give practitioners information about their capacity and directions for growth. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state supports the use of student and program performance data to inform teacher understanding of their performance. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The state supports inquiry-based activities (Examples: practitioner research, reflective journaling, study circles) that build understanding of teacher and student performance. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Key Takeaways for Part II: Quality of Professional Development

These guiding questions provide state leaders an opportunity to reflect on the responses in Part II of the tool and assist in identifying priorities for further implementation activities. Designed as a self-assessment, these questions are deliberately reflective and do not lead into planning for next steps. Ideas for next steps might be noted for future reference.

Review the scores and responses in Part II of the State Leadership Self-Assessment Tool. Then use of these questions to reflect on the alignment of the state’s professional development program with the current research and best practices in professional development.

1. What stands out about the current PD program in reviewing the scores and notes?
2. What connections are there between the strength of the state PD program (Part A) and the quality of the PD activities (Part B)?
3. Summarize what was learned overall about the strengths and areas needing attention.
4. How might the results of this self-assessment help to document the WIOA State Leadership Requirement for high quality professional development (Sec. 223(a)(1)(B))?
5. How might resources need to be reallocated to ensure that high-quality PD activities are being implemented?

1. See Part II of this tool for guidance in the characteristics of high-quality professional development. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)