Recommendations for System and School Leaders
The Elements of Curriculum-Based Professional Learning

A broad gap exists between traditional professional development and professional learning that can help teachers experience the kind of inquiry-based learning we expect them to provide to their students. The following recommendations are drawn from *The Elements: Transforming Teaching through Curriculum-Based Professional Learning*, which explores how professional learning anchored in high-quality curriculum materials allows teachers to experience the instruction their students will receive and change their instructional practices, leading to better student outcomes. Learn more at www.carnegie.org/elements.

### Core Elements

- Ensure all teachers have access to high-quality instructional materials and professional learning to support their implementation.
- Establish support for the implementation of curriculum as the top priority for professional learning.
- Deploy skilled leaders and facilitators who support and recognize the importance of examining beliefs and assumptions throughout curriculum-based professional learning.
- Require curriculum-based professional learning, in both its design and facilitation, to be grounded in high-quality instructional materials, to deepen teachers’ content knowledge, and to prepare teachers to use the materials successfully with all students.

### Structural Elements

- Hire and develop professional learning designers, facilitators, and coaches with expertise in content and curriculum and facilitating collaborative learning.
- Review decision-making criteria that guide the selection of models of professional learning used with leaders and professional developers.
- Demonstrate commitment by engaging in sessions designed for leaders and teachers and sharing reflections.
- Audit and prioritize resources, including time for curriculum-based professional learning.
- Establish calendars and pacing guides that document the support, materials, and time to be allocated to curriculum implementation.

### Functional Elements

- Develop professional learning designers, facilitators, and coaches through learning experiences that resemble those they will use with teachers.
- Establish evaluation and feedback cycles to assess the progress and impact of investments in curriculum-based professional learning.
- Expect curriculum-based professional learning to challenge beliefs and assumptions, mirror the instructional approaches students will experience, and promote reflection.
- Deploy professional learning designers, facilitators, and coaches to develop and use change tools to support successful curriculum implementation.
- Adopt a change management plan that identifies key phases of curriculum implementation and the supports required during each.

### Essentials

- Develop and promote a shared vision for teaching and learning that addresses each subject and the role of curriculum-based professional learning in supporting that vision.
- Build the capacity of formal and informal leaders at all levels to support curriculum-based professional learning.
- Ensure multiyear support for the implementation of high-quality instructional materials.
- Adopt policies and practices that promote (and eliminate those that inhibit) coherent systems of support for curriculum implementation.
- Combine the selection and purchase of high-quality instructional materials with support for implementation.
The Elements are the expectations and according actions that school and district leaders, curriculum developers, and teacher development organizations take to promote and design curriculum-based professional learning. They include:

- **core design features**, which focus on the purpose of curriculum-based professional learning
- **functional design features**, which shape teachers’ experiences
- **structural design features**, which describe parameters and settings

Elements may be used in different combinations depending on what individuals and organizations need at different times. But all curriculum-based learning rests on the Essentials – the expectations for system and school leaders that nurture growth and change.

Find the full report at [www.carnegie.org/elements](http://www.carnegie.org/elements)