Recommendations for Teachers
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

- Develop deep expertise in your teaching content and the curriculum and in the instructional materials you use with students.
- Assess and clarify beliefs and assumptions about teaching, learning, curriculum, and students on an ongoing basis.
- Maintain high expectations for students and commit to learning new ways to scaffold instruction.
- Learn about students’ communities, cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, strengths, and interests, and use that understanding to employ culturally responsive teaching strategies.
- Base opinions and value of curriculum on use and results with students.

Structural Elements

- Review the research on collaborative learning structures and their implications for curriculum implementation with colleagues.
- Hold yourself and others accountable for meaningful participation in collaborative learning.
- Seek internal and external expertise and support to advance individual and group learning.
- Document the impact of time spent on curriculum-based professional learning on your practice and students.
- Communicate to parents and other stakeholders the value of curriculum-based professional learning.

Functional Elements

- Step away from the teacher role and commit to learning opportunities that ask you to wear a “student hat.”
- Accept that discomfort is a necessary part of the learning process.
- Develop a habit of daily journaling or engage in other forms of reflective practice to promote personal growth.
- Seek feedback and support from peers, coaches, and supervisors throughout the curriculum implementation process.
- Contribute to and use change management tools, including innovation configuration maps, to guide improvement efforts.

Essentials

- Contribute to and champion a vision for teaching and learning supported by curriculum-based professional learning.
- Be able to explain curricular coherence that transcends grade levels or courses.
- Limit supplementary materials to those that are clearly aligned with the vision for teaching and learning and core curriculum.
- Be advocates and good stewards of professional learning time and resources, and hold peers and facilitators to the same standards.
- Advocate for professional learning grounded in district curriculum and instructional materials.
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)