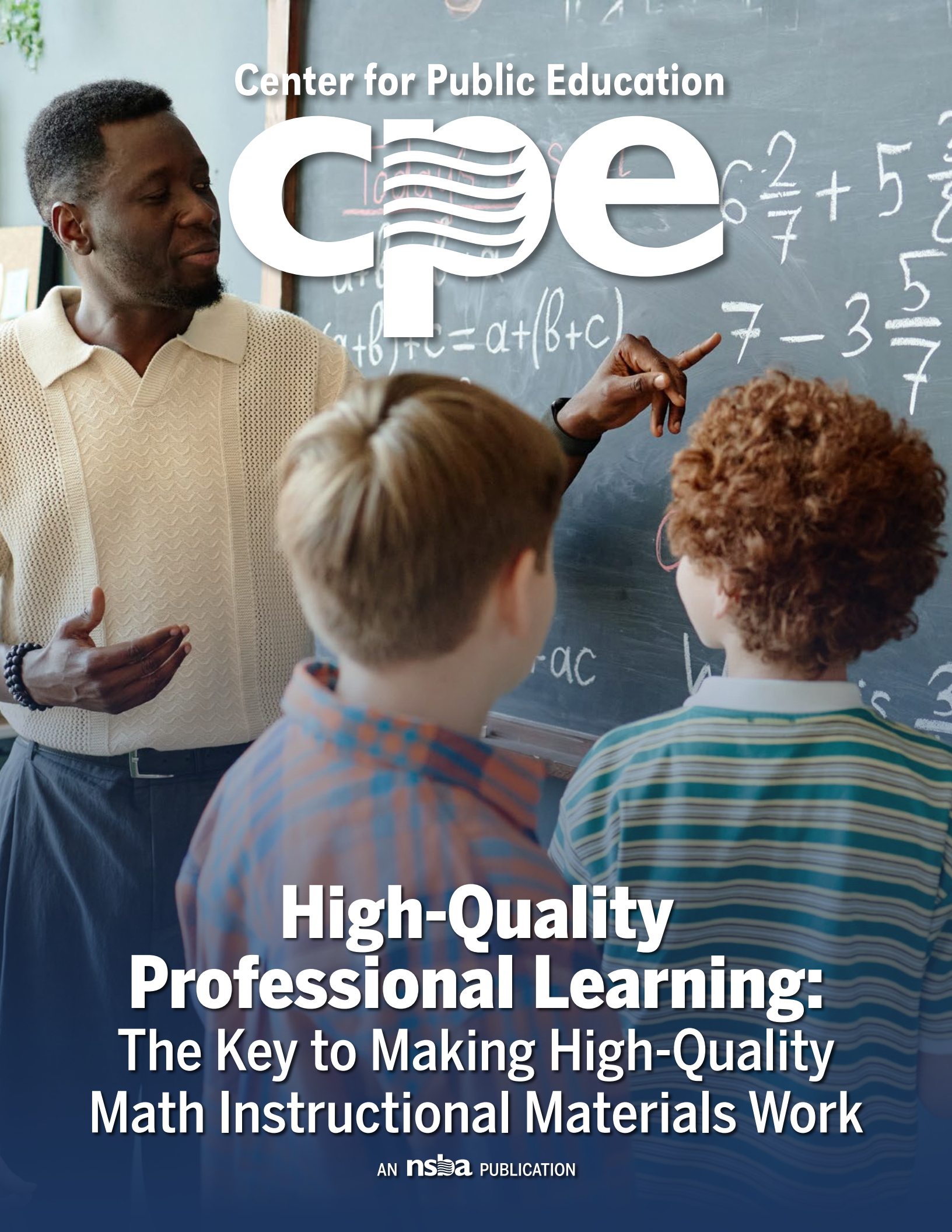


Center for Public Education

High-Quality Professional Learning:

The Key to Making High-Quality Math Instructional Materials Work

AN nsba PUBLICATION

Center for Public Education

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Introduction

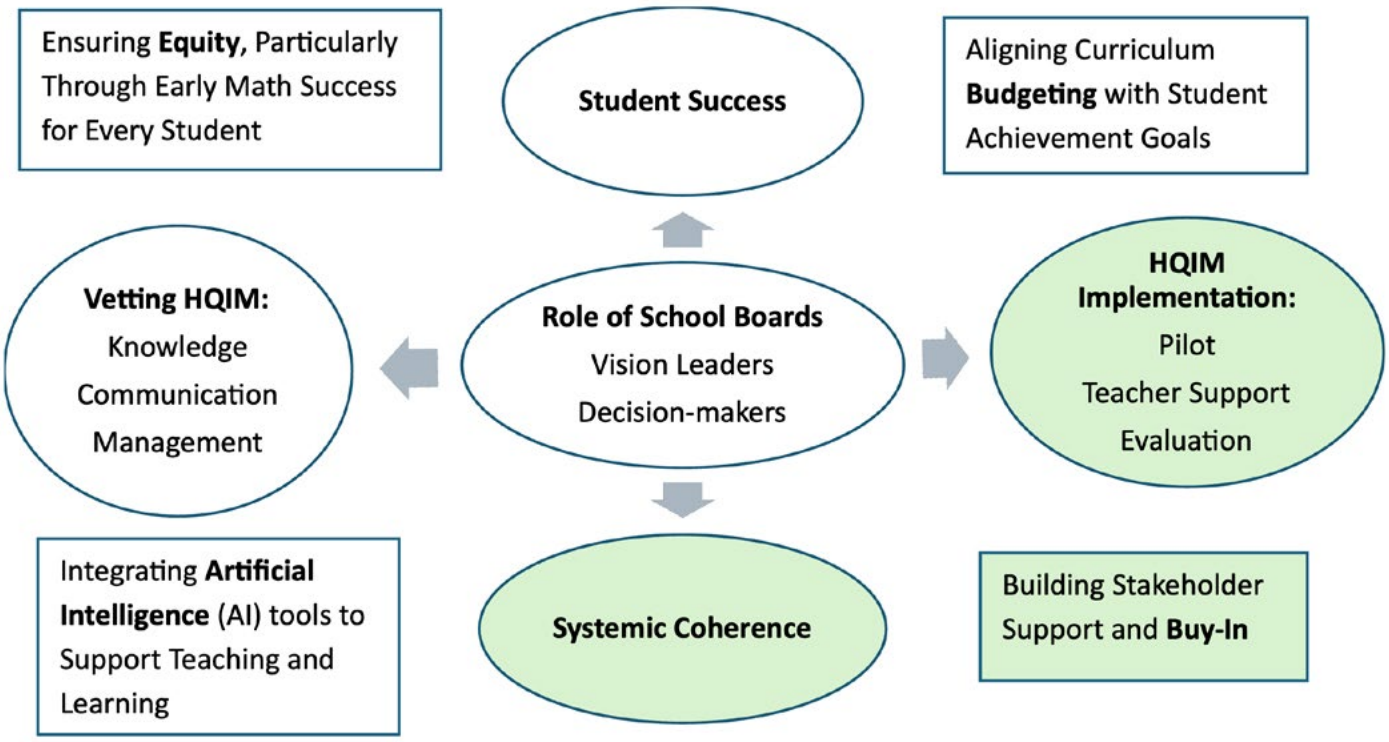
Mathematical skills are a key driver of college access and career opportunities. Yet only 27% of U.S. eighth graders perform at or above the proficient level in math, a figure that drops to just 14% among low-income students and 5% of English language learners (NAEP, 2024). To improve math instruction at scale, states and school districts across the nation are increasingly adopting high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). However, high-quality materials alone are not enough. Their success ultimately depends on well-prepared and well-supported teachers who can implement them effectively, engage all students, and adapt instruction to meet diverse learning needs.

Why This Report

Research suggests that aligning professional learning with HQIM is essential to maximizing the impact of these materials on teaching and learning (Fordham Institute, 2021). In April 2026, the Center for Public Education (CPE) of the National School Boards Association released a report outlining a practical framework for school board leadership in adopting HQIM (see Chart 1). As vision and goal setters as well as decision-makers, school board members play a critical role in building stakeholder support and creating the conditions for successful implementation.



Chart 1. A Practical Framework for School Board Leadership in HQIM Adoption



As the framework illustrates, adopting HQIM is only the beginning. Realizing their full potential depends on how effectively educators use them, making high-quality professional learning (HQPL) a critical component of successful implementation. Building on CPE's previous research, this report equips school board members and district leaders with tools and resources to rethink strategic staffing and resource allocation through the lens of transformational systems change and to identify, implement, and evaluate professional learning that helps educators make the most of HQIM.

In this report, we examine the following questions, both broadly and specifically in the context of mathematics education:

1. What does recent research identify as the key characteristics of HQPL?
2. To what extent is artificial intelligence (AI) being used in educators' professional learning?
3. How do teachers perceive and experience professional learning?
4. As student learning gaps persist, how can school leaders determine which professional learning approaches are effective?
5. How can district leaders create the conditions for effective professional learning to support HQIM?

Resource Box 1: Terminology in Professional Learning

Term	Terms Used Interchangeably	Definition
Professional Learning (PL)	Professional Development (PD)	Supports that teachers receive to improve their teaching practice and knowledge (e.g., coaching and feedback, workshops, collaborative learning, professional learning communities [PLCs]). These supports could be provided online or in person.
Curriculum-based PL	Curriculum-aligned PL	PL that integrates or uses the curriculum materials that teachers use in their classroom every day.
Curriculum	Instructional Materials	Any materials that are intended to provide learning opportunities for students.
Standards-aligned curriculum or instructional materials	High-quality curriculum or materials, standards-aligned curriculum or materials	Materials that are rated as fully meeting expectations of EdReports' college- and career-ready standards.

Source: *Prioritizing Curriculum-Based Professional Learning for Mathematics Teachers: District, Principal, and Teacher Perspectives from the American Educator Panels | RAND*

Characteristics of High-Quality Professional Learning

"When a school has a high-quality curriculum to focus on, it also has a 'North Star' for professional learning" (Fordham Institute, 2021). In other words, high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and high-quality professional learning (HQPL) should work together to strengthen teaching and learning. It is therefore important to consider the key characteristics of both HQIM and HQPL (see Chart 2).

Chart 2. Key Characteristics of HQIM and HQPL

HQIM are:

1. Aligned with state subject standards
2. Research-based and/or externally validated
3. Comprehensive to include engaging texts, tasks, and assessments
4. Based on fostering vibrant student learning experiences
5. Culturally relevant, free from bias
6. Accessible for all students

HQPL characteristics:

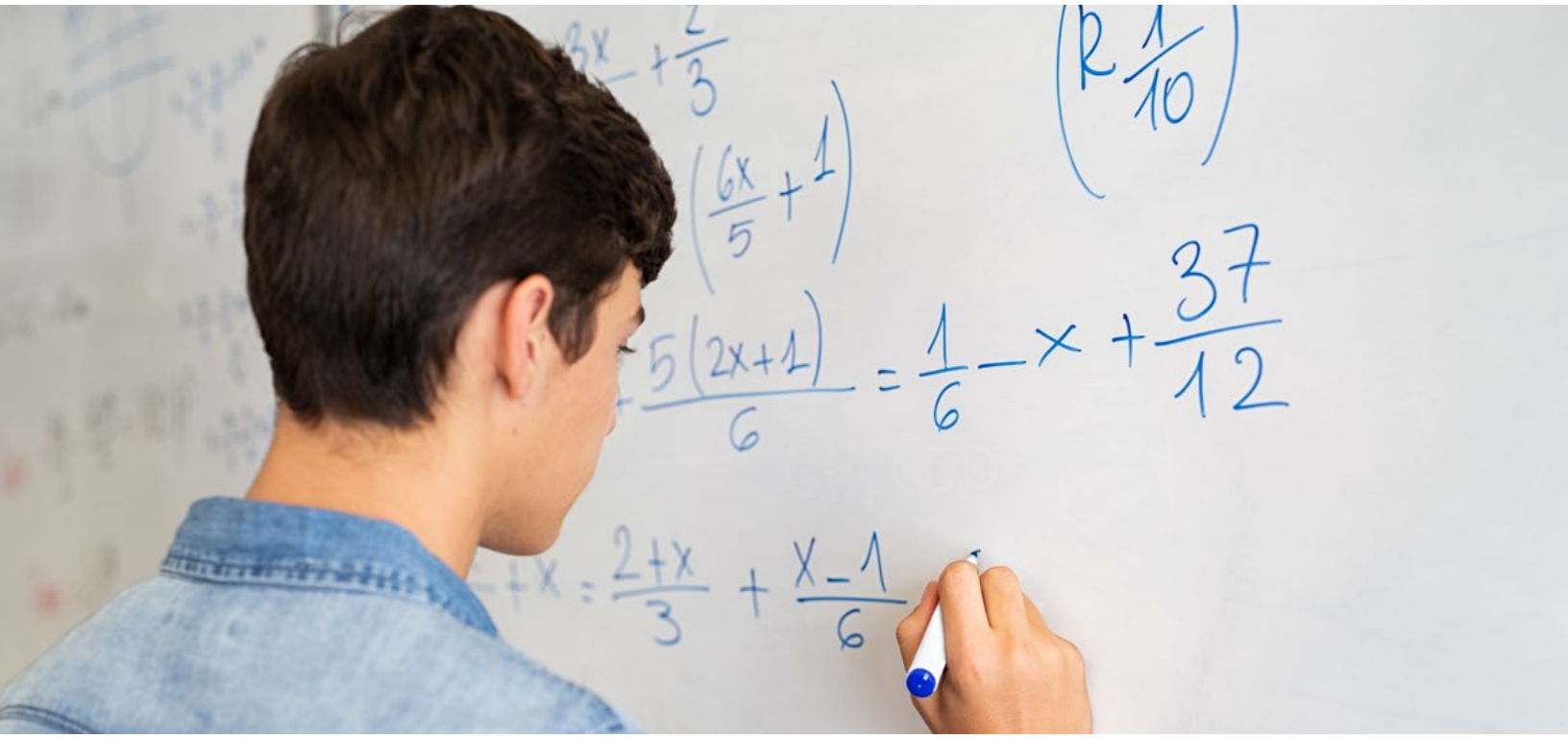
1. Content focused
2. Incorporates active learning
3. Supports collaboration
4. Models effective practice
5. Provides coaching
6. Offers opportunities for reflection
7. Sustained duration

Source: Smithsonian Science Education Center, 2024; Kentucky Department of Education, 2026; Maryland State Department of Education, 2025; California School Boards Association (CSBA) and Learning Policy Institute, 2025



According to the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and Learning Policy Institute (2025), school boards should consider supporting math professional learning that includes the following characteristics:

1. **Grounded in math content and pedagogy.** Teachers need a strong understanding of mathematical concepts as well as effective approaches for teaching them. HQPL strengthens instruction by connecting content knowledge with practical instructional strategies that teachers can apply in the classroom.
2. **Incorporates active learning.** Rather than relying on "sit and get" formats, HQPL actively engages teachers in practices such as lesson study, analyzing student work and problem-solving strategies, and collaboratively planning lessons and units. By connecting professional learning directly to classroom practice, active learning makes it more relevant and useful to teachers.
3. **Support-focused collaboration.** Collaboration can strengthen teachers' confidence and collective capacity as they adopt new instructional practices. Opportunities may include professional learning communities, shared planning time, instructional coaching, and reciprocal peer observations. School boards should also consider how dedicated collaboration time aligns with existing and future collective bargaining agreements.
4. **Models effective practice.** HQPL provides concrete examples of high-quality instruction that reinforce a shared vision for math teaching and learning. Professional learning and coaching may include model lessons, sample lesson and unit plans, analysis of student work, peer observations, and video or written cases illustrating effective approaches to teaching mathematical concepts and strategies.
5. **Provides coaching and expert support.** Effective implementation of new math curricula, tools, and instructional approaches requires ongoing support. HQPL combines collaborative inquiry among colleagues with individualized coaching and expert guidance tailored to teachers' needs, content knowledge, and instructional practices.
6. **Provides opportunities for feedback and reflection.** HQPL gives teachers time to reflect on their practice, receive constructive feedback, and make adjustments aligned with a shared vision for high-quality math instruction.
7. **Be sustained over time.** Effective professional learning is not a one-time event. HQPL provides multiple opportunities for teachers to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts and instructional practices, apply what they learn in their classrooms, and refine their practice over time.



In July 2026, the Research Partnership for Professional Learning (RPPL) published a comprehensive synthesis of research on curriculum-based professional learning, focusing on the implementation of HQIM in mathematics. The evidence points to three key strategies for effective professional learning:

1. **Structured peer collaboration** that helps teachers make instructional decisions together.
2. **Coaching** anchored in shared instructional frameworks, student data, and classroom artifacts to promote consistency and instructional quality.
3. **Purposeful adaptation of HQIM** based on ongoing analysis of student learning data.

Simply put, effective professional learning is not defined by a single workshop or training session. It is a sustained, job-embedded process that equips educators to implement HQIM with confidence and fidelity. For school boards, investing in professional learning that reflects these characteristics can strengthen instructional practice, improve student outcomes, and maximize the return on investments in HQIM.



The Emerging Role of AI in Professional Learning

Although HQPL does not depend on artificial intelligence (AI), AI is attracting increasing attention across the professional learning sector. The Research Partnership for Professional Learning (RPPL), an organization dedicated to advancing research on effective teacher professional learning, surveyed 31 professional learning provider organizations in 2025. The survey found that about half of providers are actively investing in AI solutions, while most of the others are exploring opportunities to do so.

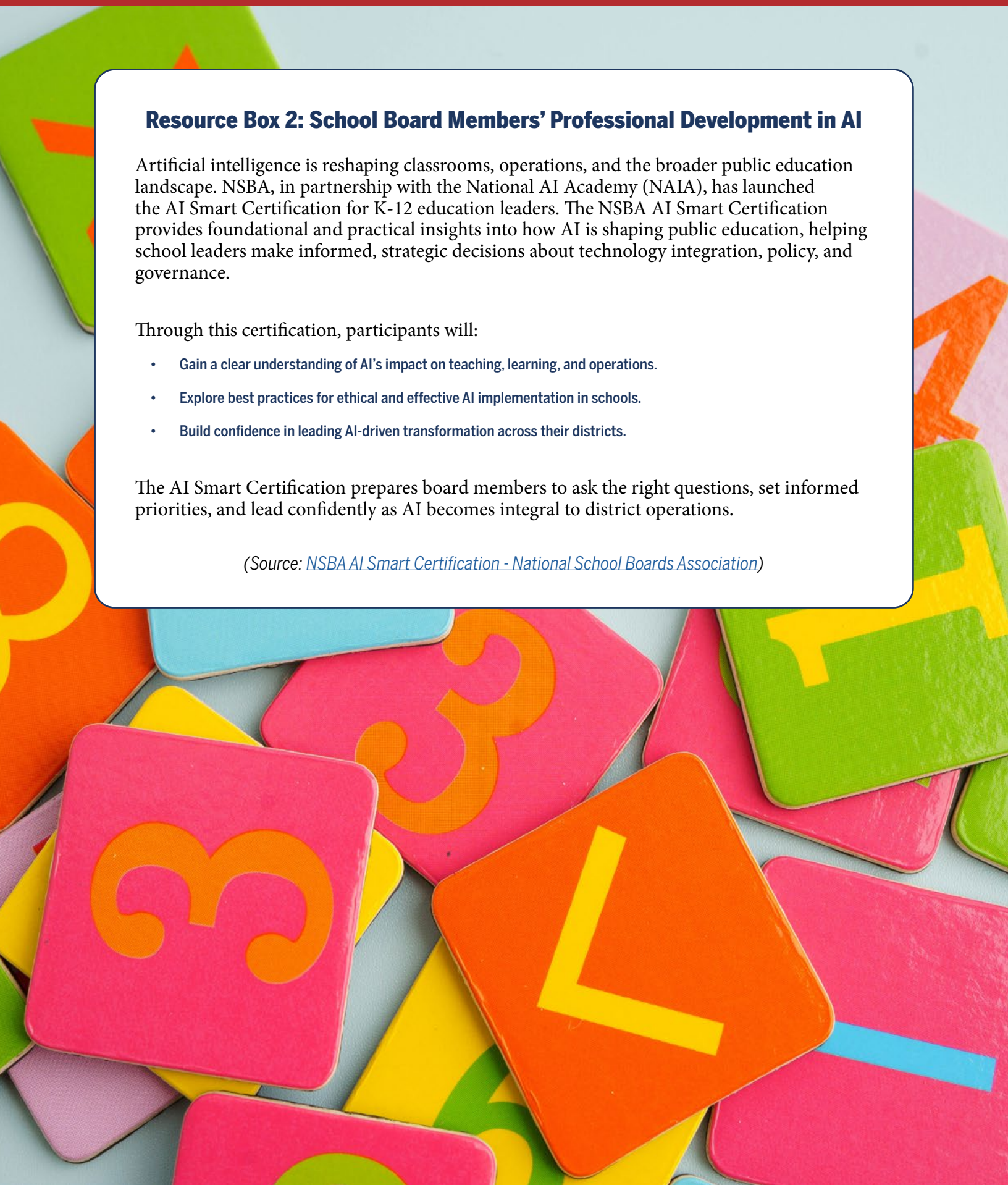
AI adoption among professional learning organizations is concentrated in a few key areas. The most common applications are data analytics and insight tools (42%), chatbots or virtual assistants (38%), and content generation (27%). These patterns reflect the growing influence of generative AI and large language models across the professional learning sector.

In contrast, professional learning providers investing substantially in AI are developing tools that help educators connect academic mindsets, critical-thinking skills, and content objectives to authentic learning tasks that are more meaningful and motivating for students. At the same time, these organizations emphasize the need for stronger research evidence on AI's impact and clearer guidance on how to support its effective implementation in schools.

One promising example is the School Teams AI Collaborative, a year-long initiative launched by Leading Educators and The Learning Accelerator. The collaborative brings together 80 educators from 19 school-based teams across the country to explore how AI can enhance teaching and learning. Participants — including schools from Boston Public Schools (MA), Denver Public Schools (CO), New York City Public Schools (NY), and District of Columbia Public Schools (DC) —

- **Collaboratively explored strategic uses of AI for instruction and developed resources to share emerging trends, promising practices, and lessons learned with other educators.**
- **Received ongoing coaching, guidance, and feedback from AI experts and fellow cohort members.**
- **Contributed to a forthcoming resource hub and report that will share the collaborative's findings and practical tools with the broader education community.**

AI is rapidly gaining traction in professional learning, but adoption is outpacing the evidence base. While providers are investing in tools that can enhance instruction and personalize educator support, they also recognize the need for rigorous research and practical guidance to ensure AI improves teaching and student learning.



Resource Box 2: School Board Members' Professional Development in AI

Artificial intelligence is reshaping classrooms, operations, and the broader public education landscape. NSBA, in partnership with the National AI Academy (NAIA), has launched the AI Smart Certification for K-12 education leaders. The NSBA AI Smart Certification provides foundational and practical insights into how AI is shaping public education, helping school leaders make informed, strategic decisions about technology integration, policy, and governance.

Through this certification, participants will:

- Gain a clear understanding of AI's impact on teaching, learning, and operations.
- Explore best practices for ethical and effective AI implementation in schools.
- Build confidence in leading AI-driven transformation across their districts.

The AI Smart Certification prepares board members to ask the right questions, set informed priorities, and lead confidently as AI becomes integral to district operations.

(Source: NSBA AI Smart Certification - National School Boards Association)

Teacher Perspectives on High-Quality Professional Learning

Teachers' perspectives provide an important lens for identifying HQPL. Research on K–12 educators in the United States consistently shows that teachers value professional learning that is collaborative, job-embedded, and tailored to their instructional context (Camburn and Han, 2017; ERS, 2024; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, n.d.). In contrast, they express frustration with isolated, top-down workshops that have little relevance to their daily classroom practice (GAO, 2026; Gates Foundation, 2016).

A landmark study by the Boston Consulting Group (Gates Foundation & BCG, 2016), based on interviews and surveys of more than 1,300 teachers, principals, district leaders, professional learning providers, and education experts, found a significant disconnect between how school systems design professional learning and how teachers experience it. While district leaders generally believe they are providing meaningful learning opportunities, many teachers view professional development as fragmented, disconnected from classroom practice, and insufficiently responsive to their needs.

Teachers Want Professional Learning That Improves Instruction

Only 29% of teachers reported being highly satisfied with their professional learning. Rather than listening to presentations or lectures, teachers preferred opportunities to observe effective instruction, practice new strategies, receive feedback, and collaborate with colleagues. Activities such as lesson planning, classroom observation, reflection, and professional learning communities (PLCs) were consistently viewed as the most valuable because they directly supported day-to-day teaching.

Teachers also emphasized the importance of structured collaboration. Focus group participants reported that collaboration was most effective when meetings had clear objectives, established protocols for giving and receiving feedback, and shared accountability among participants. When these conditions were present, teachers reported improvements in lesson planning, instructional practice, curriculum alignment, and student learning.

Coaching and Feedback Remain Limited

Although classroom observations have become more common under teacher evaluation systems, many teachers reported that observations rarely resulted in meaningful coaching. Approximately half of teachers received coaching during the previous year, and fewer than one-quarter experienced intensive coaching on a weekly basis or more frequently. Coaching was also concentrated primarily on new or struggling teachers rather than being available as an ongoing support for all educators.

These findings suggest that many schools continue to emphasize evaluation over instructional improvement. Teachers valued feedback that included modeling, mentoring, and sustained coaching rather than written evaluation reports alone.

Choice and Relevance Influence Teacher Satisfaction

Evidence shows that teacher autonomy and self-determination over professional learning goals are among the single highest predictors of teacher satisfaction, engagement, and retention (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2020; Ha et al., 2025). Yet, the BCG study found that teachers had relatively little influence over their professional learning. Fewer than one-third (30%) reported choosing most or all of their professional learning opportunities, while nearly 1 in 5 (18%) said they had no choice at all.

Teachers also expressed frustration when professional learning was disconnected from their instructional assignments or lacked continuity over time. They identified insufficient time, limited funding, generic content, and isolated training sessions as the primary barriers to meaningful professional learning. School leaders similarly cited shortages of time, staffing, and resources as major implementation challenges.

Overall, research suggests that effective school systems align professional learning with teachers' instructional needs, provide sustained coaching and collaboration, give educators meaningful voice in their learning, and create coherent, ongoing opportunities that translate directly into improved classroom practice.



Using Evidence to Identify Effective Professional Learning

Professional learning represents one of the largest investments school districts make in improving instruction. It encompasses a broad range of activities, including curriculum planning, instructional technology support, student assessment, coaching, and related personnel and operational costs. Nearly 70% of professional learning expenditures are devoted to salaries and benefits, making personnel the largest component of district spending (RPPL, 2024). As states and districts increasingly adopt HQIM, school boards and district leaders must ensure these investments support evidence-based professional learning that improves teaching, raises student achievement, and advances educational equity.

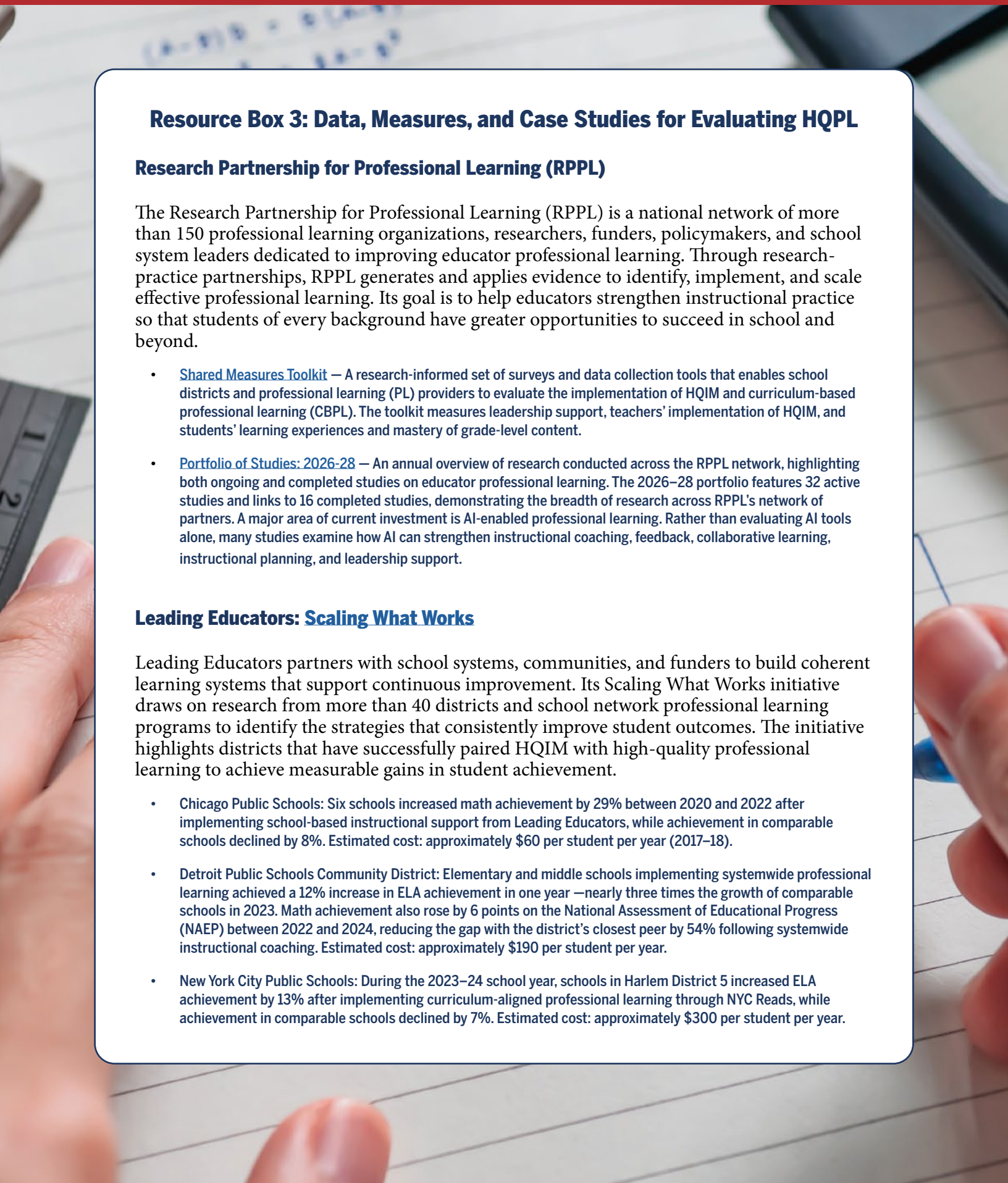
The financial investment is substantial. Boguslav et al. (2024) estimated that U.S. school districts spend approximately $37 billion annually on professional learning. The average district invests about $7,700 per teacher, while the nation's 100 largest districts spend approximately $12,000 per teacher. Given these investments, school boards should evaluate professional learning not simply by participation rates or satisfaction surveys, but by its return on investment (ROI) — whether it leads to measurable improvements in educator practice and student learning.

Selecting effective professional learning, however, is not straightforward. The Boston Consulting Group (2016) found that the professional learning marketplace is highly fragmented. Although districts collectively spend billions of dollars each year, most professional learning is developed and delivered internally rather than purchased from external providers. As a result, high-quality programs do not necessarily spread across districts, and teachers — the primary users of professional learning — often have limited influence over selecting providers or shaping learning opportunities. These conditions make it difficult for district leaders to identify the most effective professional learning models.

Recent research offers guidance for districts implementing HQIM, particularly in math. A RAND study (2025) found that districts increasingly prioritize curriculum-based professional learning that is aligned with the instructional materials teachers use. District leaders and principals ranked curriculum alignment above factors such as cost or state recommendations when selecting external professional learning providers. Most principals also reported that choosing professional learning for math teachers was a collaborative process involving both district leaders and teachers.

The study further found that curriculum-based professional learning is most effective when it is directly connected to classroom instruction. Although more than half of math teachers reported spending two hours or less per month on math professional learning, most agreed that professional learning aligned with their curriculum was valuable, especially when led by knowledgeable facilitators and when it provided time for teacher collaboration. Principals, however, reported that highly qualified facilitators were often difficult to find. High school math teachers were also less likely than elementary or middle school teachers to report that their professional learning improved their instructional practice.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the effectiveness of professional learning depends less on the amount of time or money invested than on the quality of the experience. For districts adopting HQIM, evidence increasingly points to sustained, curriculum-based professional learning that is closely aligned with HQIM, facilitated by content experts, and designed to support teacher collaboration and classroom implementation.



Resource Box 3: Data, Measures, and Case Studies for Evaluating HQPL

Research Partnership for Professional Learning (RPPL)

The Research Partnership for Professional Learning (RPPL) is a national network of more than 150 professional learning organizations, researchers, funders, policymakers, and school system leaders dedicated to improving educator professional learning. Through research-practice partnerships, RPPL generates and applies evidence to identify, implement, and scale effective professional learning. Its goal is to help educators strengthen instructional practice so that students of every background have greater opportunities to succeed in school and beyond.

- Shared Measures Toolkit — A research-informed set of surveys and data collection tools that enables school districts and professional learning (PL) providers to evaluate the implementation of HQIM and curriculum-based professional learning (CBPL). The toolkit measures leadership support, teachers' implementation of HQIM, and students' learning experiences and mastery of grade-level content.
- Portfolio of Studies: 2026-28 — An annual overview of research conducted across the RPPL network, highlighting both ongoing and completed studies on educator professional learning. The 2026–28 portfolio features 32 active studies and links to 16 completed studies, demonstrating the breadth of research across RPPL's network of partners. A major area of current investment is AI-enabled professional learning. Rather than evaluating AI tools alone, many studies examine how AI can strengthen instructional coaching, feedback, collaborative learning, instructional planning, and leadership support.

Leading Educators: Scaling What Works

Leading Educators partners with school systems, communities, and funders to build coherent learning systems that support continuous improvement. Its Scaling What Works initiative draws on research from more than 40 districts and school network professional learning programs to identify the strategies that consistently improve student outcomes. The initiative highlights districts that have successfully paired HQIM with high-quality professional learning to achieve measurable gains in student achievement.

- Chicago Public Schools: Six schools increased math achievement by 29% between 2020 and 2022 after implementing school-based instructional support from Leading Educators, while achievement in comparable schools declined by 8%. Estimated cost: approximately $60 per student per year (2017–18).
- Detroit Public Schools Community District: Elementary and middle schools implementing systemwide professional learning achieved a 12% increase in ELA achievement in one year —nearly three times the growth of comparable schools in 2023. Math achievement also rose by 6 points on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) between 2022 and 2024, reducing the gap with the district's closest peer by 54% following systemwide instructional coaching. Estimated cost: approximately $190 per student per year.
- New York City Public Schools: During the 2023–24 school year, schools in Harlem District 5 increased ELA achievement by 13% after implementing curriculum-aligned professional learning through NYC Reads, while achievement in comparable schools declined by 7%. Estimated cost: approximately $300 per student per year.

Carnegie Foundation: PMI Resource Library

This resource showcases practical measures used to support a variety of continuous professional development improvement efforts. The examples illustrate both the technical design of measurement tools and the collaborative processes involved in developing and using them. Rather than presenting "ideal" measures, the resource demonstrates how practical measures can be adapted to different contexts and improvement goals.

WestEd: Professional Learning Measure

This short teacher survey measures teachers' perceptions of key aspects of their collaborative, ongoing, job-embedded professional learning experiences. The survey helps instructional leaders, professional learning designers, and facilitators assess teachers' perceptions of collaborative professional learning. The measure is grounded in research on effective teacher learning. It evaluates key features of HQPL, including content focus, active learning, coherence with district priorities, collaborative participation, modeling of effective practice, coaching and expert support, opportunities for feedback and reflection, and sustained learning over time. The survey is currently undergoing validation and refinement through pilot testing with professional learning communities (PLCs), with early findings informing improvements to survey items and data reporting tools.



Building District Capacity for High-Quality Professional Learning Through Strategic Staffing

Adopting HQIM in math should be viewed as more than a curriculum initiative — it is an opportunity for transformational systems change. Rather than improving isolated practices, districts can use HQIM to rethink how teaching and learning occur across the system, including what students learn, how educators collaborate, how resources are allocated, and how decisions are made. The goal is to create coherent instructional systems that enable every student to succeed in math.

New York City, for example, has framed its HQIM initiative around an ambitious vision: helping students love math and teachers love teaching it. To achieve this type of long-term change, researchers argue that school boards must act as stewards of continuous improvement rather than simply managing risk (CRPE, 2026).

In this report, we describe this approach as systemic coherence — a pathway to transformational change. Professional learning is a central part of that pathway. RAND researchers (2026) found that most principals purchased professional learning bundled with new mathematics curricula, particularly when adopting HQIM. While these programs helped teachers learn the basics of the materials — such as lesson structures and navigation — many principals reported that initial training alone was not enough to improve instruction or sustain changes in classroom practice.

The implication for school boards is clear: adopting HQIM is only the beginning. To achieve lasting improvements in teaching and learning, districts should provide ongoing, job-embedded professional learning that helps teachers deepen their instructional practice and effectively implement the curriculum over time. Sustained support — not one-time training — is essential for translating HQIM into stronger student outcomes (see Chart 3).

Strategic staffing and deployment are critical for creating the conditions for effective professional learning. Rather than relying primarily on traditional one-time workshops, school boards are increasingly supporting job-embedded professional learning by redesigning educators' roles, schedules, and collaborative structures. These approaches integrate professional learning into teachers' daily work and create sustained opportunities for continuous improvement.

Examples from school district policies illustrate how boards support this work:

- **Jordan School District (Utah): The district's policy framework establishes school-based professional learning committees, defines procedures for awarding salary lane-change credit for in-service coursework, and outlines approval processes for professional learning activities.**
- **Consolidated School District of New Britain (Connecticut): Board policy supports ongoing educator development through job-embedded small-group learning, compliance with professional learning requirements, and professional development and evaluation committees that guide continuous improvement.**
- **Dent-Phelps R-III School District (Missouri): The district's staff handbook promotes sustained professional learning through structured peer mentoring, including multiyear "buddy" programs for new educators, and district improvement committees that support instructional improvement.**

Chart 3. District Strategies for Supporting Effective Professional Learning for HQIM

Shift from "Training" to Continuous, Job-Embedded Learning

- Replace isolated, introductory publisher walkthroughs with sustained, recursive professional learning model.
- Utilize practices like instructional coaching, collaborative lesson planning (e.g., Lesson Study), and teacher learning communities where educators can test out HQIM strategies, observe peers, and reflect.
- Ensure professional learning does not just cover how to navigate the digital platform or workbook, but deepens teachers' understanding of the underlying mathematical concepts and how students conceptually build them.

Align Professional Learning with Curriculum Design

- Train leaders and teachers to understand why the curriculum is structured the way it is (e.g., specific sequencing, explicit connections between procedural fluency and conceptual understanding).
- Teach educators how to modify lessons for diverse learners or pacing constraints without stripping away the rigor or cognitive demand intended by the HQIM developers.
- Partner with professional learning providers who specialize directly in the specific math curriculum adopted by the district.

Cultivate Leadership Capacity at All Levels

- Develop principal instructional leadership. Provide targeted training for administrators so they can recognize productive struggle, student discourse, and high-cognitive demand in math classrooms.
- Cultivate math coaches, grade-level chairs, and department heads to facilitate collaborative planning and lead school-based professional learning communities (PLCs).

Foster a **Collaborative** and Safe Culture for Teachers

- Create an environment where teachers feel safe grappling with new instructional routines, complex math problems, and unfamiliar pedagogical shifts.
- Involve educators in evaluating how the HQIM and its supporting professional learning are meeting their needs, making adjustments based on real-time feedback loops.

Additionally, to strengthen implementation, school boards can ask several key questions throughout the adoption process (California School Boards Association and Learning Policy Institute, 2025):

- **Does the board regularly review professional learning plans as part of HQIM implementation?**
- **Do district policies align with the board's vision for high-quality professional learning?**
- **Has sufficient funding been allocated to prepare teachers for successful curriculum implementation?**
- **How will the district monitor and report on implementation and outcomes?**
- **How will the district evaluate the effectiveness and return on investment of professional learning?**

District leaders can also leverage evidence-based resources when selecting professional learning providers. For example, New Mexico Public Education Department's High-Quality Professional Learning (HQPL) Marketplace helps districts identify vetted professional learning programs aligned with HQIM. The marketplace reviews programs for evidence-based practices and demonstrated effectiveness, providing districts with a reliable starting point when investing in professional learning.

Although school boards do not manage classroom instruction, they play a critical governance role in creating the conditions for success. By establishing a clear vision, aligning policies and resources, supporting continuous professional learning, and monitoring implementation and outcomes, boards can help ensure that investments in both HQIM and HQPL lead to stronger math instruction and improved student achievement.



Conclusion

High-quality instructional materials and high-quality professional learning are most effective when implemented as part of a coherent district strategy. While selecting strong instructional materials is an important decision, lasting improvements in math teaching and learning depend on how well educators are supported to use those materials over time. Research consistently shows that sustained, evidence-based professional learning — rather than one-time training — is essential for translating curriculum investments into improved instructional practice and stronger student outcomes.

School boards and district leaders play a pivotal role in creating the conditions for success. By establishing a clear vision, aligning policies and resources, investing in effective professional learning, and using data to monitor implementation and outcomes, they can help build the district capacity needed for continuous improvement. Equally important, leaders should view professional learning as a strategic investment that deserves the same level of planning, evaluation, and accountability as any other major district initiative.

As states and districts continue to invest in HQIM, the next challenge is ensuring that every educator has the knowledge, skills, and ongoing support to implement them effectively. Districts that align high-quality instructional materials, high-quality professional learning, and continuous improvement within a coherent system will be best positioned to strengthen math instruction, expand educational opportunity, and improve outcomes for all students.



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Center for Public Education

About CPE

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) believes that accurate, objective information is essential to building support for public schools and creating effective programs to prepare all students for success. As NSBA's research branch, the Center for Public Education (CPE) provides objective and timely information about public education and its importance to the well-being of our nation. Launched in 2006, CPE emerged from discussions between NSBA and its member state school boards associations about how to inform the public about the successes and challenges of public education. To serve a wide range of audiences, including parents, teachers, and school leaders, CPE offers research, data, and analysis on current education issues and explores ways to improve student achievement and engage support for public schools.

About NSBA

Founded in 1940, the National School Boards Association's (NSBA) purpose is to ensure each student everywhere has access to excellent and equitable public education governed by high-performing school board leaders and supported by the community.

With members spread across the United States, the Virgin Islands, and Canada, NSBA is the only national organization representing school boards. Along with its member state associations and member public school districts representing locally elected school board officials serving millions of public school students, NSBA believes that public education is a civil right necessary to the dignity and freedom of the American people and that each child, regardless of their ability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, identity, or citizenship, deserves equitable access to an education that maximizes their individual potential.

For more information, visit nsba.org.



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NSBA's Position

NSBA supports strengthening local school board governance and community engagement in public schools and recognizes the many options and choices offered to students in our public schools. NSBA opposes vouchers, tuition tax credits and similar programs, and charter schools not subject to the oversight of local school boards, effectively creating a separate, unaccountable system of publicly funded education that: a) diverts public funding to private schools or private home schools, including virtual schools, regardless of whether they are owned or operated by individuals, religious institutions, not-for-profit entities, or corporations; b) diverts public funds outside of locally elected, locally accountable, representative oversight; and c) often has the effect of resegregating schools. Public funds should only be used within public schools to advance curricular opportunities, including specialized public school programs authorized by local school boards, such as magnet schools, alternative schools, career and technical education partnerships, advanced placement programs and classes, dual credit programs, postsecondary–high school partnerships, and high school–local business partnerships. NSBA urges full accountability of the use of public funds for educational purposes.

NSBA believes public tax dollars should only support public schools. NSBA opposes any efforts to subsidize tuition or expenses at elementary or secondary private schools, religious schools, or private home/correspondence schools with public tax dollars. Specifically, NSBA opposes vouchers, tax credits, and tax subsidies for use at nonpublic K-12 schools.



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