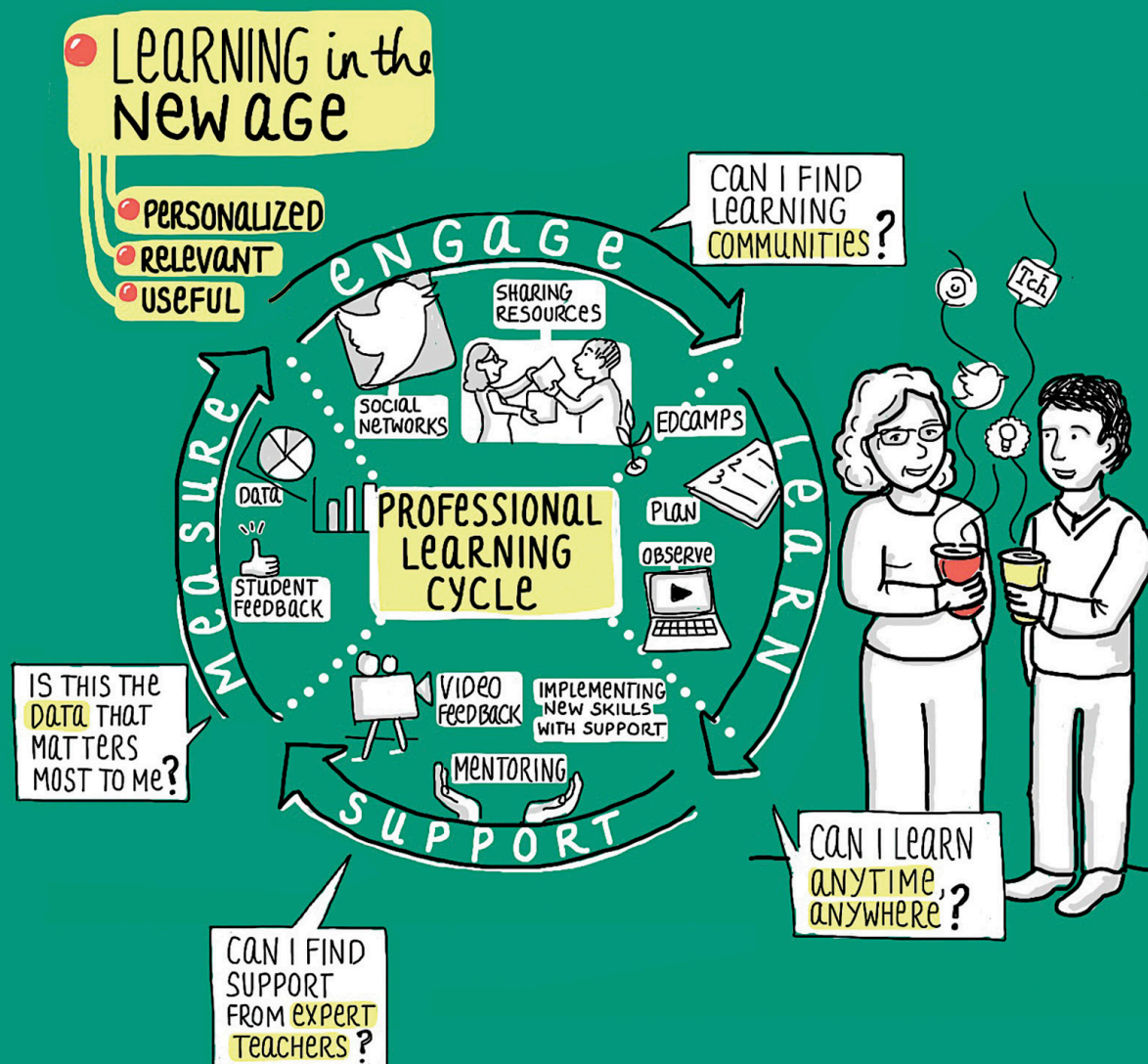


How Teachers Are Learning: Professional Development Remix

An in-depth report on the tools advancing teacher training



About EdSurge

EdSurge was started in 2011 by Betsy Corcoran, Matt Bowman, Nick Punt and Agustin Vilaseca to connect the emerging community of edtech entrepreneurs and educators. We wanted to share detailed information about what new technologies could—and could not—do to support learning.

We report on the latest news and trends in the edtech industry to help:

- Entrepreneurs who build new products and businesses;
- Educators who use these tools;
- Investors and others who support companies and schools.

In addition to reporting on trends, we share other information vital to all in the learning ecosystem including **available jobs, opportunities** and **events**. We are building a database of rich information (the **EdSurge EdTech Index**) about emerging products and how they're used. And we run a series of **edtech Summits** where educators and entrepreneurs meet on common ground and exchange feedback on how to build and refine tools to improve educational outcomes. We also write reports that help entrepreneurs, educators, and investors make smart decisions.

With the right tools, technology can transform “learning” from something we did in classrooms at fixed hours of the day to something we can do anywhere, anytime.

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Forward

Our most powerful lessons are rooted in common sense: Students will learn best in environments where teachers themselves are model learners. And surely our age demands that teachers be our bravest learners, figuring out how to make sense of new standards, wield emerging technologies and cope with a dizzying array of emerging student needs every day.

So how do we best support these learners? Through personalized professional development.

EdSurge, led by associate editor, Christina Quattrocchi, a former teacher, spent a year exploring the extraordinary changes in PD tools and in the cycle of learning. Together these are tools leading to a new era of personalized professional development. We are proud to share the results of this work with you, both in this PDF and, [in more detail, online](#).

Our report looks at tools that support how teachers engage with colleagues; ones that help teachers learn or find support for implementing fresh strategies and approaches; and ones that measure how that learning impacts practice in the classroom. We hope that our framework around the cycle of learning and characterizations of these products will help teachers and administrators sift through the emerging tools and brew their own personalized professional development approach, including using a combination of speciality and free resources such as Twitter and EdCamps. We also hope that entrepreneurs and funders will use this report to reflect on work still to be done to help teachers learn, individually and collectively in schools and districts.

Most critically, we hope to hear back from you--about your experiences with these emerging professional development tools and how we can all nurture a vibrant culture of learning inside and outside of our schools. Please drop us a note at feedback@edsurge.com. We're all learning here together.

— Betsy Corcoran, CEO, EdSurge

Acknowledgements

This report—in both its paper and **online incarnations**—reflects a year’s worth of research, interviews and reflection on the part of the EdSurge team and hundreds of teachers in the field.

We are very thankful to more than 50 teachers and administrators who shared their stories of professional development in their articles and interviews with us. Their stories of frustration and triumph inspired and informed us continually through this journey. We appreciate the support of edWeb, which let us survey hundreds of their members for insights and commentary on PD. We’d also like to thank the entrepreneurs at companies developing fresh approaches to PD, who spent hours talking with us about the philosophical and practical underpinnings of their work.

A number of EdSurge staff and contributors put tremendous energy into creating this report. We are fortunate that many of them have been in the classroom themselves or have administrative backgrounds. These include: Leonard Medlock, MaryJo Madda, Marisa Kaplan, Becky Fisher, Katrina Stevens, and Joan Young. EdSurge’s CEO Betsy Corcoran edited the entire report, while Nick Punt added his deft touch to the graphics and display of information. Other teammates, including Agustin Vilaseca and Shu Uesugi, helped ensure that the website would support the framework we developed.

Through the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, we have been able to do this work and make it freely available to all.

We believe supporting teachers is one of the most important tasks for those in the field of education. Teachers are one of our country’s most valuable resources, and they should be given the time, space, and resources to continually grow and push themselves as professionals. We hope this work contributes to that end and are thankful to everyone who helped make it possible.

— *Christina Quattrocchi, Associate Editor, EdSurge*

Our Approach to the PD Landscape

In 2013, EdSurge began to explore how technology was supporting professional development, and just what role it could play to support teachers, our very important learners.

We began by assessing the needs for professional learning, starting with what educators liked and what they didn't about the opportunities they were given to learn. We surveyed over 400 educators and did user interviews with over 50 educators. Once we developed a solid idea of what types of support were needed, we turned to the tools.

We mapped the available tools on the market used for professional development. We then compared what was available with what teachers told us they needed. With this comparison and with user interviews, we developed our framework for professional development.

The framework captures how teachers say they like to learn and how tools support their preferred mode of learning.

In addition to the framework, we developed classifications that describe what content the tool teaches, the way it is accessed, when it can be used, and the way learning is delivered.

Finally, we profiled 28 products, describing in detail how they work and how they are used by teachers and administrators. We also categorized each product according to the framework, to give teachers and administrators an idea of how these tools can fit together to support the ways teachers learn best.

After all this work, we walked away with a firm belief that educators need and deserve excellent support and learning opportunities. We also believe this entails some kind of personalized learning experience. The tools can be a means to support this.

So please, read, share, and help push this industry closer towards the reality of personalized learning for every teacher and administrator.

Emerging Insights

The Current PD Landscape: Progress with More Work to be Done

Most products can be accessed anytime and anywhere. More than 89% of the 28 tools we profiled can be accessed remotely and without a commitment to a specific time. This can be extremely helpful for learners who want to go at their own pace and learn when the time is right for them. On the other hand, it also means that many of the learning activities happen without direct support. The inconsistencies in how tools are used means that their effectiveness can vary dramatically.

Video is a popular tool. However you slice it, video plays a big role in emerging PD tools. Over 64% of the tools we examined involve some video component in the learning process, whether video modules, videos of other teachers modeling best practice, or self-made videos for feedback. Tools such as Teaching Channel and Teaching Channel Teams use videos of master teachers to spark conversation. Others such as Teachscape and PD In Focus make videos and reflections on those videos a key component of learning. Still other tools including Talent, SmarterCookie, and Edthena, focus exclusively on making it possible for teachers to share self-made videos with one another for feedback. It's clear that video is a powerful tool that can facilitate some powerful relationships. However, just watching a video can be extremely passive. Therefore, questions about how to link these videos with active, engaged learning persist.

Teacher choice is an overwhelmingly prevalent way to assign learning. Almost all of the PD options on our list leave it up to the teachers to choose what they learn. This definitely puts the teacher in the driver's seat when it comes to learning. But teachers who don't know what they need to learn may have difficulty picking the most relevant tools. Only a few tools offer differentiated pathways or adaptive content. For example, edWeb builds groups around specific topics, while PD In Focus allows administrators to assign specific content to specific groups of teachers.

"Measurement" usually means observations or evaluations. Tools that help teachers measure their learning often involve someone else observing a teacher or evaluating his or her practice. Observations can either be facilitated by an administrator, with tools like BloomBoard and TeachBoost, or by a colleague, through tools such as Talent or Edthena. But no matter who's doing the measuring, the predominant type of measurement available consists of narrative third-party observations. Measurement tools that collect data including student feedback, student test scores, or even a teacher's own reflections are scarce.

Emerging Insights (continued)

An Emerging Set of Valuable Products and Features

Set goals and measure whether those goals are achieved. This seems to be a valuable way of giving teachers ownership over their own learning. Whether teachers set goals by themselves or with the assistance of coaches or administrators, setting goals and then measuring whether they've been achieved is a solid step on the road to continuous improvement. Tools that facilitate this, such as BloomBoard, TeachBoost, Teachscape, and Truenorthlogic give teachers a chance to track what they learn and to engage in a continuous cycle of learning.

Demonstrating mastery is crucial. While many traditional professional development experiences simply ask a teacher to reflect on their learning, asking teachers to demonstrate their mastery of a concept is an authentic way to ensure they've learned something new. Tools that support this, such as Adobe Exchange, ask educators to go through a set of learning tasks and then submit a piece of work related to those tasks that shows mastery. Those artifacts are then stored in Adobe's community marketplace of resources, so others can comment on, critique, and ultimately use them. Such opportunities are rare but important techniques for surfacing learning.

Make it an assignment. Many tools are open to a teacher's choice, but sometimes too many choices isn't such a great thing. Tools that allow an administrator to choose a learning opportunity and assign it to specific groups of teachers are important. These tools allow instructional leaders to provide differentiated learning pathways which is one step closer to personalized learning. One great example of this is PD In Focus, which allows administrators to create different assignments for different groups of teachers based on their needs or interests.

Adaptive is rare but happening. While students increasingly have access to curriculum and learning materials that adapt to their skill levels, this feature is hard to find among professional development tools. A few virtual experiences are building a case for adaptive learning for teachers. One of these tools is TeachLivE. TeachLivE presents the user with a virtual classroom of students whose behaviors and interactions adapt to the teacher driving the simulation. Virtual students respond to voice, body language, and even a teacher's clothing. It's an intriguing virtual experience and a great example of what adaptive learning might look like for teachers.

Emerging Insights (continued)

What's Needed to Succeed Today + Tomorrow

Informal learning needs to play a role. Teachers say again and again that they get the most value out of informal learning opportunities such as EdCamps and Twitter chats. That suggests these activities need to be leveraged and included in their professional development. Such informal learning needs to be demonstrable, measurable, and go beyond reflections. In addition, informal learning needs to be recognized in some waysay, through badges, certificates, Continued Education Units or other incentives. Teachers who put a lot of time and work into these opportunities should get some sort of acknowledgement for this work.

Connecting teachers is important, but it should be done with a purpose. Teachers acknowledge they get significant value from their colleagues. Toolmakers have responded by including features such as social networks and the ability to make connections within their products. However, these features need to be leveraged strategically. Just putting up the ability to connect with each other doesn't mean teachers will find value in connecting. Don't adopt a tool because it has a social network and think teachers will use it. Adopt a tool with the social network that's integrated strategically or expect to create a solid implementation plan for how it will be used.

Teachers need time. It is important that teachers get time to do professional development within their typical work day. While tools give them the opportunity to learn anytime and anywhere, it's hard for them to prioritize their learning among the other pressing needs like grading papers and contacting parents. However, if you intentionally provide teachers with time and space to focus on using these tools, the tools will be more effective.

School leaders need support, too. Often times, newly appointed school leaders have very little experience managing people and coordinating operations. And yet, there are very few tools that give these leaders the support and training they need. Only one tool on our list targets these school leaders as learners: Delivering Performance Feedback to Teachers leads school leaders through a simulated conversation with a teacher, helping them practice and learn how best to give feedback. This community could use many more tools to support the wide range of demands they face.

Pick products that meet one or two of your needs really well. Introducing technology is challenging; it's also hard to find products that do everything for every user. That's why it's important to pick products that meet one need well. Don't expect to see the answers to all your PD bundled into one product. Chances are if you hope for one product to meet all your needs, it's going to fall short in one way or another. That means savvy teachers and administrators will likely mash together different PD products and approaches. Find products that really appeal to you, that excite you, and that you believe in. And then seek out solid ways to implement them. Don't look for the panacea, because chances are it will let you down.

Using This Report

We hope this guide will help teachers and administrators find the right tools, for the right purpose. Here's how to use this resource:

Frameworks for Evaluating PD Products: Our framework helps educators recognize the purpose or purposes of each tool. The framework captures the cycle of learning and highlights which part of the cycle various tools support. Use the framework to find the part of the cycle you need to support or to figure out how to fit different tools together to cover the entire cycle.

Comparing the Products: In this report, you can compare products in three different ways. Educators can start by comparing purpose. They will find each tool categorized by its main purpose: Engage, Learn, Support, or Measure. You can use the framework to ensure that you have tools that cover every stage of the cycle of learning. Tools are also categorized according to what teachers learn, how content is assigned, usage scenarios, and access methods. Based on these categories, educators can find the tool that caters best to their mode of learning. Finally, educators can compare products based on their price and who can purchase them: some tools are strictly for individual teachers, while others are meant to be used across an entire school.

Product Profiles: We have included profiles of 28 professional development products. These profiles provide an overview of each tool, how it works, how it's used, and who's using it. For a deeper dive into the details and to see videos and screenshots of each tool, we suggest you look at the (free) online profiles of each product on the EdSurge Index. We've provided links to make these easy to find.

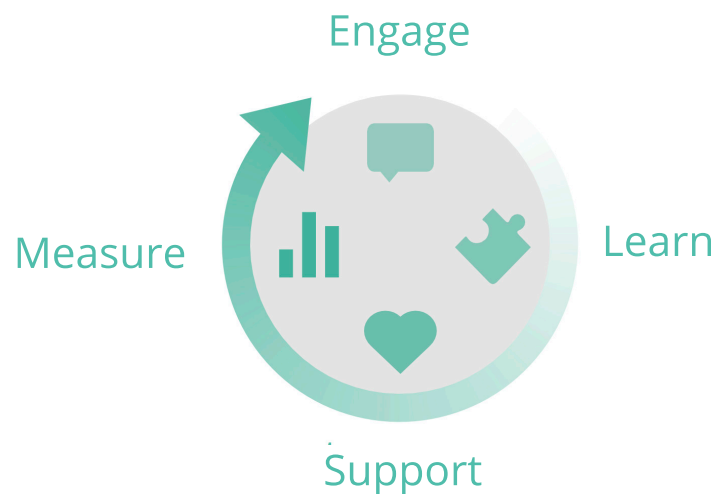
Approaches for Evaluating PD Products

There are two components to the EdSurge PD framework: the Professional Development Learning Cycle and our tool classification. On the EdSurge site, each of the 28 tools listed here have been analyzed according to this framework. You can read the analysis of each of these tools by searching the EdSurge Index for the individual product page for each of those products, or get to know an overview of each product in the product reports included in this paper.

The PD Learning Cycle

To evaluate emerging edtech professional development tools, EdSurge created a “framework of a continuous cycle of learning.”

More than 50 educators contributed to and reviewed EdSurge’s Professional Development Learning Cycle. Its four stages—Engage, Learn, Support and Measure—form a continuous cycle. Where in this cycle teachers begin and how they will proceed will vary. Some will get more out of one stage than another. That’s fine, too. Teachers will discover the tools that work best for them—and when those tools are most useful. It’s all about giving teachers a more personalized professional development experience.



Detailed Tool Classification

To further differentiate what tools do and how they can be used, we have also classified tools based on the content they deliver and the way they deliver it. We do this so teachers and administrators can find the tools that fit their learning needs. We use the following categories:

- What You Learn
- How Content Is Assigned
- Usage Scenario
- Access Method

Comparing the Products

With the PD Learning Cycle categories we've created we have hoped to define areas needed to create a holistic professional development experience. While each product does either one or more parts of cycle, the whole learning cycle can be created by putting different products together that support different needs. We hope the tables below help you to find the right products for the right need, while also illustrating how these products could potentially fit together to complete a whole cycle.



Engage

These tools enable teachers to join groups, ask questions and share resources. Most tools that allow educators to engage also include a "Learn" component, such as webinars, online courses, and modules.



Adobe Education Exchange

Engage Learn

Online community that connects teachers to one another, to resources, and to free online courses about how to incorporate media creation into the classroom

Free

For Teachers



edWeb

Engage Learn

A social network that connects educators and education industry professionals, enabling them to share resources and ideas through themed groups and monthly webinars

Free

For Teachers



LessonCast

Engage

Web-based software that allows teachers to create their own "screencasts" on professional learning topics, and share those screencasts with peers for feedback and collaboration

Paid

For Teachers



SimpleK12

Engage Learn

A social network that allows educators to share resources, connect with each other, view webinars and online courses, and receive badges for their activities

Freemium

For Teachers



Teachers Pay Teachers

Engage

Marketplace where teachers can buy, sell, request and share original lesson plans and supplemental classroom materials

Freemium

For Teachers



Learn

These are content-rich tools presented in a variety of ways including online courses, webinars or self-paced modules. Some of these tools also provide “Support” capabilities that help teachers implement skills and ideas.



Annenberg Learner

Learn

A bank of videos, online courses, and educational resources through which educators can earn continuing education credits and find tools to use in the classroom

Freemium

For Teachers



Cast

Engage Learn

Online courses and resources that help teachers differentiate their instruction based on Universal Design principles

Paid

For Teachers



Nextpert

Learn

A platform that guides lesson plan and assessments creation, and connects users with experts to get answers to the questions they have

License

For Administrators



PD In Focus

Learn

Gives administrators the ability to assign teachers PD videos with customized follow up questions

License

For Administrators



The EdMod App

Learn

A research tool that provides teachers with classroom strategies to differentiate for students with diverse needs

License

For Administrators



ASCD Professional Development Tools

Learn

Collection of courses, resources, and webinars created by education experts to train teachers on new techniques, Common Core methods, and hone new skills

Freemium

For Teachers



myPearson Trainer

Learn

Bank of training videos and resources to help teachers learn various teaching techniques compatible with Pearson products

Free

For Teachers



PBS Teacherline

Learn

Facilitated professional development courses and online tools for instructional coaches

Paid

For Teachers



Teaching Channel

Engage Learn

Video library that allows teachers to view videos of expert teachers in action, share comments, and ask questions of the online community

Free

For Teachers



Support

These tools help educators connect and share their practice with experienced mentors for feedback and coaching. Some tools in the “Support” category allow teachers to also “Engage” with their peers, as well as to “Measure” their learning.



ADVANCEfeedback

Support Measure

Teacher development tool in which third party coaches give feedback on classroom video

License

For Administrators



e-Mentoring for Student Success

Learn Support

Third party mentors tutor new teachers through a platform that allows 1:1 tutoring, grouping with other similar educators, and special online courses

License

For Administrators



Great Teaching, Great Feedback

Support

Matches teachers with outsourced coaches who engage in a coaching relationship through video sharing and commenting platform

License

For Administrators



Talent

Support Measure

Supports mentoring and rubric based assessments of teacher practice by letting teachers upload videos, share with peers and administrators

License

For Teachers



TeachLivE

Learn Support

Software that simulates classroom student-teacher interactions, allowing a live teacher to control a classroom of virtual students

Paid

For Administrators



Delivering Performance Feedback to Teachers

Support

Interactive simulation where administrators control an avatar to test out and learn how to give feedback to teachers on their performance

License

For Administrators



Edthena

Support

Connects teachers to coaches via an online platform with video recordings and commenting tools

License

For Administrators



SmarterCookie

Support Measure

Lets teachers upload classroom videos & receive timestamped feedback from coaches & peers

Freemium

For Teachers



Teaching Channel Teams

Engage Learn Support

Private site created for schools or districts to share video, group teachers, and share resources online

License

For Administrators



Measure

These tools are usually associated with some form of collecting data on a teacher's practice. They provide some way to measure a teacher's growth or progress in adopting new practices or acquiring new skills.



BloomBoard

Learn Measure

Platform that supports teachers to set goals, administrators to track observation data, and connects both to auto recommendations to third party resources

Freemium

For Administrators



TeachBoost

Engage Support Measure

Interface for managing classroom data associated with classroom walkthroughs, observations and teacher performance evaluations

License

For Administrators



TruenorthLogic

Engage Support Measure

Professional development and human resource tools for K-12 districts to build new skills and track data on professional growth

License

For Central Office Administrators



FineTune

Learn Measure

A software tool that trains teachers to understand and assess the Common Core standards for writing

Paid

For Teachers



Teachscope

Engage Learn Support Measure

Management system that provides a catalogue of courses including videos of best practices, communities of practice, tools for observation and evaluation, and talent management

License

For Central Office Administrators

How do you want to schedule your PD?

Intensive PD

Intensive PD includes professional development tools that require an ongoing commitment over a specific period of time.

ADVANCEfeedback

e-Mentoring for Student Success

Great Teaching, Great Feedback

Course-Style PD

Course-style PD includes resources that provide support but must be scheduled at a specific time.

Adobe Education Exchange

edWeb

LessonCast

Annenberg Learner

ASCD PD Tools

CAST

myPearson Trainer

PBS Teacherline

The EdMod App

Delivering Performance Feedback to Teachers

e-Mentoring for Student Success

TeachLivE

FineTune

Supplementary PD

Supplementary PD includes tools that teachers can loop back to over the course of the year for ongoing and periodical support. These tools are used as needed and the amount of use varies educator to educator.

Adobe Education Exchange

edWeb

LessonCast

Simple K12

Teachers Pay Teachers

ASCD PD Tools

CAST

myPearson Trainer

Nextpert

PBS Teacherline

PD In Focus

Teaching Channel

Edthena

Great Teaching, Great Feedback

SmarterCookie

Talent

Teaching Channel Teams

TeachLivE

BloomBoard














TeachBoost

Teachscape

Truenorthlogic

What Tools Give Teachers Credit?

Getting credit for professional development is important for teachers. It acknowledges and rewards them for the many hours they put into improving their practice. The two traditional ways in which teachers are rewarded for the time they put into learning are through Continuing Education Units and Graduate School Credits. Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are mandatory for teachers to maintain their teaching license. The number they need to acquire varies state by state. Graduate School Credits (GSC's) are helpful to teachers because often-times a combination of years of experience and GSC's will determine a teacher's salary level. Tools help users acquire GSC's by partnering with accredited universities, and CEU's through partnership with state accreditors.

Tool	Continuing Education Units	Graduate School Credits
Simple K12 Professional development for teachers and students with webinars and courses		
Annenberg Learner A bank of videos, online courses, and educational resources for educators to earn continuing education credits and find tools to use in the classroom		
ASCD PD Tools Collection of courses, resources, and webinars created by education experts to train teachers on teaching techniques including teaching Common Core curriculum		
CAST Online courses and resources that help teachers differentiate their instruction, according to Universal Design principles		
myPearson Trainer Bank of training videos and resources to help teachers learn teaching techniques compatible with Pearson products		
PBS Teacherline Facilitated professional development courses and online tools for instructional coaches		
e-Mentoring for Student Success Mentor training/support, 1:1 tutoring, and content in math, science, and special education		
Nextpert A platform that guides lesson plan and assessment creation, and connects users with experts to get answers to the questions they have		

Product Profiles

Adobe Education Exchange	19	ADVANCEfeedback	38
edWeb	20	Delivering Performance Feedback. . .	39
Lessoncast PD Tools and Courseware . .	21	e-Mentoring for Student Success . . .	40
SimpleK12.	23	Edthena.	42
TeachersPayTeachers.	24	Great Teaching, Great Feedback	44
Annenberg Learner.	26	SmarterCookie	46
ASCD Professional Development Tools .	27	Talent.	48
CAST	28	Teaching Channel Teams.	49
myPearson Trainer	30	TeachLivE	50
Nextpert	31	BloomBoard	52
PBS TeacherLine	33	FineTune	54
PD In Focus.	35	TeachBoost.	55
Teaching Channel	36	Teachscape.	57
The EdMod App.	37	Truenorthlogic	59



Adobe Education Exchange

Platform that engages teachers in online courses and resources to incorporate media creation into the classroom

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental
 Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Social Network
 Content Repository
 Asynchronous Modules
 Webinar

Overview

Adobe Education Exchange is a free platform that focuses on building teachers' skills and helps them to incorporate media into the classroom. It allows teachers to share and search for classroom resources, engage in discussions with others, and take online courses to learn more. While much of the platform has a focus on Adobe products (resources that require things like Photoshop or Flash and profiles for high-lighting expertise with a specific product) there are also more resources and online courses focusing broadly on creativity and media, not tied to a specific product.

Cost

Free

Seeking Improvement

Integrating creativity skills into curriculum

On-Label Use

Teachers use this to find resources, connect with other educators on the network, and take courses focused around how to integrate creativity skills into all class subjects. Educators wanting to train other educators also use the tool to take courses to become Adobe Education Trainers.

Off-Label Use

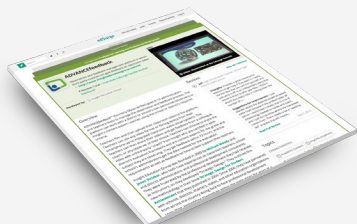
High school aged students are taking the courses to learn how to teach others how use Adobe products. IT departments are using the courses to train their staff how to better serve people at the help desk.

Deal Breakers

Some of the resources require Adobe products to work in. If a teacher is unable to download a free trial or doesn't have access to the products, it would preclude them from using some, but not all, of the resources loaded up on the site.

Types of Schools Using It

Individual teachers and districts that have purchased Adobe products.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/adobe-education-exchange



edWeb

Social platform for educators and education industry professionals centered on monthly webinars

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental
 Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice
 Differentiated

Access Method

Social Network
 Webinar

Overview

edWeb is a social networking platform that offers monthly webinars on several dozens topics and supports virtual professional learning communities formed around those topics. It's a site where communities of teachers, librarians, administrators, and education industry professionals connect, learn about new ideas in the field, and share resources. It is free to both create a profile and to participate in webinars. Individual teachers can use the platform to learn new things by joining communities, "follow" other educators, and create discussion groups around specific topics.

Librarians were early adopters of edWeb. The librarian community found edWeb as a way to connect with each other, as they are often the only ones in their schools that fill their specific role. Librarians typically have the capacity to be tech savvy, and found edWeb as a way to discuss with others ways to implement different technology in their schools.

Now, what distinguishes edWeb is the diversity of voices within each community, which includes teachers, industry professionals, librarians and administrators. All these groups come together to share ideas and perspectives on their work as it pertains to a diverse range of specific topic.

As of late 2013, edWeb has over 66,000 registered users. The company is funded through sponsorships. Sponsors will support and pay for a learning community on the site, and subsidize the operating cost as well as the cost of having experts deliver webinars each month.

Cost

Free for educators and educational institutions to participate and use the platform; there are fees for non-profits (\$2,000 per event) or companies (\$2,900 per event) to host webinars.

On-Label Use

Plug into existing Professional Learning Communities that provide monthly webinars, regular resources, and group chats organized around different topics in education.

Off-Label Use

Teachers can use the edWeb platform to create their own private PLC groups. In these groups they can share resources, watch webinars, simultaneously post comments and carry on private conversations.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/edweb--2



Lessoncast PD Tools and Courseware

Web-based software to connect professional learning and classroom practice through teacher-created digital resources

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage

Type of Support

Supplemental,
Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic
Instructional Skills
Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Content Repository

Overview

LessonCast is a tool that lets educators condense a lesson plan, instructional strategy, or academic or professional development goal into a three-minute slideshow-like video. The tool is used both by teachers (both pre-service and current) in graduate/training programs, as well as in schools and districts that are looking to create or reform their professional learning environment. Teachers use the tool to take a screencast of various artifacts that help explain what the lesson is, what they hope to accomplish and what is required to make the lesson happen and be successful. Individuals can use these lessoncasts to create personal teaching portfolios, and schools and districts can create communities that allow their teachers to easily digest information on their own time and make it more applicable to their specific classroom.

In late 2013, LessonCast has 150 customers, mostly in the greater Baltimore area where founders Nicole Tucker-Smith and Khalid Smith started the company. Nicole started the company in response to her personal experience as the professional development coordinator for Baltimore County. They have had a lot of success expanding into graduate level teacher preparation courses. They are working with K-12 schools like Henderson Hopkins to help develop materials around developing new blended learning models that they will use to help schools adopting their product get started.

Teachers using LessonCast in a graduate class pay \$45 per semester for access to the editing tool, and they also get to keep all the lessoncasts that they create in a personal portfolio. Teachers can also browse the public lessoncasts that are in the gallery on their website. Schools or Districts buy into a year-long license ranging from \$3,000 - \$5,000, depending on the size of the community, desired level of assistance and oversight from the LessonCast Learning team, and amount of starter premium content that the company developed working with their pilot schools.

Cost

Courses for individual teachers range from \$45 - \$99 for a semester. Graduate students and teaching candidates pay \$45 per semester for access to the service. Schools pay between \$2,000 - \$5,000 per year for a community site, depending on the amount of starting materials and levels of customization. Schools that want to work more intensely with LessonCast on developing and capturing professional learning practices will pay at least \$5,000 per year

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/lessoncast-pd-tools-and-courseware





Lessoncast PD Tools and Courseware

(continued)

On-Label Use

Condense lesson plans or instructional strategies into a three-minute video that teachers or teaching candidates can share with colleagues, mentors, and administrators

Off-Label Use

Use it to supplement the resume of a teacher; ESL teachers have used it to present lessons in multiple languages to students

Deal Breakers

It takes new users between one to three hours to create a lessoncast. Although it is estimated to save time in the long run, there is a substantial initial time investment in order to capture professional learning materials into lessoncasts.

Types of Schools Using It

K-12 elementary schools and graduate teaching programs



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/lessoncast-pd-tools-and-courseware



SimpleK12

Technology professional development for teachers and students with webinars and courses

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Social Network
 Content Repository
 Asynchronous
 Webinar

Overview

SimpleK12 is an online professional development tool that incorporates teacher learning into a social platform, and promotes engagement by letting teachers accumulate points that they can trade in for rewards. The company also sells its own “toolkits,” for say, dealing with student or handling paperwork. . It allows teachers to create a profile, track their PD through a transcript of courses and outcomes, and access a broad range of content.

Teachers can communicate with one another through forums, upload resources to share with others and gain points as they participate in the community. They can redeem those points on the site for merchandise, memberships or content. The content is delivered through webinars, which cover a range of subjects from organizational skills to the Common Core.

Cost

\$357 per teacher per year (SimpleK12 runs membership sales through their newsletter), Teachers can create a profile and access some content (a handful of webinars and resources) for free without a license. Site licenses for districts and schools vary based on size .

On-Label Use

Watch webinars for professional development credit and participate in a professional learning community.

Deal Breakers

Teachers who cannot afford the membership fees.

Types of Schools Using It

Statewide, to large top 500 school districts, to tiny private school.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/simplek12



TeachersPayTeachers

Marketplace where teachers can buy, sell, request and share original lesson plans

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Social Network

Content Repository

Overview

TeachersPayTeachers is an online marketplace that enables teachers to buy and sell original content and lesson plans with other teachers. The design is reminiscent of Amazon, in that teachers can browse content created by other teachers through filters like grade level, subject, price, and type of resources. TpT highlights top sellers, featured resources, and sales of the week. The site makes “resource sharing” into a full- featured shopping experience, where teachers can simultaneously be an entrepreneur and a customer.

As of 2013, the TpT marketplace hosted over a half million resources, of which a majority devoted to primary grades; there are also prominent ELA and math categories. Each resource’s profile includes an overview on what it is and what it does, ratings and comments from other customers, and detailed information about the seller including descriptions of their teacher experience and their teaching style.

Buyers can directly ask sellers questions about an individual resource that’s up for sale through the site. Buyers can also download a preview of the resource before they commit to buying. Teachers can “follow” their favorite sellers and get updates on future releases. And much like Amazon, buyers can maintain a wishlist of items they would like to buy.

Anyone can sell resources on the TpT marketplace, whether they are a teacher or not. Before sellers can upload resources to sell, however, they must share a free resource. Once the free resource is up, the site lets sellers set their own prices for additional materials. Resources must be uploaded in pdf, Word, Wordperfect, or HTML files.

The pricing sweet spot for individual items seems to be around \$3.50, says Paul Edelman, founder of the site. Customers buy in groups, with typical customers spending about \$14 per order (about three items).

TpT has excited some controversy. Some teachers love it and appreciate the extra money which they frequently spend on additional resources for their class. (Most teachers spend several hundred dollars of their own money each year to supplement school supplies.) Others have complained that since teachers are paid with public funds, the resources they create for their job is public property and belongs in the public domain. Copyright issues about who owns materials created for the classroom are still unclear.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It’s Used, Who’s Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teacherspayteachers



 TeachersPayTeachers

(continued)

Creating a TpT account is free for buyers. However, sellers choose between the free version and a paid membership: The company takes a 40% commission on sales from sellers using a free account. Those who pay for a premium membership of \$60 per year get charged a 15% commission.

TeachersPayTeachers is solely a resource-sharing site. Beyond being able to get ready to use resources for the classroom, teacher will receive no further coaching or advice on what it takes to implement the resource in their own classrooms.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teacherspayteachers



Annenberg Learner

A bank of videos, online courses, and educational resources for educators to earn continuing education credits and find tools to use in the classroom

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Content Repository
 Webinar
 Video Library
 Asynchronous Modules

Overview

Annenberg Learner houses dozens of freely available videos, courses, and educational resources. The educational arm of the Annenberg Foundation partner with Colorado State University to provide tuition-based graduate credit and/or continuing education credits for teachers. There are over 110 courses available, with content spanning all the major disciplines at all the grade levels.

Cost

All content can be used for free. Credit can be earned for taking some courses: Two credit courses are \$196 and three credit courses are \$294. Both have an additional \$20 tech fee for taking the course online. Tuition for Continued Education Unit courses is currently \$50 per CEU or \$75 for 1.5 units, \$125 for 2.5 units and \$150 for 3 units.

On-Label Use

Teachers can purchase online courses for graduate or CEU credit, or access a variety of materials including courses, webinars, and lesson plans for free.

Deal Breakers

Most of the content is not updated regularly and therefore is a little outdated.

Types of Schools Using It

Mostly accessed by individual teachers, but schools can purchase DVDs of any of their videos or courses.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/annenberg-learner



ASCD Professional Development Tools

Collection of courses, resources, and webinars created by education experts to train teachers on new techniques, Common Core methods, and hone new skills

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental,
Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Academic
Instructional Skills
Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Content Repository
Asynchronous Module
Webinar
Online Courses

Overview

ASCD provides professional development resources that connect teachers to research experts and to courses for building instructional skills. The association offers four PD tools for teachers; webinars, PD Online, Educore and Principal Compass. These come in the form of online courses, videos, and webinars. Content includes examples from real teachers in the classroom, lectures by experts, and Powerpoint presentations.

PD Online, is a series of online courses that span subjects from how to teach to the Common Core standards to management and school culture. EduCore, provides specific math and literacy Common Core-aligned materials including webinars, expert-led lectures and sample lesson plans. ASCD also offers free webinar lectures given by experts.

For principals, ASCD offers the Principal Compass program, developed with Pearson to provide administrators with short courses in leadership and management.

Cost

Webinars and EduCore are free; online courses are \$99 per person with bulk discounts; a one-year site license (for six leaders) to Principal Compass runs \$4990. Districts with multiple sites may apply for discounts.

On-Label Use

Teachers can take courses, gain content knowledge and achieve course credit

Deal Breakers

Time consuming and costly. Some require a school or district to purchase the PD.

Types of Schools Using It

Ranges from small schools to state departments.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/ascd-professional-development-tools



CAST

Online courses and resources that help teachers differentiate their instruction, according to Universal Design principles

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental
 Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Online Courses
 Asynchronous Modules

Overview

CAST's professional development offerings aim to translate "research to practice," specifically by applying the UDL (Universal Design for Learning) framework to curriculum development. UDL is a framework that uses neuroscience principles to explain learner variability and to illuminate a variety of ways to teach to various types of learners (by determining what motivates each type of learner, understanding their emotions, etc.). CAST promotes UDL strategies that help teachers develop curriculum and instructional practices that inherently differentiate and scaffold for different types of learners. Teachers learn how to create instructional goals, materials, and assessments that work for all students in their classroom.

CAST offers online and in-person workshops and courses. This review, however, focuses on CAST's online offerings.

With online course bundles, participants receive access to 'UDL Studio' (literacy curriculum tool), UDL Book Builder (authoring tool that users can use to create digital books), UDL Editions (reading support tool), UDL Curriculum Self-Check (a curriculum self-assessment program), and UDL Connect (a social community platform). People who sign up for in-person sessions also receive access to all of these programs, as well as UDL Exchange (an online collaboration and lesson creation platform) and Science Writer (a student web-based tool for creating science and lab reports).

UDL Exchange is a free website community that enables educators to create, mix, and share UDL-based lesson plans and other teaching resources, aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Educators can browse, rate, and tag existing resources or build:

- UDL Lessons (instructional plans that address the variability and diversity of all learners);
- UDL Resources (multimedia supports for UDL implementation, including videos and websites);
- UDL Collections (themed collections such as curriculum units, to support UDL practice).

While teachers may elect to take individual courses, schools/districts often work with CAST representatives to create customized collections of courses that best support larger groups of teachers.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/cast--2





(continued)

Cost

About \$1000 - \$1200 per person for 14-week online courses. A 10% discount is offered to teams of three or more people from the same institution who register together. CAST also develops customized workshops for larger groups (such as districts) and prices those accordingly.

On-Label Use

Teachers learn how to incorporate theories of UDL (Universal Design for Learning) into their curriculum design and teaching practice, hence improving their ability to differentiate learning. They also can receive access to CAST's web-based learning tools (such as 'UDL Studio,' a web-based literacy tool).

Off-Label Use

Some CAST courses go beyond UDL. For example, one course relates to preparing and integrating video for practice; teachers learn how to use UDL theories to do this, but they also learn to incorporate Common Core standards into their curriculum development

Deal Breakers

There is a great deal of neuroscience behind these professional development sessions. If a teacher is disinterested in learning about neuroscience principles he or she may find these sessions difficult or overly theoretical. Also, certain online courses are only available during certain semesters (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

Types of Schools Using It

Mostly public and charter K-12 schools.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/cast--2



myPearson Trainer

Bank of training videos and resources to help teachers learn various teaching techniques compatible with Pearson products

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental
 Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Online Courses
 Asynchronous Modules
 Webinar
 Content Repository

Overview

myPearson Training provides teachers and administrators with tutorials on how to implement Pearson products and informational PDFs about the pedagogy behind the curriculum. myPearsonTraining offers tutorials, webinars, online courses, and on-site training for using Pearson products. Although much of the material is free, educators must pay fees to take one of the 100 online courses.

The myPearsonTraining team includes content developers, editors, and a media team, who work in various Pearson offices or remotely throughout the United States.

Cost

Free tutorials and webinars; \$120 (individual) - \$3675 (large group) for online courses.

On-Label Use

Teachers can learn how to best utilize Pearson products in the classroom.

Off-Label Use

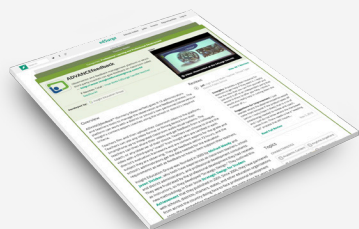
Teachers and administrators can use the tutorials and webinars to sample the Pearson products before buying licenses.

Deal Breakers

To get the most skills training, schools must be using Pearson products.

Types of Schools Using It

Existing Pearson customers worldwide in K-12 public and private schools, as well as universities worldwide.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/mypearson-trainer



Nextpert

Individualized digital professional development tool with expert community and support

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Social Network

Content Repository

Online Courses

Overview

Nextpert is a platform that gives teachers guidance on building lesson plans and assessments, advancing their learning, and connecting with experts to get answers to the questions they have.

Nextpert was launched to early adopters in summer 2013 and fully launched in October 2013. It supports teachers, administrators and district leaders in building and sharing curriculum that will transform their instruction for the Common Core or higher standards curriculum. The system has three main components: Build, Learn and Connect.

The Build tool offers scaffolding aimed at supporting teachers building their own or modify existing lessons and assessment items. The Learn component of Nextpert gives users free access to Scholastic U, another product made by Scholastic, to offer online courses to improve literacy instruction. The Connect component encourages teachers and administrators to connect with "Nextperts," an online network of approximately 500 experts (from teachers through district superintendents & national education leaders), to ask questions about and get coaching on instructional practices and get responses within 24 hours.

Cost

\$3,800 per school per year for full staff access (District volume pricing is available for 10 or more schools. Nextpert advises that to get best results with their product all teachers should have access) \$1,500 per school per year for access of up to ten staff members.

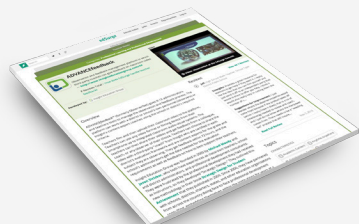
On-Label Use

Build and share curriculum with colleagues using a builder tool that supports the crucial components of developing an exemplar lesson plan. Teachers can get access to model lessons and assessments that they can modify.

Off-Label Use

Teachers can collaborate with their co-teachers to co-plan lessons, units and next generation assessments using Nextpert's builder tool.

(continued)



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/nextpert

 **Nextpert**

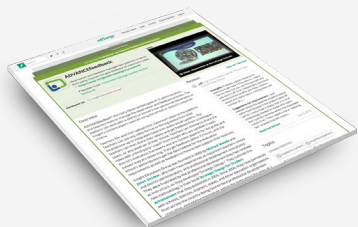
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Deal Breakers

It requires Internet access, so for schools with limited wifi it would be a challenge. Cost may also be an obstacle depending on school and district funding.

Types of Schools Using It

Public Schools of all sizes



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/nextpert



PBS TeacherLine

Facilitated professional development courses and online tools for instructional coaches

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Learn

Type of Support

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Online Courses

Webinar

Asynchronous Modules

Overview

PBS TeacherLine offers a collection of for-credit and noncredit courses. (Credits are awarded through a partnership with a dozen universities.) Most courses are graduate level, with the for-credit courses lasting for six weeks or ten weeks. Most teachers take the for-credit courses as Continuing Education Units or to complete their teaching certification.

The for-credit courses focus on pedagogical and teaching strategies within several central realms: Instructional Technology, Reading/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies/History, STEM, Science, and general Instructional Strategies, which include topics like Curriculum Mapping and Assessment/Evaluation. The self-paced, noncredit courses, on the other hand, are only content-based. They serve more as refreshers for teachers, and place more of an emphasis on smaller units of PD.

Cost

Facilitated courses are \$265 for a one-hour/one-credit course, \$295 for a two-credit course, and \$345 for a three-credit course. Self-paced courses are \$49. If teachers chose to take higher credit (more than three-credit) courses, they then pay the partnered university directly.

On-Label Use

Use online courses to learn pedagogical strategies for a variety of subjects (ELA, math, science, history) and adjunct topics (instructional technology, leadership, teaching for multiple intelligences).

Off-Label Use

Teachers looking to brush up on information can choose to take the shorter, self-paced courses.

Deal Breakers

There are no specific offerings for administrators. Also, not all courses are offered year-round

(continued)



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/pbs-teacherline

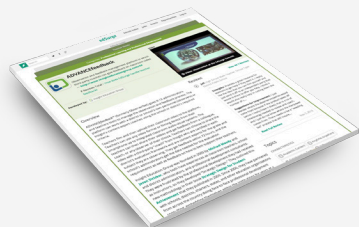


PBS TeacherLine

(continued)

Types of Schools Using It

Originally, inner city Title 1 schools were the primary users; the platform was originally designed for them, based on the specifics of the funding grant issued to PBS. Rural schools also make up a large percentage of users. However, PBS Teacher Line reports that they have users in a variety of districts and school settings.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/pbs-teacherline



PD In Focus

Gives administrators the ability to assign teachers PD videos with customized follow up questions

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic

Instructional Skills

Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Differentiated

Access Method

Asynchronous Modules

Video Share Platform

Overview

Released in March 2007, PD In Focus was designed to be a professional development resource that can be used by entire schools and/or districts, and by both teachers and administrators. It is essentially a catalog of over 1,000 videos including teachers teaching, slide presentations, and lectures by experts. Think of it as “flipping” PD for teachers before flipping the classroom was cool.

PD In Focus allows administrators to create video-based assignments for teachers that they can distribute to specific groups of teachers and monitor their progress. Principals, who log in as either “leaders” or “facilitators,” can assign certain videos to teachers, create customized response questions, and create a related discussion board. This PD is meant to be both self-directed and facilitated by administrators for teachers. PD In Focus offers a free two-week trial and typically is licenses to schools or districts.

Cost

One year site (large school or small district) license \$1695, multiple sites for a district with bulk discounts.

On-Label Use

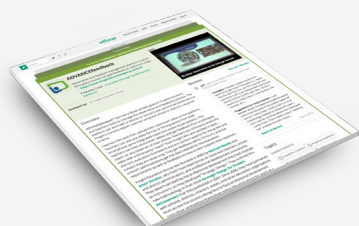
Teachers can watch videos, gain content knowledge, and participate in administrator-led assignments.

Deal Breakers

Requires significant investment in time and funds. PD In Focus requires a school or district to purchase the PD.

Types of Schools Using It

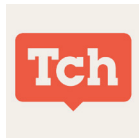
Ranges from small schools to state departments.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/pd-infocus



Teaching Channel

Online PD video platform for teachers to share and showcase new ideas and best practices focused on high-needs areas

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Engage Learn

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Social Network
 Content Repository
 Video Library

Overview

As of 2013, the Teaching Channel hosted a library of nearly 800 professionally produced videos of expert teachers in action, giving other teachers the chance to see best practices in high-needs areas including Common Core, lesson plan ideas, and classroom management. The platform also makes all materials used by teachers in the videos--including lesson plans and worksheets--used by teachers in the videos available to registered users. Registered users can also join the Teaching Channel community by creating a profile, sharing and commenting on videos. It began creating this library in 2011.

While the site is well known for their high quality video production, it also hosts a range of featured for registered users. Registering is free for all users and allows teachers to make notes and public comments on videos, save and tag videos for later, follow other users, and join in a community Q&A forum. Teachers use the site as a hub for storing ideas and inspiration, and for connecting to a large community of teachers when they have questions or need advice.

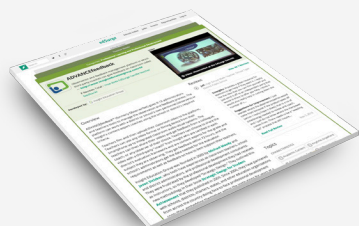
The Teaching Channel community includes over 417,000 registered users as of fall 2013. Individual teachers create accounts and view videos as needed.

Cost

Free

On-Label Use

Watch professionally produced videos showcasing effective teachers in action, demonstrating their best practices for other teachers to learn from.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teaching-channel



The EdMod App

A research tool that provides teachers with classroom strategies to differentiate for students with diverse needs

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Content Repository

Social Network

Overview

The EdMod App is a platform developed by Education Modified LLC to support teachers in differentiation, specifically as it applies to special education. The platform provides ideas on classroom practices for individualizing teaching to support teachers in meeting the need of all students. Teachers can search for teaching strategies based on students' disabilities or learning styles. Additionally, teachers have the ability to tag, track, and evaluate the strategies in individual student portfolios.

Upon logging into the teacher portal, the teacher has three options for "access tools." First, a Modification Strategies Search tool allows the teacher to search for modification techniques based on a student's particular disability. Second, a section for support on writing IEPs (an Individualized Education Program plan) helps teachers write their IEPs in alignment to the Common Core State Standards. Third, a section for individual student folders provides a space for teachers to keep these documents and information organized for each of their students.

The EdMod App is still in beta as of winter 2014, so it is currently free for schools and/or teachers that are interested in using it.

Education Modified was founded in 2011 by high school special education teachers Melissa Corto and Elisa Altorfer after they met while mentoring teachers-in-training. Education Modified was launched with the goal of providing teachers with user-friendly, technology-based tools that maximize teachers' knowledge of differentiation practices. In 2013, Education Modified was chosen to participate in 4.0 School's Design Lab Spring Accelerator Program.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/the-edmod-app



ADVANCEfeedback

Observation and feedback management platform in which third party coaches can give feedback on classroom video

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Support Measure

Type of Support

Intensive

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic
Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Differentiated

Access Method

Video Sharing

Overview

ADVANCEfeedback™ (formerly ObserverNet) gives K-12 administrators and teachers tools to manage the observation and feedback process. The platform can work with a district or school's own personnel (observers) or Insight's content-expert coaches using the school or district's required criteria.

Teachers film and then upload their classroom video to the platform. Teachers can use any video format or filming device from their smartphone up to integrated classroom audio-visual systems. The teachers can then share their videos and get feedback from a colleague, coach, or any observer of their choice. Teachers can choose to share the video with a third-party "coach" from Insight who are certified in each district's evaluation framework and are content experts for the grade and subject they are observing. They get feedback within 72 hours, and the school's administrators get the data needed for the evaluation requirements as well as feedback on how to best support their teachers.

Insight Education Group was founded in 2000 by Michael Moody and Jason Stricker, who both have experiences as classroom teachers, school and district administrators, and professional development consultants. They were frustrated by the professional development they had received as instructors, so they developed "Strategic Design." They outlined this new methodology in their book *Strategic Design for Student Achievement* that they published in 2009. Since 2000, they have partnered with schools, districts, charters, states, and other education organizations from across the country doing face-to-face professional development consulting, embedding themselves within the institutions for years at a time.

Insight Education Group is located in Los Angeles, CA, but they have team members located all over the country. The Insight team recently began expanding their reach through software starting with myCore, their Common Core aligned lesson planning platform. The tool won the 2014 EdTech Digest Cool Tool Award and 2014 CodiE Award for "Best Professional Learning Solution in Education." The fully functional ADVANCEfeedback™ product is part of an upcoming ADVANCE suite of professional learning solutions that are still under development.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/advancefeedback



Delivering Performance Feedback

Interactive simulation where administrators control an avatar to test out and learn how to give feedback to teachers on their performance

Primary User(s)

Administrator

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Support

Type of Support

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Adaptive

Access Method

Simulation

Overview

“Delivering Performance Feedback to Teachers” is an interactive and conversation-based training simulation that lets principals practice giving feedback to virtual teacher (avatars). It’s a role-playing exercise that demonstrates to principals the consequences of how they deliver feedback, while guiding them through a specific methodology of feedback. While the stakes aren’t as high in the virtual world, where teachers don’t get mad, quit or go on strike, if the user makes too many mistakes a virtual coach will pop up to re-direct them.

The game is based on principles developed by Paul Bambrick of UnCommon Schools, a leader in training teachers. It was further modified by the team at TNTP based on the training they give to teachers.

The game was tested by one large district in May 2013 and is now in use there. It’s not an extensive time investment: the whole program can be completed in 60 minutes.

Cost

Individual license is \$70. Institutional license based on the number of schools: starting as low as \$11.10 per user for large clients. The course license is one year for individuals and two years for institutional clients.

On-Label Use

Districts and networks provide this training to principals, assistant principals and instructional coaches.

Deal Breakers

The Flash requirement excludes iPad users. The course has only two teacher avatars that were created to represent particular teacher profiles. This doesn’t mimic real life, where a principal has multiple different teachers at different skill levels with many different learning outcomes. Because of this, the course gives a limited range of experiences.

Types of Schools Using It

TNTP did a research study in May 2013 with a large district, which purchased the program autumn 2013. There are also some charter schools in NYC who have purchased individual licenses and are currently using the tool.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It’s Used, Who’s Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/delivering-performance-feedback



e-Mentoring for Student Success

Mentor training/support, 1:1 tutoring, and content in math, science, and special education

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Learn Support

Type of Support

Intensive

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Differentiated

Access Method

Video Sharing

Social Network

Online Courses

Overview

The New Teacher Center (NTC) offers online mentorship and training for new teachers, primarily in math, science, and special education. This is predominantly achieved through the e-Mentoring for Student Success (eMSS) platform, where new teachers consult with an NTC-provided mentor, discuss best practices with their peers in the program, and have access to “Explorations,” a set of pedagogical/content practice modules. All of NTC’s offerings are browser-based.

Like other third-party mentoring programs such as Great Teaching, Great Feedback and Advance, NTC provides third-party mentors to new teachers. It is distinctive, however, in that it provides new teachers with an online community, as well as courses and modules to support additional learning needs. Teachers can use the online community for as long as they want.

The e-Mentoring for Student Success platform costs districts \$1,200 per teacher. It is used by large public districts like Chicago Public Schools, Tulsa, Austin, Hillsborough Public Schools in Florida, and the NYC Department of Education to support their new teachers and manage induction and training.

Cost

The e-Mentoring for Student Success (eMSS) program is \$1200 per teacher (though districts will often purchase “bundles” and reduce that price). There are also individual pieces either for free or for purchase by teachers outside of the eMSS program. The “Community” page offers several free resources, as well as 8-week PD modules (“Explorations”) for \$200 each and a “No-Nonsense Nurturer” course for \$150.

On-Label Use

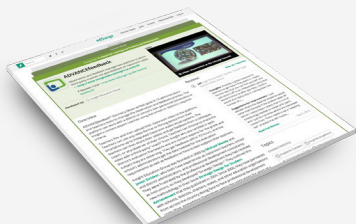
NTC’s main offerings connect new teachers with third-party mentors and other new teachers over its eMSS platform. The platform offers personalized coaching support, a community network to chat with and engage in asynchronous discussions, and a selection of online courses.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It’s Used, Who’s Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/e-mentoring-for-student-success





e-Mentoring for Student Success

(continued)

Off-Label Use

Though not specifically stressed, the presence of the eMSS community and forums allows for NTC users to meet one another and form their own professional learning communities--both inside and outside of their own school systems.

Deal Breakers

This offering is not a one-stop shop PD provider. Dedication to the mentor-mentee relationship and/or time dedicated to the courses is crucial for success; current teachers merely looking for a brush-up might find the offerings unhelpful.

Types of Schools Using It

A number of different types of schools and districts use NTC, from urban to rural districts. This online mentoring program more often gets picked up by smaller districts, as larger districts tend to go for NTC's in-person programming.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/e-mentoring-for-student-success



Edthena

Connects teachers to coaches via an online platform with video recordings and commenting tools

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher

Access Method

Video Sharing

Overview

Edthena is a tool that supports collaboration amongst teachers, coaches, mentors and administrators. The tool allows teachers to record video clips of them teaching in their classrooms and then upload those clips from their computer to a platform where coaches, mentors, administrators and colleagues can offer feedback at specific moments in the video in four categories: questions, suggestions, strengths and notes.

Edthena dedicated two years to prototyping and development in an effort to make their user interface easy to use. It stands out among comparable tools in two ways. The four categories of feedback type allow for easy sorting and viewing of comments. These categories are unique to Edthena. Also, Edthena does not create a custom private site for schools or organizations. Its platform is open to users through invite and brings everyone together in the same site, regardless of which school or organization a teacher is part of.

Edthena has partnered with large organizations such as Teach for America, UnCommon Schools, Center for Transformative Teacher Training, and the Center for Technology and Education to support a variety of teacher candidates, practicing teachers, coaches and administrators. The company also has partnerships with the University of Washington and University of Michigan.

Cost

Edthena is available to organizations and institutions and prices on a per user basis. Pricing is based on the total number of individuals uploading videos. Typical contracts start at \$5,000.

On-Label Use

Coaches, administrators and mentors can provide real-time, specific feedback for teachers and teacher candidates on video clips of their lessons.

Off-Label Use

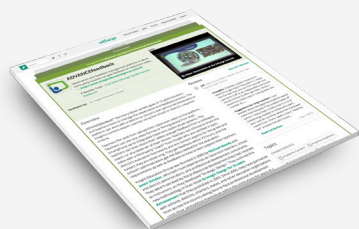
Instructional coaches can use Edthena to get feedback on their in-classroom coaching skills.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/edthena





Edthena

(continued)

Platforms

Web-based, can be used with any camera; must locally install the Edthena Video Tool application to a laptop or desktop to use.

Deal Breakers

Requires video-capturing devices, teachers uncomfortable with being filmed.

Types of Schools Using It

Users include school networks, teacher preparation programs and support organizations and universities. The majority of teachers using the product come from the public schools and form their own professional learning communities--both inside and outside of their own school systems.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/edthena



Great Teaching, Great Feedback

Matches teachers with outsourced coaches who engage in a coaching relationship through video sharing and commenting platform

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Support

Type of Support

Intensive

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Differentiated

Access Method

Video Sharing

Overview

Great Teaching, Great Feedback is a virtual coaching service for teachers. Districts contract with the service to support teachers in areas where they are unable to meet the demands for coaching on their own. Great Teaching, Great Feedback (GTGF) hires their own coaches, matches those coaches to the district's teachers, and then supports the coaching relationship through the BloomBoard platform. The product was piloted in 2011 and launched in autumn 2012.

GTGF matches district teachers with one of its 60 paid coaches from TNTP's highly trained network; coaches are selected based on their experience in teaching, the subject area, and the needs of the district. Over a period of time defined by the district (such as six to eight weeks), teachers upload video clips of themselves teaching; coaches will provide detailed feedback within three days.

Coaches use the BloomBoard platform to watch the video clips and add time-stamped comments. After a coach sends feedback to a teacher, they schedule a follow-up phone call or email to debrief and discuss next steps.

GTGF is a district-facing product: Districts provide GTGF with a teacher-performance rubric that is used throughout the district. The coaches use that rubric to work with teachers. The service is highly customized to the needs of a district; coaches can focus their feedback on specific initiatives the district has put in place. GTGF also distinguishes itself from other video coaching tools by providing both a platform and coaches as part of one service (rather than leaving it up to a district to find coaches).

Cost

The cost is based on expected usage -- namely, on the number of rubrics that a district wants coaches to use and on the number of videos of teachers that the district wants coaches to review. There is an initial fee of \$15,000 per rubric; this covers training for the coaches on a district's rubric and language they prefer coaches use when giving feedback. That fee does not include observations, which come in packages. The typical package is about 400 observations with 100 participating teachers. The cost is approximately \$200-250 per observation, which includes full video feedback and a debrief phone call or email. Teachers also get unlimited access to the BloomBoard platform, for the period of their coaching relationship. Together that means a district can expect a minimum starting cost of about \$100k per year.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/great-teaching-great-feedback





Great Teaching, Great Feedback

(continued)

On-Label Use

Teachers upload four videos over the course of six to eight weeks and receive feedback from a coach who has experience in their content area. After each round of feedback, the coach and teacher debrief over the phone or via email.

Platforms

The GTGF service uses the BloomBoard platform to host videos and resources. BloomBoard is web-based and requires a standard Internet connection. Teachers can use any video recording device to capture video.

Deal Breakers

It takes teachers about one hour to upload a 20-30 minute video clip (based on internet speed) so teachers need ample uploading time. Use of the tool requires a level of comfort with using video in the classroom. Cost might be an issue for some districts.

Types of Schools Using It

Large, urban districts including Tulsa Public Schools and DC Public Schools.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/great-teaching-great-feedback



SmarterCookie

Lets teachers upload classroom videos & receive timestamped feedback from coaches & peers

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Support

Measure

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Video Sharing

Video Library

Overview

SmarterCookie allows teachers to upload classroom videos and receive timestamped feedback from coaches and other teachers. It helps teachers share what's going on in their class without having to schedule in-person observations. SmarterCookie stands out among comparable products by allowing individual teachers and coaches to adopt the product for free. A premium version is available to schools for \$100 per teacher that applies a custom performance rubric to each video. It also lets schools create a local video library-- that means teachers can check out best practices from other teachers in their school.

Users can download the SmarterCookie app, available for iOS devices, for recording, editing and uploading video to the platform. The app allows teachers to capture video without being connected to the internet. They can upload the video once they connect to a more robust internet connection, giving them a way to still capture video even at times when internet speed is slowed down at school.

The product was created in the summer of 2012. As of autumn 2013 the product has several thousand users, including charter schools like Ascend, Blackstone Valley Prep, and KIPP SF College Prep.

Cost

Free for individual teachers, \$100 per teacher per year for premium version, with volume discounts and unlimited storage.

On-Label Use

Share video with colleagues and coaches for feedback. For schools, use for coaching and feedback, forming video-based professional learning communities and creating a video library of best practices.

Off-Label Use

Use to calibrate and manage school culture across the school, i.e., what is standard practice for giving rewards and demerits to students. Also used to share videos of teaching candidate demo lessons with a group of principals who are hiring to gauge interest in the candidate.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/smartercookie--2





SmarterCookie

(continued)

Deal Breakers

Lack of video-capturing devices, teachers uncomfortable with being filmed.

Types of Schools Using It

Mostly charter schools, teacher-training programs.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/smartercookie--2



Talent

Video-based teacher instructional support platform

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Support

Measure

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Video Sharing

Video Library

Overview

Talent, the first product from Torsh, is a video-based teacher observation and analytics platform that captures the daily interactions that occur in the classroom through video and allows teachers to share them with mentors and peers for quick feedback and analysis.

Teachers use a smartphone or tablet to capture the video, upload it to the Talent platform via an app and share it with their community. Or they can use traditional video cameras like flip and upload it directly from a computer desktop. One feature that differentiates the Talent is that each video is automatically transcribed, to make searching for videos easier. Teachers can then tag the video with standards, resources, and subject matter. Coaches and colleagues then comment on the videos through the platform.

The company charges schools based on the number of users of the platform. Each “customer,” or school, gets its own branded instance of the Talent platform. As of late 2013, the Talent mobile app was available in the iOS app store; an Android version was in the works. The web application is accessible through all major browsers via the desktop and a variety of tablet devices. As of autumn 2013, Talent had been deployed in more than 20 US school districts and teacher training programs.

Cost

Typical contracts start at about \$8,000 per year for a group of 25 users. Monthly contracts are also available, with the price adjusting accordingly. (Swivel device sold separately)

On-Label Use

Teachers get feedback and mentoring on their teaching by capturing their teaching via video and sharing with others.

Platforms

Web-based platform paired with an iOS app.

Deal Breakers

Teachers need an iOS device or other video recording device to capture video.

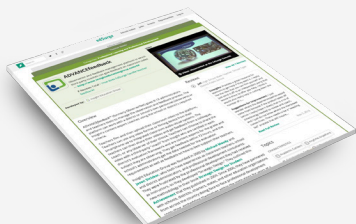
Types of Schools Using It

Charter Schools, Teacher Training Programs, and Public Schools.

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/talent





Teaching Channel Teams

Private site created for schools or districts to share video, group teachers, and share resources online

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Blended

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Teacher Choice

Access Method

Video Sharing
 Social Network
 Content Repository
 Video Library
 Video Share Platform

Overview

Teaching Channel Teams gives schools and districts a private web-based social network where they can create groups, upload their own videos, and tap into the Teaching Channel's professionally made video library. Teachers can create group chat rooms to share resources and collaborate across the school or district. Teachers and coaches can use the platform to share their own videos and resources, to extend coaching time beyond opportunities to do in class observations. Administrators can also use the platform to create a best practices library of their teachers in action.

Schools, districts, and in some cases states have adopted the tool, creating 42,000 individual accounts since early 2013. Big districts including Tulsa Public Schools and Fresno Unified School District and the entire state of Utah have adopted the platform for their teachers.

Cost

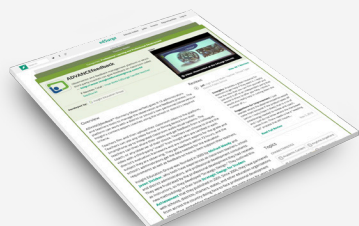
\$52.50 - \$75 per user per year

Deal Breakers

Internet Speed, Non-collaborative school culture.

Types of Schools Using It

Big public districts and teacher mentoring programs.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teaching-channel-teams



TeachLive

Software that simulates classroom student-teacher interactions, allowing a live teacher to control a classroom of virtual students

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Learn Support

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Scheduled

What Teachers Learn

Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Adaptive

Access Method

Simulation

Overview

TeachLive is a simulated teaching experience, where a teacher teaches a virtual classroom to practice instructional skills, delivering specific content and pedagogy and management skills. Rather than teachers having to test out their skills on a real live classroom to assess their strengths and weaknesses, TeachLive lets them test on virtual students. The virtual students have been programmed with distinctive personality types based on the work of psychologist William Wong. This means that in each simulation, they each take on the same personality every time.

Teachers can decide what skills they want to develop - say, classroom management or teaching via the Socratic method. The virtual students are coded to respond in ways that help teachers develop those skills. The teacher shares his or her objective with the TeachLive team. Two weeks later, the simulation is ready to run, and the teacher can begin.

The teacher uses a large monitor to see the five virtual students, and with the help of a (Microsoft) Kinect cable and the TeachLive software, the teacher's actions will trigger various responses among the virtual students.

TeachLive was developed by University of Central Florida in 2008. It has since been used by over 10,000 teachers in over 37 universities, including both pre-service and in-service teachers. Users engage in the simulation, as much or as little as they want. Some are assigned based on a class they take to do the simulation until they master a specific skill. Others might be assigned to use it only once for a short ten minute session.

Cost

The cost is fee-based. Currently, universities pay \$120 an hour while the simulation is running. They can include as many students during that hour as they want. UCF typically recommends teachers use the system for 10-minute long simulations. Ten-minute sessions run \$20 each.

(continued)



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachlive



(continued)

On-Label Use

Educators articulate what they want to get out of the simulator, based on their interests or desires for improvement.

Off-Label Use

The technology gives potential teaching candidates a chance to practice what it's like to manage a small class before they become teachers.

Platforms

TeachLivE is not browser-based. Schools require a Windows-based computer, a \$100 Kinect cable, some sort of projector/projection screen, and the TeachLivE software installed on the computer.

Deal Breakers

The software hasn't been released on a browser yet, so the TeachLivE product requires a great deal of collaboration with the TeachLivE staff and prep work.

Types of Schools Using It

As of late 2013, 37 universities across the country are using it with in-service and pre-service teachers.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachlive



BloomBoard

Tool for teachers to develop professional learning plans and for admins to evaluate teachers

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Learn Measure

Type of Support

Supplemental
 Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Data-Driven
 Teacher Choice

Access Method

Content Repository
 Video Library

Overview

BloomBoard supports professional development in three ways:

- By allowing teachers to set explicit goals and share those goals with their administrators;
- By allowing administrators to track their observations of teachers' practices and the associated data;
- By recommending specific actions or resources to teachers that will help them achieve those goals.

BloomBoard has been very attentive to the requirements that schools and districts must fulfill to continue to get funding through the Obama Administration's Race to the Top Program. (For instance, that program requires districts to develop a more rigorous observation process.) As a result, as of late 2013, BloomBoard has been adopted by more than 320 districts as a tool to streamline that teacher observation and evaluation process.

Users start by setting goals on the platform for how they'd like to improve their teaching. They create action items around those goals. Once goals are tagged to a teaching rubric, teachers can access personalized recommendations for learning opportunities in BloomBoard's marketplace which includes third party video-based workshops, presentations, and online courses that are tied to those goals. Not all resources are free; however, a district can work with BloomBoard to customize the recommendations and resources that get recommended.

Administrators also use the platform to track the observation process and the multiple data points that come along with it, as well as track teacher progress toward their goals. Observers capture notes on a teacher's instruction, tag those notes with instructional standards they address, and upload and tag evidence of teacher practices, such as lesson plans or worksheets.

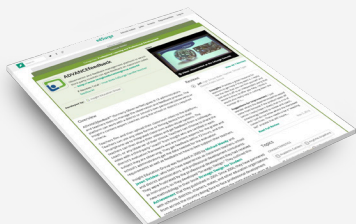
While the goal setting and observation process functions are free, the data dashboard license, which allows administrators to view a teacher's progress toward their goals, starts at \$999 per administrator. Teachers must also pay to use the wider library of third-party professional development material. BloomBoard then gets a portion of revenue from each of those sales.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/bloomboard





BloomBoard

(continued)

Schools including Aspire, Green Dot, and Oakland Unified Public Schools played a pivotal role in helping refine the product. BloomBoard's 2012-2013 Colorado pilot included 27 districts and about 300 schools, along with their 6,000 teachers. Other statewide partners include Connecticut and Delaware. As of late 2013, there are over 320 districts using the BloomBoard platform.

Cost

Freemium - Teachers and administrators can use the free platform to set goals, manage observations, and access custom recommended learning opportunities. When school administrators want an overall data dashboard, the product costs \$999 per administrator. For storing video-based observations and other extensive video resources, Bloomboard charges districts \$99 per 10 gigabytes of data for storage and bandwidth to support content hosting and management as well as video-based observations.

On-Label Use

Help teachers create a customized professional development plan and track progress toward these goals. Gives administrators a centralized place to track, organize and record the observation process, as well as support teacher growth and development.

Deal Breakers

Some of the content is free and some of it is paid. To access the paid content, a teacher without a budget would find it hard to take advantage of those learning opportunities.

Types of Schools Using It

Public schools like Oakland Unified School District and the Los Altos Unified School District, as well as charter school operators including Aspire and Green Dot (who were also

early beta testers). Colorado, Connecticut and Delaware are also using the platform statewide.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/bloomboard



FineTune

Self-paced PD tool for writing evaluation and instruction aligned with the Common Core State Standards

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Teacher

PD Classifications



Learn

Measure

Type of Support

Course-Style

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere

What Teachers Learn

Academic

How Content is Assigned

Data-Driven

Differentiated

Overview

FineTune is an online professional development tool that helps teachers grow their ability to critically evaluate and respond to student writing. The result is consistent, calibrated, and CCSS-aligned assessment of student writing across a group of teachers and across curricular subjects.

FineTune presents the teachers with anonymized student essays in four levels of difficulty spanning grades 6-12 across all three types of writing recommended by the Common Core: narrative, argumentative, and informational/explanatory. Teachers score these essays on a six-point scale using a five-category writing rubric aligned with the Common Core. After submitting those scores, the teacher can compare her or his scores with those of a normed group of teachers, followed by an explanation of the latter's scores. If none of the teacher's scores deviate by more than one point from the normed group's, the teacher receives credit for having met the minimum criteria for calibration. If the teacher meets the minimum or maximum criteria on three essays in a row, he or she is approved as a Reader or Senior Reader of double-blind common writing assessments. Finally, because it is cloud-based, teachers can access it through their AcademicMerit teacher portal anywhere with internet access.

FineTune is one element of AcademicMerit's integrated suite of tools that also includes A21 and Literary Companion. FineTune is sold to both schools and individuals on an annual-subscription, per-teacher basis as either a stand-alone product or as part of the suite of tools. AcademicMerit has designed its products to be complementary; for example, teachers trained using FineTune can participate in scoring student essays in A21 common and formative assessments – with the resulting data allowing them to better gauge the impact their professional learning has had on student performance.

AcademicMerit was founded in 2008 by Ogden Morse, who also founded Lyceum Communications (developer of the award winning web-based vocabulary program Get A Clue). The company's primary mission is to help schools answer three questions fundamental to both teaching and learning: "Where are we?", "Where do we go from here?" and "How do we get there?" AcademicMerit built FineTune in response to the outdated and ineffective professional development tools they had used as educators.

The AcademicMerit team consists of nine veteran edtech entrepreneurs, educators, designers, and developers based in Portland, Maine. Since the FineTune product was released in 2012, it is being used across at least three school sites. FineTune won the EdTech Digest Cool Tools Award for Professional Development for 2012.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/finetune



TeachBoost

Interface for managing classroom observations and teacher performance evaluations

Primary User(s)

Administrator

Purchaser

Administrator

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Blended

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills

How Content is Assigned

Data-Driven

Access Method

Content Repository
 Social Network

Overview

TeachBoost's online platform gives K-12 administrators tools to manage classroom observations and teacher performance evaluations. It also provides a free resource library and the ability to create private groups.

It is meant to be implemented as a schoolwide evaluation tool. Administrators use it to schedule and track the observation process and store notes and reports from their evaluations. They can then send their feedback directly to the teachers through their TeachBoost accounts.

Teachers can set goals and expectations, receive and give feedback, and gain access to professional development resources offered in the TeachBoost library. Users can browse for resources in the library, and administrators can tag suggested resources for teachers by attaching them directly to their comments on observations. Users can also add to the library so that it becomes a repository for best practices.

Teachers have the option of creating private collaborative groups where they can set group goals, conduct peer observations and to garner feedback from their extended support network beyond their direct evaluators. Groups can be formed by grade level, subject area or an administrator can use the teacher competency matrix to group teachers by goal. There are also features that allow coaches to form a private group with a mentee, where they can view an administrator's latest observation and give advice accordingly through the group.

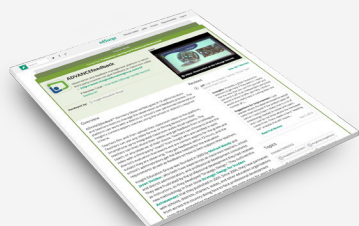
Observation templates can be customized and used to solicit feedback from peers. The platform supports teachers creating professional portfolios as well.

As of late 2013, more than 300 public schools used the tool, including charter schools in the KIPP and SEED networks. The tool is particularly helpful for schools with a highly structured and regulated observation system.

Cost

Priced per teacher/year. Average schools pay \$2,000- \$4,000 annually.

(continued)



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachboost



TeachBoost

(continued)

On-Label Use

Record observation feedback, share it with teachers and other administrators, create a two-way conversation between teacher and admin about professional development goals and observation data. Facilitate coaching relationships or professional learning communities through the group function.

Off-Label Use

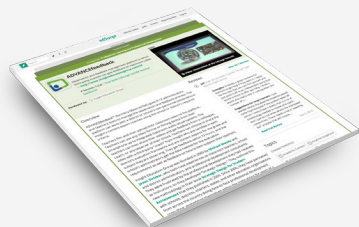
District or network leaders use the tool to conduct school wide observations and evaluations.

Deal Breakers

If doing administrator-led observations and giving feedback is not a priority for a school, this tool is not the tool for you.

Types of Schools Using It

Traditional public schools and KIPP.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachboost



Teachscape

Professional Development products and services for educators in K-12 and higher-ed

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Central Office

PD Classifications



Engage Learn
 Support Measure

Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Blended

What Teachers Learn

Academic
 Instructional Skills
 Pedagogies

How Content is Assigned

Differentiated

Access Method

Social Network
 Content Repository
 Online Courses
 Asynchronous
 Webinar
 Video Library

Overview

Teachscape offers several systems to support professional development, including a catalogue of courses including videos of best practices, communities to reflect on learning, tools for observation and evaluation, and talent management.

Each system can be purchased separately, or combined to create a holistic approach to professional development.

Through Teachscape Learn, teachers develop their own customized learning plans based on the needs and goals of individual teachers, schools and districts. They can then tag resources, videos, and courses to that plan. It provides over 160 courses and 2,500 videos of best practices, expert commentaries, and interactive courses, which cover preK-12 and all subjects. Users can create their own communities to share resources and discuss what they learn.

Teachscape Reflect allows principals and teachers to use customizable digital forms and upload evidence from the observation and evaluation process online. It also allows schools to evaluate teachers based on a specified framework determined by the district. Teachscape Reflect also has exclusive rights to Charlotte Danielson's 2011 and 2013 editions of her Framework for Teaching Evaluation, which is directly available on Reflect as an available framework for administrators to use to perform their evaluations.

Teachscape Advance focuses on talent management, to support a district's HR needs. Teachscape Focus helps administrators develop a common language around what good teaching looks like, in order to hone their observation skills.

Cost

Teachscape Learn is \$3,399 per site, Teachscape Reflect \$399 per user for observers and \$45 per user for teachers. Teachscape Reflect is \$800 per site. Teachscape offers volume discounts on all their products. Set up fees are either 5% of the total purchase or \$2,000.

On-Label Use

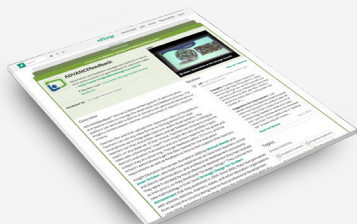
Teachers can receive personalized learning plans based on their goals and needs.

(continued)

READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachscape



 **Teachscape**

(continued)

Districts can facilitate PD across schools, community-based discussions, and teacher observations.

Platforms

Web-based, iOS and Android apps available for Teachscape Reflect, as well as an iOS video capture app for Teachscape Learn.

Deal Breakers

This is for school districts wanting to do a total system overhaul that potentially includes a new approach to PD. If districts are only looking for supplementary tools, this might not be the best fit.

Types of Schools Using It

Districts, States



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/teachscape

Truenorthlogic

truenorthlogic

Professional development and human resource tools for K-12 districts to build new skills and track data on professional growth

Primary User(s)

Teacher

Purchaser

Central Office

PD Classifications



Type of Support

Supplemental

Usage Scenarios

Anytime/Anywhere
 Scheduled

How Content is Assigned

Data-Driven
 Differentiated

Access Method

Social Network
 Content Repository

Overview

Truenorthlogic does not deliver professional development content but instead provides a platform where all the pieces of professional development can connect with one another. It helps districts manage tasks including tracking certification, evaluations, course catalogues, course enrollment, coaching and mentoring, and improvement plans, and centralizes this information in one place.

Truenorthlogic (TNL) works with large districts and states to configure a customized version of its platform (with over 1,000 points of configuration) to meet the specific needs of an individual district. Configuration points include things like customizing workflows, dates, deadlines, auto notifications, configuring when certain options get locked down, and the sequence it leads users through on the platform.

Schools use the platform to facilitate their professional development delivery systems. The most popular functions used by TNL clients include:

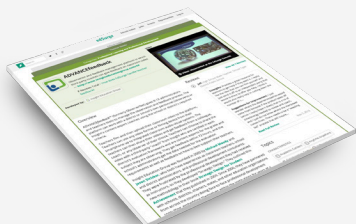
- **PD Diagnostic:** This tool gives teachers an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses by using multiple points of data such as classroom observations, student perception surveys, student achievement, and self assessments. It compares that information to a rubric set by the districts and then uses an algorithm to calculate each teacher's cumulative score in each domain of the rubric. It also identifies areas for improvement, as well as customized PD resource recommendations;
- **PD Learning Management:** Districts can use a custom-configured platform to manage professional development course rosters, course registration, and connecting that data back to a teachers' profile and evaluations;
- **Support Student Learning Objectives:** For teachers who don't have a statewide assessment in their content area, the TNL platform offers alternative assessments, as well as pre- and post-assessment tracking. It then calculates the impact teachers make on their classroom. This can then be included in a teacher's observation and evaluation (used by the state of Georgia);
- **Managing Calibration of Observations:** Observers use videos to review a teacher's performance on the platform. Once they are done submitting time stamped comments on the video, they are given an automatic score on how their observations measured up against an ideal set of feedback (used by State of New York, Connecticut, and LAUSD);

(continued)

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How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

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truenorthlogic

Truenorthlogic

(continued)

- Observers also use the TNL platform to review videos of a teacher's performance. Observers then submit time-stamped comments and receive back a score that measures how their observations and assessments compared to "ideal" feedback (used by State of New York, Connecticut, and LAUSD).

Each TNL product is unique to the district for which it was built. Some districts base salary increases on a teachers' history (within TNL) of PD credits and observation data. Others use it to manage HR functions including recruiting.. It is also used to link a teacher's HR records to their course participation and evaluation records.

Users include major districts like New York City, Chicago Public Schools and Los Angeles Unified School District. Georgia, Hawaii, Utah, and Connecticut also have their own platforms created by TNL.

Cost

Because there is such a range of products, TNL does not provide pricing before a consultation. However, the lowest contracts EdSurge has found on public record start at \$300,000. Prices are based on the software module a district wants to use and the number of users within the district.

On-Label Use

School personnel use TNL as an LMS and for a range of HR needs such as professional development and teacher evaluation

Platforms

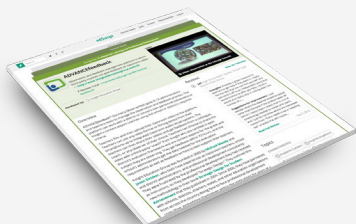
Web-based, available on tablets, desktops, and laptops.

Deal Breakers

This is a system meant to be purchased by districts or states.

Types of Schools Using It

Large districts and states.



READ THE DETAILED REPORT THAT INCLUDES

How It's Used, Who's Using it, How It Works

edsurge.com/truenorthlogic--2

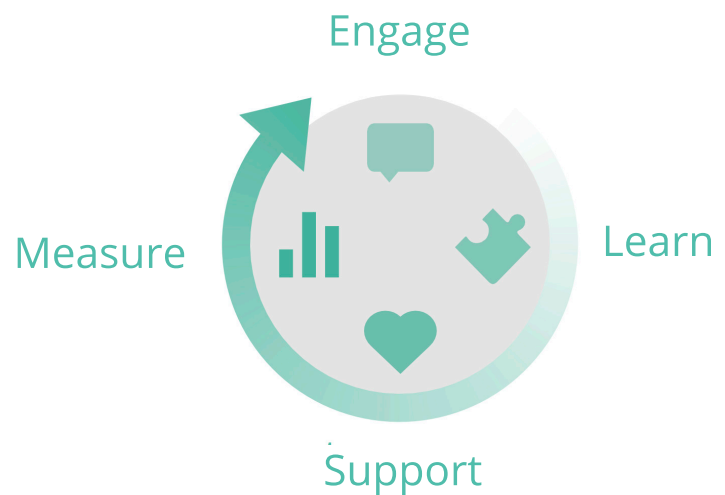
Methodology

EdSurge's PD Learning Cycle and classification system is based on survey data, literature reviews, and interviews with educators and professional development experts. EdSurge surveyed more than 400 U.S. educators on their attitudes, likes, and dislikes of professional development in their schools. We conducted in-depth interviews with 50 educators at all levels of districts and charter schools on the reality versus the ideal of professional development.

The PD Learning Cycle

To evaluate emerging edtech professional development tools, EdSurge created a “framework of a continuous cycle of learning.”

More than 50 educators contributed to and reviewed EdSurge's Professional Development Learning Cycle. Its four stages—Engage, Learn, Support and Measure—form a continuous cycle. Where in this cycle teachers begin and how they will proceed will vary. Some will get more out of one stage than another. That's fine, too. Teachers will discover the tools that work best for them—and when those tools are most useful. It's all about giving teachers a more personalized professional development.



Stage One: Engage

Teachers gain tremendous value from interacting with peers and colleagues—sharing challenges, successes, what works, and what doesn't. Community support is a big part of how teachers process and apply what they learn.

We have included “Engage” as the first stage of the Professional Development Learning Cycle because often it is from conversations with colleagues that teachers identify new practices that they want to implement or solutions to problems they would like to fix.

Products that fall into this category connect teachers with one another by creating groups that can connect asynchronously online, message one another, and share specific materials.

Methodology (continued)

Stage Two: Learn

New methods for teaching are being created, reimagined or revived from the past. These new methods influence instructional skills and pedagogy. Even academic content, standards, and the expected sequence of teaching those standards are in constant flux. That's why teachers must be continually learning. They do this by checking in with experts and absorbing new information and approaches.

We have included "Learn" as the second stage because once teachers have processed and consulted with their peers, the next stage is to seek information that exists outside their collegial circle.

Products that fall into this category provide learners with opportunities to learn new content and put that content into practice. These tools usually contain some sort of online classes, asynchronous modules, videos, or webinars that target specific skills. These tools can also include both formal (credit bearing) and informal learning (non-credit bearing) opportunities, however, informal learning opportunities must include the opportunity to learn from an expert.

Stage Three: Support

Mentoring from coaches or fellow educators is a way for teachers to get support in implementing new ideas in their classroom or refining the skills they have. Coaching usually involves outside observers who look at a teacher's practice and provide feedback on how to get better.

We have included "Support" as the third stage because once armed with support from peers and new information, teachers begin to implement new ideas in their classrooms. Some teachers need more coaching and mentoring than others. Experienced teachers might themselves become coaches as they develop more skills.

Products that fall into this category help teachers connect to an expert or coach who can support them in improving their practice. These tools also support the interactions between coaches and teachers, however, they are not used in an evaluative capacity.

Stage Four: Measure

Measurement can be either an informal or a formal process for tracking growth. These activities, which typically involve observations and evaluations, help teachers assess how their learning has impacted their classroom practice. It also helps them determine whether they have mastered a new skill and are ready to move onto something new.

While often measurement can be used as tools to simply assess and move on, we think it should be used as a learning tool and thus have included it in the learning process. This final stage sets them up to begin the Professional Development Learning Cycle again.

Products that fall into this category give users the ability to measure practice by tracking related data. Such tools frequently support rubrics and evaluation forms to assess mastery. Some of these tools also include data from other sources including student surveys and student achievement data.

Methodology (continued)

Tool Classification

Our classification system was developed to help differentiate among product features so that teachers can choose which product best suit them. We began to create the categories for this system with the belief that every learning experience can be described by: *What You Learn, How Content Is Assigned, Usage Scenarios, and Access Method.*

Once these categories were set, we mapped 28 products to them and figured out how these products would answer these four questions. We then boiled down those responses to the categories we currently have now. While we recognize that there are many ways to categorize products, we believe our classification system clearly answers these four questions for educators as they search for products they want to use.

What You Learn

Academic Content	Teaching strategies related to specific academic content
Instructional Skills	Skills used to deliver instruction, such as classroom management, differentiation, and questioning techniques
Pedagogy	Teaching methods and philosophies, such as socratic method, inquiry method, constructivism, and project based

How Content Is Assigned

Teacher Choice	Teachers determine and have control over what they learn and how they learn it
Data Driven	Use data related to a teacher or their students to assign content
Differentiated	There are different pathways for teachers to take, depending on their unique situations
Adaptive	Adjusts and personalizes recommended content for the teacher in real time

Methodology (continued)

Usage Scenarios

Anytime / Anywhere	Available for use anytime and independent of a particular location
Blended	Part of learning is done online, part is done in person
Scheduled	You have to show up virtually, on the phone, or in person at a specific time

Access Method

Content Repository	A database of resources
Video Share Platform	Enables sharing and often commenting on videos that teachers upload themselves
Social Network	Enables teachers to connect with each other in online forums or groups
Video Library	A compilation of videos of teachers in action
Webinars	One-time lectures by experts in the field, with varying levels of participation by viewers
Asynchronous Modules	A series of slides, notes, or video clips leading the learner through components of a new concept or skill
Online Courses	A class outline led by an instructor and usually occurring at scheduled times

Further Reading

What's going on in classrooms and schools?

To learn more about what's happening in classrooms and schools, check out the Field Guide section of our PD Guide. We share stories from educators who are transforming how they approach professional development, by creating innovative ideas for what PD can be.

[Charting the PD Water With Badges in New Jersey](#)

[The Flip Side of Professional Development](#)

['Makers' Of Their Own Learning](#)

[The Ultimate PD for School Leaders](#)

What are emerging tools?

Learn about some of the latest tools and most forward-thinking companies who are pioneering unusual PD approaches. We share stories about how these tools are impacting professional development and what educators think about them.

[Declara Shares PD Lessons From Around The World](#)

[How EdCamps Break the Rules of Professional Development](#)

[OPINION: My World Has Been Rocked By Student Avatars](#)

What can districts do?

While professional development is often in the hands of individual teachers and their school leaders, school districts also have an opportunity to re-imagine professional development. Here are some examples of how district leaders can redesign professional development for an entire school system.

[The Long \(Beach\) Road To Perfect PD](#)

[7 Questions Districts Should Ask PD Vendors](#)

[PD Moves Forward But Not Far Enough](#)



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