Elevating Educators with Meaningful Professional Development

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Teachers Need Personalized Learning Too

Because supporting high-quality teachers is so critical to student learning and outcomes, creating a professional development experience that gives teachers the support they need should be a top priority for school districts. Investing in an ecosystem where teachers feel comfortable registering for and receiving high-quality, meaningful professional learning also supports efforts **to increase teacher retention rates**.

School and district leaders need to focus on retaining the best staff, finding the most qualified teachers for open positions, investing in ongoing teacher development, and effectively onboarding new hires to their systems.

And solving for each of these factors at once can be overwhelming.

83%
of parents continue to point to high-quality teachers as one of the most important educational elements that impact student success, according to Instructure's State of Teaching and Learning in K-12 Education.

The Troubles with Traditional PD

> **Students deserve meaningful learning experiences—ones where they explore rich questions, engage in deep discussions, and problem-solve in collaborative ways.**
>
> **ZACHARY HERRMANN & DEAN PAM GROSSMAN**
> Penn GSE

Educators are often focused on providing students with an engaging learning experience. And rightfully so. Innovative pedagogy encourages teachers to empower students with personalized, meaningful learning opportunities. Many have written about the **power of personalized learning** and outlined examples of **what a classroom with personalized learning looks like**.

However, many teachers weren't consistently exposed to such personalization in their own schooling, and delivering personalized, meaningful classroom learning experiences is an iterative process.

According to Instructure's State of Teaching and Learning in K-12 Education, only

43%

of administrators and

23%

of teachers report training opportunities around consistent and effective pedagogy.

Many formalized professional learning opportunities aren't targeted to the individual educator's needs and fall short when it comes to implementing these experiences into the classroom. With traditional PD, administrators often don't have the time or resources to tailor assets to every staff member's needs.

Unfortunately, in this system, many school districts can't maximize the potential of their PD hours. With limited ways to meet individual needs or guarantee that the targeted skills will be implemented in the classroom, administrators hope for the best as teachers collect their required hours.

In light of these challenges, some schools are beginning to redefine the professional learning experience for their teachers with the resources available to them.

Creating Voice & Choice for Educators in Professional Learning

Poway Unified School District's vision is "creating culture and conditions to empower world-class learners." As part of this vision, students are given many opportunities to explore their interests and discover their passions throughout their educational journey. In an effort to continue providing students with the highest quality education, Poway has invested in providing its educators with voice and choice in their professional learning.

"We started by asking how do we reimagine professional development in a way that gets teachers excited in a structure that works for them?" Dr. Jennifer Burks, Associate Superintendent of Technology and Innovation.

To hear their teachers' voices and understand their needs, Poway's Technology and Innovation team sent out a survey at the beginning of the school year. In this survey, educators shared their preferred topics, channels, and formats (virtual, self-paced, or in-person) for professional learning. The team then used this feedback as a guide for planning professional education for the year.

Poway Unified School District's mission for professional learning:

Create a blended model of professional learning that is adaptive in meeting the needs of all teachers in order to have a greater impact on student learning. According to the recent national Speak Up survey,

72%

of teachers acknowledged the value in learning new things from videos. Additionally, research states that short clips and tutorials resonate with audiences.

Poway's team used social media as a professional learning communication channel providing short videos and clips designed to support teachers' learning preferences. In addition, the PUSD Technology and Innovation YouTube channel serves as a hub for on-demand content where teachers can access the support or training they need when they need it, in their preferred format.

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> **We also made sure that all teachers and students at our schools were utilizing Canvas LMS... this was one of our silver linings that came out of the pandemic. That standardization was instrumental.**
>
> **DR. JENNIFER BURKS**
> Associate Superintendent of Technology and Innovation

Choose Your Own Adventure module in Poway's Professional Learning Course in Canvas LMS

In a Canvas LMS professional learning course, Brenda Gillies, Technology and Innovation Coach at Poway, described how they provided educators with choice through Choose Your Own Canvas Adventure paths.

The course houses a recommended learning path for new teachers learning Canvas LMS for the first time.

For more experienced users or those who simply wanted more customization as they learned, they could choose the pace, order, and environment in which they learned the material by exploring more specific topics beyond the new user path.

Gillies added that the Choose Your Own Canvas Adventure section is regularly updated by their team with new topics and integrations.

> **[Professional Development] is no longer just come and sit, where everybody gets the same thing. Providing options has really had a positive impact... [Over] the last couple of years, the requests and the kind of information and training that [teachers] are asking for has shifted from substitution types of support to how to leverage technology in meaningful ways and positively impact student learning. Mindsets have really changed.**
>
> **BRENDA GILLIES**
> Technology & Innovation Coach
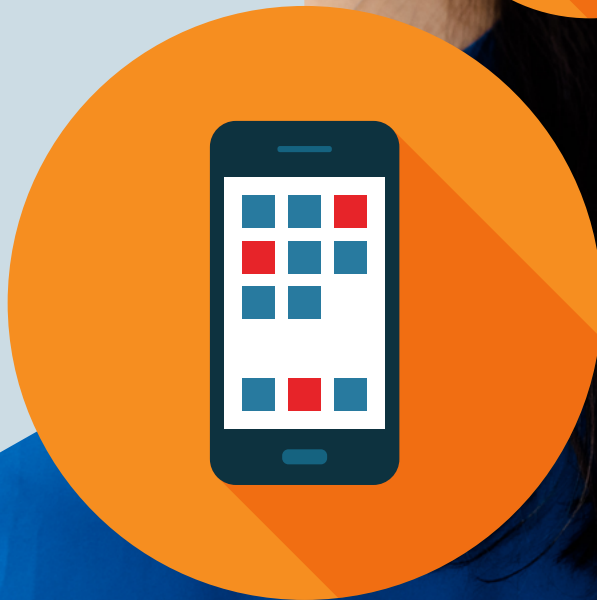
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Scaling & Differentiating Professional Learning — Equitably

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A Learning Environment for All

For many district leaders, supporting teachers' ongoing learning and growth tailored to their specific needs takes time and effort. Creating these programs can place a significant strain on already limited resources. But if teachers are already using a learning management system like Canvas LMS for their students, educators can also use this same familiar environment for adult learning.

Canvas LMS supports districts in their efforts to provide:

RELEVANT PD
Canvas LMS helps districts provide their teachers equitable access to high-quality curriculum and differentiated instruction relevant to their teaching subject and experience.

FLEXIBLE PD
Teachers need flexible, accessible PD options that fit their busy schedules and a medium by which they can prove completion, growth, and track credentials throughout their teaching career.
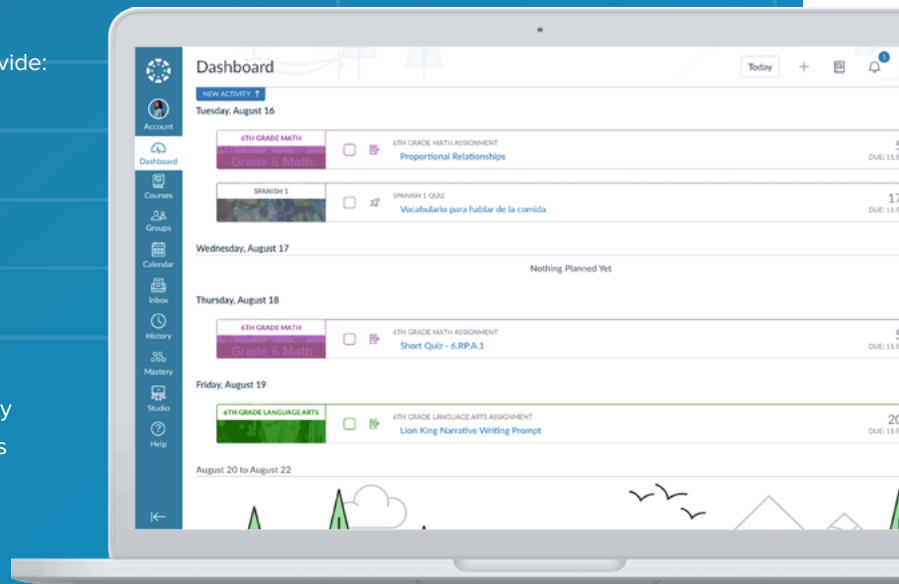
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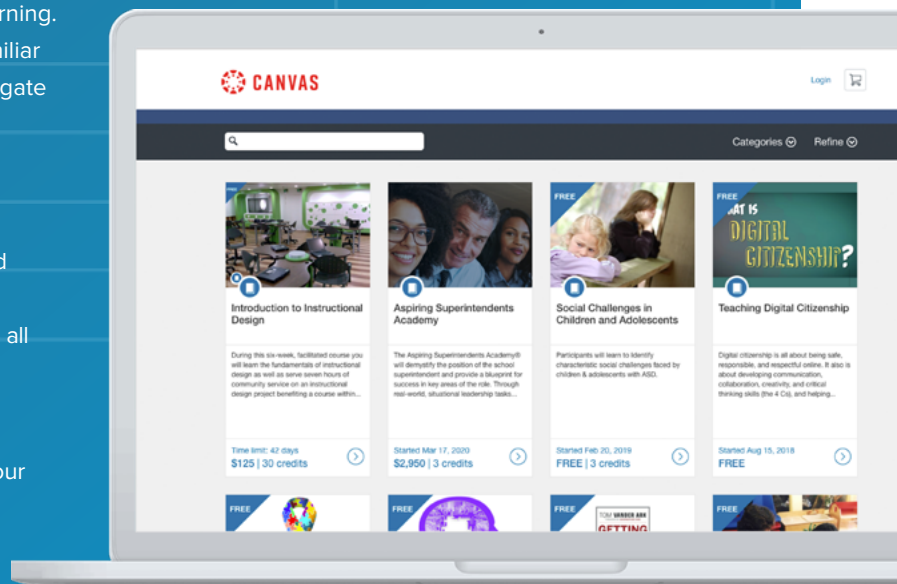
Designed for Differentiation

SIMPLIFIED REGISTRATION

Building equitable, scalable professional learning starts with having a registration tool that works and that won't overwhelm your many users. Canvas Catalog streamlines the registration process to get your registrants from across the school, district, or state into the Canvas courses they need.

Often, teachers seek support while trying to access unfamiliar systems that house their professional learning. Through single-sign-on and integration with the familiar Canvas LMS environment, teachers are able to navigate to the content they need–without having to turn to admins or other teachers for log-in help.

As registrants complete their courses, Catalog issues transcripts so administrators can track who completed which courses. Adult learning isn't limited to just your teachers either; offer family resource courses to keep all households informed with essential information.

The bottom line? Not everyone taking your training needs the same PD. Catalog makes it easy for all your stakeholders to participate in the PD that they need when they need it.

Reward PD to Drive the Mission

Teachers need to feel empowered on their PD journeys. Providing them with personalized opportunities can do just that. By creating skills-based credential systems with Canvas Credentials, districts and schools can connect their teachers to new PD opportunities.

As teachers complete these opportunities, they are recognized and rewarded with secure, portable, and shareable digital credentials. Canvas Credentials provides districts with the ability to visualize, analyze, learn from, and expand their professional development program.

As they continue their journey, educators may need to reskill, upskill, or show proof of what they've built throughout their careers. Canvas Credentials provides educators with pathways to their goals and opportunities to articulate their competencies and accomplishments in a standardized format.

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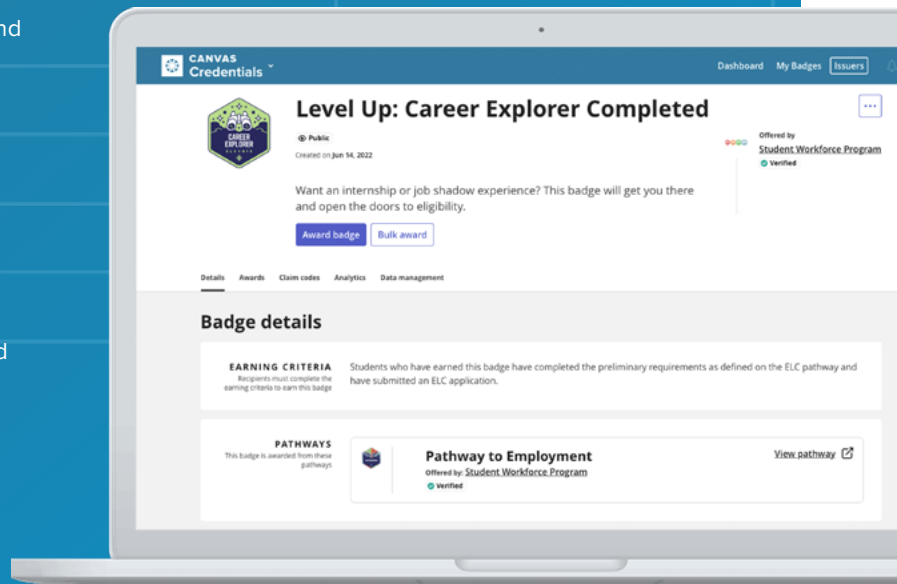
Support Where It's Needed

As schools commit to creating custom professional learning content for their teachers based on their experience, grade level, and course subject, they should also consider the varying technology skills every teacher brings to the table. Impact by Instructure supports your teachers when and where they need it without disruption through in-app messaging and targeted campaigns.

This support is invaluable all around. For veteran teachers needing help adopting a new feature to quickly onboarding a new teacher as they juggle all of their technology needs in tandem with getting their classroom ready for students.

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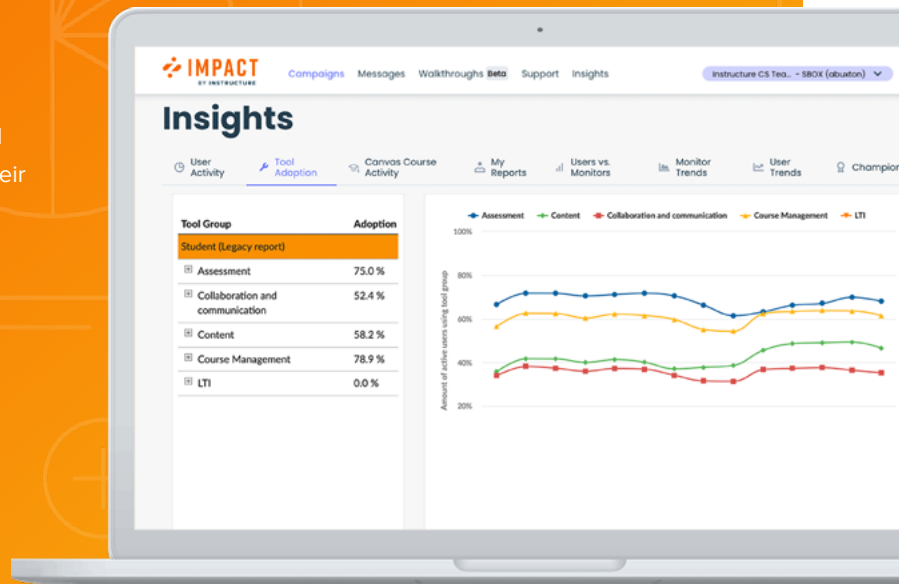
Connecting Leaders

Professional learning extends beyond your district course offerings and having the right technology in your toolkit. These elements are essential, but the best leaders are nonstop learners. And who better to learn about leadership & learning from than fellow educators?

CANVAS Leadership Series

Our **Center for Leadership & Learning** connects school and district leaders from around the globe. Together, leaders discuss improving communication, creating consistency, building a healthy school culture, and advancing collective teacher efficacy.

In these meetings, leaders also dive into Canvas LMS from the student, parent, and teacher perspectives. They learn proven methods for accelerating teacher buy-in and identify key metrics to measure their school culture while preparing for implementation.

MASTERY Leadership Series

And with the **Mastery Connect** Leadership series, school leaders learn how to start using data to drive instruction, personalize learning with targeted interventions, and create an actionable implementation plan for building an assessment program that works.

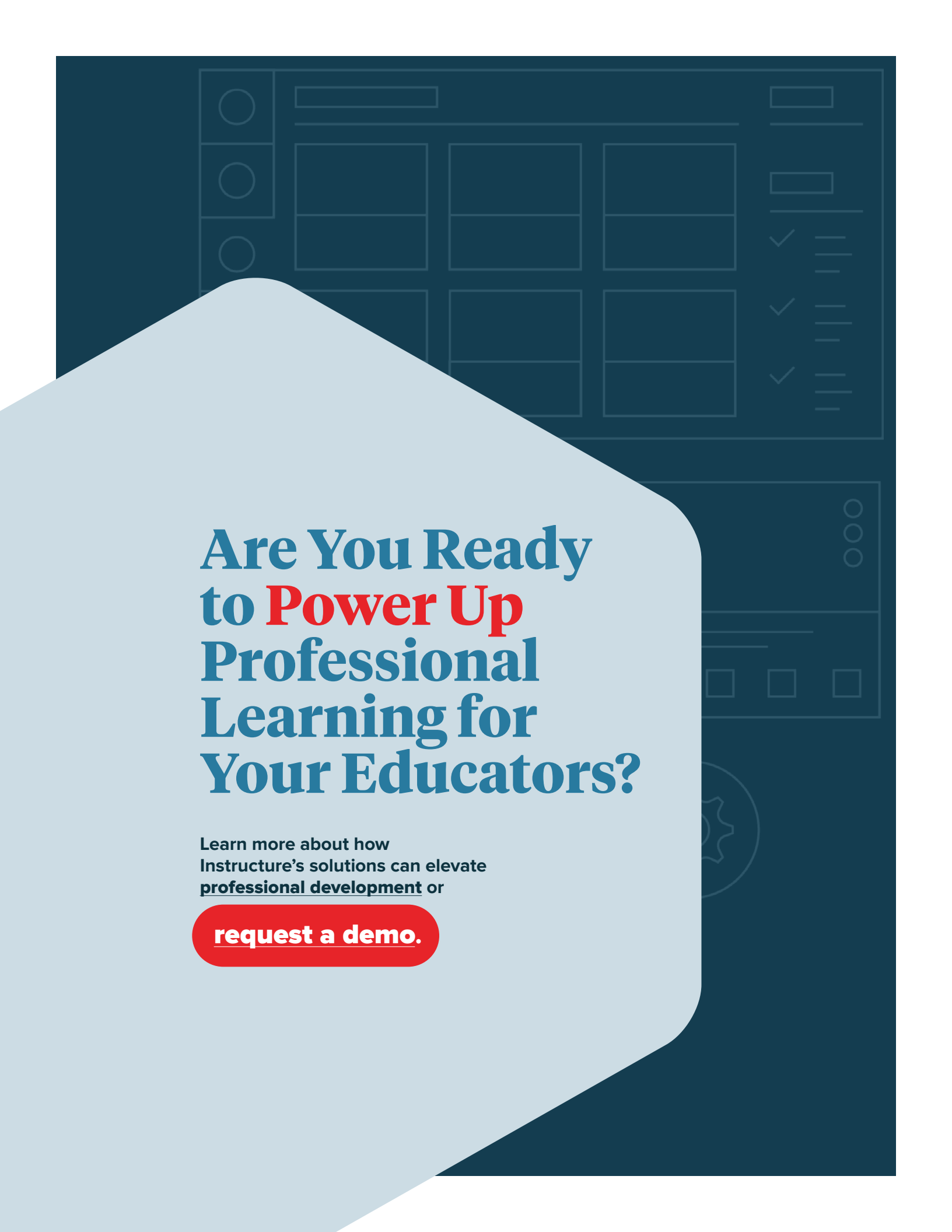Putting PD into motion has never been more collaborative.

Are You Ready to **Power Up** Professional Learning for Your Educators?

Learn more about how Instructure's solutions can elevate professional development or

request a demo.

INSTRUCTURE

Powering the World's Smartest Classrooms.

Instructure is an education technology company dedicated to helping everyone learn together. We amplify the power of teaching and elevate the learning process, leading to improved student outcomes. Today, Instructure supports more than 30 million educators and learners at more than 6,000 organizations around the world.

The Instructure Learning Platform makes learning more personal and student success more equitable by delivering the solutions you need to support, enrich, and connect every aspect of teaching and learning. The Instructure Learning Platform includes:

Canvas by Instructure: providing a robust foundation for teaching and learning—both in and out of the classroom—for all students, while seamlessly integrating with other learning tools.

Mastery by Instructure: bringing together the assessment tools and quality content educators need to implement a successful assessment program that drives learning forward.

Elevate by Instructure: Improving the use of data and technology to help solve district challenges and give educators the information they need to make impactful decisions.

Impact by Instructure: helping teachers and students adopt educational technology to promote deeper engagement with learning.

Learn more
instructure.com/k-12.