



Adult Basic & Literacy Education

Ohio ABLE Professional Planning Toolkit



Introduction

Professional Development (PD) is a series of ongoing, focused activities that are linked to professional and/or organizational goals. These activities are designed to develop individual professional growth and to nurture leadership. PD provides knowledge, skills, and techniques to facilitate changed behavior and promotes student success and improved programs.

To assist you in meeting the Professional Development Assurances in your approved ABLE grant, the Ohio ABLE Professional Development Network (PDN) on behalf of the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) ABLE state program has developed the *Ohio ABLE Professional Planning Toolkit*. This document is intended to provide information, resources, and a process to guide you in the development of a professional development plan. It introduces you to supports available to all ABLE staff and helps you focus on your own professional growth as an ABLE practitioner.

This toolkit is designed to address the following questions.

- What are the components of the Ohio ABLE Professional Development System?
- What types of professional development opportunities are available for ABLE staff?
- Where can ABLE staff find additional resources to help with their jobs?
- What are the system tools to support ABLE programs and staff?
- What communication avenues are available to connect ABLE programs and staff?
- How do staff determine professional development needs and create plans to address those needs?

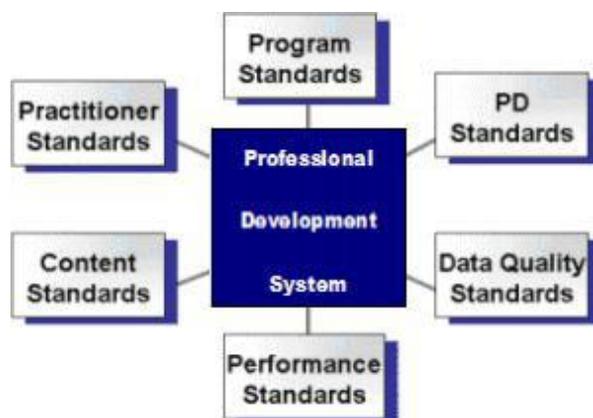


Ohio ABLE Professional Development System

The OBR state ABLE program funds a variety of quality professional development activities for ABLE staff. These activities are offered at no cost to the participant and are conducted at a variety of locations and times.

According to the policies section of the *ABLE eGuide*, “the Ohio ABLE PD system’s purpose is to provide opportunities for adult education practitioners to develop skills and gain knowledge that support improved student achievement and their transitions to postsecondary education/training and employment. It also serves to ensure that programs meet the PD requirements of the grant.”

The role of the Ohio ABLE PD system is to connect the six sets of standards below into a coherent, interrelated system of quality services to adult learners.



At the foundation of the professional development system are practitioner and professional development standards. The **practitioner standards** provide a pathway for professional growth and guide the development of high quality activities that reflect the **professional development standards**. Through responsive professional development, practitioners gain a better understanding of how to implement **program standards** that lead to effective teaching, learning, administration and support. Professional development provides the tools and processes to help practitioners use the **content standards** to help adult learners gain the skills and knowledge they need to reach their educational and personal goals. Through effective professional development, programs learn how to implement reliable and valid **data standards** that can be used to analyze progress and make necessary adjustments for continuous improvement. When these five sets of standards are being fully implemented, the result is a high quality delivery system that leads to strong student outcomes and meeting and exceeding the **performance standards**.



Professional Development Policy and Guidance

In support of the Ohio ABLE PD System, the OBR state ABLE program publishes a PD policy document, outlining requirements, processes, and an annual list of required orientations and trainings. The ABLE PD policy is located under the heading Policies at ohiohighered.org/able/reference.

Ohio ABLE Professional Development Network

The OBR state ABLE program established the PDN to assist local ABLE programs in developing staff skills and knowledge in order to increase students' foundation skills and their successful transition to postsecondary education/training and employment.

The PDN carries out this mission by providing a comprehensive system of professional development services, technical assistance, and resources. These efforts are intended to:

- facilitate a culture of sustained learning;
- provide evidence-based, high quality, effective professional development; and
- respond to emerging state ABLE and agency professional development priorities.



Professional Supports for Ohio ABLE Practitioners

In planning professional growth, it is important to be aware of the supports and resources that exist. This section of the toolkit explains state and national professional supports available to you, such as PD system tools, communication channels, and professional organizations.

There are four key online tools to use when navigating Ohio's professional development.

The Ohio PDN Website (ohioable.org)

This state-sponsored website includes general ABLE information and resources to support program administration and instruction. In addition, it serves as the portal to other website tools. New items are added to the PDN website regularly. A few of the features on ohioable.org include the following.

- [Bodega](#) – free hardcopy instructional resources, office supplies, and books are available through the Bodega. These materials are generally given out at trainings, but specific requests may be made by contacting the [PDN](#).
- [Instructional Resources](#) – resources available for ABE/ASE, ESOL, EL/Civics and transitions.
 - [Eureka](#) - lesson plans, templates and teaching ideas.
 - [Teacher Resource Center](#) - An online database of thousands of vetted math, science, and social studies resources for adult education classrooms.

The PD System

(mercury.educ.kent.edu/database/rcn/registrations/login.cfm)

This is the online system for registration and tracking of professional training and events. Details about this tool include the following.

- ABLE practitioners receive a distinct ABLE System ID from their program administrators.*
- ABLE practitioners are responsible for maintain the accuracy of their contact information.
- ABLE practitioners use the system to register for an event or activity listed on the PD calendar.



- ABLE practitioners can review their professional development through the *PD history* link within the system.

*Please note that ABLE program administrators have special *Director access* to the PD system and are responsible for adding staff to the system. This generates an ABLE System ID for login purposes.

Registering for PD

There are three general types of professional development available through the Ohio ABLE Professional Development System's calendar.

Facilitated

The PDN offers a variety of facilitated training opportunities for ABLE practitioners. Facilitated training includes face-to-face workshops and events, webinars, study circles, online courses, and book clubs. These activities have a date associated with them and can be found listed on the first page of the PD calendar. After logging in to the PD system, you can click *Register* at the top right to find a list of facilitated training.

Self-directed

In addition to traditional face-to-face trainings, the PDN offers alternative delivery PD. This utilizes multiple formats and media options for a wider variety of opportunities and allows you to work at your own pace. Self-directed PD may be in the form of a video, an online course, a webinar, a book club, or a cultural event. They do not have a date associated with them, and they are not facilitated. After logging in to the PD system, you can click *Register* at the top right to find a list of facilitated training. Then, click *self-directed* in the center of the page near the top to find a list of self-direct professional development.

Independent

There are a variety of other options for independent PD including site-based activities that your local institution may offer. With the endless amount of resources on the internet, you have immediate access to lesson plans, research, teaching strategies, and a host of other valuable information.

You may also find links to free online courses designed by state and national adult education organizations as well as electronic lists and discussion groups that focus on adult education and literacy topics. By accessing the many resources on the



internet and the experience of your colleagues, you may want to conduct your own action research project within your classroom to find solutions to various problems.

Once you have decided on an activity, you can add it to your PD history in the PD system. After logging in to the PD system, you can click *Register* at the top right to find a list of facilitated training. Then, click *register for an independent professional development activity* in the center of the page near the top. Finally, fill in the details about the activity and submit it for inclusion in your PD history.

Other Options for Independent PD include:

- Read a book and write a reaction paper.
- Keep a teaching journal.
- Participate in a group discussion.
- Take an online class.
- Visit another classroom and observe a peer.
- Conduct action research: The PDN Library has an entire collection devoted to staff development. You may want to investigate books on a particular topic and conduct your own action research.
- Participate in a Study Circle.
- Participate in site-based professional development opportunities: Your local program may also conduct or sponsor professional development activities on various topics specific to staff at your program. Be sure to check for a schedule of any PD activities that are being planned for your program.
- Present an instructional idea to your peers.
- Participate in mentoring/coaching.
- Participate in special projects identified by OBR or the PDN.

Additional Online Courses and Webinars

The following organizations offer online courses or webinars for additional options for professional development.

- [AEPro](#)
- [Catholic Legal Immigration Network](#) (CLINIC)
- [ELT Advantage](#)
- [GEDTS](#)
- [LINCS](#)
- [NAASLN](#)
- [New Readers Press](#)
- [ProLiteracy](#)
- [TESOL International Association](#)
- [World Education](#)



Additional Options

- Participate in study circles where teachers discuss issues and solve particular issues. The **National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy** (NCSALL) has developed some excellent study circle guides on topics such as learner persistence, research-based reading instruction, adult development, and multiple intelligences theory. You can view descriptions of these by clicking [here](#).
- Take online courses, share information with colleagues, gather classroom activities and research from [LINCS](#), **Literacy Information and Communication System**, a professional learning community for adult educators that provides access to resources, professional development, and a connected network of practitioners.
 - The *LINCS* Learning Portal – allows access to self-paced online courses for adult education practitioners.
 - The *LINCS* Community- participate in ongoing, topic-specific discussions with fellow adult education practitioners and leaders. Join groups of interest, access high-quality resources, and learn about upcoming events in the field.
 - The *LINCS* Resource Collections are online subject-oriented collections of high quality instructional resources, including multi-media resources, informed by research, especially scientifically based and other rigorous research, for use by adult education and literacy educators.

PD Portfolio

The Ohio ABLE PD system is designed to track and maintain an electronic record of your professional growth during your time in ABLE. You can use the *PD history* feature as well as the certificates and agendas you receive at PDN-sponsored training and events to document and build your professional portfolio.

It is important for you to maintain these certificates for future use, such as applying for licensure renewal, as the PDN is not responsible for misplaced or lost certificates and does not reissue them.

The PD Moodle (ohioable.org/online)

This system is Ohio's learning platform for self-directed resources, such as online courses, Communities of Practice, and resource sharing. A separate login is required. And, there are user guides available online [here](#).



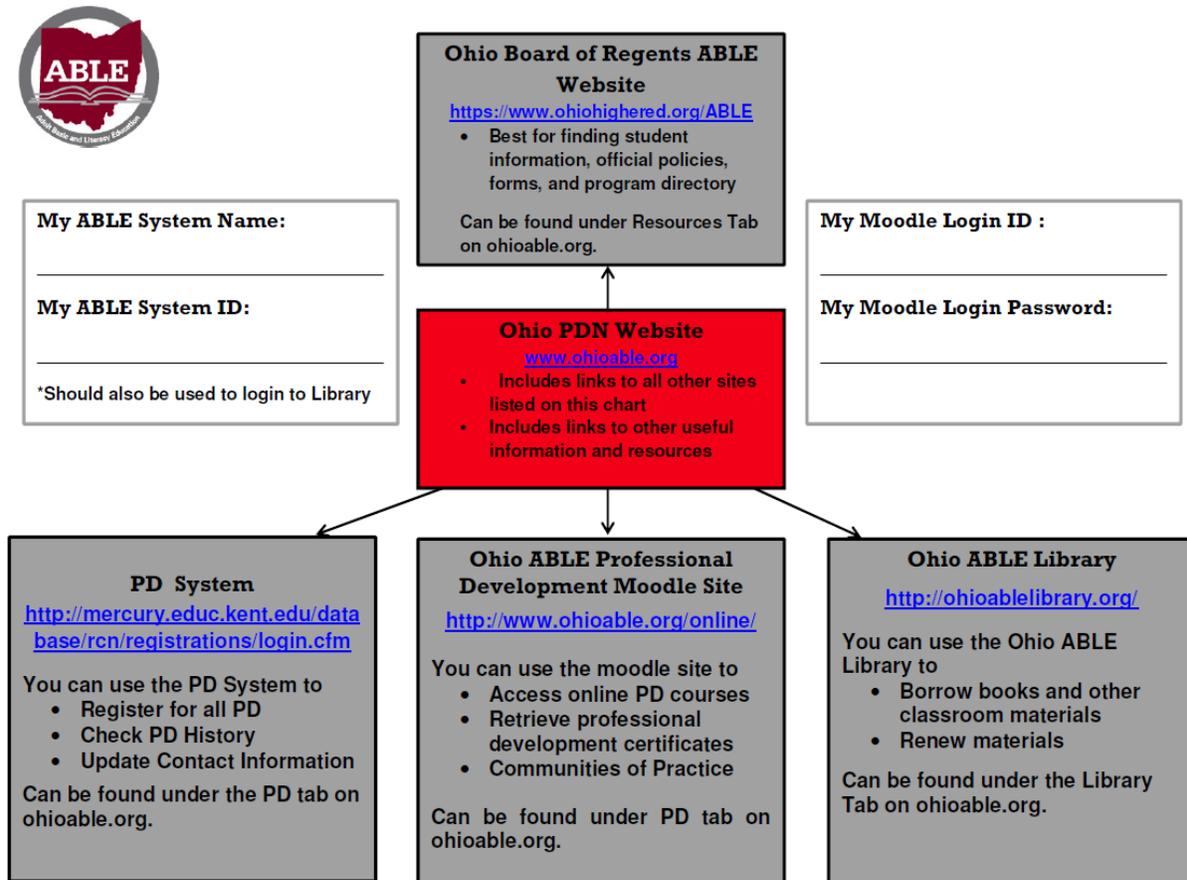
The Ohio ABLE PDN Library (<http://ohioablelibrary.org/>)

This library includes adult education instructional and professional development resources available for preview purposes. You can use your ABLE System ID to search for and reserve books online. Then, PDN staff will mail available items to you with a postage-paid return label. To contact the PDN librarian, email library@ohioable.org.

Ohio PDN Online Tools Quick Reference

The [Ohio ABLE Website Reference Chart](#) is a graphic to explain the correlation of the ABLE websites and their content. You can record your login information for the PD System/Library and the Moodle and save it as a resource or print a hardcopy. A downloadable copy of the chart is included at the link above.

Ohio ABLE Website Reference Chart





Communication and Technical Assistance

In order to streamline technical assistance, the PDN instituted a central PD “hotline.” The general contact information for the PDN is listed below.

Phone: 800-765-2897, option 2
 Email: ohiopdn@literacy.kent.edu
 AOL IM: OhioPDN

In addition, there are a variety of other methods for communication and technical assistance as outlined in the table below.

	OBR	PDN
Website	Ohiohighered.org	Ohioable.org
Email distribution lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Statewide administrator •Statewide institution leadership •Regional administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ohio Lit •ESOL •ABLELink •GED
Newsletters	OBR e-newsletter to which the Ohio ABLE PDN regularly contributes	
Web Conferencing*	Web Ex	Adobe Connect
ABLE Calendar	Ohiohighered.org	PD System training registration calendar
ABLE Program Directory	Ohiohighered.org	
Communities of Practice in Moodle		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Administrator •ESOL •Technology Point Person (TPP)

*Described in more detail on the following page.



Web Conferencing

Many professional development opportunities are available via webinar or web conference. The OBR state ABLE program and the PDN use platforms called WebEx and CarmenConnect. Both platforms have similar components. General information about web conferencing is included in the following table.

Components	Description
Audio	The audio setup wizard is used to configure your audio equipment, speakers and microphone (USB headset recommended). –In a web conference, it is a good idea to mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
Video	A webcam is required to stream live video (optional).
Chat box	This feature allows participants to type comments and questions during the web session.
Whiteboard	This area is typically the largest portion of the screen where the presentation is displayed.
Participant window	This shows who is participating and the status of audio connections.

To learn more about setting up and navigating CarmenConnect for web conferencing, please consult the CarmenConnect Quick Start Guide at ohioable.org/ProfessionalDevelopment.

Professional Organizations and Additional Resources

Professional organizations are non-profit agencies organized to support you and your profession. Many of interest to adult educators provide leadership, communication, professional development and advocacy for adult education and literacy programs and their staff.

Annual Conferences

Each organization conducts and/or sponsors professional development conferences and activities that provide a forum to provide staff development and to advance adult education and literacy. Annual conferences provide great hands-on workshops and activities. Attending is a great way to enhance your professional growth and network with other education professionals who face the same challenges.



Two state conferences supported by Ohio ABLE are:

- [OAACE](#) (Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education) – typically held in April
- [Ohio TESOL](#) (Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages) - typically held in November

Three of the most popular national conferences for adult educators are those conducted by the:

- [COABE](#) (Commission on Adult Basic Education)
- [TESOL International Association](#) (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)
- [ProLiteracy America](#)

Additional Resources

[Ohio Resource Center](#) (ORC) for Math, Science and Reading

The ORC identifies effective instructional and professional development resources and best practices, supports professional development for teachers and administrators, and fosters educational research and development in teacher preparation for Ohio's schools. (K-12)

[Ohio Writing Institute Network for Success](#) (WINS)

The purpose of the initiative is to help college-bound students improve their English skills so they are better prepared for college level English coursework.

[Ohio Educational Technology Conference](#) (OETC)

As a state agency, OETC is dedicated to enhancing learning by developing programs and using best practices to serve learning organizations while acquiring, integrating and sustaining educational technology.



Planning for Improvement

This section of the toolkit focuses on planning for improvement using tools, such as a self-assessment, reflection, and a professional growth plan.

Self-Assessment

In PD planning, it is always good practice to reflect on strengths and weaknesses in order to identify needs. The Ohio ABLE Practitioner Standards can be used for self-assessment and to identify areas for growth and further professional development.

Additionally, the OBR state ABLE program identifies two self-assessment tools that can help you consider your professional growth and PD options. Self-assessment resources are located under the heading Professional Development at ohiohighered.org/able/reference.

Reflection

As referenced in this toolkit, you have a variety of opportunities to strengthen or fine-tune your professional skills. But how do you decide what to select? Planning your professional development should be a reflective process, one in which you and your program administrator or another staff person match your professional needs and interests to the most appropriate venue. Two sources of information that could inform your plan include:

Data

In preparation for completing your professional growth plan, please consider:

- your ABLE program's Program Improvement Consultation Plan
- the practitioner standards for your role in ABLE
- training requirements for your role as outlined in the ABLE PD policy
- the results of your self-assessment
- your personal professional goals
- the needs of your students and your ability to facilitate their learning

Resources

In preparation for completing your Professional Growth Plan, you may want to consult:

- the Ohio ABLE PD system's training schedule of facilitated and self-directed activities
- professional organizations for scheduled events



- the internet for additional self-directed, online professional development opportunities and resources

Professional Growth Plan

A professional growth plan is a plan that is customized to your career goals, which should be aligned to those of the OBR state ABLE program as well as the specific goals identified by your program within the Program Improvement Consultation Plan.

Upon completion of the New Staff Orientation and the specific modules for your role in ABLE – New Administrators Orientation, New Teacher Orientation, or New Support Staff Orientation – you may want to complete a professional growth plan to outline your next steps for professional development.

Plans may vary in format, but the following elements are important to include:

- Program goals (aligned to ABLE priorities)
- Professional goals and timeframe for achievement
- Professional development activities and resources needed
 - OBR state ABLE program required training
 - Other training or professional development activities

Record of Accomplishments

As you begin to implement your plan and participate in professional development activities, here are three questions to guide your process.

- What did you learn?
- How will you apply this learning?
- What questions do you still have?

Responding to these questions will help professional development become an ongoing process in your professional practices with adult learners.

Create Your Plan

Once you have completed a self-assessment, reviewed your data, and consulted necessary resources, you are ready to create your professional growth plan and set your professional goals for the year.

The following page has a sample form that you could use for your plan.



Professional Growth Plan

Name				Position	
Program				Fiscal Year	
Program goals					
Goal 1				Goal 2	
Professional Goals				Record of Accomplishment	
Goal 1					
	Professional Development Activities	Timeframe	Resources	Achievement (work/status)	Reflection (next steps)
Goal 2					
Signature				Date	
Supervisor				Date	