Step 1: Convene a team of literacy changemakers and find out what information is already available. How many students are advanced proficient, proficient, approaching proficiency, or not yet proficient? Seek information from any and all grade levels (typically 3–12).

District Name _____ Date(s) _____

ELA School Profile

School Name _____

ELA Achievement Results	Year 1					Year 2					Year 3				
ELA Levels of Performance	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
	% of students					% of students					% of students				
Grade 3															
Grade 4															
Grade 5															
Grade 6															
Grade 7															
Grade 8															
Grade 9															
Grade 10															
Grade 11															
Grade 12															

Notes about data trends (utilize various reports):

Grade	Trends
K	
1	
2	
3	

(continued)

FIGURE 3.4. District-level K–12 literacy program evaluation.

Grade	Trends
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	

Step 2: Get out in the field and take a look at what's going on. You may want to include a literacy professional developer to facilitate this experience. Some guiding questions that we have used in school districts to support teams are listed below. What stands out?

Guiding Questions:

1. Does the school have a literacy teacher leadership-team structure?　　　Y　　N

2. Is there a reading specialist?　　　Y　　N

3. Does the school have a systematic plan for reading intervention?　　　Y　　N

FIGURE 3.4. *(continued)*

4. What materials are used for literacy instruction? _____

5. How is the curriculum adopted? _____

6. Do benchmarks and pacing guides exist?   Y   N

7. What assessments are used? _____

8. Are teachers participating in PLCs, grade-level meetings, and other forums?   Y   N

9. Is there vertical articulation?   Y   N

10. What type of past professional development has occurred? _____

11. Are teachers thoroughly trained in implementing the standards?   Y   N

12. How is professional development selected and funded? _____

13. Describe the overall school culture/environment. _____

14. Are there before- and after-school programs?   Y   N

15. Does the school receive Title 1 funding?   Y   N

16. What is the school's philosophy about literacy instruction? _____

17. What is the school's collective definition of rigor? _____

18. Is literacy integrated into specials (art, music, etc.)?   av   Y   N

General Notes:

```



```

Observations:

1. Is the room neat and organized for whole-class and small-group instruction?

2. Is the environment literacy rich?

FIGURE 3.4.   *(continued)*

3. What activities occur (how long and when)?

4. How are the following components being taught?
   - Phonemic awareness

   - Phonics

   - Vocabulary

   - Comprehension

   - Fluency

   - Writing

5. How is literacy instruction organized?

6. What happens during guided reading?

7. How are students assigned to independent/partner practice (i.e., work stations)?

8. What do students do during independent/partner practice? Are they on task?

9. How is differentiation handled?

10. Is reading integrated in the content areas? How? What interdisciplinary approaches are used?

11. Do students engage in project-based learning?

12. What roles do the different adults in the room play?

Notes about general classroom culture (i.e., interactions, language, respect/rapport, atmosphere, etc.):

FIGURE 3.4. *(continued)*

Step 3: Organize your findings! What are the best activities for readers and writers that are taking place currently? What are the areas in need of improvement?

Step 4: Now it's time to prepare a formal report and possibly a formal presentation for local literacy stakeholders. What next steps will bring your school community forward? What will bring more joy to literacy learning in the classroom? Start with the positive!

FIGURE 3.4. *(continued)*

Professional Development Proposal for _____ (school name)

Year: _____

Literacy Changemakers:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Professional Development: (Briefly "sell" why this PD is important and needed.)

Example: *Last year, our students achieved greater heights when it came to comprehending fiction and informational texts. The literacy team believes that the strategies brought back to the district after attending the Rutgers Reading Conference made all the difference. The proposal below is respectfully submitted by our literacy team. The team will complete appropriate district paperwork for all events that are approved.*

Event	Date	Cost	Rationale

What's Hot at _____ **School**

According to our faculty/administrator surveys, the following literacy topics are "hot" or deemed really important at the moment:

-
-
-

Significance: The latest "What's Hot" report from the International Literacy Association (2020) (*www.literacyworldwide.org*) addresses these areas that are directly aligned with what we would like to learn more about in order to better our practice:

-
-
-

FIGURE 4.5. A planning template for "dream" PD.

Statement	Yes	No	Weed it or need it?
General Recommendations			
Books are organized with a balance of genres, levels, authors, featured books, etc.			
There are approximately 15–30 books per student (or 300–750 books overall) (7 books per student for a novice teacher).			
Two books per child are added to the classroom library annually.			
Leveled texts, decodable readers, and complex texts are available if needed.			
Diverse formats include, but are not limited to books, magazines, catalogs, diaries, ebooks, and audio books.			
Materials for reader response include Post-it Notes, writing paper, graphic organizers, colored pencils, etc.			
There is a 50/50 balance of fiction and informational texts.			
Books are in good condition.			
Genres include, but are not limited to picture books, chapter books, poetry, folktales, joke/riddle books, historical fiction, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, biography, classics, series, multicultural, nonfiction, graphic novels, etc.			
Author study collections and series collections are included.			
Contemporary choices/high-interest books are included.			
Award winners and book list choices are included (e.g., Newbery Award, Caldecott Award, ILA Children's Choice, and Teachers' Choice).			
Reference materials are included (e.g., thesaurus, dictionary, atlas, picture dictionary).			
Clear labels and signage are included within the classroom library.			
Books are easily accessible for all learners.			
Book displays include books with covers facing outward to entice readers.			
Literacy displays and props are located in the library area.			
A management system for recommending books to peers is utilized.			
A management system for checking out books is utilized.			
Students are able to make book recommendations (e.g., use of interest inventories).			
The classroom library is a welcoming focal point of the classroom.			
The reading area includes flexible seating (e.g., rugs, beanbags, pillows, chairs).			
The reading area includes soft lighting and decorative items (e.g., plants) to create a warm and homelike feeling.			

FIGURE 5.1. A sample interdisciplinary and inclusive classroom library checklist. Created by Kunz, Fitzgerald, and Schpakow (2019); based on Booksource (2019); Lee and Low Books (2017); Morrow, Kunz, and Hall (2018); Routman (2003); and Scholastic (2019).

Statement	Yes	No	Weed it or need it?
Time is allocated for students to "shop" for books, and students are not limited by reading level.			
Independent reading time is part of the daily class schedule.			
Interdisciplinary Topics			
Books represent various geographic locations worldwide (e.g., Asia, Africa, Europe, Central/South America, Oceania, Indigenous Regions, North America).			
Geographic locations represented include rural, urban, and suburban settings.			
History/social studies topics are included.			
International studies are included.			
Peace and postconflict topics are included.			
Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) topics are included.			
Environmental topics are included.			
Business and economic topics are included.			
Religious topics and religious holidays are included.			
Health and wellness topics are included.			
Books addressing mindfulness are included.			
Inclusivity			
Books feature cultural and linguistic diversity.			
Books include main characters who cope with challenges or loss.			
Books include main characters of color.			
Books include main characters who are LGBTQIA+.			
Books include main characters with disabilities.			
Books feature contemporary diverse characters and story lines.			
Books feature a range of family structures and family configurations.			
Books feature characters with different types of gender identity/gender expression.			
The classroom library features diversity throughout the year.			
A diverse cast of characters or inclusive images are represented in nonfiction.			
Diverse protagonists are included (e.g., African American, International, Latino/a, LGBTQIA+, Middle Eastern, Indigenous).			
A variety of authors and illustrators are represented (e.g., African American, Asian, Jewish, Latino/a, Muslim, Indigenous, LGBTQIA+).			
A variety of cultures are represented (e.g., African American, Asian, Jewish, Latino, Muslim, Indigenous, LGBTQIA+).			
A variety of perspectives and experiences are included (e.g., financial hardships, immigrant experience, indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ themes and studies, people with special needs, people with physical disabilities, refugee experience, women's history).			
The classroom library is reflective of the students in the class (e.g., gender, race, family diversity, language, culture, socioeconomic background) and/or provides a window into the diverse lives of others.			

FIGURE 5.1. *(continued)*

What Brings You Joy?

Name _____

Only put a check mark ✓ next to the statement if it brings you joy and happiness.

____ attending or watching a sporting event	____ singing my favorite songs
____ playing sports	____ cleaning my room
____ getting a book as a present	____ getting a high-five from a friend
____ helping someone in need	____ listening to a bedtime story
____ playing video games	____ visiting new places
____ watching television	____ playing board games
____ playing with animals	____ spending time outside
____ finding insects	____ staring at the sky
____ spending time with my friends	____ dressing up as pretend characters
____ dancing to music	____ hearing or telling jokes
____ watching a magic show	____ helping someone cook in the kitchen
____ solving mysteries	____ getting a hug from someone special
____ swimming in a pool or ocean	____ playing on a computer or device
____ eating my favorite food	____ reading a favorite book
____ writing a letter or story	____ counting or solving math problems
____ solving a problem	____ celebrating holidays

What else makes you happy? Write, draw, and label in the space below:

FIGURE 6.1. An interest inventory for learning what brings the students joy.

Teacher's Name _____ Class/Grade _____

10-Month Happiness Calendar

Month	Topic	Special Dates	Materials Needed
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			

FIGURE 6.2. A planning form for celebrating 10 months of joyful learning.

THE CULTURES IN MY COMMUNITY				
Country of origin	General values, beliefs, and practices	Home life and interaction	How children are viewed	How school is viewed

FIGURE 9.3. A graphic organizer for collecting information about the cultures in your school community.