PLTW Quick Guide to Online Learning for Program Coordinators, Site Coordinators, & Administrators

About This Guide

This Quick Guide was created for PLTW Network Districts and Schools and the Program Coordinators and Site Coordinators – including but not limited to superintendents, principals, counselors, curriculum directors, other district and building-level administrators – to help them support their stakeholders (teachers, students, caregivers, other educators, community) as they engage with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum in online and blended learning environments. As a professional in the field, the reader should use their best judgment; this Quick Guide is solely a reference tool that may be helpful throughout the year. One of two Quick Guides, this resource provides a quick overview of top strategies and tips for creating a supportive online learning experience based on research-based best practices. The other Quick Guide is specifically for Teachers. There are also eight full-length guides focused on Program Coordinators, Site Coordinators, and Administrators, Other Educators, Teachers (Grades PreK-5), Teachers (Grades 6-12), Caregivers (Grades PreK-5), Caregivers (Grades 6-12), Students (Grades PreK-5), and Students (Grades 6-12), that can be found HERE.

Role of the Administrator and Other Educational Leaders

As administrators, you are often recognized as the first line of leadership in any school, online, blended, or brick and mortar. As long as decisions are made thoughtfully, strategically, and with the end user – the student – in mind, an intentional and meaningful online and blended learning program is attainable. Here are some research-based best practices and resources to help you do that.

Research-based Best Practices & Resources

Take Action: Plan for quality, meaningful, and intentional implementation of online and blended learning.	*Reflect: Have I explored existing planning guides, standards, and research in online and blended learning to guide my plans?*

- Resource: Digital Learning Collaborative. (2019). Planning for quality: A Guide for Starting and Growing a Digital Learning Program. A Keeping Pace with Digital Learning Report.
- Resource: Digital Learning Collaborative. (2019). Planning for Quality: A Guide for Continuous Improvement of Digital Learning Programs. A Keeping Pace with Digital Learning Report.
- Resource: iNACOL Blended Learning Teacher Competency Framework.
- Resource: K-12 Blended Teaching: A Guide to Personalized Learning and Online Integration
- Resource: Kennedy, K., & Ferdig, R. (Eds.). (2018). Handbook of Research on K-12 Online and Blended Learning. Pittsburgh, PA: ETC Press.
- Resource: The National Standards for Quality Online Learning.

Take Action: Collaborate with other schools/districts to discuss vision, strategies, implementation, troubleshooting, and more.

Reflect: Are there other districts/schools that we can collaborate with for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)?

Take Action: Offer ongoing professional learning, and support to all stakeholders to better support students in online and blended learning models and to keep up with rapidly changing technology, pedagogy, and best practices.

Reflect:
- *What training can we provide our stakeholders to better support students in online and blended learning models?*
- *How can we structure professional learning to enable teachers to experience the tools and best practices in online learning that they will engage in with their students?*

- Resource: [Digital Learning Collaborative](#)
- Resource: [International Society for Technology in Education](#)

Take Action: Communicate clearly and consistently about online and blended learning to teachers, other educators, caregivers, and students.

Reflect:
- *How am I communicating about online learning to educators, caregivers, and students?*
- *When did we last update and post policies and our handbook?*

Take Action: Ensure access and equity by providing access to and support for technology and Internet access for all educators and students.

Reflect: Have I thought creatively about partnering with community, corporate organizations, and others to ensure access and equity for all students, their caregivers, faculty, and staff?

Take Action: Ensure accessibility for all students, providing accommodations based on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), in online and blended learning environments.

Reflect: How is my school/district providing accommodations and supports to students with IEPs, 504s, and ILPs in online and blended learning?

- Resource: [ISTE's The 5 competencies of digital citizenship](#)

Take Action: Humanize online learning by prioritizing interaction, collaboration, communication, teacher presence, relationship-building, community-building, supports, meaningful learning, and wellbeing.

Reflect: How are we humanizing the online and blended learning environment for our stakeholders?

- Resource: PLTW Blog. [Humanizing Online the Online Learning Environment](#).

Take Action: Prioritize personal wellbeing in online and blended learning.

Reflect: How are we prioritizing personal wellbeing in online and blended learning?

- Resource: [Headspace](#)
- Resource: [Wellness for Educators](#)

Take Action: Be open to shifting roles and responsibilities to better support online and blended learning models.

Reflect:
- *Have I considered co-teaching models where teachers can support each other in their courses?*
- *Have I thought about repurposing auxiliary staff to mentors in the online learning environment who can help support students?*
- *How are my staff and I thinking creatively about shifting the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders to better support online and blended learning models?*

Example: Review the roles of resource teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrative staff to determine how they can assist students, teachers, and caregivers.

Take Action: Create accountability agreements for all stakeholders for student success while learning online.

Reflect: What will need to be included in our district/school accountability agreements for students to be successful while learning online?

Example: Ensure that online platforms conform to state and district data-sharing/data privacy agreements.

Take Action: Offer orientations to online and blended learning to all stakeholders.

Reflect:
- *How are we orienting all of our stakeholders to online and blended learning?*
- *How could we provide initial and ongoing support to students, teachers, and caregivers (monthly webinars, virtual office hours aimed at students and/or caregivers, videos and/ or resources posted to the district's website, etc.)?*

Take Action: Encourage and support caregiver involvement in the school/district planning and evaluation processes as well as in their students' learning in online and blended environments (including determining how caregivers will monitor and/or access their students' courses and progress).

Reflect: How can we encourage involvement as well as provide initial and ongoing support to students, teachers, and caregivers (monthly webinars, virtual office hours aimed at students and/or caregivers, videos and/or resources posted to the district's website, etc.)?

Take Action: Conduct iterative evaluations to ensure online and blended learning efforts are serving their intended purpose for all stakeholders.

Reflect: How are we continuously evaluating our implementation of online and blended learning to ensure we are meeting our stakeholders' needs? (see Planning Guides from the Digital Learning Collaborative)

Acknowledgments