



Connected Educator: Growing Your Professional Network

Educator shares and learns in the global community as a means to develop professionally.

Key Method

Educator will seek opportunities to learn from a variety of other professionals, reflect on the new information, and share information with others.

Method Components

What is a Professional Learning Network?

A professional learning network is an ever-changing group of both domestic and foreign connections to which teachers go to share and learn new information. These diverse groups reflect a variety of values, passions, and expertise. As an Educational Technology Coach, extended professional learning networks can serve to answer questions, deliver diverse and inventive information, and provide support to all invested.

Establishing a strong professional network

An Educational Technology Coach, will be tasked with supporting teachers from varying backgrounds and abilities with tools that cross multiple contents and grade levels. Having a well-rounded and diverse professional network allows the Ed Tech Coach to understand and utilize tools, contents and experiences from multiple perspectives, which enhances the instructional learning of themselves, as well as others. A professional learning network is a group of educators that share



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information, exchange knowledge, grapple with problems, and grow as practitioners.

Make your presence noticeable

Using a variety of online meetings, Ed Tech coaches can demonstrate their skills for others and take on new learning themselves and utilize other educators' resources and perspectives to support their own growth. Ed Coach should create and maintain their own sites in order to share with the teachers they support and learn from.

Some ideas are:

- Blogs
- Video Tutorials or playlists
- Social Media Networks
- Online communities, such as NEA EdCommunities
- Meetup Groups
- Webinars
- International Learning Communities
(<https://ncee.org/what-we-do/center-on-international-education-benchmarking/>)

Attend networking events-both online and offline

Attend online and offline events, such as professional conferences, at the local, state, national and international level in order to broaden the scope of your own practice. Presenting information at these events can foster personal, as well as professional growth and create confidence to think and teach outside of your own realm. Active participation in professional blogs provides a comprehensive sphere of knowledge that encourages reflective practice. .. Attend webinars to see products in action and reflect on how, or if, these can be supportive to the teachers and students you work with.

Share your experience and knowledge

Participate in online networks as a contributor by sharing information that you have found or learned. Respond to others in forums with constructive support or ideas.

Reflect on the material and experiences

Use digital tools to share information with others. Reflect on your experiences to support teachers of varying ability who may be going through struggles with a tools or software and assist them in finding what works best for them, as well as their learners.



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Establish and maintain your online presence

Regularly update your network, respond to others and make sure your presence is an accurate representation of your learning and teaching intentions. Keep links and material updated to reflect current trends.

Supporting Rationale and Research

The Power of Virtual Coaching

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct11/vol69/num02/The-Power-of-Virtual-Coaching.aspx>

Mackey, Julie. "Blending real work experiences and virtual professional development." (2008).

https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/1966/12611007_mackey.pdf%3Bjsessionid%3DEAF47473986D9A185AF2D2CD761A84EF?sequence%3D1

Laxton, Amber, et al. A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market. Digital Promise, 2017, A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market.

<http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/accelerating-learning-for-adult-education.pdf>

McConnell, Tom J., et al. "Virtual professional learning communities: Teachers' perceptions of virtual versus face-to-face professional development." *Journal of Science Education and Technology* 22.3 (2013): 267-277

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZAKnVW1BUazlZgJuDJFUCdMI5tNGFI7/view?usp=sharing>

King, Kathleen P. "Professional learning in unlikely spaces: Social media and virtual communities as professional development." *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)* 6.4 (2011): 40-46.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dEjyJukVBz_aVd5sNybkK3lejYaMsLWq_/view?usp=sharing



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Knight, Jim. "What Good Coaches Do." Educational Leadership, vol. 69, no. 2, Oct. 2011,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J5vI5fKsja-TbKpMtlYuev4qmA0N1JWh/view?usp=sharing>

West, Lucy, and Antonia Cameron. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vBA9LXPN1o6VX9MZ-9Hn68nqirpA2T0I/view?usp=sharing>

Resources

[Growing your Professional Network](#)

[4 Solid Strategies for Expanding Your Professional Network](#)

[ISTE Standards for Coaches](#)

[Professional learning networks from ISTE \(requires membership to access\)](#)

[25 Awesome Social Media Tools for Education](#)

[Why use LinkedIn](#)

[How to use Facebook for Professional Networking](#)

Google Tutorials

[Google Classroom Training](#)

[How to use Blogger](#)

[Google Blogger Tutorials](#)

Networking Websites

[ASCD.org](#)

[Facebook.com](#)

[LinkedIn](#)



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[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[NEA EdCommunities](#)

[ISTE professional learning networks](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must answer the questions with a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, to achieve proficiency for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(200-300 words per response)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. Reflect on your current professional network. What diverse connections do you have and how do you use them to improve your skills as a coach?
2. Describe how you have contributed to a network as an expert or seeker of knowledge.
3. What do you hope to improve by working toward growing your professional learning networks?

Passing: Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educator includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **three artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*



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Artifact 1: Beginning List and Description

Describe your state of networking at the beginning of this micro-credential work. List the professional networks in which you actively participate. Write a summary of your networking connections and how you use them.

Artifact 2: Problem of Practice Solution

Document how you have used your professional network to solve a problem of practice. Describe the problem you were trying to solve and how you explored or connected with others to solve all, or a portion of, this problem. Explain how you used the information gained through your professional learning network to support professional growth, and expand new networks that you have explored while working on this micro-credential. Use a screencast, annotated screenshots, or a reflective journal to document the steps you went through.

Artifact 3: Website or Blog Share

Share your professional blog or website to demonstrate your reflective process and how you use information gained through networking to improve your skills as an Ed Tech Coach or to support the teachers you work with.

Combine your artifacts into one document with links for the assessor and upload into your NEA certification bank account.

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Beginning List and Description	Lists the group(s) that the educator participated in before taking on this micro-credential. Describes the way in which the educator uses their list for professional growth.	Lists the groups the educator participated in, but does not reflect how the educator uses them or how they improve the educator's professional practice.	Does not list professional networks, nor is there a reflection on the way in which they support the educator's growth.
Artifact 2: Problem of Practice Solution	Describes a problem of practice in either the educator's own practice or a teacher that the educator	Problem of practice is defined; it is either your own or a teacher whom you support.	There is no problem of practice shared or no demonstration of using a PLN to seek out a solution.



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	supports. Explains clearly the steps that the educator went through to collaborate with their diverse PLN to find a solution and explains how the educator shared that information.	You share a solution but do not show how using your professional learning network supported you in this growth.	No indication of how the information was shared with a supported teacher.
Artifact 3: Website or Blog	<p>The website or blog is shared with the assessors.</p> <p>Artifact shows how the educator has captured information that is relevant to the teachers with whom the educator works.</p> <p>Information supports growth of teachers and may be searchable or organized in a way that encourages teachers to grow professionally or become participants in their own PLN</p>	<p>The website is shared with the assessors.</p> <p>The artifact includes information but does not connect to outside networking tools.</p> <p>Information is limited to troubleshooting information, but does not connect teachers to a wider network.</p>	<p>Website or Blog is missing or the information is limited to troubleshooting information.</p> <p>Does not connect to an outside network or encourage teachers to grow professionally.</p>

Part 3 Reflection

(350 - 500 words)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)



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Please answer the following reflective questions. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

- How has building your professional network changed your instruction?
- In what way does increasing your global connections support your growth as a professional Educational Technology Coach?
- What can you gain from a larger network that you cannot achieve alone?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.



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