CANVAS
LMS

The LMS Workbook for K-12 Leaders

How to Create Better Teaching and Learning Experiences.

INSTRUCTURE

Make Learning Personal.

As a leader, you're likely grappling with how best to foster an environment of equity, student achievement, and high-quality instruction across the district. With so many options out there, it can be equally challenging to find tech that supports your efforts.

A learning management system (LMS) serves as the hub of creating a personalized teaching and learning experience, so choosing the right one is critical to building a rich tech ecosystem. But how do you know which tech tools are the right ones for students and teachers?

With greater expectations placed on today's schools and districts, the decision is an important one. Free "learning management systems," such as G Suite for Education, offer some helpful functionality, but lack must-have features that support strong teaching practices at scale. Additionally, as classrooms become more tech-connected, students and parents expect all the necessary features that come with a full-fledged LMS.

According to Instructure's 2021 State of Teaching and Learning in K-12 Education research study, 81% of educators believe that technology will become increasingly important in teaching and learning moving forward, with 67% agreeing that remote learning will impact everyday classroom practices in the future.

How to Use this Workbook

Do you know if your LMS is truly meeting your district's needs? Do you have a free "LMS" that is only delivering half of what teachers and learners expect? Whether you want to know how your LMS stacks up or you're ready to make a move, this workbook can help. It's specifically designed to help you select and make the most of a full-fledged LMS. It's a hands-on approach to help you prioritize your efforts, get clarity on needs, and lead a district-wide implementation with fidelity. Take the time to carefully consider each question in the checklists (and solicit input from others when needed). By the time you go through these pages, you should feel confident that you're on track to move forward. Ready? Let's get started.

Set Your Baseline

The full-fledged, modern LMS has come a long way in helping leaders transform their districts when it comes to equity in the classroom. Where do you stand in building equitable classrooms and promoting teaching excellence at scale? Fill out this self-evaluation to get a sense of the elements that a comprehensive LMS delivers and note possible action steps to take.

Guarantee a Viable Curriculum:

Do you have insight into what curriculum is being taught in individual schools and classrooms? YES / NO

Are you able to easily provide your teachers with high-quality content? YES / NO

Is your platform friendly to importing third-party content? YES / NO

Are you able to guarantee your locked content? YES / NO

Scale Instructional Best Practices:

Do you have a standardized curriculum, including scope and sequence, across your district? YES / NO

Do you have insight into how curriculum is taught in individual schools and classrooms? YES / NO

Have you identified high performers amongst your faculty?
YES / NO

Can you scale what's working across your district? **YES / NO**

Does your platform encourage and enable instructional best practices, such as:

Differentiated curriculum **YES / NO**

Authentic discussion **YES / NO**

Formative assessment resulting in actionable data
YES / NO

Curriculum and instruction easily aligned to standards
YES / NO

Ensure Tech Interoperability:

Do all your edtech tools "talk" to each other? **YES / NO**

Do you reduce double-entry for your teachers? **YES / NO**

Can you bring all your data into one place? **YES / NO**

Are you confident that your data is secure? **YES / NO**

Do you know how to vet your edtech security? **YES / NO**

Do your teachers know how to vet the edtech they choose?
YES / NO

Additional Notes and Actions

Your self-assessment has shown you where the gaps are. Now what? In Part Two, we list best practice elements to scale teaching effectiveness and accelerate student success.

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Implement Best Practices

Used by K-12 students across 4,000 educational institutions, Canvas LMS connects millions of teachers and learners. Drawing on their experiences, we've brought together a set of proven best practices for you to review.

Guarantee Your Curriculum:

As education leaders, you need to be able to create or procure high-quality course content and templates. Start by working with a platform that lets you lockdown templates, while leaving other aspects open to customization. This allows you to publish the curriculum to every applicable course throughout your district (with syncing for updates), guaranteeing the quality of the content reaching your learners. Additional curriculum best practices and insights:

- **Share resources internally.** Each day, teachers create or find engaging, high-quality content. Being able to share internally means teachers can easily collaborate, while giving districts more control to ensure equity and students' online safety.

- **Vet content providers.** How do you better ensure that your third-party content continues to be engaging and relevant? Create the standards and process by which your district personnel vet the quality of what your teachers are using in their classrooms. The content should be engaging, accurate, and tightly aligned to standards. Further, it needs to meet accessibility requirements and be in a format that you're able to lock down, migrate, or easily modify for specific use cases.

- **Track participation.** Insights into student engagement allows teachers to not only adapt and provide data-driven instruction but also gives school, district administrators and other stakeholders the reports necessary to support their teachers, students, and parents in multiple areas.

> **"** The tools Canvas LMS provides help our teachers target their feedback to students in a way that can be difficult without an LMS. The SpeedGrader allows teachers to not only grade assignments but provide specific, constructive feedback in a way that enables students to take action towards improvement. **"**

IAN DAVEY
Assessment & Data Specialist at Ogden,
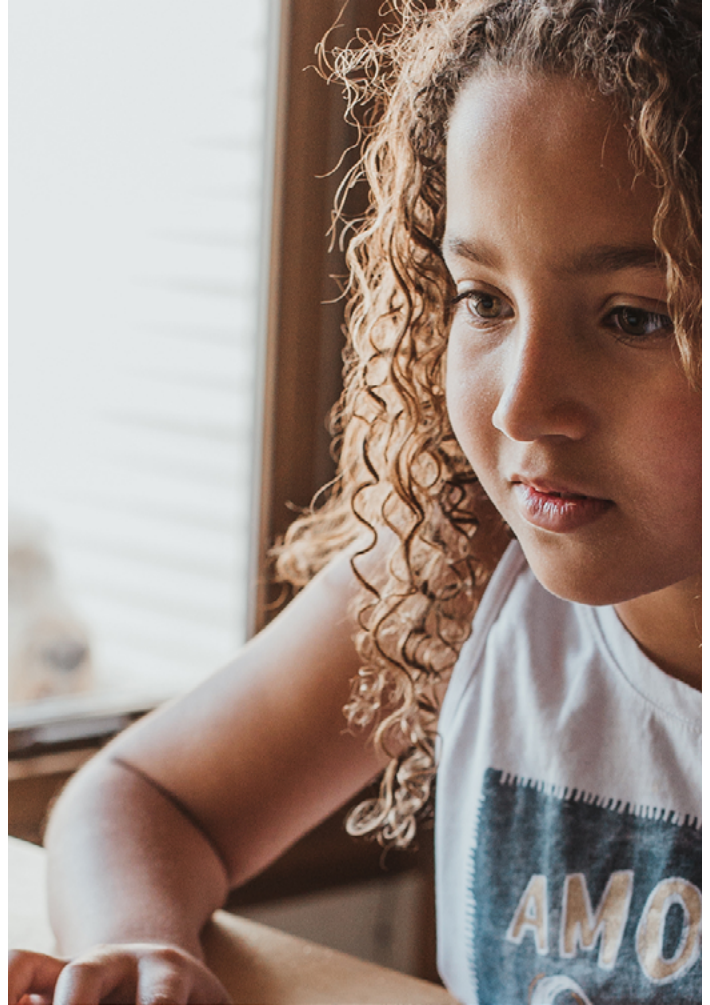**UT School District**

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Scale Instructional Best Practices

How do you provide good teaching practices throughout your district to all your students at scale? You need to be able to assess what your students know and don't know, and then provide them with content and instruction uniquely addressing each individual student's gaps in understanding. Teachers should be able to quickly differentiate curriculum and feedback to students. Edtech best practices allows for authentic, engaging discussion in blended learning settings. It also offers teachers timely, personal feedback and grading via mobile, on-the-go applications.

- **Facilitate discussions.** Authentic discussions engage students in a deeper learning experience that helps them develop the skills needed in the 21st Century workplace: collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity. The right discussion platform fosters meaningful dialogue by making it easy for students to individually engage, at a level they're comfortable with, as well as see the participation of others.

- **Provide feedback.** Teachers need the time and tools to offer students personal, meaningful feedback that helps them learn and grow. Mobile, intuitive feedback tools make this happen. Students easily submit diverse learning artifacts/assignments, allowing teachers to conveniently access and respond to student submissions with rich feedback in a variety of ways, such as video recordings, whether in the classroom or on the go.

- **Use formative and interim data.** Teachers need tools that allow them to quickly identify student understanding through timely, in-class assessment, and then use the resulting data to address individual student needs. Use assessment tools and content that make gathering and using standards-aligned data simple and engaging. Real-time performance data should be easily served up and you should be able to access reporting at the levels your district needs.

- **Align your content and assessments to standards.** Teachers need a real-time view into what their students know and don't know relative to any set of standards, and an LMS should make getting this insight simpler. Find an LMS that allows users to quickly tag content and assessments with the standards they're teaching and then displays standards data in a way that makes it actionable. Also look for workflows that make it easy to update standards and deploy custom standards.

> "
> With Canvas LMS we have the ability to reach more students and individualize our instruction more, to differentiate when need be. So it just makes it easier to manage and do all those tasks, and we're reaching more than just the 'middle student.
> "

TEACHER
Oshkosh School District,
Oshkosh Wisconsin

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Ensure Interoperability

Interoperability is the capacity of software and computer systems to share information and data, then synthesize it for the benefit of the user. True interoperability happens when these tools integrate with each other seamlessly, regardless of who developed each product. As K-12 classrooms often use several different systems and digital tools for their students, it can be tricky to integrate them in a way that benefits students and teachers without hijacking the learning experience. Ensure the technology you bring in is enhancing the teaching, not detracting from it. Teachers should also assess how the tools they have chosen to use in their own classroom connect with one another.

- **Promote data security best practices.** As the ability to gather data improves, so must the knowledge and ability to protect such data, tracking where your data lives and who has access. A reliable, secure LMS committed to industry interoperability standards (IMS Global, Ed-Fi, etc) should act as the hub of your edtech learning ecosystem, with data securely flowing between systems. Know the right questions to ask your edtech vendor to ensure their commitment to your data's security, and train your staff on what to look for when introducing new edtech into their classrooms.

Nobody knows the unique needs of your teachers and learners as well as you. Built on openness in every way, Canvas LMS is the integrated learning management system that helps you create a custom K–12 learning environment to equitably scale student achievement. Whatever the learning initiative, Canvas LMS is there to support and connect it—from scaled curriculum and formative assessment to showcased learning and teacher development. Through open APIs and our adherence to LTI standards, Canvas LMS provides easy integration with a network of education technology partners to support your digital classroom today and well into the future.

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I also love how Canvas LMS works with many different edtech apps like Notability, Google Drive, and Nearpod to create a cohesive learning experience. This collaboration between different apps allows Canvas LMS to be my "rock" in navigating different edtech products.

"

TEACHER
Oshkosh School District,
Oshkosh Wisconsin

Learn more about how our Canvas offerings—including Canvas LMS —transform teaching, learning, and engagement or request a demo.

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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. In addition to Canvas by Instructure, the Instructure Learning Platform includes:

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 at **https://www.instructure.com/k-12**.