

5 Step Google Apps Professional Development Plan

Professional Development is an important step to fully utilizing Google Apps at your school or district. We've outlined a few steps that you can use to help develop and complete a successful PD program.

Professional Development Plan Summary:

- 1 Gain support from school administrators that will help drive professional development at the schools.
- 2 Assemble a group of Google Apps School Guides who will deliver professional development at school sites and help with ongoing development.
- 3 Set the scope and sequence for the professional development plan for teachers.
- 4 Conduct Google Apps training across the district and build momentum and excitement for the transition.
- 5 Process feedback and revise the professional development program.

Some practical considerations:

- Consider timing conflicts for vacation and summer
- Review the Google Apps Education Certified Trainer program and the Google Apps Training Center
- Plan for ~7-8 weeks for preparation of a Google Apps training program.

Consult with other schools or districts in your area/state that have used Google Apps

1 Approach school administrators

Gaining the support for Google Apps from all the school level administrators is a practical first step in rolling out Google Apps.

Plan for 3 weeks to complete the following tasks:

Communicate benefits

Compose an email addressed to administrators that communicates the availability of Google Apps and the benefits for their schools. Things to include:

- Emphasize that administrators play a critical role in the successful implementation of the program
- Highlight 3 features that have potential for curricular, instructive, or administrative impact (for example: Sites for e-portfolios, forms for tracking student behavior, docs for department notes)
- Outline the request and need for individuals, departments and/or grade levels, at the school who will help with the training and transition to Google Apps - "Google Apps School Guides"

[Top 10 reasons to use Google Apps](#)

Introduce useful features

Seeing is believing - start introducing some Google Apps features to school administrators to show how the tools can be used in everyday life.

Some examples:

- Create a shared agenda and minute taking document for running meetings
- Email a form to admins and show the automatic summary data at a meeting
- Share a Google Doc with admins that outlines the vision of Google Apps at the school that they can
- Share Google Sites as a dashboard or one stop shop for staff and administrators. Post useful updates, links, resources and calendars.
- Set up Picasa for back-to-school night
- Collect information from parents via Forms
- Work with school secretaries to make one key school process paperless by using Google Apps (i.e. send weekly announcements only via email)
- Use a form to have teachers use single words to define the culture of the school or the goal of the school. Use the Word Cloud gadget in Spreadsheets or Wordle to display the information.

Request recommendations

Ask school administrators to recommend at least one individual to be their schools' Google Apps School Guide. Be sure to communicate the expectations of being a Guide and some ideal qualities.

2 Assemble Google Apps School Guides

Google Apps School Guides will be individuals at each school in your district that will lead Google Apps training and encourage Google Apps integration in the classroom.

Plan for 3-4 weeks to complete the following tasks:

Set up Guide resources

Create a Google Site to centralize resources for Google Apps School Guides. Some things to include:

- Expectations of a Google Apps School Guide
- FAQs about the Google Apps transition
- FAQs about the Google Apps tools
- Handouts and templates
- Calendars with relevant training dates

Set up a discussion group in your Google Apps domain for Guides (i.e. google-guides@mydistrict.org) for sharing and communicating with Guides.

Contact Guides and schedule training

Start building enthusiasm for the program and getting Guides excited about their role in the upcoming Google Apps roll out:

- Take advantage of the discussion group to send out weekly tips or have Guides start sharing their own.
- Schedule social webinars or meet-ups
- Distribute swag ([Customize and buy your own](#))

Also, if Guides are new to Google Apps, you can begin introducing features by creating the scheduling process completely using Google Apps – collect scheduling information via forms and send out calendar invitations for the training dates.

Conduct technical Google Apps training

Google Apps School Guides will be responsible for training at each of their respective schools, so they should have a solid understanding of all the tools. During the training sessions, be sure to reiterate the technical expectations for Guides and their commitment to understanding and using the product.

When planning your Google Apps training for the Guides, you can consider the following options:



- Hire a [Google Apps Education Certified Trainer](#) individual or organization to help lead your training workshops for your Google Apps School Guides.
- Require self-paced training by reviewing the [Google Apps Education Online Training Center](#) and setting a schedule for completing modules/lessons.
- Recommend completion of the [Google Apps Education Individual Qualification](#) exams (requires purchase of 6, \$15 exams).

Encourage the Guides to take advantage of the discussion group for asking questions and sharing ideas while learning and reviewing the training materials.

Try and make the trainings fun and Googley!

Conduct general Guide training

In addition to the technical Google Apps training, set up time to carry out general Guide training. Potential topics for these types of trainings could include:

- Expectations of a Google Apps School Guide, examples include (but not limited to):
 - Conduct monthly workshops
 - Troubleshoot common problems
 - Circulate best practices
 - Collaboration on developing the scope and sequence for PD at schools in the district
 - Strategy around how to gain teacher buy-in
 - Troubleshoot potential challenges

These meetings should help prepare Guides with resources and strategies to train teachers at their schools.

Set up channels and strategies for ongoing communication

Continue to engage Guides throughout the year using the resource site and discussion groups. With this ongoing communication, you can continue to:

- Have each Guide contribute tips and tricks and how they are using them in the classroom (or share how others in their school are using it in the classroom)
- Encourage them to document their trainings with handouts, screenshots, or video and start building a “just in time/anytime” PD library for Google Apps
- Highlight new feature releases (stay up to date with the Google Apps updates feed)
- Address any problems that arise

You might also consider to have webinars or meet-ups for Guides throughout the year as well to share their experiences.



3 Assemble Google Apps School Guides

It is now time to plan the professional development for the teachers. You will need to determine the learning objectives you want your teachers to master and the pace of your professional development plan. You will also need to consider how the training is delivered (i.e. school site staff meeting, webex etc.). There are lots of great training resources in the [Google Apps Training Center](#). Be sure to use these resources before reinventing the wheel!

Plan for 1-2 weeks to complete the following tasks:

Training preparations

When planning your Professional Development plan, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Account for extra lead time when scheduling training
- Consider advocating for stipends given to Google Apps School Guides
- Have some Google Apps/Google giveaways on hand
- Create a Google Apps training site for the district with links to resources, videos, highlighted tips and tricks, FAQs, common tutorials, etc. (example from the state of Oregon)
- Measure the level of prior knowledge and technical proficiency to plan accordingly for different levels
 - Consider using Forms in Google Docs to collect the information and also use as a demonstration of the tool.
- Determine whether Google Apps training is centralized at the district level or customized by Guides at the school level.

Objectives

Set clear objectives and goals for Google Apps usage and training at your district. For example, will training be project based (i.e. teachers will be able to create a class website, set-up a course syllabus) or product based (i.e. teachers will be able to use Forms in Google Docs, learn how to create calendars).

The objectives of the training program should build in relevancy for teachers and demonstrate how using Google Apps will engage students and make teachers more effective.



EXPERT TIP

"Have teachers start using docs for professional purposes before the students. We used calendar to schedule meetings, curriculum, and resources (labs, etc.) and Docs to plan collaboratively. The combination of workshops and job-embedded development makes teachers more comfortable and proficient. This takes longer but I think it helps a lot towards system-wide adoption."
- John Calvert, Clarkstown Central School District, NY

Identify new or existing practices to promote

As part of the objectives, you can identify some existing processes or projects done at a school or district level that teachers can now implement with Google Apps.

For example:

- Class sites: Encourage every teacher to have an online presence, conduct training on Google Sites
- Lesson plans: Set up grade-level folders schoolwide for teachers to contribute and access and conduct training on shared folders with Google Docs
- School calendar: Create a shared calendar that consolidates all schoolwide activities (assemblies, events, sports, testing, etc.) into one place.

For more ideas review the [Top 10 ways to start using Google Apps](#).



EXPERT TIP

"Apps (Docs in particular) also helps satisfy the requirements set forth by the new Common Core Standards that 37 States, including NY, have signed onto. Every system is scrambling to prepare for next year when they are in place. In the writing strand, look at "Production and Distribution," in Speaking and Listening, look at "Comprehension and Collaboration." It is a home run- could be it's own section."

- John Calvert, Clarkstown Central School District, NY

Timing

Once you have objectives in mind, determine the frequency and duration of training necessary for accomplishing your goals.

There are several ways you can conduct your training

- Frequent and short - take 20 min/week in staff meetings to introduce a new feature and have teachers practice (10 min for presentation, 10 min for practice)
- Concentrated - devote staff development days to covering all the tools

- Online - create screencasts or videos for an online training library

Delivery

There are several options to consider when structuring training sessions, for example:

- Facilitation - large district-wide [summits](#), in-person staff meetings, webinars, recorded videos hosted in Google Apps
- Environment/infrastructure - bring your own laptop, computer lab, projector
- Group work and individual exercises
- Allocation of time for independent practice
- Review sessions - potentially through recorded videos or webinars - to follow up on training

Success stories - have a place for teachers to share how they are successfully using the tools or other tips/tricks they have

4

Build momentum and conduct training

With a plan in place, administrative support, and Guides ready to go - you're ready to start having everyone at your district "go Google."

The following tasks will be ongoing throughout the year:

Promote training sessions and tools

Make sure the Guides actively promote their school training sessions and provide tips and tricks to the teachers. Some communication channels include:

- Emails - send out notices of upcoming trainings, create a Google Apps newsletter (at the district or school level) that sends out training information, tips and tricks, highlights teachers at the school
- Newsletters - target existing school newsletters to promote training
- Flyers - print flyers and post around faculty lounges/areas
- Handouts - print handouts to distribute to faculty inboxes
- Calendar invitations/reminders - set up and subscribe faculty to a Google Apps training calendar
- Blogposts - create a Google Apps School Guide blog to promote training or uses of Google Apps, or use an existing blog (for example, the principal's blog or another school administrator)

Recognition for training and innovation

Recognition programs can help encourage teachers to complete the training and incorporate Google Apps into their classrooms.

For example, you could showcase teachers that are using Google Apps in innovative ways in their curriculum and with students by highlighting them on the school website, recognizing them at staff meetings, present them with Google giveaways, etc. Set up a place where teachers can share these stories and learn from each other.

You might also consider setting up school or district-wide competitions for completing tasks or projects in Google Apps - for students or teachers. For example, there could be a race to complete the "Top 10 ways to use Google Apps", a "Google Apps scavenger hunt" or trying to complete the tasks to become a [Gmail Ninja](#).

Another program might be a regular "TV" series (hosted on Google Video included

in Google Apps) that features teachers sharing their innovative tips and tricks for Google Apps.

These programs will serve to recognize those that are taking advantage of the tools as well as educating others how they can integrate them into their own curriculum.



5 Reflect and revise

At Google, we strongly believe in revision and iteration. Consider your first Professional Development plan a “beta” and continue to work to improve it as the year progresses.

Some things to consider while evaluating your training program:

- Analyze the usage of the products in your Google Apps control panel usage reports - identify which products have the most usage, which ones have the least. Why are some being used more than others?
- Survey the Guides and get their feedback on the training materials, delivery, style, etc.
- Encourage Guides to deliver surveys to their teachers to get feedback on their training sessions and how they might improve the training program and revise objectives
- Consider targeted intervention with schools that have low adoption
- Surface best practices
- Gather student anecdotes, thoughts, and recommendations for how Apps can transform the school
- Embrace the change!
- Plan ongoing learning and development

Congratulations on completing your training for Google Apps! Have some great ideas you'd like to share with us? Send them our way so we can include them in this (beta) guide!