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The Professional Learning Partner Guide (PLPG) Rubric: Does it measure curriculum-based learning

October, 2024

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rivet education's PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PARTNER GUIDE
APPLICATION RUBRIC

Visit https://riveteducation.org/plpg-rubric/ for more information on the Professional Learning Partner Guide (PLPG) Rubric.

"Professional learning results in equitable and excellent outcomes for all students when educators prioritize high-quality curriculum and instructional materials for students, assess student learning, understand the curriculum, and implement through instruction."

01 What is the PLPG Rubric Validation Study?

- Professional learning (PL) is recognized widely in the field of education as a critical implementation strategy to support teacher knowledge and skill development.

- Rivet Education created a Professional Learning Partner Guide (PLPG), a searchable database of learning providers with expertise in the adoption and implementation of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). The development of the PLPG was in response to the lack of resources and guidance available to support districts with evaluation of professional learning (PL) services.

- To be selected as a PL provider (PLP) in the PLPG, PL organizations and vendors have to submit an application that is reviewed and scored by Rivet Education using the PLPG Rubric (formerly known as the Scoring and Evidence Guide or SEG).

- The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) (Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) in collaboration with Rivet Education was funded by the Gates Foundation to validate the PLPG rubric.

- The psychometric testing of the PLPG rubric is being conducted in three phases, with the first phase focusing on establishing content validity of the Rubric (based on the SEG Version 2); the second phase on exploring the reliability and structural validity of the rubric; and the third phase on establishing the rubric convergent and predictive validity. This output summarizes the results from Phase I.

02   Why is validating the PLPG Rubric Important?

- To ensure confidence in the PLPG as a robust database of high quality PL services, the PLPG rubric needs to be evaluated as a reliable and valid assessment instrument.

- The following questions need to be answered to establish the psychometric properties of the PLPG Rubric:
  - Does the PLPG rubric measure the needed aspects of quality curriculum-based professional learning?
  - Are the rubric results and scores consistent across the applications reviewers?
  - How strong is the rubric structure? How well do items hang together that are supposed to?
  - How closely does the rubric relate to other scoring systems related to quality PL services?
  - Do the scores resulting from the application process predict the outcomes they are supposed to predict?

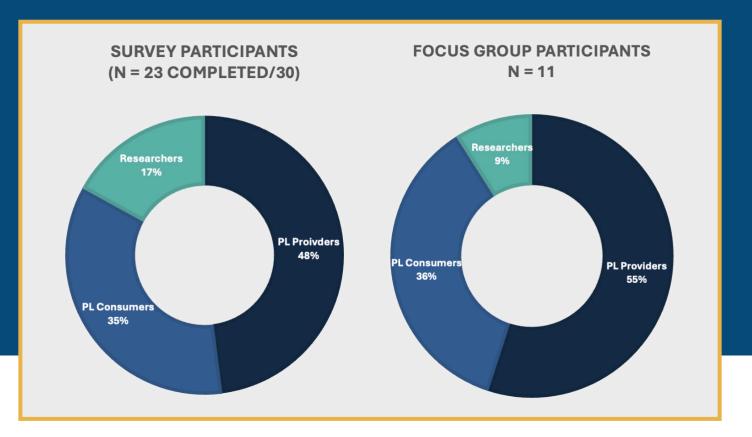## About the PLPG Rubric (SEG Version 2)

- It is organized into three Gateways, with a total of 37 items.

- Applicants can apply to:
  - Gateway 1 Content or Gateway 1 HQIM Expertise,
  - Any of the four learning types/constructs contained within Gateway 2 (Adoption, Launch, Ongoing Professional Learning for Teachers, and System Design and Leadership Support), and
  - Gateway 3 (Using Data to Plan and Improve).

- Rivet Education reviewers use a weighted scoring system with detailed criteria for each score and example lists of evidence to support selection of a particular score.

03   How did we establish content validity (Phase I)?

Content Validity is...
the degree to which a tool or instrument is relevant to and representative of the conecept(s) it is designed measure

- The following areas of interest were examined as part of Phase I:
  - The administration process (e.g., frequency of the review cycles for submissions and renewals, satisfaction with the application process)
  - Relevance, clarity, and alignment of the SEG gateways, PL Types (e.g., adoption, launch), and indicators (items), including any improvements that could be made
  - The content, comprehensiveness, and utility of the Scoring Rubric, including scoring criteria and weighing of indicators

- A mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data was used to establish the content validity of the rubric (SEG Version 2) that included:
  - a 4-section survey (N=23 survey participants)
  - two focus groups (N=11 focus group participants)

- Participants included PL providers, consumers of PL (i.e., state and districts), coaching researchers, and implementation science experts

- All data were analyzed by the NIRN team, reviewed by Rivet, and discussed in detail to inform changes to the PLPG Rubric

**SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
(N = 23 COMPLETED/30)**

- Researchers 17%
- PL Proivders 48%
- PL Consumers 35%

**FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS
N = 11**

- Researchers 9%
- PL Providers 55%
- PL Consumers 36%

04

What did we learn?

In short, data supported the content validity of the SEG, with some recommendations for how to refine the Rubric.

- About the Administration Process:
  - Biennial renewal cycles (every 2 years) should be maintained pending no other changes for those PLPs already in the PLPG.
  - A grandfather clause is needed for applicants to not have to reapply as a result of external changes impacting the scoring, such as modifications to the rubric or changes in educational standards.
  - Instructions and tips for new applicants and organizations with fewer resources should be added into existing guidance webinars and materials.
- About the Gateways, Constructs, and Indicators:
  - Gateways, Constructs, and Indicators needed to be revised for clarity and greater specificity of target audience and level of system.
  - Indicators needed to be revised to ensure centering of student per spective.
  - Additional indicators were to be added around evaluation of coaching and use of data.
- About the Scoring:
  - All indicators should be scored on the same scale (0,1,2) and weighted equally to standardize cutoff scores representing a passing grade.
  - The 3-point scoring system should be further defined to include quality as well as presence/absence of predefined criteria.

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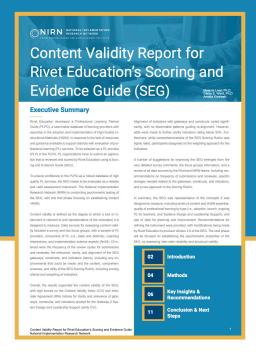## 05 — What changes were made to the PLPG Rubric?

The learnings were incorporated into the Rubric, resulting in a new version, now officially called PLPG Rubric. In addition to the suggested recommendations highlighted above in this brief, all of which led to actual changes, Rivet also made the following modifications:

- Revised the Gateway 1 Template
- Publicized the Rubric Screener to allow applicants to determine their level of readiness for submitting an application
- Added "drop-in" hours for Gateways 2 and 3 applicants
- Changed the names of the Gateway 2 constructs
- Created a glossary to provide definitions of key terms
- Further defined the purpose of Gateway 2 and distinction from Gateway 2

To learn more about NIRN and Rivet Education's partnership read:

["Content Validity Report for Rivet Education's Scoring and Evidence Guide (SEG)"](#)

["A Conversation with Joslyn Richardson on Supporting High-Quality Instructional Materials and Professional Learning"](#)

Content Validity Report for Rivet Education's Scoring and Evidence Guide (SEG)

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Executive Summary

Rivet Education developed a Professional Learning Partner Guide (PLPG), a searchable database of learning providers with expertise in the adoption and implementation of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), in response to the lack of resources and guidance available to support districts with evaluation of professional learning (PL) services. To be selected as a PL provider (PLP) in the PLPG, organizations have to submit an application that is reviewed and scored by Rivet Education using a Scoring and Evidence Guide (SEG).

To ensure confidence in the PLPG as a robust database of high quality PL services, the SEG needs to be evaluated as a reliable and valid assessment instrument. The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) is conducting psychometric testing of the SEG, with this first phase focusing on establishing content validity.

Content validity is defined as the degree to which a tool or instrument is relevant to and representative of the concept(s) it is designed to measure. Data sources for assessing content validity included a survey and two focus groups, with a sample of PL providers, consumers of PL (i.e., state and districts), coaching researchers, and implementation science experts (N=24). Of interest were the frequency of the review cycles for submissions and renewals; the relevance, clarity, and alignment of the SEG gateways, constructs, and indicators (items), including any improvements that could be made; and the content, comprehensiveness, and utility of the SEG Scoring Rubric, including scoring criteria and weighting of indicators.

Overall, the results supported the content validity of the SEG, with high scores on the Content Validity Index (CVI) and Inter-rater Agreement (IRA) indices for clarity and relevance of gateways, constructs, and indicators (except for the Gateway 2 System Design and Leadership Support clarity CVI).

Alignment of indicators with gateways and constructs varied significantly, with no discernable patterns guiding re-alignment. However, edits were made to further clarify indicators rating below 50%. Furthermore, while comprehensiveness of the SEG Scoring Rubric was highly rated, participants disagreed on the weighting approach for the indicators.

A number of suggestions for improving the SEG emerged from the very detailed survey comments, the focus groups information, and a review of all data sources by the Rivet and NIRN teams, including recommendations on frequency of submissions and renewals, specific changes needed related to the gateways, constructs, and indicators, and a new approach to the Scoring Rubric.

In summary, the SEG was representative of the concepts it was designed to measure, including levels of content and HQIM expertise, quality of professional learning by type (i.e., adoption, launch, ongoing PL for teachers, and Systems Design and Leadership Support), and use of data for planning and improvement. Recommendations for refining the instrument were provided, with modifications being made by Rivet Education to produce Version 3.0 of the SEG. The next phase will be focused on establishing the psychometric properties of the SEG, by assessing inter-rater reliability and structural validity.

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04	Methods
06	Key Insights & Recommendations
11	Conclusion & Next Steps

Content Validity Report for Rivet Education's Scoring and Evidence Guide
National Implementation Research Network