



# Doc H's Blog

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## Learning system requires system that learns

To create a great system of learning, you must have a system that learns. This is true at the individual student level, as well as at the teacher, classroom, school, district, and state levels.

A student moving through school will be more successful if they have a system that learns. For an individual, this means that the student must look at his or her current and past performance and identify those [habits of the mind](#) and learning tools that enable the student to identify successes and missteps in learning. Many students are using learning notebooks to identify their goals and track their performance in academics, behavior, and other important areas. Students who take time to analyze their performance and reflect in writing will identify learning methods that worked for them in the past and repeat those methods. They will also identify learning methods that did not work and review how to improve them in future learning opportunities.

Teachers need to develop learning systems both for their personal learning and that of the classroom. Teachers are lifelong learners. Throughout their careers, there are multiple opportunities for professional learning. In our Kentucky Professional Growth and Effectiveness System we are asking teachers to do self-reflection on their learning needs that address personal improvement and improvement in teaching.

A great tool for a teacher to use in improving a classroom learning system is a continuous improvement cycle such as Plan, Do, Study, Act ([PDSA](#)). To be effective, the teacher needs to engage students from the beginning to the end of the cycle.

First, a teacher should plan learning experiences based on key learning requirements. Clear understanding of learner expectations is critical. Students also must have a clear understanding of how learning will be measured and the goal for the classroom.

In the Do phase, a teacher and students will identify what the teacher will do and students will do to reach the learning expectations.

In the Study phase, the students and teachers analyze learning results and identify potential improvement strategies and successful strategies.

In the Act phase, the teacher and students build on strategies that work and implement improvement methods identified in the Study phase.

The continuous improvement cycle repeats many times throughout the school year and within a short period of time, students become experts at improving not only their individual learning system but also the classroom learning system.

The PDSA learning cycle can be used at the school level to improve school outcomes. Also, a district can utilize the improvement cycle to improve student outcomes and operational outcomes. Finally, a state agency can overcome the bureaucratic tendencies of the agency by focusing on a continuous improvement cycle.

At the Kentucky Department of Education, the foundation for our "learning system" that is now a "system of learning" is called Deliverology. It is a system developed by Sir Michael Barber, advisor to former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and a global expert on education reform and implementation of large-scale system change. More information about KDE's system can be found on the Delivery [webpage](#).

Why is it important that a learning system become a system that learns? Without learning, outcomes that matter will not improve and we will maintain status quo. Too many of our children are not achieving success in our schools. Creating systems that learn is critical for those children who are not achieving success. Do you have a system that learns?

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