Using Moodle in a Community of Practice: Getting Started
The Ohio ABLE Professional Development Network (PDN) uses a content management application called “Moodle” to host professional development activities and encourage discussion within communities of practice. This document contains helpful tips for getting the most out of your Moodle experience.

**Accessing Moodle:**

In order to access Moodle, you will need a Moodle account. If you already have an account, simply login to your Moodle account to get started.

If you’ve forgotten your username and/or password, click on “**Forgotten your username or password?**” and enter the username or e-mail address associated with your account. Then, you will receive an automated response with information on accessing your account.

If you don’t already have one, a Moodle account is fast and simple to create. Click on “**Create new account**” in order to begin the process.
Enter all required information and click “Create my new account” at the bottom.

You will receive an automated e-mail welcoming you to Moodle. You can now login to your new Moodle account! If you have not received an e-mail from Tim Ponder, check your “junk” or “spam” folder. Sometimes Tim’s e-mails are filtered there.

**Accessing the Communities of Practice**

Now that you’ve logged into Moodle, you want to locate your community of practice. You may notice that several courses are listed in Moodle, ranging from Assessment to Writing. Scroll down through these courses until you find “Communities of Practice.” Click on the community of practice you would like to join.
Many ABLE courses, including the Communities of Practice, require enrollment keys. These one-time access codes allow you to participate in the course or community of practice you are joining. The enrollment key for all of the communities of practice is “Summit2013”. Enter the enrollment key when prompted and click "Enroll me."

Congratulations! You’ve just become a member of a community of practice!

**Editing Your Settings and Preferences:**

Now that you’ve successfully logged in and enrolled in your community of practice, you will want to take a moment to personalize your Moodle account. You can edit your profile settings by following the steps below.

On the left-hand side of your screen, you’ll see the “Settings” heading. Click on “My profile settings” in order to customize your profile.

Click on “Edit profile.”
When editing your profile, we recommend making these two important changes:

1. Add a profile picture to your account.
2. Update your e-mail settings to help you stay on top of new information and postings to the forum.

On this screen, you can edit your display name, e-mail address, and location.

Additionally, you can change your notification and subscription options.

When you scroll down, you can share details about yourself and upload a profile picture.

Moodle automatically defaults to “No digest” settings when you create your account. If you do not want to receive an e-mail every time someone posts to the forum, you should select either “Complete” or “Subjects” to limit the number of messages you will receive.
You can also determine whether to auto-subscribe to forums to which you post and turn on forum tracking to highlight new and unread forum responses you may be following. If you do not want to be subscribed to a forum in which you have posted (and receive e-mail notifications as a result of that subscription), select “No, don’t automatically subscribe me to forums” from the dropdown menu next to “Forum auto-subscribe.” You can continue to personalize your Moodle account by sharing some details about yourself with your fellow Moodlers.

Share interesting information about yourself in the “Description” box.

Upload a picture of yourself that will be shown on all forum posts and profile views by clicking “Choose a file.”

A dialog box will open. Select “Upload a file” and then “Browse...” to choose your photo from among your own files. Finally, click “Upload this file.”
Enter any additional information that you would like to share and then click “Update profile” at the bottom.

Once you have updated your profile, you will be redirected to the “View profile” screen. If you want to make any additional edits, simply click on “Edit profile.”

Navigating the Moodle:

Once you have edited your profile and preferences, you can return to your community of practice and get involved!

In order to navigate to your community of practice, click on “My courses” in the “Navigation” pane on the left side of your screen. This will expand and list all the courses in which you are enrolled. Click on the community of practice you have joined. In this case, we’ll be clicking on “Student Achievement CoP: Enrollment Under 499.”
There are three main components to each community of practice in Moodle:

1. Welcome
2. Administrator Summit Resources
3. Community of Practice Forum

**Welcome**

The Moodle welcome screen includes general information about Moodle, moderator contact information, and news and updates to Moodle. There are two moderators for each community of practice who will serve as resources and facilitators of discussion on the forums.

**Administrator Summit Resources**

The Administrator Summit Resources section houses all of the materials that were shared during the 2013 Administrator Summit.

It contains several folders, each of which holds a variety of documents that you may view online or download and save.
For example, if you were to click on “Strategy Matrices,” Moodle would bring up a screen listing of all of the strategy documents that each community of practice generated on Day One of the Administrator Summit.

If you were interested in viewing the Strategy Matrix for Assessment that was developed by the Enrollment and Recruitment community of practice, you would simply click on that file name.

A dialogue box may appear, prompting you to either open the file with Adobe Reader or save the file to your computer. Click on “Open with” and select Adobe Reader and then click “OK.” The document will now open in another window on your computer. If you wish, you may save it.
The Community of Practice Forum

The forum is intended to be a place where Ohio ABLE administrators can openly discuss best practices, ask questions, share ideas, and collaborate with one another. To get started, click on the forum called “How’s it going?” Or, if you have a general question or comment to share, click on “General Discussion Forum”.

Once you enter the forum, you’ll see a series of discussion topics. In this case, the discussion topic is also “How’s it going?”.

In order to read the prompt for discussion, click on “How’s it going?”.

Many forum prompts will ask you to share your thoughts or insights on a particular topic. In order to reply to a forum prompt, click “Reply” at the bottom right.
Another forum function permits users to create their own new discussion topics to post to a particular forum.

If you are interested in starting a new thread, click “Add a new discussion topic” on the main forum page.
Moodle Supports for Communities of Practice:

Each community of practice has two moderators. The contact information for both of these individuals is listed on the welcome screen of each community of practice.

Additionally, if you encounter any challenges with Moodle or have questions about participating in a community of practice, please contact the Ohio ABLE Professional Development Network at ohiopdn@literacy.kent.edu or (800) 765-2897, option 2.

Enjoy and happy Moodling!