

Effectiveness Literature and Research-Based Practices

Effective Professional Development

By focusing on a group of teachers from the same school, professional development may help sustain changes in practice over time, as some teachers leave the school's teaching force and other new teachers join the faculty. Professional development may help contribute to a shared professional culture, in which teachers in a school or teachers who teach the same goals, methods, problems, and solutions.

Garet, M., Porter, A., Desimone, L., Birman, B., Yoon, K. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), p. 922.

Professional development might be judged by the collective contributions that teachers and other professionals make to one another's work, to the school or district in which they work, and to a wider professional community. In this conception, professional development is linked to collective responsibilities for the improvement of teaching and learning. By this standard, the test of effective professional development is whether and how individuals actively engage in strengthening the overall quality of the educational enterprise.

Little, Judith Warren. (1997, March). Working paper: Benchmarks in schools: Excellence in professional development and professional community. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Collaborative Teaching Teams

Schools where teachers focus on student work, interact with colleagues to plan how to improve their teaching, and continuously bring new skills and knowledge to bear on their practice are also schools that produce the best results for children.

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE). (2000, Fall). *Engaging Public Support for Teachers' Professional Development*, No. 3, p. 1.

The research indicates that quality schools generally have a stable, professional community of experienced teachers who share norms, values, goals, and a common focus on student learning. The school culture fosters among staff a willingness to collaborate and openness to reflection and new ideas directed toward supporting high student achievement. The findings suggest "that teachers working together as a

community of adults with individual and joint commitments to a set of common goals within the broader context of the school can have a powerful effect beyond their individual contributions.

Lewis, A. (2001). Add li up: using research to improve education for Low-income and minority students: Washington, DC: Poverty & Race Research, p.8.

Professional Learning Communities

Characteristics of Professional Learning Communities

- *Shared leadership - the collegial and facilitative participation of the principal who shares leadership - and thus, power and authority - through inviting staff input in decision making;*
- *A shared vision – a vision for the school that is developed from an unswerving commitment on the part of staff to students’ learning and that is consistently articulated and referenced for the staff work;*
- *Collective learning - staff study and research and application of the learning to solutions that address students’ needs;*
- *Supportive conditions - physical conditions, human capacities and an organization that supports such an operation; and*
- *Shared practice - the visitation and review of each teacher’s classroom behavior by peers as a feedback and assistance activity to support individual and community improvement.*

Hord, S. (2003). Professional learning communities: Perspectives from the field. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, p. 9.

Student achievement increases substantially in schools with collaborative work cultures that foster a professional learning community among teachers and others, focus continuously on improving instructional practices in light of student performance data, and link to external standards and staff development support.

Newmann, F., and G. Wehlage. (1995). Successful school restructuring. Madison, Wisconsin: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools.

School improvement will never occur on a wide scale until the majority of teachers become contributors to and beneficiaries of the professional learning community.

Fullan, M. (2000, April). The three stories of educational reform. Phi Delta Kappan, p. 584.

Schools need principals who are data driven and results oriented. When principals use accumulated evidence to inform practice, to celebrate success, and to identify areas

that need ongoing attention they help to foster the commitment to continuous improvement that characterizes a professional learning community.

DuFour, Rick. (1999, February). Help wanted: Principals who can lead professional learning communities NAASP Bulletin.

The research indicates that quality schools generally have a stable, professional community of experienced teachers who share norms, values, goals, and a common focus on student learning. The school culture fosters among staff a willingness to collaborate and openness to reflection and new ideas directed toward supporting high student achievement.

Lewis, Anne & Paik, Sandra. (2001). Add it up: Using research to improve education for low-income and minority students. Washington DC: Poverty & Race Research Action Council, p. 8.

School Reform

School reform efforts must focus on building the capacity of schools and teachers to undertake tasks they have never before been called upon to accomplish...to rethink their practice and to redesign their institutions can be accomplished only by investing in individual and organizational learning, in the human capital of the educational enterprise - the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of teachers and administrators, as well as those of parents and community members.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. (1993, June). Reframing the school reform agenda, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 754.