



Need of Continuing Professional Development in Teacher Education

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Continuing professional development, Management of professional development, Teacher education

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ABSTRACT *Continuing professional development (CPD) consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice. CPD is, in the main, becoming better organized and better related to schools' and teachers' individual needs. These developments are taking place in the context of a wide range of national initiatives and government policy focusing on raising the profile of CPD in the teaching profession. However, in order to ensure that CPD brings about the improvements intended and that value for money is obtained, more attention needs to be given to improving the management of professional development, particularly in relation to developing the skills of CPD coordinators' and line managers to enable them to help teachers plan robust and relevant individual training plans.*

Introduction

Continuing professional development (CPD) consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice. CPD is, in the main, becoming better organized and better related to schools' and teachers' individual needs. There is now a good degree of coherence and common purpose in attempts to improve standards through professional development activity. These developments are taking place in the context of a wide range of national initiatives and government policy focusing on raising the profile of CPD in the teaching profession. However, in order to ensure that CPD brings about the improvements intended and that value for money is obtained, more attention needs to be given to improving the management of professional development, particularly in relation to developing the skills of CPD coordinators' and line managers to enable them to help teachers plan robust and relevant individual training plans.

Need for the study

- To ensure that all staff are valued and appreciated
- To improve the educational experience and achievement of pupils by enhancing the professionalism of teachers
- To enable staff to develop their skills, knowledge and professional expertise through self-evaluation and ongoing personal reflection
- To enhance the professionalism of teachers by maintaining an ongoing individual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolio
- To ensure that all teachers maintain a CPD profile for professional purposes
- To encourage staff to take broad and varied opportunities for professional development
- To undertake annual Professional Review and Development (PRD) meetings with teachers
- To identify agreed development objectives and appropriate CPD activities for CPD profile
- To identify and collate any CPD issues which require whole-school or authority attention

Objective

Continuing professional development (CPD) is relevant to realize the full potential of performance management being to produce improvements and innovations in teaching and professional practices and outcomes.

The main objectives are:

The process will be effective leading to improved teaching, learning and management practices. There is a professional commitment to building excellence at every stage of a teacher's career. It focuses on individual target setting and self evaluation. It recognizes good performance and respects staff contributions and opinions. It is integrated with existing arrangements for quality assurance. It identifies and supports the professional needs of each teacher. It balances individual and personal development priorities with these relating to the effective fulfillment of the school development plan. Professional development is coherent and progressive.

How to attain?

To ensure relevance we suggest that policy – national, local and school - promote supply that addresses a CPD 'curriculum' comprised of five broad areas:

1. context in order to meet local challenges and conditions, characterized by the particular profile of children and young people within the school or educational setting including their socio-economic status, ability, language capabilities, ethnicity and cultural background.
2. Specialism to develop phase appropriate expertise or subject and other specializations, particularly Special Educational Needs (SENs).
3. Leadership to lead learning within and beyond classrooms, schools and other educational settings and contribute in local, regional and national contexts.
4. Pedagogy to develop flexible, innovative, differentiated and appropriate learning opportunities for all children and young people based on up to date knowledge of learning and development, curriculum and assessment.
5. Professionalism to work inter- and intra-professionally, with parents and other adults within the school and wider community.

' A teaching profession for the 21st century' (the McCrone agreement) states that all teachers have an entitlement to a Continuing Professional Development plan that is agreed annually with their line manager and that is based on the assessment of the individual need.

Standards for Staff Professional Development

While standards for student learning are controversial these days, National Staff Development Council (NSDC) believes

standards for staff development provide an important benchmark against which school systems and schools can compare their current staff development efforts and make plans for improving them. The Council also believes that a great deal has been learned in the past few years that strengthen the link between student achievement and the professional learning of teachers and principals. That's why the Council, with the support of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, has spent the better part of the past year revising its standards for staff development, initially adopted in the mid-1990s.

The staff development standards are based on NSDC's view that the primary purpose of staff development is to ensure high levels of learning for all students through improved professional learning experiences for every school employee who affects student learning. The standards fall into three categories: context, process, and content. Context standards describe "where" the learning will be applied, the organizational environment in which improved performance is expected. Process standards refer to "how" the learning occurs. Content standards refer to "what" is learned. These are the essential things that task force members believe all educators should know.

Quality Improvement Process

1. Plan: Develop a plan to improve.

Identify the opportunity for improvement. Document "how we do things now."

Determine the root cause of the problem. Select a solution for improvement.

2. Develop an action plan for implementing the improvement.

Do: Carry out your plan. Pilot the proposed changes on a small scale.

3. Check: Gather information and study results for the pilot project.

Identify what you learned about the process and how you could improve upon it.

4. Act: Adjust the process, based on your new knowledge.

Standardize the new methods. Review and repeat the steps. Parent involvement; Interventions for struggling students; Staff development; Lunch time/discipline issues; and Proficiencies in curriculum areas.

These concerns became the focus of five action teams composed of the principal, teachers, parents, and community representatives. For a larger pool of knowledgeable, excited and enthusiastic teachers across the country and to ensure that there is one such teacher in every school; to ensure that there is a workforce of teachers with a sound knowledge, an understanding of how pupils learn and of related teaching practices. Provide CPD which seeks to develop and improve existing good practice as well as that which addresses 'weaknesses'. Provide opportunities for those teachers who are keen to develop their own knowledge of and/or related pedagogy irrespective of the priorities of the school they are in. Sustain the supply of experts to move into Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Local Authority (LA) adviser and consultant's posts, research, etc. Develop a model of CPD which would focus on developing good teaching to inspire others in order to raise expectations for all pupils and teachers. Engage teachers from all schools, including those in high attaining ones. Review the use and effectiveness of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) training and development for them and leading teachers. Raise teachers' awareness of progression in the subject and help them to see the 'bigger picture'. Increase the number of models of CPD available – based on the range of identified needs. Rigorously review the evidence base for effective CPD and to encourage peer-reviewed research.

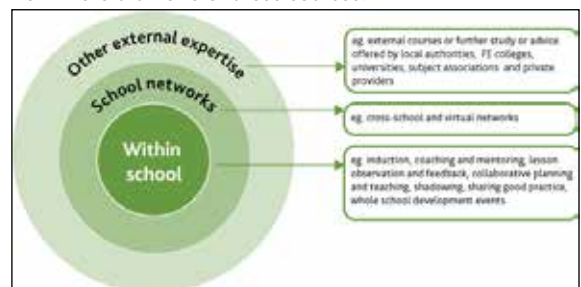
Continuing Professional Development Model



The standards are arranged in three inter-related sections:

- professional attributes
- professional knowledge and understanding, and
- Professional skills.

There are many possible sources of CPD, as shown in the diagram below. Some forms of CPD may encompass elements from more than one of these sources.



Effects of Professional Development in the classroom

Monitoring and evaluating the success of CPD activities, with measures that focus on the extent to which teachers, as a result of their professional development and subsequent teaching, are able to demonstrate that to their pupils.

- (i) Achieve well relative to their previous attainment
- (ii) Make progress that is as good as or better than comparable pupils nationally
- (iii) Are motivated, enthusiastic and respond positively to challenge and high expectations
- (iv) As a result, have high standards of behavior.

Professional development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the reform. Professional development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate. Professional development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration. Teachers need a wide variety of staff development opportunities. For example, a science teacher might need to attend classes to learn more about the content of the science she's teaching. In addition, she might need other types of staff development program to learn better ways to teach that new science material. She might also need to

learn more about classroom management techniques, how to incorporate technology into her instruction, and how to better address the needs of language minority students in her classroom.

Benefits of Professional Development

Staff development standards can inspire improved performance and provide guidance to superintendents, principals, and other staff development leaders as they plan and implement powerful professional learning experiences for all teachers and administrators. At NSDC, we say, "At school, everyone's job is to learn." Staff development standards tell us how to make that vision a reality. The professional standards will help guide teachers' professional development and career choices.

Conclusion

The central and crucial role played by teachers is in raising standards of achievement for all children and young people. In teacher learning and professional development, teacher can and does improve the quality of teaching. By improving the quality of their teaching and developing their professional expertise, teachers have an impact on the learning and achievement of children and young people, as well as on their colleagues and peers.

Government and other agencies have already recognized the need for greater differentiation in the curriculum, learning approaches and assessment strategies used to ensure standards of achievement for all children and young people. Further improvement in teaching quality and thus raising standards for all will be achieved through the implementation of a more 'personalized and tailored' approach to CPD. This must be supported financially and through the development of appropriate knowledge and infrastructure to support the sharing of expertise and the effective management of professional knowledge and expertise.

The GTCW has set out the principle that all teachers should be entitled to high-quality and well planned CPD provision throughout their careers. However, along with an entitlement comes a responsibility to develop oneself professionally and to ensure that professional knowledge and skills are constantly updated. 'Teachers maintain up-to-date professional knowledge, understanding and skills and they reflect on their own practice. They recognize their own needs and take responsibility for their continuing professional development, taking advantage of the range of opportunities available to them. Teachers contribute to the wider development of the school and the profession.'

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