

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF TEACHERS: PATHWAYS TO ENHANCED PRACTICE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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In order to enhance practice and promote student learning, teachers continuously enhance their knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and professional dispositions. This process is known as professional growth in teaching. According to research, ongoing professional development is essential for both the efficiency of individual teachers and the overall growth of schools. Meaningful professional learning, according to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), entails more than just attending workshops; it also entails consistent engagement with the material, practice reflection, peer cooperation, and connection with curriculum objectives. Teachers benefit from this kind of thorough engagement as they develop deeper subject knowledge and improve their teaching methods, which in turn improve student outcomes.

It has been demonstrated that teachers' professional development is greatly impacted by their active engagement in collaborative professional learning communities (PLCs). In a study by Vangrieken et al., (2017), teacher collaboration within PLCs was associated with increased instructional effectiveness, shared responsibility for student learning, and enhanced problem-solving capacity. Teachers who participated in these communities were able to exchange teaching methods, co-analyze student data, and assist one another in modifying lessons to meet the requirements of various learners. PLCs' open discussion and group reflection foster the conversion of isolated teaching methods into inquiry-based professional development.

Coaching and mentoring are equally effective ways to support teachers' professional development. Measurable gains in teaching methods can result from instructional

coaching, in which seasoned educators assist teachers via co-planning, observation, and feedback. This method helps teachers use professional learning in the classroom by offering them individualized, job-integrated support. Coaching has specifically been connected to enhancements in student engagement, classroom management, and instructional clarity, all of which support better teaching outcomes.

Lastly, how instructors participate in continuous learning has increased as a result of the incorporation of technology into professional development opportunities. Beyond conventional face-to-face settings, educators can access resources, communicate across contexts, and engage in reflective practice thanks to digital professional learning networks. Teachers can tailor their professional learning pathways to meet their unique objectives and circumstances by using social media-based communities, webinars, and online courses. This adaptable, self-directed growth model highlights how teacher professionalism is changing in the twenty-first century.

References:

- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). Effective teacher professional development. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/122.311>
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