Leadership and Professional Learning

Forty actions Leaders can take to improve Professional Learning

Peter Cole

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Introduction

Research into school effectiveness[i] suggests that leaders bring about change by
- developing and gaining commitment to a shared vision of improvement,
- planning and providing resources to support change implementation,
- encouraging and supporting ongoing professional learning,
- monitoring progress and needs,
- providing continuous assistance, and
- creating an environment supportive of individuals in the process of change.

Fullen (2003)[ii] suggests that to bring about the reforms needed to ensure all students experience success in schools by 'closing the gap and lifting the bar' we need 'leaders who can create fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and the teaching profession itself'. He also suggests that to sustain school reform leaders will need to be effective not only within but also beyond their school.

Both of the sources referred to above provide a broad agenda for sustained school improvement. The purpose of this paper is quite modest in comparison, as it specifically focuses on the role of the leadership team in encouraging and supporting ongoing teacher effectiveness through the development of a strong professional learning culture. The reason for adopting a specific focus on improving the professional learning culture within schools stems from a belief that there are only a few levers for bringing about improvements in students' learning and that the most effective levers are those to do with improving the performance of teachers (i.e. teacher appraisal and teacher development). It is also considered that in most school environments the 'pay-off' from teacher appraisal and teacher development practices in terms of increased teacher effectiveness needs to and can be dramatically improved.

This paper discusses ways to optimise the links between 'professional development', improved teacher effectiveness and improved student learning. It suggests that in order for this to happen, school leaders will need to:
1. change teachers' perceptions that a development need is best met by an externally provided, expert facilitated, one-off training program
2. build a vibrant professional learning culture within the school
3. ensure that effective teaching practice is systematically adopted right across the school
4. ensure that there is a close link between teachers' professional learning plans, improved classroom teaching and improved student outcomes.

This is a companion paper to my earlier IARTV paper *Professional development: A great way to avoid change*[iii] and whilst it covers some of the same territory of the earlier paper it provides an agenda for improving a school's professional learning culture that can only be implemented and sustained within schools by leadership teams.

Implicit in the suggestions advanced in the final section of this paper is the need to make teacher appraisal practices more aligned to teacher professional learning outcomes, though teacher appraisal is not a theme that is explored in any detail. An allied implication is that the role description for all teachers should include the responsibility for continuously improving their own and their colleagues' professional knowledge, skills and attitudes and that appraisal processes should also review the effectiveness of actions taken in relation to this responsibility.

Like my earlier IARTV paper, this paper is based on the belief that schools waste thousands of dollars on professional development as many of the activities typically undertaken to develop teachers produce very little return in terms of improved teacher competency and increased student learning. In addition, it is based on the belief that many leadership teams need to be far more proactive and give greater priority to developing and sustaining a strong teacher performance and development culture within schools.

The changes in professional learning practices that this paper advocates are outlined in Figure 1. The actions of school leaders will determine the degree to which this change agenda is realized.

Figure 1: Shifting the balance in professional learning

Less of this	More of this
external workshops	workplace-based professional learning
reliance on experts	staff sharing experiences and expertise
separation of training from work	integration of teacher work and learning
professional learning as an isolated event	professional learning as a routine practice
individual pursuit of professional learning	group pursuit of professional learning

Shift the focus from the professionals to the profession

If schools do not have a vibrant professional learning culture, then it is inevitable that teachers will look beyond the school for professional growth opportunities.

Professional development (PD) has been described as the systematic and formal attempts to advance the knowledge, skills and understanding of teachers in ways that lead to changes in their thinking and classroom behaviour[iv]. That is, the purpose of teacher professional development is to improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that student learning in improved. However, despite the dozens of ways that teachers can improve their professional learning, one particular method - external programs delivered by experts - has emerged supreme and blinded teachers to other learning opportunities to such an extent that very often the words professional development are seen to be synonymous with this form of learning. That this has happened is not surprising as it this model that over the decades education systems and subject associations have usually adopted as the means for delivering professional development.

The downside of the external conference or seminar becoming the most common form of delivery of professional learning is that this model is generally ineffective in producing changed teacher behaviour[v]. That there is poor transference between training and changed classroom practice should not be a surprise to anyone as this model inevitably needs to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach even though the participants are teachers with diverse experience, needs, skills and understandings who are working in a wide range of teaching contexts. As they are dealing with a highly diverse group of participants with whom they are unfamiliar, external professional development providers are not in a position to know and respond to individual teachers' needs. Consequently, they are forced to design their program content on their assumptions about the common learning needs of potential program participants. In such a circumstance, inevitably many participants' needs will not be met.

External professional development providers are also not in a position to adopt the classic training model of tell, show, observe, correct and reinforce as they are dealing with a mass audience and this approach is not practical. In order to overcome the limitation of the externally provided program, presenters inevitably tend to focuses on the why and what to change and not on participants learning how to implement improvements within their own learning contexts. That is, the external delivery professional development model that is most ubiquitous provides participants with content that tends to focus on the description and investigation of new ideas, policies and programs. These programs generally support teachers to acquire new knowledge (and less often, new skills) and heighten their awareness that change or improvement is needed in school and teaching practices. Rarely does this model provide the kinds of professional learning required by teachers to enable them to implement and sustain improved teaching practices once they return to their school.

In order to improve the effectiveness of teachers' professional learning strategies need to be implemented to break this automatic linking of a professional development need with an externally provided training program solution. This change needs to occur because the automatic assumption that one's development needs are best met by a formal, external training activity severely limits teachers' perceptions of learning possibilities. This shifting of perceptions can be addressed by changing the language used when referring to teacher learning needs and opportunities and by making teachers more aware of the range of school-based development options available to them.

School leaders need to assist teachers to better appreciate that the best place for authentic teacher learning is usually the classroom and school. Indeed, it has been suggested[vi] that the optimal workplace is one in which 'learning arises from and feeds back into work experience, where learning is considered to be part of work'. Figure 2 contrasts elements of external and school-based professional learning opportunities and illustrates the potential that exists in schools to provide teachers with authentic learning opportunities.

Figure 2: Contrasting external and school-based professional learning opportunities

External provision of learning	School-based provision of learning
One size fits all regardless of context	Context sensitive and driven by identified local teacher learning requirements
Limited school participation possible	Whole school involvement possible
One-off event	Offers possibilities for continuous learning
Teachers are passive learners	Teachers are active learners.
Costly and disruptive	Structured as part of working life
Provider needs and capacity determines timing	School and teacher needs determine timing
Generic and macro skills targeted	Specific and micro skills targeted
One or two sources of advice	Multiple sources of advice and demonstration
Usually focuses on 'why' and 'what'	Extends from 'why' and 'what' to 'how'
Transference to changed behaviour low	Transference to changed behaviour high
Little opportunity for reflection on practice	Opportunity for continuous reflection on practice
Adds little to school culture	Emerges from and builds collegiality, trust, mutual concern, expertise, sense of efficacy

As the concept of 'professional learning' carries little baggage and helps to broaden thinking about teacher development it should replace professional development as the descriptor of teacher learning opportunities. Professional learning provides a better starting point for discussions about ways to improve teacher effectiveness as professional learning can occur in many ways that are often not thought of as professional development. The emphasis on learning rather than development also enables one to open up discussions as to how and when teacher learning takes place. The term also helps to situate the teacher/learner rather than the development program at the centre of the action.

Consequently, it is suggested that at the school level the PD coordinator becomes a Professional Learning coordinator; PD plans become Professional Learning plans, the PD budget be renamed as the Professional Learning budget, professional development opportunities become Professional Learning opportunities, and Learning Team or Faculty meetings become Professional Learning meetings.

Whilst this suggestion can provide the leadership team with a 'quick win', the symbolism of this change in terminology will not be lost on staff and the process of making such changes will alert staff to the new thinking that the leadership teams wants to engender about how one engages in and with professional learning.

However to dissuade staff from thinking that their professional learning needs are best met by attending an externally-provided conference or workshop, they need to be convinced that there alternative and better ways to develop their professional expertise within their school.

Strategies for building a vibrant professional learning culture within the school.

It has been suggested[vii] that 'the most significant contribution a principal can make to developing others is creating an appropriate context for adult learning. It is context — the programs, procedures, beliefs, expectations, and habits that constitute the norm for a given school — that plays the largest role in determining whether professional development efforts will have an impact on that school'. The term 'professional learning culture' provides a shorthand way to describe this desired context.

Whilst it is easy to assert that teacher facilitated and school-located professional learning focussed on classroom practice is most likely to improve classroom teaching[viii], opportunities of this kind are rarely experienced in most schools[ix]. Some evidence to support this statement is provided by a 2003 survey that revealed that of professional development activities experienced by teachers only 3-4% involved classroom demonstration and 2-4% involved peer observation and feedback. Indeed, it is likely that few teachers currently would agree that their school and colleagues present as the most effective sources for meeting their professional learning needs. Figure 6 suggests some reasons why this might be so.

Figure 6: Factors that impede school-based professional learning

Most teachers
- are reluctant to volunteer to train colleagues or demonstrate good practice
- are reluctant to ask colleagues for assistance or feedback
- do not see it as their role to contribute to the training/learning of other colleagues
- do not have the time to participate in or contribute to teacher facilitated training

Nevertheless, these factors are not insurmountable and provide an initial list of the areas that should be worked on to make schools optimal professional learning workplaces in which learning arises from and feeds back into daily experience and where professional learning is considered to be part of one's ongoing work.

A professional learning culture is most likely to develop when there is a high degree of leadership support for teacher learning and risk taking and when there is a high degree of staff interaction and co-dependence. Consequently strategies designed to produce these conditions need to be implemented. A few of the typical strategies adopted by schools to build collegiality, trust and cooperation between staff are listed in Figure 3. The first four strategies are designed to increase teacher dialogue about teaching and learning and encourage co-dependence. The latter 'softer' strategy, however, is equally important as teacher trust and risk-taking is more likely to be evident when individuals feel they have the friendship and loyalty of their colleagues as well as their professional respect.

Figure 3: Strategies for building staff interaction and cooperation

Team planning	working with colleagues to jointly plan a syllabus, a unit of work, a lesson or an activity within a lesson, homework tasks, extra-curricular activities, parent meetings, and so forth
Learning teams	teachers who agree to work together to explore teaching and learning issues and strategies and share teaching experiences
Teaching teams	teachers who take responsibility for teaching a common group of students (e.g. students in Year 6 or 9) and cooperate in the planning and delivery of lessons to the student group
Team teaching	teachers who occupy the same classroom space (usually occupied by a class formed by consolidating two or more 'regular' classes) and share in the running of the consolidated classroom
Mentoring	establishing a formal relationship whereby a highly competent and experienced teacher supports a less experienced and competent teacher though the offering of advice and feedback.
Social gatherings	any informal but planned activities that enable staff to relate within a social context – weekly social club, weekend retreats, staff dinners, staff sports teams, trivia nights, theatre nights, etc.

These strategies and other ones such as action research groups and professional reading and discussion groups are not as intrusive or threatening as the next layer of strategies leaders should introduce. This is because they are usually entered into at the discretion of teachers, are stimulating and enjoyable and are 'input' rather than outcome focussed.

A further layer of strategies that leadership teams are advised to introduce are outlined in Figure 4 below[x]. These strategies tend to be more confronting for staff than those outlined in Figure 3 as they are more likely to result in an examination of and feedback on one's actual classroom teaching effectiveness.

Figure 4: Strategies that contribute to a strong professional learning culture

Coaching:	the coach is responsible for participating in regular discussion sessions with the teacher and for suggesting strategies designed to improve their performance.
Teacher observation:	in-class observation of a specified element of teaching and the provision of feedback on the effectiveness of the teaching performance.
Teaching demonstration:	provision of a 'model' lesson with a prior discussion to clarify purpose, expectations and desired outcomes and a debriefing session to review the lesson and its outcomes.
Walk Throughs:	instructionally-focused Walk Throughs use observers who visit numerous classrooms for short periods of time to observe how a particular practice is being implemented and pool their individual observations to provide the leadership team with a report.

Lesson study:	this strategy originated in Japan and is a structured method of planning, teaching, reviewing and redesigning a lesson to make it as effective as possible.
Inter-school pairing	this interschool arrangement is constructed around one teacher working alongside a teacher in another school for a day a week for five weeks and then swapping the arrangement around for the next 5 weeks[xi].

Other strategies that are less confronting than those in Figure 4 but are worthy of leadership support include teacher-run training sessions (workshops or training sessions designed and delivered by teaching colleagues) and 'commissioned' instructional research (where a small group is given the responsibility for researching a specific teaching practice). A 'good ideas' program and a pedagogy audit are also good vehicles for stimulating discussion about teaching practice and ways to improve performance across the school.

A good ideas program gives staff the encouragement and licence to offer suggestions (good ideas) for improving staff and student performance. The program can be run over a week. The tasks of promoting the good ideas program and processing 'good ideas' generated through the program can be managed by a small group of teachers. The good ideas team issues staff with blank 'good ideas' cards, encourages staff participation, charts the number of good ideas received each day and at the end of the week organises the ideas into common categories and sorts them in terms of practicality (yes, no or maybe) and the likely benefits (low, moderate, high) that they would generate. The leadership team discusses and makes decisions about how to progress the implementation of the best ideas.

A pedagogy audit can take the form of teachers responding to a list of teaching and learning strategies and indicating how often they use particular strategies and when they are most effective, or it can be done building up a list of practices by asking teachers to complete the sentence "The teaching and learning strategies I use effectively in my classroom include …". The various lists can then be consolidated and converted into a pedagogy survey which can be administered to staff.

Audit results can be used to discover how wide-spread particular practices are being applied, who professes to being competent in a particular practice and when training in a particular practice might be warranted. That is, the audit can help to detect good practice and those teachers who are available to spread desired practices through strategies such as coaching, workshops, demonstration lessons and team teaching. Pedagogy audits could precede the strategy of asking the question about what three practices need to become ubiquitous in classrooms as it helps to surface those staff using evidence-based strategies and the gaps in practice that need to be addressed.

A further extension of this strategy is to post the results of the audit (a list of all staff and of all the strategies they profess to be using in their classrooms) in the staffroom and invite staff to seek out other staff who could demonstrate strategies that they could use to

extend their repertoire of teaching and learning methods. This list could become a key source for staff self-improvement and be continually updated as teachers support each other to acquire the competence to use new practices and as new evidence-based approaches are brought to the attention of staff.

Whilst initiating strategies that foster teacher collaboration is an essential leadership responsibility, this action alone may not be sufficient to generate the degree of change that needs to be achieved. There is a strong teacher culture that values independence and there could be other factors within the school that act as deterrents to 'deep' collaboration. The leadership team will also need implement a range of 'enabling' strategies that underpin the development of a strong professional culture. These strategies include:

- providing timetable arrangements that create blocks of time for teachers to work together
- redistributing time to shorten the school day on a weekly basis
- reallocating meeting time to professional learning time
- providing staff with insightful analyses of student and school data
- establishing a well-stocked professional reading and viewing library
- using funds set aside for external 'professional development' to release staff for school-located professional learning (e.g. classroom visits)
- building the expectation that collaborative teacher activities will produce artifacts (e.g., units of work, rubrics, reading lists, observation guides and protocols and assessment tools) that other teachers can use to improve teaching and learning
- requiring teaching teams and learning teams to set and review progress towards goals
- establishing a regular regime of staff-led professional learning events
- providing training to those staff who feel they need to improve their workshop presentation skills
- establishing a lesson demonstration area (e.g. a modified classroom with an adjacent viewing room)
- establishing a workshop presentation area
- establishing small group meeting rooms
- engaging demonstration teachers
- including in leading teachers' role descriptions the responsibility for assisting other staff to improve their teaching competence.

Ideally the professional learning culture of the school would be such that teachers would be committed to continually:

- acquiring new knowledge and skills (learning what and how to improve their teaching)
- implementing new practice (applying new knowledge and skills in the classroom)
- refining new practice through self reflection and feedback (improving implementation)
- sharing new practice through demonstrations, workshops and presentations (teaching others what and how to improve their teaching)

- assisting others to implement improvements through team planning and teaching, coaching and mentoring (spreading the implementation of new knowledge and skills in the classroom)
- refining other's practice through observation and feedback (improving the implementation of others).

Indeed, it has been suggested[xii] that 'in the right school context even flawed professional development activities (such as the much-maligned single-session workshop) can serve as a catalyst for professional growth. Conversely, in the wrong school context, even programs with solid content and powerful training strategies are unlikely to be effective'.

Strategies for improving the link between professional learning activities and improved classroom teaching.

Whilst the above discussion has been about establishing a professional learning culture within a school, this section offers strategies for gaining benefit from teachers attending an external training session and for ensuring that teacher participation in professional learning planning translates into improved classroom practice. As was suggested previously, flawed professional development activities such as a one-off external workshop or conference session can serve as a catalyst for professional growth in the right context.

A school with a strong professional learning culture (teams working cooperatively and extensive discussion and sharing of practice) can provide such a context as there is the expectation that knowledge and skills acquired (through attending an external training activity or network meeting or visiting another school) will be discussed and, if deemed as relevant, shared. However, there is no guarantee that this will happen and it is less likely to when only one or two staff are involved in the external activity and their participation in the activity arose from personal interest rather than in response to a commission from colleagues to investigate an issue of concern to the group.

When only one or two teachers from a school have been engaged in an external professional learning event their capacity to influence other teachers to adopt new practices will be extremely limited, regardless of the value of the event. This is less likely to be the case when a team of teachers attend the event and when there are established processes back at the school to ensure that the knowledge and skills they acquired are used to progress ongoing improvement activities.

The take away message here is that external 'professional development' programs contribute best to school effectiveness when:
- group activities are supported in preference to individual activities
- professional development resources are targeted at supporting college improvement priorities, rather than an individual's priorities

- processes have been established within the school to incorporate the learning derived from the training program into school-wide discussions and ongoing reform strategies and plans.

Consequently, a school's overall 'professional development' plan might be more effective in bringing about change if it was based upon a few key events involving many participants, if these key events had relevance for the various stages of planned change and if in the interim between events participants were required to adopt and reflect upon particular practices that were explored in the events. It might also be more effective if staff were proactive in determining the professional learning experiences that are most essential for the school and if potential presenters were required to develop their programs in line with the school's requirements.

A further avenue for improving the link between a professional learning activity and changed behaviour in the classroom involves a review of the processes used to develop and document teachers' professional learning plans[xiii].

The typical process adopted when determining the contents of a teacher's individual development plan is to ask the teacher to nominate a development need. Whilst this may be done in the context of a 'formal' appraisal or performance review session, the actual identification of need is more a consequence of a personal decision than a decision by an informed other, and is usually informed by subjective rather than objective factors. However, the subjectivity of the process for identifying one's development need is not the main concern here. The real issue is that this process, however it is managed, tends to generate a generic rather than a specific development need and places the focus on identifying what learning is needed or desirable rather than on what improvement in teaching behaviour should being pursued.

In order to improve the linkage between professional learning activities it is suggested that school leaders need to:
- initiate the planning discussion by asking 'What specific behaviour change or improvement actions do you want or need to initiate in your classroom (or the school)?'
- ensure that the proposed classroom improvement is consistent with the values and practices of the school and contributes to meeting school improvement priorities
- convert the desired changed behaviour or improvement actions into one or more professional learning targets to be achieved by the teacher (e.g. Target 1: To have all my students participating in effective peer and self assessments.)
- continue with the question 'What specific assistance do you require to implement the desired change?' (e.g. I need to know what models of self assessment work best and how to make my students confident and competent to conduct per and self assessments)
- assist teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the specific nature of the learning that is needed to help them to realise their improvement intentions by asking 'Is your need primarily for knowledge, skill development or attitude

change?" (e.g. Knowledge of peer and self assessment models and skill to introduce preferred models)

- assist teachers to better match their learning need with a learning activity that is strategic and practical (e.g. Knowledge can be acquired by reading and being told, skills can be acquired by observing, practicing and feedback)
- assist teachers to plan to progress their learning in small 'doable' bits and to move from knowing about effective teaching techniques to acquiring, applying and refining these techniques
- encourage staff to select short-term and mid-term professional learning options
- make all teachers' professional learning targets public (e.g. by displaying them in the staffroom)
- build the expectation that teachers with similar professional learning targets will work together to develop and share their knowledge and skills
- build the expectation that teachers will give timely reports on their professional learning progress
- build the expectation that teachers will review and revise their professional learning plans every semester
- require teachers to provide evidence of the achievement of their professional learning targets when conducting teacher performance reviews.

These suggestions are a way to change the habits of those teachers who too frequently attend conferences or workshops that produce marginal benefit in terms of improved teaching practice[xiv] and those who have grand professional learning plans but never get around to implementing them. They also help to change the view that it is the participation in the learning activity that is the key purpose, a purpose that is achieved when an appropriate learning program is attended (i.e. the activity is the 'means' and participation is the 'end').

Under the model suggested above, participation in a development activity is merely a means to an end, the end being to meet the target of improved classroom performance that the teacher has set. Thus, when reviewing a teacher's performance the question to be asked about professional learning is not whether the teacher participated in professional development but whether she met her target to improve one or more specific aspects of her teaching and the impact that this has had on student learning outcomes. The model also makes achievement of one's professional learning targets more likely as professional learning plans contain a series of small steps that can be implemented fairly readily and that cumulatively contribute to building the knowledge and skills needed to meet one's improvement target.

The proposal that professional learning plans stop being 'secret teachers' business' and made public (e.g. by posting each staff member's professional learning targets in the staffroom) also seeks to establish a culture that is open to sharing and that encourages groups of teachers to assist each other with learning and trying out new teaching approaches within their classrooms. As all staff can scan the list of teachers and their professional learning targets, this strategy also enables 'spontaneous' support to be offered from other staff who have relevant experience or tools that could assist a

colleague achieve their targets. It is considered that the various elements in the model described above will contribute to building a strong professional learning culture in the school and provide the means for enmeshing professional learning actions with improved teacher effectiveness and improved student outcomes.

Conclusion

Research[xv] suggests that creating a collaborative culture 'is "the single most important factor" for successful school improvement initiatives, "the first order of business" for those seeking to enhance their schools' effectiveness, an essential requirement of improving schools, the critical element in reform efforts, and the most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement'.

The basic premise of this paper is that typical models of professional development generally do little to improve the quality of teaching in schools and that for professional learning to be really effective in promoting improved teaching and learning leadership teams must initiate a range of actions to build a strong collaborative culture within their schools. It has suggested a range of strategies designed to shift the focus for professional learning from the external expert to the school and its teachers. It has also proposed a model of professional development planning that challenges many of the processes that currently underpin the development of teachers' professional learning plans.   In combination, the strategies suggested in this paper are designed to produce an environment in which professional learning:

• can be managed by individuals and groups in their own time
• can be initiated quickly as part of a teacher's changed work routines
• builds collegiality and promotes a shared commitment to improving teaching and learning
• is cost-effective and delivers value for money or time expended
• is focused on improving student learning outcomes.

Building staff's collective capacity to improve student learning outcomes may not be easy, but it should be the key objective of the leadership team. To achieve this objective the leadership team needs to be monitoring and responding to factors within the school that might be impeding teachers' commitment to professional learning and to establish the school as a professional learning community built around a shared mission, vision, values and goals; collaborative teams; extensive teacher dialogue; high expectations and a commitment to continuous improvement.

The ideas and strategies in this paper (summarised in Appendix 1) are offered as a contribution to this endeavour.

Appendix 1. A summary of the key suggestions offered in this paper.

Whilst the list below of forty suggested actions for building a professional learning community may appear pretty daunting, there are many schools that would be able to demonstrate a commitment to the majority of these suggestions. Clearly actions like team planning, mentoring (although it is usually confined to mentoring beginning teachers) and the establishment of learning teams are becoming relatively commonplace. Less common are actions like watching and giving feedback on a colleague's teaching, inter-school classroom sharing, sharing professional learning plans, working in teams to achieve professional learning targets, school walk throughs, undertaking a lesson study and engaging demonstration teachers (as opposed to workshop presenters).

It is hoped that the list assists school leaders to identify one or two initiatives that they could implement to extend the range of strategies they have already put in place to promote teacher collaboration and build a professional learning community within their schools.

1. Replace the term 'professional development' with the term 'professional learning'.
2. Foster team planning.
3. Implement learning teams.
4. Implement teaching teams.
5. Foster team teaching.
6. Implement mentoring.
7. Foster social gatherings.
8. Foster action research groups.
9. Foster professional reading groups.
10. Foster instructionally-focused discussion groups.
11. Implement teacher coaching.
12. Implement teacher classroom observation.
13. Implement teaching demonstrations.
14. Implement instructionally-focused walk throughs.
15. Foster lesson study.
16. Foster interschool 'pedagogical pairings'
17. Foster teacher-run training sessions.
18. Implement 'commissioned' instructional research.
19. Administer pedagogy audits.
20. Establish a 'good ideas' program.
21. Create blocks of time for teachers to work together.
22. Redistribute time to shorten the school day on a weekly basis.
23. Reallocate meeting time to professional learning time.
24. Provide staff with insightful analyses of student and school data.
25. Establish a well-stocked professional reading and viewing library.
26. Use funds set aside for external 'professional development' to release staff for school-located professional learning (e.g. classroom visits).

27. Build the expectation that collaborative teacher activities will produce artifacts (e.g., units of work, rubrics, reading lists, observation guides and protocols and assessment tools) that other teachers can use to improve teaching and learning.
28. Require teaching teams and learning teams to set and review progress towards goals.
29. Establish a regular regime of staff-led professional learning events.
30. Provide training to those staff who feel they need to improve their workshop presentation skills.
31. Establish a lesson demonstration area (e.g. a modified classroom with an adjacent viewing room).
32. Establish a workshop presentation area.
33. Establish small group meeting rooms.
34. Engage demonstration teachers.
35. Including in leading teachers' role descriptions the responsibility for assisting other staff to improve their teaching competence, for promoting collaborative activity and for contributing towards and enriching the professional learning culture of the school.
36. Base the school's overall 'professional development' plan on a few key events involving many participants.
37. Improve the processes used to develop and document teachers' professional learning.
38. Make all teachers' professional learning targets public.
39. Create the expectation that teachers with similar professional learning targets will work together.
40. Create the expectation that teachers will review and revise their professional learning plans every semester.

References and endnotes

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ii Fullan, M. (2003) *Change forces with a vengeance*, RoutledgeFarmer, London, p. 92.

iii Cole, P. (December 2004) *Professional development: A great way to avoid change*, IARTV Seminar Series No. 140, IARTV Melbourne.

iv Fenstermacher, G. and Berliner, D. (1983) *A conceptual framework for the analysis of staff development*, Santa Monica, California: Rand.

v The poor transition from external courses to the classroom is discussed in Bredeson, P. and Scribner, J. (2000) A statewide professional development conference: useful strategy for learning or inefficient use of resources, *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, February 21, vol. 8, no. 13.

vi Hawley, W. and Valli, L. (2000) *Learner-centred Professional Development*, Research Bulletin No. 27 Phi Delta Kappa Centre for Evaluation, Development and Research.

vii DuFour, R. (2001) In the right context, *Journal of Staff Development*, Vol. 22, No. 1.

viii It is acknowledged that a teacher in a very small school is more likely to benefit from external input and participation in networks as their teaching environment is unlikely to provide adequate opportunities for meeting their professional learning needs.

ix Owen, S. (2003) School-based professional development – building morale, professionalism and productive teacher learning practices, *Journal of Education Enquiry*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 102-128.

x More details about classroom observation and lesson study techniques are provided in the appendices of my earlier IARTV paper (Cole 2004).

xi Although this 'pedagogical pairing' model would be particularly valuable for teachers in small schools and appears best suited to generalist teachers in the primary school, the potential for all teachers to gain new learning from working in tandem in their own and their partner's school for ten days seems quite substantial.

xii DuFour, R. (1998). Why look elsewhere: Improving schools from within. *The School Administrator*, Vol. 2, No. 55, pp. 24-28.

xiii This is an issue that is explored in some detail in my earlier IARTV paper – (Cole 2004, pp.12-16)

xiv The discussion here is about improving 'generic' teaching skills and whilst this cannot be done without a teacher teaching something (i.e. content), if one's purpose was to improve the teaching of content knowledge, then the professional learning would need to encompass content knowledge and engage the participant in observing and using content teaching skills.

xv Quoted in DuFour, R. (2001) In the right context, *Journal of Staff Development*, Vol. 22, No. 1, p.15.