



Effective Professional Development

Based on decades of research, there is a consensus about what makes professional development most effective. That is, what kinds of learning experiences have the greatest impact on teachers’ knowledge, practice, and ultimately student learning. In 2009, the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) issued a report (Wei et al) summarizing this research. The chart below includes major findings from the NSDC report with notes about Keys to Literacy alignment to these findings.

<i>NSDC Findings</i>	<i>KTL Alignment</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PD Must Be Sustained and Intense</u></p> <p>Intensive PD sustained over a period of time is more effective than intermittent workshops with no follow-up mechanisms. This includes a substantial number of contact hours spread out over multiple months. (p. 7-8)</p>	<p>KTL develops long-term, annual PD plans that include follow-up PD for teachers delivered by KTL Trainers AND building-based coaches.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>School-Based Coaching</u></p> <p>Coaches are used to tighten the connection between formal training and teachers’ application of instructional practices in their classrooms. Coaching models recognize that if PD is to take root in teachers’ practice, on-going and specific follow-up is necessary to help teachers incorporate new knowledge and skills into classroom practice both in the short and long term. Successful coaching should be offered by accomplished peers and should include ongoing classroom modeling, supportive critiques of practice, and specific observations. (p. 14)</p>	<p>Building coaches are an essential component of KTL professional development.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Make it School-Wide</u></p> <p>PD is more effective when it is a coherent part of school reform plans rather than “one-shot” workshops. (p.5) When whole grade levels, schools or departments are involved, they provide a broader base of understanding and support. Teachers create a critical mass for improved instruction and serve as support groups for each other’s improved practice. (p. 6)</p>	<p>KTL PD is delivered to building-based teams and emphasizes use of consistent instructional practices and terminology as students move from grade to grade and subject to subject.</p> <p>KTL PD is typically adopted to address school and district-wide literacy goals.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Focus on Instructional Content</u></p> <p>PD is most useful when it focuses on concrete tasks of</p>	<p>KTL PD focuses on evidence-based instructional practices for improving literacy skills that are embedded in content-specific</p>

<p>teaching rather than abstract discussions of teaching. PD affects teacher practice when it focuses on enhancing teachers' knowledge of how to engage in specific instructional methods and how to teach specific kinds of content to students. It should also focus on student learning – providing an understanding of the skills that students will be expected to demonstrate. (p. 3)</p>	<p>instruction.</p> <p>KTL PD is designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and teaching practice in order to increase student literacy achievement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Make the Training Active</u></p> <p>Opportunities for active learning are important, including modeling the sought after practices and constructing opportunities for teachers to practice and reflect on the new strategies. (p. 6)</p>	<p>KTL PD is hands-on and incorporates modeling by KTL Trainers and building coaches. Teachers receive guided practice for how to develop instructional lessons and student activities.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Provide Opportunities for Collaboration</u></p> <p>Effective PD highlights the importance of teacher collaboration and communities of practice in schools that focus on teachers' own practices. Collective work in trusting environments provides a basis for inquiry and reflection into teachers' own practice, allowing teachers to take risks, solve problems, and attend to dilemmas in their practice. (p. 6) Teachers learn best by working with their colleagues in professional learning communities, engaging in continuous dialog and examination of their practice and student performance to develop and enact more effective instructional practices. (p. 9)</p>	<p>KTL initial and follow-up PD is designed to be highly collaborative. Teachers work with KTL Trainers and building coaches in small-collaborative groups.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Provide Opportunities for Peer Observation</u></p> <p>Teachers' instruction becomes more student-centered and focused on ensuring that students gain mastery of skills or the subject when they participate in peer observations. Teachers also have more opportunities to learn and a greater desire to continuously develop more effective practices. Videotapes of teaching can be used as an alternative to observation as a way to make aspects of teacher practice public and open to peer critique, learn new practices, and analyze aspects of teaching practice. (p. 12-13)</p>	<p>KTL offers classroom observation and delivery of model lessons by KTL Trainers. KTL also trains building coaches how to conduct peer observations.</p> <p>KTL uses classroom videos of model lessons as part of our PD.</p>

Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, L., Andree, A., Richardson, N., Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. Dallas, TX. National Staff Development Council.