

# Newfoundland and Labrador Professional Development Alliance

A Proposed Model for Professional  
Development



# Professional Development: A Definition

Professional development is the continual renewal of personal knowledge and expertise that leads to improved professional competence in support of student learning.

Professional development engages individuals and groups in a broad range of activities, including teacher preparation, in-service, individual development, program implementation, staff development, and organizational development.



# Teacher-Centered Professional Development



# Teacher at the Center

- Effective professional development requires a balanced approach in which choices are available and encouraged in relation to identified individual and organizational needs.

*Atlantic Canada Departments of Education  
and Teacher Organizations (2000)*



# Teacher at the Center

- Professional development activities must respond to needs that have been identified by educators and are intended to have an impact on student learning.
- Professional development should be driven in a significant way by individual professional growth plans.

*Professional Development Advisory  
Committee (1998)*



# Teacher at the Center

Teacher development is considered especially productive when teachers are in charge of the agenda and determine the focus and nature of the programming offered. In the name of professional autonomy, many argue that teachers should determine the shape and course of their own development (*Ball, 1996, p. 502*).



# Teacher at the Center

Teachers do make a difference. They do know their situations. They are not mere screens who translate others' intentions and ideologies into practice. Teachers' knowledge is an essential component in improving educational practice. Those concerned with improving education need to be concerned not only with what it is they wish to happen in learning but also with teachers' knowledge and the professional knowledge landscapes in which teachers work.

*(Connelly, Clandinin & He, 1997).*



**Educators**





# Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- The need for lifelong learning is shifting the emphasis from a dependence on the “what” of learning to the “how” of learning. (*Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Learning to Learn, 1991*)
- The continual renewal of knowledge and expertise, through a variety of experiences, is central to the concept of professionalism. (*Atlantic Canada Departments of Education and Teacher Organizations, 2000*)



# Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- Adult lives change rapidly, and the longevity of human beings pushes steadily upward . . . Lifelong learning is becoming a necessity, not just a mellifluous phrase. (*Howard Gardner, 1999*).
- We are witnessing an educational refocusing away from teaching unrelated, fragmented, short-term content toward broader, enduring, more essential life-span learnings. (*Costa and Kallick, 2000*).



# Teacher at the Center: Lifelong Learning

- Every organization has to become a learning institution (and) a teaching institution. Organizations that build in continuous learning in jobs will dominate the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (*Drucker, 1992*)
- The most successful corporation of the future will be a learning organization. (*Senge, 1990*).



# Professional Development Linked to Student Learning



# Student Learning

- Professional development benefits educators and supports student learning. (*Atlantic Canada Departments of Education and Teacher Organizations, 2000*)
- Professional development activities must respond to needs that have been identified by educators and are intended to have an impact on student learning. (*Professional Development Advisory Committee, 1998*)



# Student Learning

- There is growing evidence of the link between professional development and improvement in student learning (Fullan, 1993, 1995; Guskey, 1995).
- If new practices are to become institutionalized, then teachers must be convinced that these practices contribute to making a difference in student learning. (Guskey, 1995).







# Professional Development in Context



# The Context of PD

- The continual renewal of knowledge and expertise, through a variety of experiences, is central to the concept of professionalism.
- Effective professional development requires a balanced approach in which choices are available and encouraged in relation to identified individual and organizational needs.
- Professional development initiatives have the greatest impact when supported by strong leadership and collaboration.
- Change in society and schools is inevitable and should be viewed as an opportunity for growth.



# The Context of PD

- Professional development, to be effective, must be embedded in teacher work and teacher knowledge and is school based. (Abdal-Haqq, 1995).
- “The contexts in which teachers work affects what they do.” (Ball, 1996, p. 501-502)







# Access to Diverse Professional Development Opportunities



# PD Delivery

- There is a need to establish cooperatively how to best identify teacher professional development needs and to deliver programs effectively and efficiently to meet these needs.
- Professional Development should be accessible, affordable, sustainable, and relevant.

*(Professional Development Advisory Committee, 1998)*



# PD Delivery: Diverse Approaches

- A multiple intelligences approach can be drawn upon ... to present ideas that are consequential. This approach can be of use to anyone seeking to master any significant topic ... including someone who has not been inside a classroom for decades.

*(Howard Gardner, 1999)*





# PD Delivery: Collaboration

- Cooperative humans realize that all of us together are more powerful, intellectually or physically, than any one individual. Probably the foremost disposition in the postindustrial society is the heightened ability to think in concert with others, to find ourselves increasingly more interdependent and sensitive to the needs of others. Problem solving has become so complex that no one person can go it alone. *(Costa and Kallick, 2000).*



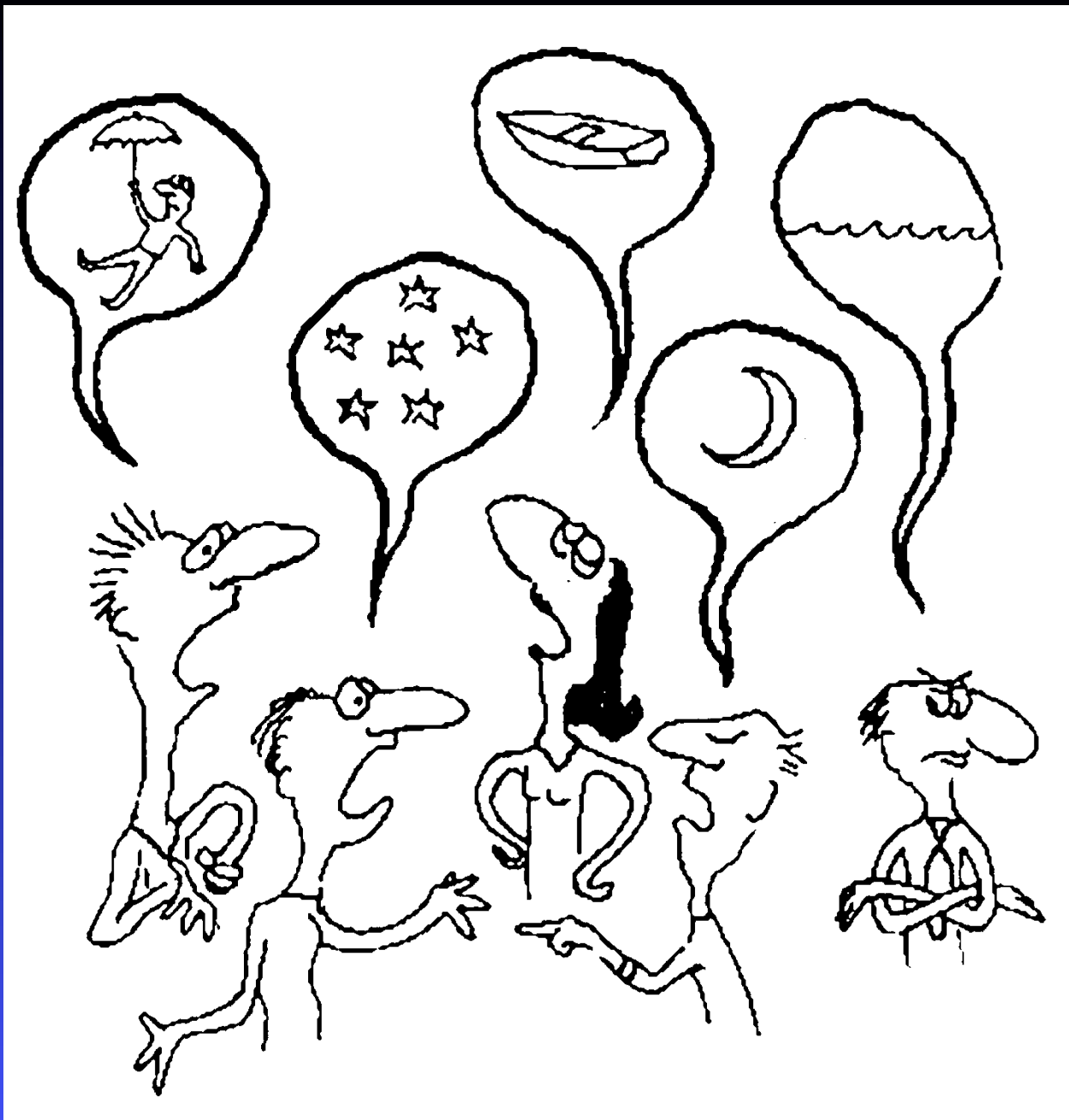
# PD Delivery: Some Key Elements

- Choice
- Balance of Individual and Organizational needs
- Collaboration
- Diversity of Approaches
- Role of technology
- System of incentives and rewards












# Professional Development Alliance and Change



**Educators** refer primarily to teachers but also include professional personnel at school districts, the Department of Education, Memorial University and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association



**Educators**

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**Learners** refer to both educators and students, all of whom are engaged in lifelong learning and who continually learn from one another in a variety of ways.



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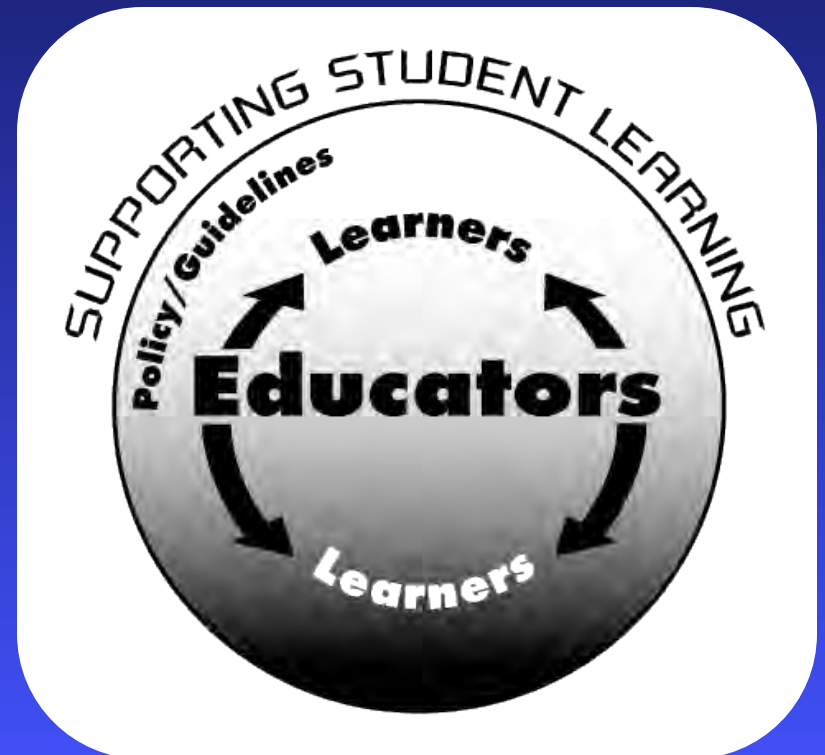
**Supporting Student Learning: All professional development is focused on enhancing student learning.**



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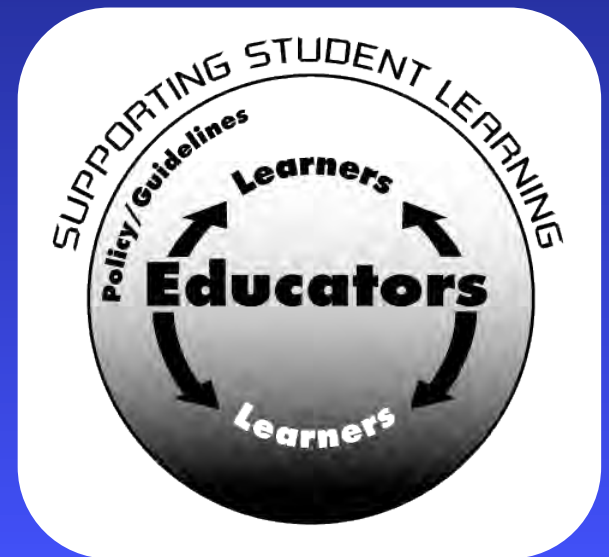


**Policy/Guidelines** includes definitions, beliefs and best practices that impact on professional development in the province. Policies and guidelines also refer to frameworks and procedures for recognizing participation in professional development.



## Policy/Guidelines

Each educator determines his or her PD needs in the context of policy/guidelines and other inputs. Inputs, both internal and external, refer to those forces that drive the need for professional development activities, including new curricula, the findings of research into aspects of teaching and learning, policies and regulations, strategic plans, social and economic conditions and individual professional growth plans.



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Needs Analysis refers to such activities as setting annual agendas, monitoring the impact of professional development initiatives, and highlighting particular areas of need, both organizational and individual.



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# Professional Development Delivery: Providers

Providers include the individuals, groups, and mechanisms through whom or which professional development activities are undertaken. Providers can be internal or external to the province or the education system. Within the provincial education system, PD providers include teachers, program specialists/consultants/officers (District, Department of Education, NLTA), special interest councils of NLTA, Memorial University, the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI), the NLTA Virtual Teacher Centre (VTC).



# Professional Development Delivery: Forms of PD

Forms of PD include the various ways professional development can be organized and delivered, including institutes, workshops, learning teams and individualized learning. These forms of PD may be undertaken face-to-face, through mediating technologies (eg web-based), private study, or combinations of various types.

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# Professional Development Alliance

Includes School Districts, the Department of Education, Memorial University, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.



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