

INSTRUCTIONALModule

Teacher Supervision & Development

THE GEORGE LUCAS
EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION
www.glef.org

INTRODUCTION

Why invest time, energy, and resources in teacher development? Don't we all, as school leaders, manage to encourage teachers somehow to continue their own development? Do we really need a program or plan?

As a school leader, isn't it reasonable to assume that these teachers arrive ready to teach, equipped with degrees and certification, and perhaps even years of experience?

Don't teachers arrive prepared to be teachers? Haven't states initiated comprehensive assessment and accountability programs for teacher training programs?

These latter questions may be easier to answer than the former. Yes, teachers do arrive prepared to be teachers, and yes, states have invested heavily in examinations of teacher training programs. Yes, as a school leader, it is reasonable to assume these teachers are ready to teach. But, it is these very questions and their answers that make the first question, **"Why invest time, energy, and resources in teacher development?,"** the most difficult and yet the most important.

Even with these changes and the arrival in education of the most sophisticated and best-educated teachers in history, most school leaders agree that they are still going to need to invest time, energy, and resources towards professional development.

This module will help school leaders organize their thoughts, experiences, and resources to answer these questions for their own schools. Included are materials to assist school leaders in their own efforts to establish and sustain an environment that supports teacher development and the professional growth of teachers. In today's context, many school leaders find that their faculty includes a large number of beginning teachers and those who have come to teaching from alternative routes. These groups of teachers make the role of the principal as instructional leader especially important. Experienced teachers must also keep abreast of new policies, curriculum, brain-based research, technology, etc.

Other variables such as reduced funding for staff development and conferences means that, within the school environment, professional growth must become a focus. This last variable also impacts the experienced teachers in a school. Finding ways for schools and teachers to generate opportunities for continued learning becomes a challenge for today's school leaders.

Teacher development is a common theme in any school leadership training program, so the traditional textbooks will provide a foundation. What this module offers are examples of how to build on that foundation in a variety of settings, illustrated by master school leaders. These "professors of practice" are meeting the challenges of teacher development and supervision each day in their schools. Another important aspect of this module is linking the theoretical foundation from textbooks to the realities of the classroom. The application activities provide opportunities to practice the translation from theory to practice, so school leaders can answer the questions, **"Why?" "Why invest time, energy, and resources in teacher development and supervision?"** and **"Do we need a program or plan?"**