

# Sustaining Change *with* Capacity-Building Professional Development

## What Is Capacity-Building Professional Development?

The best adult learning allows participants to deeply explore relevant topics. Great professional development should be a combination of bringing in education experts to facilitate learning and empowering local educators to discover and implement leadership solutions. What if each school, district, or state built human capital strategies by taking advantage of local capacity? Capacity-building professional development instills meaningful, ongoing learning in local professional communities.

### Why is capacity building the best professional development solution?

Conferences, workshops, books, online resources, and periodicals can dramatically change individual practices and launch discussions among colleagues. Yet sustained, job-embedded professional development translates into real change. Only through continuous discussion, collaboration on instructional goals, and strategic, supported implementation can school improvement affect student growth. By tailoring the highest quality programs, products, and services to best fit your professional community, ASCD is world-renowned for providing the customized professional development to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

### Grounded in research

The link between educator effectiveness and student learning is undeniable. Research shows that for teachers and leaders to be highly effective and sustain best practices, an environment of differentiated professional learning, risk taking, and collaborative relationships must be in place.

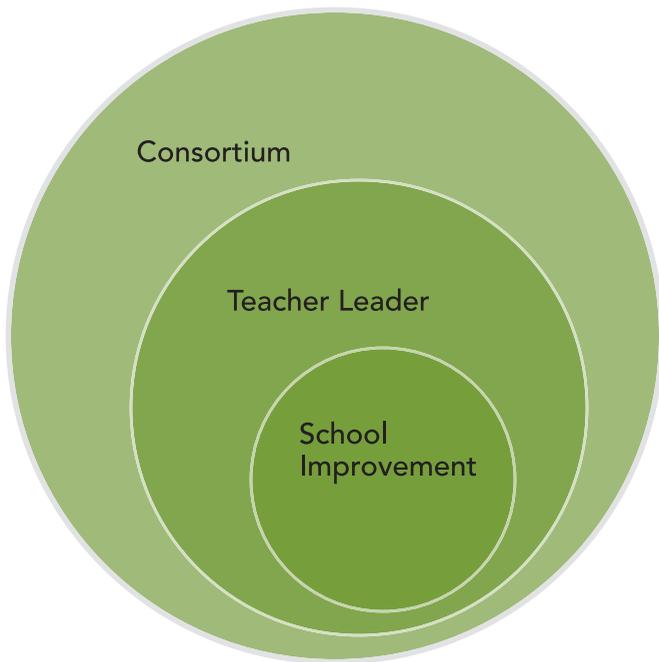
- *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession* (NSDC, 2009) affirms the value of growth opportunities that are “sustained, focused on important content, and embedded in the work of collaborative professional learning teams” to improve student learning.

- *Teaching Teachers: Professional Development to Improve Student Achievement* (AERA, 2005) discusses how professional learning communities and extended time for professional development leads to teaching that improves student achievement.
- In “Teacher Learning: What Matters?,” a February 2009 *Educational Leadership* article, Linda Darling-Hammond and Nikole Richardson review recent research and find that “teaching practices and student learning are more likely to be transformed by professional development that is sustained, coherent, and intense.”

### Essential to teacher effectiveness

For most of the last decade, the No Child Left Behind Act specified that all students should have highly qualified teachers: teachers who meet the most basic qualifications to enter the classroom. However, President Barack Obama and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan are committed to supporting highly effective teachers who elicit growth in student achievement and receive comprehensive support at all stages of their careers—from preparation and induction to ongoing professional development. Yet each state and each district has unique needs for professional development. ASCD’s capacity building provides the necessary leadership at local levels.

Learn more at [www.ascd.org/towardeffectiveteaching](http://www.ascd.org/towardeffectiveteaching).



### What are the models?

Capacity-building professional development promotes the structures, processes, and policies necessary for productive professional growth. ASCD offers three different models of capacity-building professional development.

**Consortium Model:** A consortium is a group of districts or schools interested in working together to build local capacity. ASCD Faculty members guide teams—which include district- or state-level administrators, school-based administrators, and teacher leaders—as they build their expertise in specific instructional and leadership practices as well as effective professional development practices.

**Teacher Leader Model:** The teacher leader model builds capacity within a school or district. Teacher leader teams work with ASCD Faculty members to become experts in specific instructional and leadership frameworks and practices through on-site workshops, follow-up coaching, modeling, and feedback. Educators learn how to plan, lead, implement, and evaluate effective professional development. In addition, leaders such as school-based administrators or instructional coaches focus on their role in supporting schoolwide implementation.

**School Improvement Coach Model:** The school improvement coach model is designed to build capacity at an individual school. ASCD Faculty members work with the leadership at individual schools on an integrated school improvement framework based on the results of a needs assessment and aligned with student achievement data.

### Where has it worked?

*“The key [to school improvement] is exemplary teaching and learning along with stellar professional development that challenges, supports, and inspires teachers to change instructional practices [to] improve student learning. ASCD Faculty have an exceptional ability to do all three in concert.”*

—Lynda Wood, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, Southfield Public Schools, Michigan

**For more resources and information on capacity-building professional development, visit ASCD at [www.ascd.org/oscb](http://www.ascd.org/oscb).**

