

## COURSE-2.4.1- M.ED – 4<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER

In education, the term **professional development** may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness. When the term is used in education contexts without qualification, specific examples, or additional explanation, however, it may be difficult to determine precisely what “professional development” is referring to.

In practice, professional development for educators encompasses an extremely broad range of topics and formats. For example, professional-development experiences may be funded by district, school, or state budgets and programs, or they may be supported by a foundation grant or other private funding source. They may range from a one-day conference to a two-week workshop to a multiyear advanced-degree program. They may be delivered in person or online, during the school day or outside of normal school hours, and through one-on-one interactions or in group situations. And they may be led and facilitated by educators within a school or provided by outside consultants or organizations hired by a school or district. And, of course, the list of possible formats could go on.

The following are a representative selection of common professional-development topics and objectives for educators:

- Furthering education and knowledge in a teacher’s subject area—e.g., learning new scientific theories, expanding knowledge of different historical periods, or learning how to teach subject-area content and concepts more effectively.
- Training or mentoring in specialized teaching techniques that can be used in many different subject areas, such as **differentiation** (varying teaching techniques based on student learning needs and interests) or literacy strategies (techniques for improving reading and writing skills), for example.

- Earning certification in a particular educational approach or program, usually from a university or other credentialing organization, such as teaching Advanced Placement courses or career and technical programs that culminate in students earning an industry-specific certification.
- Developing technical, quantitative, and analytical skills that can be used to analyze student-performance data, and then use the findings to make modifications to academic programs and teaching techniques.
- Learning new technological skills, such as how to use interactive whiteboards or course-management systems in ways that can improve teaching effectiveness and student performance.
- Improving fundamental teaching techniques, such as how to **manage a classroom** effectively or frame questions in ways that elicit deeper thinking and more substantive answers from students.
- Working with colleagues, such as in **professional learning communities**, to develop teaching skills collaboratively or create new interdisciplinary courses that are taught by teams of two or more teachers.
- Developing specialized skills to better teach and **support** certain populations of students, such as students with learning disabilities or students who are not proficient in English.
- Acquiring leadership skills, such as skills that can be used to develop and coordinate a school-improvement initiative or a community-volunteer program. For related discussions, see **leadership team** and **shared leadership**.
- Pairing new and beginning teachers with more experienced “mentor teachers” or “instructional coaches” who model effective teaching strategies, expose less-experienced teachers to new ideas and skills, and provide constructive feedback and professional guidance.
- Conducting **action research** to gain a better understanding of what’s working or not working in a school’s academic program, and then using the findings to improve educational quality and results.
- Earning additional formal certifications, such as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification, which requires educators to

spend a considerable amount of time recording, analyzing, and reflecting on their teaching practice (many states provide incentives for teachers to obtain National Board Certification).

- Attending graduate school to earn an advanced degree, such as a master's degree or doctorate in education, educational leadership, or a specialized field of education such as literacy or technology.