Chapter 1
A Multimedia Professional Development Process for Teacher Education and Professional Development

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ABSTRACT

In this updated chapter, the authors introduce a multimedia professional development process that can be used to support teacher candidates or inservice teachers' needs. The multimedia process has three key components: 1) teachers learn new evidence-based practices using multimedia vignettes including modeling videos; 2) teachers receive customizable curriculum materials to use during daily instruction; and 3) teachers receive data-driven coaching and personalized supports for making needed improvements or enhancements. The chapter details research backing each component of the process and includes resources for implementation.

BACKGROUND

Even the best teacher education programs lack the time or ability to foresee and prepare special and general education teachers for every possible scenario they may encounter in the classroom (Grossman & McDonald, 2008). For example, special education teachers need to be prepared for a broad range of positions because, in many states, they can be hired to teach students with any disability, in any subject area, at any grade level. These educators must also develop skills for teaching content in self-contained and inclusive settings (Brownell, Sindelar, Kiely, & Danielson, 2010). As such, they must be prepared to meet the needs of students across settings and be well-versed in a variety of evidence-based practices.

Similarly, general education teachers can be placed in a variety of positions and settings where they must develop a deep understanding of curriculum and acquire skills in behavior management, classroom organization, and using effective teaching strategies (Darling-Hammond, 2008; 2012). Additionally, the majority of students with disabilities receive 80% or more of their education primarily in a general education setting (Aud et al., 2012; National Center for Education Statistics, 2018), so these teachers also need to learn about evidence-based practices for teaching students with disabilities. This means faculty and other instructors within teacher preparation programs, and leaders of professional development efforts must give explicit thought and action to how they will create meaningful learning experiences to prepare teachers for the challenges associated with teaching students with disabilities.

Numerous empirical research studies suggest that professional development (PD) often fails to help teachers improve to the extent where student achievement is positively influenced (Harris & Sass, 2011; Hill, Beisiegel, & Jacob, 2013). That said, a research-backed recommendation is for teachers to receive more than 14 hours of PD to support improvement in both teacher practice and student learning (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). The content of PD efforts should also be closely linked to teachers' practice, with the intent of making new pedagogies and other instructional approaches relevant and "easy" for teachers to incorporate (Desimone, 2009).

In this chapter we expand upon the previous edition of this volume (see Rodgers, Kennedy, Alves, & Romig, 2016) where we introduced the role Content Acquisition Podcasts (CAPs) can serve in teacher preparation and professional development. Although CAPs are backed by numerous empirical research studies (see Kennedy, Wagner, et al., 2016), in their original form, these vignettes focus on supporting teachers' declarative knowledge. In order for teachers to learn and implement evidence-based practices with fidelity, declarative (i.e., factual information), procedural (i.e., how to implement and routine knowledge), and conditional/situational (i.e., when/where to implement a skill/practice) knowledge are needed (Alexander, Schallert, & Hare, 1991; Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989; Peeples et al., 2018). In the time since the original chapter was written and published, Kennedy and his colleagues extended the CAP platform into a professional development process, which is detailed herein. The CAP Professional Development (CAP-PD) process is intended to provide teachers with additional supports that lead to their successful learning and implementation of evidence-based practices, and corresponding impact on measurable outcomes for students with disabilities.

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