
Most students identified as gifted spend the majority of their time in a general education classroom, making it even more critical that all teachers be trained in addressing individual student needs through differentiation. This study analyzes longitudinal and sociometric data to show that under certain quality criteria, participants in professional development are more likely to help non-participant colleagues, and that the content of the professional development can be effectively translated to the non-participants through teacher-teacher interaction. As we seek to train teachers to address increasing student diversity, this study suggests that we target those most likely to invest themselves in the content and structure of the professional development experience for maximum transferability.


I found the paper written by Professor Leonie Kronborg and Dr Margaret Plunkett both from Monash University in Victoria, incredibly informative and stimulating. The paper outlines a study focusing on a review of professional learning provided to teachers in a new Australian selective high school for highly able students. This is just one of many dedicated to ensuring the very best education for our highly-able students.


The researchers examined the effects of content-based in-service professional development courses on student achievement. They found that students of teachers who participated in content-based courses significantly outperformed students whose teachers did not participate, in increased percentages of students achieving pass/advanced scores and decreased percentages of students who scored in the warning/failing range. Equally important, the researchers discovered that teachers who participated in content-based professional development were 4.6 times more likely to remain in the district than teachers who did not participate. The authors concluded that professional development that addresses course content which teachers currently are teaching improves student achievement, increases teacher retention, and thereby, decreases the need for training of new teachers.
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