



RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

NMSA BELIEFS

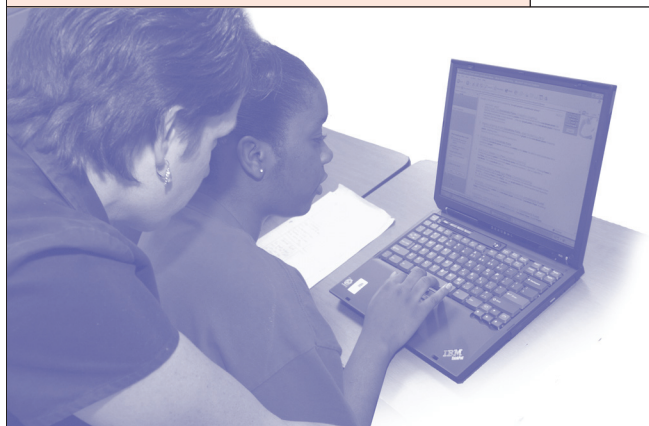
National Middle School Association strongly believes that:

- Teachers who are well-prepared and trained are more effective in the classroom and therefore have the greatest impact on student learning.
- The best way to increase teacher effectiveness in the classroom is through regular, high quality professional development.
- Professional development for middle grades teachers should focus on the uniqueness of young adolescent students and encompass both content knowledge and instructional strategies.

CURRENT RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research in support of the value and need for teacher professional development:

- Teachers report that the more time they spend in professional development, the more likely they were to indicate that it had improved their instruction¹.
- Professional development activities can be linked to increased student achievement. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) has identified 26 staff development programs documenting such evidence².
- Middle grades teachers are not currently engaged in regular professional development. Teachers participate in professional development activities an average of only *several times a year*³.
- Middle grades teachers are not currently getting balanced professional development; the most frequent types of professional development activities occur within their own school. Professional development activities outside the school occur much less frequently³.
- Middle grades teachers, themselves, indicate a high need for additional professional development—in multiple areas, not just one or two³.



Action Steps / Recommendations

- 1) Policymakers, states, and districts must provide adequate funding for teacher professional development throughout the year.
- 2) Schools should dedicate a minimum of 10 percent of their budgets, excluding salaries and benefits, to professional development and devote at least 25 percent of a teacher's work time to learning and collaborating with colleagues.
- 3) States and school districts must ensure that new and experienced middle grades teachers have access to a wide range of professional development activities that encompass both their subject content area and effective instructional strategies AND reflect the needs of young adolescents.



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1. National Center for Education Statistics. (2001, June). *Teacher preparation and professional development: 2000*. (NCES 2001-088). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

2. Killion, J. (1999). *What works in the middle: Results-based staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

3. Flowers, N., & Mertens, S. B. (2003). Professional development for middle-grades teachers: Does one size fit all? In P. G. Andrews & V. Anfara, Jr. (Eds.), *Leaders for a movement: Professional preparation and development of middle level teachers and administrators* (pp.145-160). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.