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Studying the effects of professional development: The case of the NSF's local systemic change through teacher enhancement initiative.

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Summary: Enacting the vision of NCTM's Principles and standards for school mathematics depends on effective teacher professional development. This 7-year study of 48 projects in the National Science Foundation's Local Systemic Change Through Teacher Enhancement Initiative investigates the relationship between professional development and teachers' attitudes, preparedness, and classroom practices in mathematics. These programs included many features considered to characterize effective professional development: content focus, extensive and sustained duration, and connection to practice and to influences on teachers' practice. Results provide evidence of positive impact on teacher-reported attitudes toward, preparedness for, and practice of Standards-based teaching, despite the fact that many teachers did not participate in professional development to the extent intended. Teachers' perception of their principals' support for standards-based mathematics instruction was also positively related to these outcomes.

Classification: B50 D30

Keywords: evaluation; large-scale studies; longitudinal studies; professional development; reform in mathematics education; teaching practice

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