

Archived Information

U.S. Department of Education -- Planning and Evaluation Service

Professional Development for the 21st Century Classroom (Oct. 23, 2000)

Purpose

The purposes of this study are to generate accurate information about the current state of technology-related professional development for a nationally representative sample of school districts, schools and teachers, provide rich descriptions of a variety of approaches (models) for increasing teachers' proficiency in integrating technology into their classroom instruction, and examine the role of the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) in supporting technology-related professional development nationwide and through the various models studied in-depth. The study is a key component of the Department's Integrated Studies of Educational Technology (ISET).

Research Questions

1. What are best practices in professional development for the instructional use of technology?
2. To what extent and under what circumstances does professional development in instructional use of educational technology result in changes in teaching and learning?
3. What is the state of practice related to professional development in the instructional use of educational technology?

General Evaluation Design and Data Collection Activities

Conducted by SRI International, the Professional Development for the 21st Century Classroom Study is coordinated with and the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund Supplemental Study and the Formative Evaluation of the E-rate. Collectively referred to as ISET (the Integrated Studies of Educational Technology), these studies will collect data from a nested, nationally representative sample of teachers, schools and districts as well as all states. The sample includes a particular focus on high-poverty, rural and urban areas and allows for contrasts between TLCF and non-TLCF districts.

The ISET survey instruments supplement the TLCF State Performance Report and will collect data on professional development for teachers related to educational technology, teachers' use of technology for instruction, and the instructional supports and policy structures associated with such professional development and technology use.

To provide for a richer interpretation of survey data and a fuller understanding of distinct and notable approaches to preparing teachers to use educational technology in instruction, the Professional Development for the 21st Century Classroom Study also includes case studies of nine districts using various models for professional development. These models include: district-to-district partnerships, district-to-university partnerships, distance learning, vendor-supplied training, train-the-trainer, and curriculum development approaches. The study also will examine sites using broadly systemic approaches.