

2.1

Teacher Success

2.1.1 Definitions

Teacher success refers to the degree to which individual teachers attain, within the context of their entire teaching careers, their desired professional goals.

Teacher competence refers to the quality of having an appropriate level of professional knowledge, skill and judgment to carry out specific teaching objectives and other professional responsibilities.

Teacher success is the more encompassing concept in the sense that a successful teacher is necessarily competent, generally speaking. It is also important to understand, however, that an individual may demonstrate an insufficient level of competence in a specific situation (e.g., when faced with a new teaching assignment on short notice), yet continue to be a successful teacher.

2.1.2 Preamble

Teachers recognize the interdependence between their students' success as learners and their own success as professional educators. Although each teacher has a responsibility to offer the best possible learning opportunities for students, no teacher should be expected to fully achieve their professional goals at all times. Teaching and learning, as processes that involve social, emotional and cognitive dimensions, are far too complex to guarantee competence or success in every circumstance. Teachers must have the flexibility, for example, to try new approaches and learning resources in their work with students. Some of these trial and error methods may be better suited than others to meet students' educational needs.

As with individual students, the extent of each teacher's success depends upon a wide range of interconnected contextual factors. Although some of these variables (e.g., career-related decisions) are largely within the teacher's control, many others are not (e.g., the diversity of students' learning needs, health, family situation and so on). It is essential to take this full range of factors into account when there are questions or concerns about a teacher's success generally, or the individual's competence in a specific situation.

Teachers believe that they should be supported to become as competent as possible as they carry out their professional roles, and to become as successful as possible throughout all stages of their careers. Questions or concerns about a specific competence matter should always be addressed within the broader context of teachers' goals and needs as successful professionals.

2.1.3 Beliefs

(1) Teacher Success

Throughout their careers, individual teachers experience various degrees of success in meeting a range of professional goals and objectives, including the following:

- (a) To conduct professional relationships in ways that are consistent with the principles of equity, fairness and respect for others.
- (b) To create and maintain a learning environment that encourages and supports each student to reach the highest level of individual achievement possible.
- (c) To demonstrate a professional level of knowledge about the curriculum.
- (d) To demonstrate a repertoire of instructional strategies and methods that are applied in teaching activities.
- (e) To have the professional knowledge, skills and judgment to carry out the teacher's responsibility for student assessment and evaluation.
- (f) To reflect, individually and collectively, upon the goals as well as the experience of professional practice, and adapt one's teaching accordingly.
- (g) To work with colleagues in ways that are mutually supportive, and develop to the fullest extent possible effective professional relationships with students, administrators, parents and other members of the educational community.

(2) **Questionable Practices**

- (a) Legitimate questions or concerns about an individual's teaching practice typically involve situations in which, taking the full context of the practice into consideration, a teacher demonstrates an unacceptably low level of professional knowledge, skill, or judgment, or a disregard for the welfare of the student to an extent that renders the teacher unfit to continue teaching.
- (b) Questionable practices include one or more of the following patterns of conduct in which a teacher:
 - (i) Takes no action or makes minimal effort in the face of manifest needs or opportunities to act on behalf of students.
 - (ii) Treats students in an unacceptably unjust or disrespectful manner.
 - (iii) Makes poor decisions and judgments in shaping students' educational experiences.
 - (iv) Persistently fails to implement the provincial curriculum conscientiously and diligently, or performs at an unacceptably low level in carrying out teaching objectives and other professional responsibilities.

(3) **Supports for Teacher Success**

- (a) Teacher success should be supported through a broad spectrum of structures, processes and resources, many of which are identified in various Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation bylaws and policies. Key supports that are expected by teachers as they carry out their professional responsibilities include the following:
 - (i) Provincial, school division and school-level policies and practices that support and enhance teacher success, and are developed with the direct involvement of teachers.
 - (ii) Employment conditions that are consistent with the teaching profession's understanding of an equitable, ethical, respectful, healthy and safe work environment.
 - (iii) Teaching assignments and other related duties or responsibilities that are commensurate with an individual teacher's professional knowledge, skills and experience, taking into consideration the context in which the teacher works.
 - (iv) Designated time, teaching resources, opportunities for professional reflection and growth, and other supports, as identified by the teaching profession, that enable teachers to create and maintain a learning environment that meets students' diverse educational needs.

(4) **Accountability for Teacher Success**

- (a) Accountability for teacher success is a responsibility that is shared among key participants in the education system.
 - (i) The individual teacher is primarily responsible for:
 - (A) Setting personal goals and objectives for a successful professional practice.
 - (B) Conducting one's professional practice in ways that are consistent with the Code of Ethics, the Standards of Practice, the Code of Collective Interests, and the Federation's policies on teacher success and professional growth.
 - (C) Engaging in career-long personal and professional reflection, and self-directed professional growth opportunities as necessary.
 - (ii) The teaching profession is primarily responsible for addressing, in ways that are consistent with *The Teachers' Federation Act, 2006* and the Federation bylaws and policies, situations where there are questionable practices.
 - (iii) The education community as a whole is primarily responsible for ensuring that the supports for teacher success, as identified by the teaching profession, are available and that these supports are revised or expanded as necessary.

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