

McGinn, A. (2017). Teacher experiences with professional development for technology integration at an independent k-12 school: a multi-case study. (Doctoral Dissertation, Towson University)

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Abstract

K-12 schools in the U.S. have been challenged by recent reform initiatives that push for improvements in teaching and learning at all levels. This national trend for preparing students for success in the 21st century has brought effective technology integration to the forefront of education improvement. Many schools turn to professional development to train teachers for technology integration. Despite its importance, the current literature has not reached a consensus about how to best address teachers' learning needs through PD. Independent schools, which are self-determining in mission and program, are not immune to the pressure from these national trends. Although independent schools educate 10% of all students in the U.S., they have been overlooked in the current literature. Little is known about PD for technology integration at independent schools, and teachers' experiences need to be studied in-depth to determine how to best meet their learning needs. This qualitative multi-case study explored seven independent school teachers' experiences with PD for technology integration, using diffusion theory as a theoretical framework. Data were collected through a survey of teacher innovativeness, classroom observations, and individual interviews. Data were analyzed using open coding and axial coding, which resulted in the identification of themes for each case and across all seven cases. The findings revealed that participants had varied experiences with PD for technology integration based on their innovativeness. This research bridges a gap in the current literature by identifying teachers' differing learning needs and by suggesting potential solutions for improving PD for technology integration.

Keywords: professional development, technology integration, independent schools, diffusion theory, case studies, K-12