



International Conference *SHARING AND LEARNING FOR MENTORING IN EDUCATION* ICSLME 2023

Sustaining teacher professional development thanks to mentoring and peer-to-peer



RESPOND

Sustaining the Professional Development
of Teachers within Schools
as Professional Learning Environments

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Project Partners

- University of Florence, Italy (coordinating partner)
- University Lucian Blaga of Sibiu, Romania
- University of Granada, Spain
- Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Regional Educational Authority of Piemonte (USR – Rete Sostenibilità), Italy
- Comprehensive School 21 of Sibiu, Romania



RESPOND

Sustaining the Professional Development
of Teachers within Schools
as Professional Learning Environments

Erasmus+ KA220-SCH - Cooperation partnerships in school education

**SUSTAINING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
TEACHERS WITHIN SCHOOLS AS PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

(01-12-2021/01-11-2024)

RESPOND PROJECT: MAIN AIM

To build a **framework** for identifying contexts and conditions that facilitate the interdependence between **professional and school development** and the **sustainability** of both



RESPOND PROJECT: 3 SPECIFIC FOCUSES

1. The definition of a common **teacher professional profile** about global competence for teachers.
2. The definition of **teacher professional development support guidelines** with particular reference to mentor and peer to peer support in professional and school development.
3. The definition of **impact evaluation support guidelines** designed to facilitate the development of sustainable high-level teacher competences and quality learning environments.



4 RESPOND PRODUCTS

RESPOND envisages 4 intersecting products:



ID	Result Title	Leading Organisation
1	Teacher Professional Profile/Electronic Portfolio (TPP/E-PT)	UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA
2	Teacher Professional Development Support Guidelines (TPD-SG)	HOGSKOLEN I INNLANDET
3	Impact Evaluation Support Guidelines (IE-SG)	UNIVERSITATEA LUCIAN BLAGA DIN SIBIU
4	Promoting and monitoring sustainability index	UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE



PR2 - GUIDELINES FOR MENTORSHIP AND PEER-TO-PEER PROGRAMS FOR SUSTAINING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDELINES

- 4 dimensions

Constitutive elements of each dimension:

- Guiding Questions
- Values
- Attitudes
- Areas of actions
- Specific steps of action



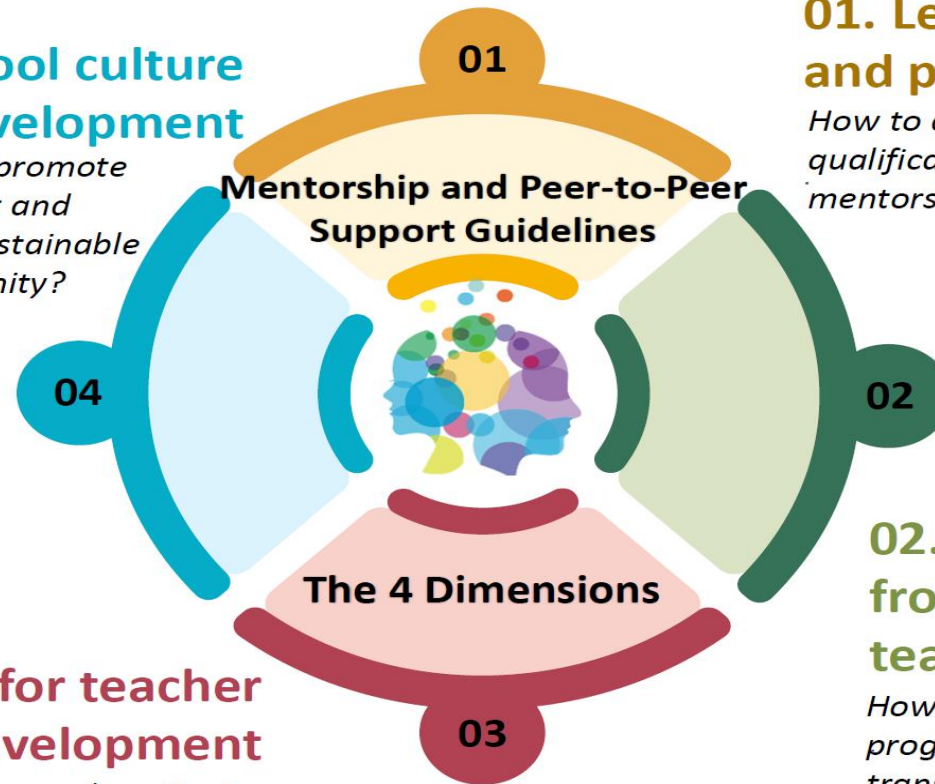
PR2 - GUIDELINES FOR MENTORSHIP AND PEER-TO-PEER PROGRAMS FOR SUSTAINING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

04. Developing the school culture for professional development

How can systems be established to promote sustained professional development and strengthen the development of a sustainable school culture and learning community?

03. Sustained support for teacher professional development

How can peer-to-peer collaboration and continuing professional development strengthen teachers' competence and the practical application of their skills and knowledge?



01. Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs

How to develop good leadership, qualifications and structures for effective mentorship and peer-to-peer programs?

02. Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession

How can mentorship and peer-to-peer programs support newly qualified teachers' transition from teacher education/training to professional practice of teachers?

VALUES, ATTITUDES AND COMPETENCES THAT GUIDE MENTORSHIP AND PEER-TO-PEER PROGRAMS



Values	Attitudes	Global competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Authentic leadership and coaching✓ Trust building and empowerment✓ Culture of continuous improvements✓ Communication and cooperation✓ Recognition of teachers' role and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Responsibility✓ Awareness and empathy✓ Self-reflection and critical thinking✓ Adaptive and flexible practice✓ Openness to others' points of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Global and Local Issues and Multiple Perspectives✓ Intercultural Communication and Interaction✓ Individual and Collective Wellbeing✓ Acting for Sustainability



OVERVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES' MAIN DIMENSIONS AND AREAS OF ACTION

01	02	03	04
Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs	Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession	Sustained support for teacher professional development	Developing the school culture for professional development
<p>1A. Identify the purpose and vision for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs</p> <p>1B. Integrate evidence-based management practice in systems and structures</p> <p>1C. Enhance teachers' professional competence by developing a school culture for action, reflection, and sharing of competence</p> <p>1D. Provide clear opportunities and strategies for career development and advancement</p> <p>1E. Establish systems for training and qualification of professional mentors and peer-to-peer guides</p>	<p>2A. Implement sustainable mentorship programs</p> <p>2B. Design personalized mentoring plans for the mentees</p> <p>2C. Enhance social and academic membership and engagement in the learning community, and strengthen cooperation between school and teacher education</p> <p>2D. Establish and distribute in-depth knowledge about school culture, the teaching profession, and transitions from teacher education to professional practice</p> <p>2E. Cultivate professional flexibility and resilience</p>	<p>3A. Develop sustainable mechanisms for peer-to-peer support and ongoing learning opportunities for teachers</p> <p>3B. Stimulate active and engaged participation in school leadership</p> <p>3C. Create genuine practices for teacher collaboration and unity</p> <p>3D. Encourage critical reflection and create systems for teacher feedback and appraisal</p> <p>3E. Develop awareness and understanding of current research and evidence on effective teaching practice</p> <p>3F. Expect and encourage teachers to continuously build bridges between theory and practice throughout their careers</p>	<p>4A. Promote collective ownership of the schools' mission, values and goals</p> <p>4B. Enhance a culture of continuous improvements</p> <p>4C. Create a structure and process for sustained professional learning and development at an organizational level</p> <p>4D. Integrate intuitive knowledge processes into management procedures</p> <p>4E. Implement the mentorship and peer-to-peer programs in school development plans and strategies</p>

Dimension 01.	Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs
Guiding Question	<i>How to develop good leadership, qualifications and structures for effective mentorship and peer-to-peer programs?</i>
Areas of actions	Specific steps of action
Identify the purpose and vision for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarify the reasons for building a mentorship and/or peer-to-peer program(s). ○ Involve participants in the process of creating a strong vision. ○ Communicate the vision for the program to all involved. ○ Set measurable short-term targets and long-term goals for the mentorship program. ○ Create a roadmap for the program’s vision, including a plan for achieving the goals. ○ Identify and support varying individual mentoring needs across specific learning goals, preferences, and professional needs.
Integrate evidence-based management practice in systems and structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure to keep updated on relevant research literature and policy documents. ○ Stimulate cooperation with other institutions and establish opportunities for sharing experiences across schools and regions. ○ Share experiences and practices within and between schools. ○ Motivate continuous professional development and lifelong learning. ○ Conduct observational- and evidence-based reflection on outcomes and impacts.
Enhance teachers’ professional competence by developing a school culture for action, reflection, and sharing of competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitate arenas for sharing and critical discussions of personal practice and experience, by promoting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Knowledge acquisition</i> – creation of new insights, skills and relationships. ● <i>Knowledge sharing</i> – dissemination of such learning within and among members of the organization. ● <i>Knowledge utilization</i> - integration of learning to make it broadly availability, its generalization to new situations, and its practical application. ○ Provide space for dialogue and reflection regarding teaching practice. ○ Develop strategies for dealing with difficult situations supported by a professional repertoire of practice.
Provide clear opportunities and strategies for career development and advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish model pathways/guidelines for teachers’ career advancement and link to opportunities for professional development. ○ Encourage teachers to take on new responsibilities and leadership roles linked to their career advancement pathway. ○ Supervise individual teachers to develop their own pathways for career advancement and facilitate its achievement through regular review and provision of necessary opportunities.
Establish systems for training and qualification of professional mentors and peer-to-peer guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify if training of mentors will be through an individual school-based program or a common mentor education program (e.g., led by a Teacher Education Institution or professional training organization). ○ Establish accredited training programs for mentors and peer-to-peer guides. ○ Support experience-based reflection and learning for continued enhancement of mentors and guides.

Dimension 02. Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession

Guiding Question

How can mentor and peer-to-peer programs support newly qualified teachers' transition from teacher education/training to professional practice as teachers?

Areas of actions

Specific steps of action

Implement sustainable mentorship programs

- Implement an induction phase where mentoring is prioritized in a systematic way during the first years of teaching, based on:
 - A co-designed plan between the mentor and the newly qualified teacher.
 - The encouragement of building personal skills and competence.
 - The promotion of new skills and competence.
 - A trustful relationship between the mentor and the mentee.

Design personalized mentoring plans for the mentees

- Assess the mentees' current competences (with PR1 self-assessment tool).
- Identify the mentees' needs for professional development.
- Set development targets for mentees according to the schools' eco-systems.
- Facilitate a continuous meta-reflection on the process and outcome.

Enhance social and academic membership and engagement in the learning community, and strengthen cooperation between school and teacher education

- Include and recognize the newly qualified teachers as important resources and contributors in the professional community.
- Establish forums for reflexive dialogue where newly qualified teachers can share their knowledge on issues such as new teaching methodologies, the use of technology in education, interdisciplinary perspectives, and action-based research-initiatives to strengthen the quality of teachers' own teaching.

Establish and distribute in-depth knowledge about school culture, the teaching profession, and transitions from teacher education to professional practice

- Create spaces for reflecting on connections between qualification in teacher education and further professional development in professional practice.
- Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and joint planning between newly qualified teachers and more experienced colleagues.

Cultivate professional flexibility and resilience

- Motivate newly qualified teachers to further develop and stay in the profession.
- Provide and initiate programs where newly qualified teachers can further develop their competence.
- Reduce the experience of isolation by newly qualified teachers and increase their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Dimension 03.**Sustained support for teacher professional development****Guiding Question**

How can peer-to-peer collaboration and continuing professional development strengthen teachers' competence and the practical application of their skills and knowledge?

Areas of actions**Specific steps of action****Develop sustainable mechanisms for peer-to-peer support and ongoing learning opportunities for teachers**

- Equip the teachers with tools and methods for different forms of peer-to-peer-support, including
 - Observation of others, being observed, and mentoring each other – structure the school day to give teachers time for activities.
 - Joint problem solving: a problem for one teacher, is a problem for the whole school.
- Facilitate opportunities for the staff to meet and work with common issues regularly and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Reduce the teacher's isolation through peer-coaching.
- Stimulate teacher collaboration to internalize new practices.

Stimulate active and engaged participation in school leadership

- Communicate clear expectations for individual and collective professional development.
- Prepare individual development plans for all teachers which follow the overarching school goals and have clear expectations for further advancement.
- Show interest and motivate teachers to focus on development, by:
 - Having an overview of all development projects and follow-up on the progress and results.
 - Creating a shared vision of the school goals and operationalize these visions to create ownership among the staff.
 - Being open to pilot and experience new learning innovations.
- Lead by example, by:
 - Providing personal follow-up, showing concern and being responsive.

Create genuine practices for teacher collaboration and unity

- Develop a school culture where the staff trust each other, discuss challenges and successes, share experiences, observe and reflect over each other's practices, including:
 - Planning and problem-solving as a collaborative activity.
 - Regular meetings to discuss student work, plan lessons and discuss research.
 - Teachers take advantage of each other's knowledge and skills to create a coherent culture where the collective capabilities of the whole teaching staff are greater than the individuals.
- Appreciate and value all staff for their unique experience, competence, and opinions by allowing all voices to be heard and supporting the work of each individual.
- Use reflective dialogues to develop and enhance teachers' meta-view on their own and collective practices.
- Support teachers in establishing good routines and structures for their own work, set limits for their roles and responsibilities, and develop teachers' resilience and adaptability to stay in the profession over time.

Encourage critical reflection and create systems for teacher feedback and appraisal

- Dare to be critical of one's own and peers' practices – be able to reflect and understand this as an opportunity for continuing development.
- Understand teaching as a learning profession – all teachers should develop their skills and knowledge throughout their whole career.
- Share reflections regarding students' results from mapping surveys, standardized tests and classroom observations as a basis for further planning and teaching, and assess if current practices are achieving the desired outcomes.
- View feedback as a tool for teachers' improvement, not as an assessment to locate the weakest.
- Recognize professional learning as a part of the day-to-day practice.

Develop awareness and understanding of current research and evidence on effective teaching practice

- Organize time and space for teachers to explore research literature by:
 - Making current research available (and makes it mandatory reading) as a foundation for staff meetings.
 - Reducing hours earmarked to teaching and giving more time to professional development.
- Ensure access to research literature through:
 - Demonstrating how to search for relevant research literature.
 - Making printed copies of research available.
- Create a culture of talking about research findings.
- Provide time and space for critical reflections by teachers to identify their schools' challenges and assess how current research could support their specific situations, including:
 - Creating an understanding that effective teaching requires regular development and improvement, that experience alone is only part of that development, and that opportunities for professional development should be valued.
 - Providing opportunities for critical discussions about relevant research and what can be an inspiration for the teachers' further development and their practices.

Expect and encourage teachers to continuously build bridges between theory and practice throughout their careers

- Support teachers to conduct practice-based research about student and teacher learning, testing new work methods and measuring the effect of innovative practices, by supporting:
 - Lesson study.
 - Action research.
 - Publication of practice-based research work for other teachers and researchers to use.
 - Provision of necessary resources for teachers to conduct practice-based and design-based research.
- Apply current research and experience as a basis for constantly developing teaching practice and promote an openness towards testing new solutions, which can be strengthened by:
 - Instructional experimentation.
 - Trust and help seeking.
- Share and celebrate teachers' experiences with the rest of the teaching staff – both positive and negative.

Dimension 04.	Developing the school culture for professional development
Guiding Question	<i>How can systems be established to promote sustained professional development and strengthen the development of a sustainable school culture and learning community?</i>
Areas of actions	Specific steps of action
Promote collective ownership of the schools' mission, values and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct a shared assessment and evaluation on the current status of the school -- which responds to the key questions: Where are we now? & Where do we want to go? ○ Provide opportunities for cooperative dialogue and deliberation on the schools' mission, values and goals. ○ Encourage active participation in identifying forward looking improvements and/or targets for the school's development and in developing strategies to achieve them. ○ Promote the responsibility of teachers (both individually and collectively) for the achievement of these targets and goals. ○ Build strong collaboration with parents and guardians around the development of a holistic learning community. ○ Strengthen and embed the school's role in wider society by establishing a strong network with external stakeholders and local actors. ○ Establish processes for regular review and renewal of the school's vision and/or mission.
Enhance a culture of continuous improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pilot and test new approaches and alternative practices on a regular basis and evaluate outcomes in relation to professional contexts. ○ Incentivize and reward innovative teaching practice. ○ Promote creative approaches and recognize that valuable learning comes from both what worked well and what did not work. ○ Provide opportunities for critical reflection and discussion on current teaching practices, habits and presumptions. ○ Utilize research-based evidence to inform and enhance continuous improvements.
Create a structure and process for sustained professional learning and development at an organizational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support processes for knowledge acquisition, sharing and utilization. ○ Coordinate and routinely arrange opportunities for exchange, sharing and collaboration among staff and students. ○ Provide defined and differentiated roles and responsibilities for school staff to implement and achieve collective initiatives. ○ Ensure time is given to staff to work collectively as a professional learning community. ○ Facilitate opportunities for school-based professional development. ○ Promote competence development between colleagues through conversations and observation of professional practice.
Integrate intuitive knowledge processes into management procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish structures for supportive leadership that facilitate organizational learning and development. ○ Enhance opportunities for decentralized leadership and stronger engagement. ○ Embed organizational learning within daily processes in order to acquire, share and utilize knowledge within and across the school. ○ Integrate a systematic structure for review, reporting and feedback that supports collective knowledge generation.
Implement the mentorship and peer-to-peer programs in school development plans and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Following guidelines under dimension 2 and dimension 3 respectively.</i>

MENTORING AND PEER-TO-PEER PRACTICES CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT

- Sustainability of teachers and schools development is considered from a dual perspective:
 - the constructive dimension of teachers' competences based on the characteristics of durability, resilience, and transformability of professional learning
 - the involvement of all teachers in the construction of a shared school culture able to promote personal attitudes, interests and abilities and achieve institutional objectives within schools intended as learning organizations





***THANKS FOR
YOUR
ATTENTION!!!***



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RESPONP PROJECT GROUP (SIBIU, OCTOBER 2023)