



ConnectedPD
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ONLINE: Action Research for School Improvement

“I feel like I can make a school-wide difference.”

– Ashley D.

Using research as a tool to bring about change is a key feature of action research. Action research is used in real educational situations, focusing on solving real problems in education, to bring about change quickly and holistically.

Research often conjures up a picture in people’s minds of academics working in isolation for years proving theories. To make a distinction from academic research, those involved in action research participate in ongoing testing and monitoring of improvements in their practice. This course provides a framework for teachers to use action research as a means to change or improve their practice.

Another important aspect that the course introduces is intellectual collaboration among teachers. This means working together to identify issues in their teaching context and developing processes for improvement. Action research facilitates the necessary context to help build a strong professional learning community and can be used either as a school improvement tool or as an individual professional development option.



Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

The course also aligns to the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content and Teachers Facilitate Learning.

Each self-study PD course from Professional Learning Board includes:

- **Convenient access** anytime, anywhere, any device
- Interactive **online** textbook
- Implement **practical suggestions** immediately
- Demonstrate comprehension with **quizzes** and checks for understanding
- Print **certificates** of completion
- Easily assign courses to align with each teacher’s **personalized PD needs**
- **Integrate** with school and district-wide initiatives
- **Low cost solution for all courses, all teachers, all school year**
- **Reports** for school administrators



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Course Outline

LESSON 1

Introducing Action Research

- Understanding action research by reviewing key definitions and its history.
- What are the key features of action research.
- Identifying the benefits of action research in the context of education.
- Exploring the teacher's role in action research.
- Considering the various types of action research.

LESSON 2

Focus Area

- How to select the right area of focus for the action research project.
- Looking at possible focus areas in education.

LESSON 3

Key Pre-planning Questions

- Questions to ask yourself before getting started.
- Developing the research agenda.
- Identifying the project team that will work with you on the project.
- Defining the various types of data that are available and data collection techniques.
- Explaining how to use a Structured Action Research Model.
- Identifying the right sample for your research.
- How to analyze data, draw conclusions, and sharing findings.

LESSON 4

Data Collection Phases

- How to use an Action Research Matrix as a guide to identify the student learning goal.
- The process of collecting data – keeping a checklist in mind.
- How to organize & display data in a way that's easy to retrieve and analyze.
- Analyzing and interpreting data.
- Using the help of professional literature in your research project.
- Arriving at short and long-term plans.
- A reminder on the ethics of practicing action research.