



National Center for **Research** on  
**Rural** Education (R<sup>2</sup>Ed)

# Teacher Professional Development

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# National Center for Research on Rural Education (R<sup>2</sup>Ed)

Housed in the *Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools (CYFS)* at UNL

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Department of Education (7/2009 – 6/2014)

Research contributes to data-based understandings of *what works, for whom, and under what conditions* in the rural context, in the areas of instruction/education, professional development of teachers, and related issues (e.g., family-school partnerships)



# R<sup>2</sup>Ed Research Studies

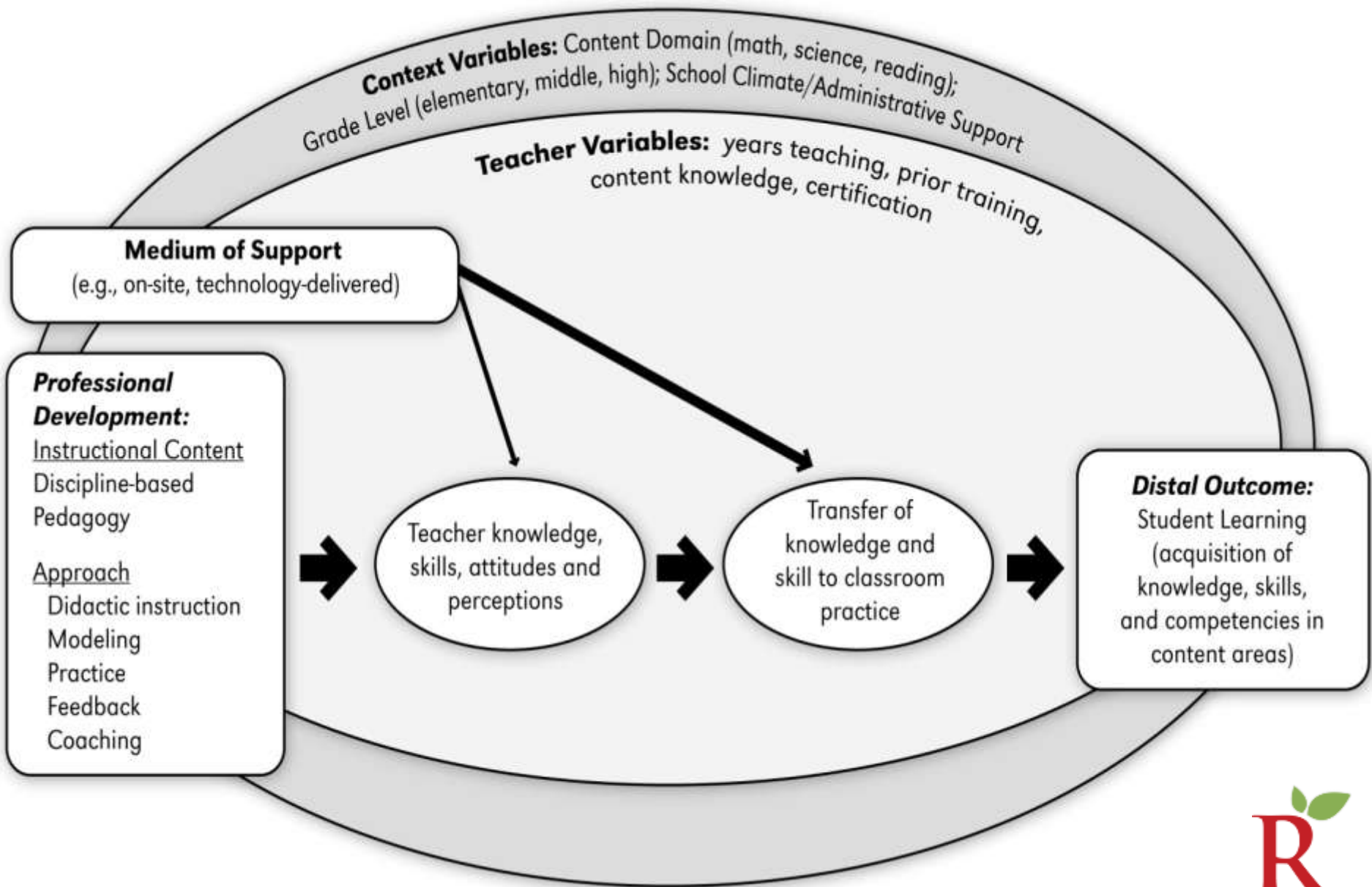


Variations in existing teacher professional development (PD) experiences in rural and non-rural settings

Differential effects of various PD approaches on teachers' reading and science knowledge and practice and student outcomes

Effects of family-school connections on rural students' behaviors and academic performance

# Theory of Change for Professional Development



# Professional Development Framework

Process	Approach	Definition
Assessment (identification of student needs)	Self-report	Teacher appraisal of student knowledge, skills, needs, and/or capabilities
	Direct observations	Direct, objective assessment of student performance
	Progress monitoring	Teacher-administered probes document students' performance
Promotion of knowledge/skills	Content instruction	Evidence-based, domain-specific information presented by content experts
	Modeling	Demonstration of effective instructional strategies by coaches
	Practice	Enactment of newly learned skills by teachers
	Feedback	Written and/or verbal evaluations of teacher practice
Skill transfer (classroom implementation)	Coaching/consultation	Individualized coordination and oversight by coaches, from training through classroom implementation



# Professional Development and Rural Teachers' Knowledge and Practice

Survey with a national sample of 595 K-5 teachers in rural and non-rural settings

Examined characteristics of PD experiences: frequency, instructional support, level of collaboration, opportunities for practice with feedback, leader characteristics

Content areas: reading, science inquiry, math, and data-based decision making



# National Survey Findings

More similarities than differences  
format, leader, and training method

More single workshops in rural

Led by regional or state staff more  
in rural

Led by colleague more in non-rural

More interaction or collaboration  
with colleagues in rural, especially  
independent of PD experience





# Project READERS (Response to Effective Assessment-Driven Early Reading Support: Rural Professional Development with Coaching)

Two variations of teacher PD with coaching in the use of student data to inform differentiation of K-3 reading instruction

360 K-3 teachers in rural schools

On-site training with on-site coaching

On-site training with distance

No training or coaching





# CSI: Coaching Science Inquiry in Rural Schools



Teacher professional development in a guided scientific inquiry approach to science instruction (including coaching via distance technology) compared to no PD



162 middle and high school science teachers in rural schools

# *Thank You*

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