About The Research

What is this research study about?

The purpose of this research study is to examine the effects of teachers' participation in an online knowledge base community. Teachers will collaboratively identify, develop, and respond to their own targeted professional developmental needs using the ADDIE(Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) generic model for training management. The study will examine participants' patterns of collaboration, user experiences, and potential outcomes for online sharing of teacher created development from a knowledge base.

What questions will the research attempt to answer?

RQ1: How does participation within an online knowledge base environment influence teachers' collaboration and interaction? **Subquestion:** What patterns of collaboration and interaction occur when teachers participate in an online knowledge base?

RQ2: How do teachers describe their user experiences as a result of collaboratively creating and sharing professional development materials in an online knowledge base?

RQ3: What are the outcomes of online sharing of teacher-created professional development materials from a knowledge base? **Subquestion:**What usage patterns occur when sharing teacher-created professional development online?

What will I need to do?

1. Participants will take an online teacher needs survey used to gather information and target gaps in training that can be addressed in a peer online environment. A link to the survey will be emailed directly to you. The online survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

2. Data from the teacher needs survey will be used to create topics that will be targeted for participant use within the online knowledge base system. These topics will be worded as objectives for training. Each participant will receive an email notification of the major identified objectives.

3. Participants will have two weeks to communicate, collaborate, and create their own "series" presentation. This "series" presentation is anything created by participants in response or correlation to the identified training objectives. The subjects of the study will self-regulate participation time and how they choose to connect to the knowledge base. You will have total control over contribution type and any interactions online. Total time involved should be around 6-8 hours.

4. Participants will be invited to attend a multisession focus group (held in 2-4 sessions) to establish a representative sample of study subjects. A series of questions will be posed for feedback and recorded using a digital audio recorder for future coding

What are the benefits of the study?

Participants will gain the benefit of learning a process for creating online developmental materials that are teacher centered. The process can be "turn keyed" to rapidly create in-house professional development. Larger implications include the focus on the potential power for teachers to rapidly develop their own learning communities to actively target gaps in knowledge while launching their own curated professional development. This can save districts and schools both time and money when these online communities can follow established training models to target relative and engaging professional development opportunities. Results from this study will also add to the professional literature within the field of online communities and blended learning.

Teacher participants will also receive credit for 20 professional growth hours for individual staff profile evaluations.