Teacher development
Some thoughts ...
Community of Practice; 18th August 2016
A bit of history ...

- HE Thami Mseleku: SADTU paper “Unionism or Professionalism?”
- SADTU and COSATU
- WCOTP, IFFTU and EI
Evolving thinking ...

- 1996: “More Teachers, Better Teachers”
- Debates about the “more” ..
- TDC in Department ..
- TD in Higher Education; closure of Colleges
- Ongoing (never-ending?) processes (national and provincial)
What can we conclude?

- One

- A single narrative is hard (if not impossible) to develop, because teacher development takes different forms, takes place in many ways, and for many reasons

- It includes career related development, development as a professional, and many other aspects

- Responsibilities are dispersed among the Department (as employer), unions, universities, professional bodies and the individual teacher
What else do we know?

- Two

- Teacher development must be linked to teacher accountability, and backed with pay, if it is to be taken seriously

- Note: In 2009 a draft agreement was reached for a performance related pay system, but did not survive the transition
  
  - Note: [www.theschoolinspector.com](http://www.theschoolinspector.com); [www.greatschools.com](http://www.greatschools.com);
So where to now?

Prof Kader Asmal: Always ask: “What is the mischief?”, in order to decide what is to be done”

In modern terms: Purpose drives Design

In this case the purpose has to be to improve learning outcomes through improved performance by teachers.

What then is the design?

One option: “Statistically, the best way to improve overall performance in the system is to get rid of under-performers”

Other option – clarify different roles and responsibilities and hold partners accountable!
So who does what ..?

- The Department
  - should provide “in-house” training, curriculum related or focused on scarce skills (such as management), which must be linked to some form of performance appraisal, and which should include an assessment of learning outcomes. Political will is needed to do the right thing in this regard
  - should require compulsory professional development, which should include compulsory long-term deployments to other schools
Who else plays a role?

- **SACE**
  - should focus on a guiding policy framework for professional development, much like the HSPCA
  - should allocate and manage PD points, and the allocation should involve a vibrant discussion about “what is valued by the profession”. A decision to grant one programme more points than another is a critical statement by the profession, and
  - must be reconstituted as a credible body.
And of course ..

- the individual teacher, who should
  - Guide their own development in terms of a career path or plan
  - Work hard at whatever programme is selected
  - Accept the outcomes of any performance appraisal, and treat anything negative as a positive development opportunity

“There is no need for teacher development to be in class on time.”
And finally ...

- Unions, who
  - Should ensure that professional development happens, as a condition of service
  - Should let professional bodies and relevant institutions deliver teacher development
  - May intervene in regard to scarce skills (such as education economics)
  - May provide trade union education as part of a professional development programme
That is it!

Thank you and good luck.