

## **New Report Highlights Promise of Faculty Professional Learning Strategy for Equity-Focused Colleges and Universities**

*Survey analysis provides valuable recommendations for investing in professional learning*

**Boulder, CO** (January 17, 2023) – Research shows that professional learning (often called “faculty development”) has the potential to transform teaching and advance equitable learning and student success. Yet notable gaps in practice undercut its impact. A new report, [\*Teaching, Learning, Equity and Change: Realizing the Promise of Professional Learning\*](#), developed by Every Learner Everywhere in partnership with Achieving the Dream (ATD) and the Online Learning Consortium (OLC), aims to inform the strategic action needed to realize the promise of professional learning at our nation’s equity-focused campuses.

Recent research in the field demonstrates the effectiveness of professional learning in advancing equity-focused change in education. It also provides a clear picture of the best practices used by effective Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs). Yet key questions remain:

- What is the status of professional learning on campuses serving most of the nation’s racially minoritized and poverty-affected students?
- How do these institutions deploy professional learning to support equity-focused teaching and learning?
- What does best practice look like?
- What obstacles and gaps in practice get in the way?
- What kind of assistance would be helpful?

The report, co-authored by ATD’s Bret Eynon, Jonathan Iuzzini, and H. Ray Keith with OLC’s Eric Loepp and Nicole Weber, provides answers to these questions through a synthesis of data collected via surveys and interviews. It highlights professional learning practice at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and community colleges, often overlooked but crucial sectors of higher education. And it deploys research-based standards for high impact professional learning to uncover strengths and gaps in current field practice.

Key findings – Based on this data, the report maps critical contours of the field:

- The field is shaped by growing interest, yet lagging investment in professional learning. This tension is particularly pronounced at MSIs and community colleges.

- Exemplary CTLs position professional learning as a strategic intervention to achieve mission-critical goals, including equity, enrollment and completion.
- Priority focal points of professional learning fieldwide include active learning, inclusive teaching practices, and engaging students in online and hybrid teaching formats.
- The field is challenged by gaps in awareness of research-based resources for best practices in professional learning.
- MSIs and community colleges identified a strong need for capacity-building partnerships focused on professional learning.

A dozen recommendations for addressing the key findings are organized into three categories, suggesting steps to be taken by campus professional learning leaders, institutional leaders, and ecosystem partners such as funders, state systems, and national higher education networks. Across all three categories, the authors emphasize that the process of improvement and change requires shared vision and collaborative partnership: “Our survey respondents and the leaders we interviewed made clear that change is possible, and that professional learning – designed and resourced with great care and attention to the needs of both full-time and part-time educators – is one of the best tools we have for advancing equity-focused change in service to our students.”

To download the free resource, [Teaching, Learning, Equity and Change: Realizing the Promise of Professional Learning](#), or learn more about Every Learner Everywhere and its collaborative approach to equitize higher education through digital learning, visit [everylearnereverywhere.org](http://everylearnereverywhere.org). To contact Every Learner Everywhere, email [everylearner@wiche.edu](mailto:everylearner@wiche.edu), or call (303) 541-0206. Follow Every Learner on Twitter [@EveryLearnerNet](https://twitter.com/EveryLearnerNet).

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outcomes with digital learning through direct technical assistance, timely resources and toolkits, and ongoing analysis of institutional practices and market trends. For more information about Every Learner Everywhere and its collaborative approach to equitize higher education through digital learning, visit [everylearnereverywhere.org](http://everylearnereverywhere.org).

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