Abstract

THESIS: Strategies for Digital Literacy Professional Development

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A mixed-methods approach was used to understand educators’ beliefs about using technology in their classrooms, digital literacy knowledge, and professional development communication methods. This study reports results from an online survey, individual interviews, and small-group activities. Within schools, around one-third of teachers were not offered the resources to teach digital literacy and three out of the eight digital literacy skills were mainly taught. Most educators felt comfortable teaching with technology and that it was effective, however, many were concerned about overuse and staying up to date. More than half of teachers would attend digital literacy professional classes, and some may change their mind if the promotions contained accurate and clearly listed topics and information learned. The qualitative results showed six key themes that would benefit teaching digital literacy in schools: 1) digital literacy school plan, 2) required technology time, 3) required digital literacy professional development, 4) digital literacy professional development promotion, 5) digital literacy professional development timing, and 6) digital literacy professional development communication methods. Additionally, this study strongly shows the need for additional digital literacy professional development for educators to increase their comfort levels with teaching with technology and using technology, understand
how digital literacy can help their students in the 21st century, teach with digital tools effectively, and be able to balance the use of technology in their classrooms.

*Keywords:* technology, digital literacy, professional development, literacy, barriers to teaching