

## Foreword

In 2000, I wrote a book titled *First in America* in which I laid out a plan for NC to lead the nation in public education. A key element in reaching that goal of First in America was excellent teaching. Because of my experience leading the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, I had worked with outstanding classroom teachers. I learned from them and from other experts on the teaching profession what it would take for every child to have an accomplished teacher. They always emphasized the critical need for high-quality professional development for every teacher.

In my book, I wrote that teachers have to continue to learn and to think constantly about how to improve their teaching. They have to stay up to date in their subject areas and on new research about pedagogy. They have to examine that information and use it to help their students learn more.

I also stressed that teachers have to be members of learning communities. They have to collaborate with colleagues and parents and community members. They have to share successes and failures and learn from each other.

Substantive and effective professional development provides teachers with the opportunities to do all these things: to gain knowledge, to collaborate, to reflect, and to practice new skills. Really good professional development translates directly to improved teaching and increased student learning.

This book by a host of experts from across the US and from the Caribbean, Chile, and the United Kingdom offers guidance to schools and school districts as they plan professional development. It offers a checklist for measuring the effectiveness of existing programs. And it offers important assistance to teacher preparation programs so that they increase both the rigor and the relevance of their offerings to prospective teachers.

As a long-time champion of National Board Certification and of the teachers who achieve it, I am particularly pleased that the authors of this book used studies of National Board Certified Teachers and the Board's certification process as tools in the development of their recommendations. It is my hope that, in the future, both teacher preparation and professional development programs will rely on National Board standards as their foundation and that they will seek advice and counsel from National Board Certified Teachers in all areas of their work.

I commend the authors and researchers who produced such a thorough study of professional development for teachers. I urge teachers and administrators, professors and policy makers to learn from it.

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Governor