



BEYOND CLASSROOM TEACHING: ADDRESSING THE POLICY MISALIGNMENT BETWEEN PPST EXPECTATIONS AND THE TEACHER WORKLOAD POLICY FOR HIGHLY PROFICIENT TEACHERS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) redefined the role of teachers by establishing career stages that recognize varying levels of professional competence and leadership. Among these stages, Highly Proficient Teachers are expected to perform responsibilities that extend beyond classroom instruction, including instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, professional learning facilitation, innovation, and action research. These functions are intended to strengthen teacher quality, promote instructional improvement, and contribute to evidence-based educational decision-making.

However, despite these expanded professional expectations, the current workload framework governing public school teachers does not explicitly allocate protected time for the performance of these leadership functions. DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024, entitled *Immediate Removal of Administrative Tasks of Public School Teachers*, and DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024, entitled *Rationalization of Teachers' Workload in Public Schools and Payment of Teaching Overload*, successfully rationalized teacher workloads and reduced administrative burdens. Nevertheless, neither policy explicitly recognizes instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, classroom observation, or action research as workload components entitled to dedicated time allocation.

As a result, Highly Proficient Teachers frequently perform these functions while maintaining a full six-hour classroom teaching load. Many conduct classroom observations during their teaching periods, schedule mentoring conferences during breaks or after office hours, and complete action research requirements during evenings, weekends, or personal time. This situation creates a significant implementation gap between the professional expectations established by the PPST and the operational realities created by existing workload policies.

This paper argues that the Department of Education should institutionalize Protected Professional Leadership Time (PPLT) for Highly Proficient Teachers. Specifically, one hour within the allowable six-hour teaching load should be allocated for instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, and action research. Such reform would align workload structures with professional standards, strengthen instructional leadership, promote research productivity, and enhance educational quality.

I. The Policy Problem and Position

The Philippine educational system has undergone significant reforms aimed at improving teacher quality and learner outcomes. Central to these reforms is the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), institutionalized through DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017. The PPST serves as the national framework that defines teacher quality and outlines professional expectations across career stages.

Under the PPST, Highly Proficient Teachers are expected to function not only as classroom teachers but also as instructional leaders who influence teaching practices beyond their own classrooms. They are expected to mentor colleagues, facilitate professional learning communities, conduct instructional supervision, provide coaching and technical assistance, lead innovations, and engage in action research. These expanded responsibilities reflect the Department of Education's recognition that educational improvement requires teacher leadership and collaborative professional practice.

However, a significant policy contradiction emerges when these expectations are examined alongside existing teacher workload policies.

The Department of Education recently adopted DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024, *Immediate Removal of Administrative Tasks of Public School Teachers*, and DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024, *Rationalization of Teachers' Workload in Public Schools and Payment of Teaching Overload*. These policies seek to protect teachers from excessive administrative burdens and ensure that they can focus on teaching and learning.

The Teacher Workload Policy Toolkit further explains that teachers generally render an eight-hour workday consisting of six hours of actual classroom instruction and two hours for ancillary and teaching-related functions. While the policy explicitly recognizes classroom teaching, class advising, remediation, enhancement classes, and ancillary assignments, it does not expressly allocate protected time for instructional supervision, classroom observation, mentoring, coaching, professional learning facilitation, or action research.

This omission creates a policy implementation gap.

On one hand, the PPST requires Highly Proficient Teachers to perform leadership functions that contribute to instructional improvement and teacher development. On the other hand, the Teacher Workload Policy provides no explicit workload



allocation that enables them to perform these responsibilities during regular working hours.

The consequence is that many Highly Proficient Teachers are compelled to conduct classroom observations while temporarily leaving their own classes, schedule mentoring sessions during lunch breaks or after office hours, and complete research activities during evenings, weekends, or personal time. Rather than being institutionalized components of professional practice, these leadership functions become additional responsibilities layered upon a full teaching load.

The policy issue, therefore, is not whether Highly Proficient Teachers should engage in instructional supervision and action research. These expectations are already embedded in the PPST. The issue is whether the current workload policy provides sufficient structural support for teachers to fulfill these responsibilities effectively.

This paper advances the following position:

The Teacher Workload Policy under DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 and DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 fails to fully operationalize the professional leadership functions expected of Highly Proficient Teachers under the PPST. To address this implementation gap, the Department of Education should institutionalize Protected Professional Leadership Time (PPLT) within the allowable teaching load to support instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, and action research responsibilities.

II. Legal and Policy Framework

Constitutional Foundations

The proposed policy reform finds support in several provisions of the 1987 Constitution.

Article XIV, Section 1: Right to Quality Education

Article XIV, Section 1 provides that:

"The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

This provision establishes the State's obligation not only to provide access to education but also to ensure educational quality. Teacher quality is widely recognized as one of the most significant determinants of learner achievement. Consequently, policies that enable teachers to perform instructional leadership, mentoring, and research functions contribute directly to the constitutional mandate of ensuring quality education.

Article II, Section 17: Priority to Education and Research

Article II, Section 17 provides:

"The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development."

This provision recognizes education and research as national priorities. The conduct of action research by Highly Proficient Teachers directly contributes to the generation of context-specific educational knowledge and supports continuous school improvement.

Article XIV, Section 5(3): Recognition of Research

Article XIV, Section 5(3) states:

"Every citizen has a right to select a profession or course of study, subject to fair, reasonable, and equitable admission and academic requirements."

While commonly associated with higher education, constitutional jurisprudence and educational policy recognize the central role of research and professional inquiry in educational institutions. The PPST itself reflects this constitutional orientation by encouraging teachers to engage in reflective practice and research-informed decision-making.

Article XIV, Section 5(1): Academic Freedom

Article XIV, Section 5(1) provides:

"Academic freedom shall be enjoyed in all institutions of higher learning."

Although this provision directly applies to higher education, the principles underlying academic freedom—intellectual inquiry, professional judgment, innovation, and scholarly engagement—provide valuable guidance for educational policies affecting teachers. Action research and instructional innovation represent practical manifestations of these principles within the basic education sector.

Statutory Foundations

Republic Act No. 4670 (Magna Carta for Public School Teachers)

The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers remains one of the most important legal foundations governing teacher welfare and working conditions.

Particularly relevant is Section 13, which provides:

"Any teacher engaged in actual classroom instruction shall not be required to render more than six hours of actual classroom teaching a day."

This provision serves as the legal basis for the six-hour teaching load currently implemented in public schools.

However, when Republic Act No. 4670 was enacted in 1966, the professional expectations imposed upon teachers were substantially different from those contemplated under the PPST. Teachers were primarily viewed as classroom instructors rather than instructional leaders, mentors, researchers, and professional learning facilitators.

The emergence of the PPST has significantly expanded teachers' professional responsibilities. Consequently, while the six-hour limitation remains legally sound, contemporary educational reforms require reconsideration of how leadership and research functions are accommodated within teacher workloads.

Republic Act No. 9293

Republic Act No. 9293 strengthened teacher professionalization by enhancing standards governing teacher licensure and competence. The law reflects the State's commitment to ensuring that teachers continuously develop professionally and maintain high standards of practice.

The expectation that Highly Proficient Teachers engage in mentoring, instructional leadership, and research aligns with the



broader objectives of teacher professionalization embodied in this law.

Republic Act No. 10912 (Continuing Professional Development Act of 2016)

Republic Act No. 10912 institutionalized continuing professional development among licensed professionals.

The law recognizes that professional excellence requires lifelong learning, innovation, reflection, and knowledge generation. Action research, instructional supervision, mentoring, and coaching are all forms of professional development that support teacher growth and organizational learning.

Accordingly, workload policies should facilitate—not hinder—the performance of these professional development functions.

III. JURISPRUDENTIAL BASIS

The importance of creating conditions that enable educators to fulfill their professional responsibilities finds support in Philippine jurisprudence.

In *University of San Agustin v. Court of Appeals* (G.R. No. 145941), the Supreme Court emphasized the importance of educational institutions in pursuing academic excellence and exercising professional judgment in educational matters.

The Court recognized that educational institutions possess unique responsibilities in promoting learning, scholarship, and professional growth. While the case specifically involved higher education, its principles remain relevant to policy discussions concerning teacher professionalism and educational quality.

The decision highlights an important policy principle: educational excellence cannot be achieved solely through compliance with regulations. Institutions must also provide educators with the necessary conditions, support mechanisms, and professional opportunities that enable them to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

Applied to the present issue, this principle suggests that requiring Highly Proficient Teachers to perform instructional supervision and action research without providing dedicated workload allocation may undermine the very objectives that educational reforms seek to achieve.

The PPST expects teachers to serve as instructional leaders, mentors, and researchers. Consequently, workload policies should be designed in a manner that supports these professional functions rather than treating them as additional responsibilities outside regular working hours.

IV. Empirical Evidence: Documenting the Gap Between Policy and Reality

A policy problem becomes significant when empirical evidence demonstrates that policy objectives are not being achieved because of implementation constraints. In the case of Highly Proficient Teachers, existing literature consistently reveals that workload remains one of the most significant barriers to the performance of research, mentoring, and instructional leadership functions.

The Department of Education envisions teachers as reflective practitioners and instructional leaders. However, studies conducted in the Philippine context suggest that workload realities frequently limit teachers' ability to perform responsibilities beyond classroom instruction.

Teacher Workload and Professional Effectiveness

Tarraya (2023) found that excessive workload negatively affects teachers' effectiveness, efficiency, and overall well-being. The study revealed that teachers often struggle to balance classroom instruction with administrative responsibilities, school programs, reporting requirements, and other professional obligations. As workload increases, opportunities for reflection, innovation, and professional development become increasingly constrained.

Similarly, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, 2024) observed that public school teachers continue to experience significant workload pressures despite reforms intended to reduce administrative burdens. The report emphasized that teachers remain responsible for numerous ancillary functions that compete with instructional and professional development activities.

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II, 2025) likewise identified workload as a persistent systemic concern. Its policy brief noted that teachers continue to balance instructional duties, learner support services, school activities, documentation requirements, and program implementation responsibilities. The Commission warned that excessive workload may undermine instructional quality and reduce opportunities for meaningful professional growth.

These findings establish an important context for understanding the situation of Highly Proficient Teachers. If classroom teachers already experience workload constraints, the challenges become even more pronounced among teachers who are expected to perform leadership functions beyond regular classroom instruction.

Challenges in Conducting Action Research

One of the core expectations of Highly Proficient Teachers under the PPST is engagement in action research and professional inquiry. Action research is intended to improve instructional practice through systematic investigation of classroom problems and implementation of evidence-based interventions.

However, empirical studies reveal that teachers often struggle to conduct meaningful research because of workload limitations.

Gonzales (2025) found that teachers generally recognize the value of action research as a tool for improving instruction and learner outcomes. Nevertheless, participants identified time constraints, competing responsibilities, and heavy workloads as major obstacles to research completion. Teachers reported difficulty allocating sufficient time for literature review, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript writing while simultaneously fulfilling teaching and school responsibilities.

Similarly, Caabas (2024) found that teachers frequently experience challenges in completing action research due to insufficient time and competing professional demands.



Participants reported that research activities often extend beyond regular working hours, requiring them to work during evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Earlier findings by Ulla (2018) reinforce these observations. In a study involving Filipino teacher-researchers, participants acknowledged the benefits of conducting research but also reported significant difficulties associated with workload management. Teachers described balancing classroom instruction, graduate studies, school assignments, and research activities simultaneously. The study concluded that lack of time remains one of the most persistent barriers to teacher research productivity.

Collectively, these studies suggest that teachers are not unwilling to conduct research. Rather, the absence of protected research time makes sustained scholarly engagement difficult. Consequently, research often becomes compliance-driven rather than developmental.

Challenges in Instructional Supervision and Mentoring

The issue extends beyond action research. The PPST also expects Highly Proficient Teachers to engage in instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, and professional learning facilitation.

Research demonstrates that these functions contribute significantly to instructional improvement.

Valdez (2023) found that effective instructional supervision positively influences teacher competencies, professional growth, and classroom performance. The study emphasized that regular coaching, feedback, and professional support improve instructional effectiveness and learner achievement.

Similarly, Villanueva (2025) concluded that instructional supervision conducted by Master Teachers significantly contributes to both teacher performance and learner outcomes. Classroom observations, mentoring conversations, and coaching sessions were identified as critical mechanisms for improving instructional quality.

Despite the recognized importance of instructional supervision, empirical studies reveal that Master Teachers and Highly Proficient Teachers experience substantial difficulties in performing these functions due to workload demands.

Moral (2024) found that Master Teachers face significant time-management challenges because they simultaneously function as classroom teachers, instructional leaders, mentors, supervisors, and program implementers. The study concluded that competing responsibilities reduce the amount of time available for instructional leadership and recommended workload adjustments to support professional functions.

Likewise, Andal (2024) documented the lived experiences of Master Teachers and found that instructional supervision frequently competes with classroom teaching responsibilities. Participants described difficulties conducting classroom observations, mentoring colleagues, and providing technical assistance while maintaining their own teaching assignments.

A qualitative inquiry conducted by Ylagan (2024) among Master Teachers in Davao City reached similar conclusions. Participants reported balancing classroom instruction with mentoring, coaching, technical assistance, and instructional leadership functions. Many described extending work beyond official hours to fulfill professional responsibilities.

These studies reveal a recurring pattern: instructional leadership functions are expected but not adequately supported through workload allocation.

Manifestations of the Policy Gap in Schools

The gap between policy expectations and workload realities becomes evident in actual school practice.

Many Highly Proficient Teachers conduct classroom observations during their own teaching schedules. This often requires temporary arrangements such as leaving learners under the supervision of another teacher or scheduling observations during limited available periods.

Mentoring conferences are frequently conducted during recess, lunch breaks, or after office hours. Likewise, action research activities are commonly undertaken during evenings, weekends, and vacation periods.

These practices indicate that professional leadership functions are being performed despite the absence of dedicated workload allocation. However, they also demonstrate that the current system relies heavily on personal sacrifice rather than institutional support.

The result is a situation in which Highly Proficient Teachers are expected to fulfill expanded professional responsibilities without corresponding workload adjustments.

The evidence therefore suggests that the problem is not one of teacher competence, commitment, or willingness. Rather, it is a structural issue rooted in policy design.

V. COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS

Comparative policy analysis provides valuable insight into how other educational systems support instructional leadership and teacher professional growth.

Several high-performing education systems recognize that instructional leadership responsibilities require workload differentiation and protected professional time.

Singapore

Singapore is widely recognized for its strong educational system and robust teacher career pathways. Under Singapore's Teacher Growth Model, experienced teachers who assume leadership responsibilities receive differentiated roles and workload arrangements.

Senior Teachers and Lead Teachers are expected to mentor colleagues, facilitate professional learning, and support instructional improvement across schools. To enable these responsibilities, teaching schedules are adjusted to provide time for coaching, mentoring, lesson study, and professional collaboration.

The Singaporean model recognizes that instructional leadership cannot be effectively performed when teachers are



assigned full teaching loads identical to those of classroom teachers.

Australia

Australian educational systems likewise provide workload adjustments for teachers who assume leadership positions.

Lead Teachers and Highly Accomplished Teachers are expected to support professional learning, mentor colleagues, and contribute to school improvement initiatives. Many jurisdictions provide reduced teaching loads or designated professional time to enable these functions.

The underlying principle is that instructional leadership constitutes legitimate professional work that requires dedicated time and institutional support.

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, teachers who serve as instructional leaders, mentors, department heads, and professional development coordinators often receive timetable reductions that allow them to perform leadership functions.

The UK's workload reform initiatives recognize that effective mentoring, instructional coaching, and professional learning facilitation require protected time. Consequently, leadership responsibilities are frequently reflected in workload allocations and staffing arrangements.

Lessons for the Philippine Context

The experiences of Singapore, Australia, and the United Kingdom reveal a common principle: instructional leadership responsibilities require differentiated workload arrangements.

These systems recognize that teachers who mentor colleagues, conduct instructional supervision, and lead professional learning contribute to school improvement in ways that extend beyond classroom instruction.

The Philippine context differs in many respects. Nevertheless, the principle of workload differentiation remains applicable.

If the PPST expects Highly Proficient Teachers to function as instructional leaders, mentors, coaches, and researchers, then workload policies should provide corresponding mechanisms that enable them to perform these responsibilities effectively.

The absence of such mechanisms creates a policy inconsistency that undermines the objectives of both the PPST and the Teacher Workload Policy.

VI. THE POSITION: THE TEACHER WORKLOAD POLICY FAILS TO OPERATIONALIZE THE PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS OF HIGHLY PROFICIENT TEACHERS

The central weakness of the current Teacher Workload Policy lies not in its intent but in its scope.

DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 and DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 successfully addressed longstanding concerns

regarding administrative workload and teaching overload. These reforms represent significant progress toward improving teacher welfare and instructional focus.

However, the policy remains largely designed around the traditional conception of teachers as classroom instructors.

The PPST, on the other hand, adopts a more expansive view of teacher professionalism. Highly Proficient Teachers are expected to function as mentors, instructional supervisors, coaches, researchers, innovators, and facilitators of professional learning.

The problem arises because these expanded responsibilities are not explicitly recognized within workload allocation structures.

Consequently, Highly Proficient Teachers perform leadership functions while maintaining workloads largely identical to those of classroom teachers. This situation creates a mismatch between professional expectations and institutional support.

In practical terms, the policy expects Highly Proficient Teachers to act as instructional leaders without providing sufficient time to lead.

This contradiction undermines the objectives of both policies.

The PPST seeks to strengthen teacher leadership and professional growth. The Teacher Workload Policy seeks to improve teaching effectiveness and workload management. Yet the absence of protected professional leadership time prevents these objectives from being fully realized.

Therefore, the issue is not whether Highly Proficient Teachers should conduct action research, instructional supervision, mentoring, and coaching. These functions are already embedded within professional standards.

The issue is whether workload policies should be revised to provide the time necessary for teachers to perform these responsibilities effectively.

This paper argues that they should.

VII. COUNTERARGUMENTS AND REBUTTAL

Policy reforms often encounter legitimate concerns regarding feasibility, equity, and operational implications. To ensure a balanced analysis, it is necessary to examine potential objections to the proposed workload differentiation for Highly Proficient Teachers.

Counterargument 1: Reduced Teaching Loads May Decrease Learner Contact Time

One argument against providing protected professional leadership time is that reducing classroom teaching assignments may decrease learner contact hours and adversely affect instructional delivery.

This concern assumes that educational quality is determined primarily by the quantity of classroom instruction. However, contemporary educational research demonstrates that instructional quality is equally dependent upon teacher effectiveness, professional collaboration, mentoring, and evidence-based instructional improvement.



Instructional supervision, coaching, and action research contribute directly to improving classroom practice. Teachers who receive mentoring and professional support are more likely to implement effective teaching strategies, resulting in improved learner outcomes.

Therefore, while protected professional leadership time may slightly reduce direct teaching hours, it may simultaneously improve the quality of instruction delivered across multiple classrooms through enhanced teacher support and instructional improvement.

Counterargument 2: Workload Differentiation May Create Inequity Among Teachers

Another concern is that granting workload adjustments to Highly Proficient Teachers may be perceived as unfair by other teachers who continue to maintain full teaching loads.

However, workload differentiation already exists within educational systems. School heads, department heads, coordinators, guidance personnel, and other personnel receive differentiated assignments because they perform functions beyond direct instruction.

The proposed reform does not create privilege; rather, it recognizes the expanded professional responsibilities already assigned to Highly Proficient Teachers under the PPST.

Equity does not necessarily require identical workloads. Instead, equity requires that workloads be aligned with assigned responsibilities.

Counterargument 3: Schools May Face Scheduling Difficulties

School administrators may argue that workload differentiation could complicate class scheduling and teacher deployment.

While operational challenges are inevitable, they are manageable through strategic scheduling, workload planning, and phased implementation. The Teacher Workload Policy itself recognizes that six hours represents the maximum allowable teaching load rather than a mandatory minimum.

Consequently, administrative flexibility already exists within the policy framework.

Furthermore, any scheduling challenges should be weighed against the long-term benefits of improved instructional supervision, stronger mentoring systems, enhanced teacher development, and increased research productivity.

Counterargument 4: Existing Ancillary Time Is Already Sufficient

Some may argue that the two-hour ancillary period within the eight-hour workday can already accommodate research and instructional supervision activities.

However, ancillary time currently accommodates numerous responsibilities including lesson preparation, assessment, checking of outputs, record-keeping, communication with stakeholders, preparation of instructional materials, and participation in school programs.

VIII. EVALUATION OF POLICY OPTIONS

To address the identified policy gap, several policy alternatives may be considered.

Option 1: Maintain the Status Quo

Under this option, existing workload policies would remain unchanged.

Advantages

- No additional administrative adjustments required.
- No changes to teacher deployment and scheduling.
- Minimal implementation costs.

Disadvantages

- Existing implementation gap remains unresolved.
- Action research continues to be conducted outside official work hours.
- Instructional supervision remains constrained by teaching schedules.
- Mentoring and coaching activities remain dependent on personal sacrifice.

Assessment

While administratively convenient, maintaining the status quo fails to address the fundamental mismatch between PPST expectations and workload realities.

Option 2: Allocate Protected Research Time Only

This option would provide dedicated time for action research but would not explicitly address instructional supervision and mentoring responsibilities.

Advantages

- Supports teacher research productivity.
- Promotes evidence-based instructional improvement.
- Easier to implement than broader workload reforms.

Disadvantages

- Does not address classroom observations and mentoring functions.
- Leaves instructional supervision challenges unresolved.
- Provides only a partial solution to the identified policy gap.

Assessment

Although this option improves research engagement, it does not fully address the broader leadership functions expected of Highly Proficient Teachers.

Option 3: Institutionalize Protected Professional Leadership Time (Preferred Option)

This option would allocate one hour daily within the allowable teaching load specifically for professional leadership functions.

Suggested allocation:

- 30 minutes for instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation;
- 30 minutes for action research, innovation, and professional inquiry.

Advantages

- Addresses both research and instructional supervision concerns.
- Aligns workload policy with PPST expectations.



- Strengthens mentoring and professional development systems.
- Promotes instructional improvement across schools.
- Enhances teacher leadership and research productivity.

Disadvantages

- Requires workload restructuring.
- May require scheduling adjustments.
- Requires implementation guidelines and monitoring mechanisms.

Assessment

This option provides the most comprehensive and sustainable solution because it addresses the full range of professional leadership responsibilities expected of Highly Proficient Teachers.

For these reasons, this paper strongly recommends the institutionalization of Protected Professional Leadership Time.

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that these existing responsibilities already consume substantial portions of available work hours. Consequently, instructional supervision and action research frequently spill over into personal time despite the existence of ancillary periods.

This suggests that ancillary time alone is insufficient to support the expanded leadership functions required of Highly Proficient Teachers.

VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing analysis, the following policy actions are recommended:

Recommendation 1: Institutionalize Protected Professional Leadership Time (PPLT)

The Department of Education should revise existing workload policies to formally recognize professional leadership functions as workload components for Highly Proficient Teachers.

Recommendation 2: Allocate One Hour Daily for Professional Leadership Functions

One hour within the allowable teaching load should be reserved for:

- instructional supervision;
- mentoring;
- coaching;
- classroom observation;
- action research;
- professional inquiry.

Recommendation 3: Recognize Instructional Supervision as an Official Workload Component

Classroom observations, post-observation conferences, technical assistance, and coaching should be recognized as legitimate professional functions within workload allocation policies.

Recommendation 4: Recognize Action Research as Professional Work

Action research should be explicitly identified as a professional leadership responsibility rather than an ancillary or voluntary activity.

Recommendation 5: Develop Implementation Guidelines

The Department of Education should issue detailed guidelines covering:

- workload computation;
- scheduling arrangements;
- monitoring mechanisms;
- accountability measures; and
- documentation requirements.

Recommendation 6: Pilot the Reform

The proposed policy may initially be piloted in selected divisions and schools to assess feasibility, implementation challenges, and impact on teacher effectiveness and learner outcomes.

IX. CONCLUSION

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers transformed the role of Highly Proficient Teachers from classroom practitioners into instructional leaders, mentors, researchers, and facilitators of professional learning. These expanded responsibilities reflect contemporary understandings of teacher professionalism and recognize the importance of teacher leadership in improving educational quality.

However, the current Teacher Workload Policy remains largely grounded in a traditional conception of teachers as classroom instructors. While the policy successfully rationalizes teaching and administrative workloads, it does not explicitly provide protected time for instructional supervision, mentoring, coaching, or action research.

This omission creates a significant implementation gap between what the PPST expects and what the workload policy enables.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that teachers face substantial challenges in conducting research and instructional supervision because of competing workload demands. Comparative policy analysis further reveals that high-performing educational systems provide differentiated workload arrangements for teachers who assume leadership responsibilities.

The issue, therefore, is not whether Highly Proficient Teachers should engage in instructional leadership and research. The issue is whether educational policies provide the institutional conditions necessary for them to perform these functions effectively.

This paper concludes that the Department of Education should institutionalize Protected Professional Leadership Time for Highly Proficient Teachers. Such reform would align workload structures with professional standards, strengthen teacher leadership, enhance research productivity, and ultimately



contribute to the constitutional mandate of providing quality education for all Filipino learners.

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