

**BUILDING AND EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING THE CORE TEACHER TEAM AT  
THANH CONG SECONDARY SCHOOL, VIETNAM**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the context of educational reform in Vietnam, the development of the Core Teacher Team (CTT) is a crucial factor in meeting the requirements of the 2018 General Education Program (GEP). This study was conducted at Thanh Cong Secondary School, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi, Vietnam aiming at building and effectively utilizing the CTT to enhance the competence of teachers and the quality of education. The study proposes specific measures based on theoretical and practical foundations of Thanh Cong Secondary School, towards sustainable development of the CTT during the period 2021-2025.

**Keywords:** Core Teacher Team(CTT), General Education Program (GEP), The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), Department of Education and Training (DoET).

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Amidst significant changes in education, the role of teachers has become increasingly important, requiring more expertise and adaptability. Particularly, the implementation of the 2018 GEP at the secondary school level has set new demands for teacher competency development. The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) places special emphasis on professional development activities for teachers through various forms, with in-service training being a fundamental and crucial form. A notable innovation in current teacher training activities is the shift from centralized training to self-training and school-based training, supported by lecturers from teacher training institutions and the CTT of schools and school clusters. Under the guidance of the MoET, the Hanoi Department of Education and Training (DoET), and the Ba Dinh District Department of Education and Training (DoET), secondary schools have been directed to establish their CTT.

After more than three years of implementing the 2018 GEP at the secondary level, the CTT has effectively played its role in various school activities, especially in teacher training to meet the new program's requirements. However, several issues need to be addressed to ensure that each secondary school has a sufficiently strong and capable CTT to support teachers in effectively implementing the 2018 GEP. Specifically, criteria for selecting CTT members, the number of CTT members, and their duties are among the issues that require feasible solutions. Hence, the topic "Building and Effectively Utilizing the Core Teacher Team at Thanh Cong Secondary School, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi City, Vietnam" was researched to contribute to improving the quality of education in the new phase.

**Research Purpose**

The research aims to build and effectively utilize the CTT at Thanh Cong Secondary School to enhance the competence of the school's teachers in meeting the requirements of the 2018 GEP.

**Research tasks**

- Systematize the theoretical foundation on the CTT as a basis for research on building and utilizing the CTT at Thanh Cong Secondary School.
- Propose measures to build and effectively utilize the CTT in teacher professional development.

#### **Research object and scope**

- Research Object: Measures for building and effectively utilizing the CTT in teacher professional development.
- Research Scope: The study was conducted in the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 at Thanh Cong Secondary School.

#### **Research methods**

- Theoretical research methods: Analyzing, synthesizing, and systematizing relevant documents to construct the theoretical framework.
- Practical research methods: Summarizing experiences, research, observation, and expert methods.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Theoretical basis*

#### **Concept and criteria for selecting CTT**

CTT members at the secondary level are teachers with good moral character, professional competence, and reputation within the school. They provide advice, support, and guidance to colleagues in professional activities and professional development.

#### **Selection process for CTT members**

The selection process includes nominations from the school, approval by the District DoET, and reporting to the City DoET.

#### **Duties of CTT members**

CTT members support the development of colleagues' professional qualities and competencies, participate in compiling materials, organize scientific research guidance for students, advise on educational planning, and participate in teacher training.

#### **Necessity of building and utilizing the CTT**

Building and utilizing the CTT helps meet the professional development needs of teachers, improves the quality of the teaching staff, and enhances the quality of education. CTT members play a crucial role in supporting colleagues and creating a conducive learning environment for students.

### *Practical Basis*

#### **Characteristics and situation of Thanh Cong Secondary School**

Established in 1978, Thanh Cong Secondary School has achieved many accolades in education. The school has 37 classes with 1,566 students and 80 staff members. The teaching staff is highly qualified and responsible.

#### **Current status of the CTT**

The CTT at the school has effectively played its role in teacher training but still has limitations in selection criteria and the number of CTT members not meeting the needs.

**3. MEASURES FOR BUILDING AND EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING THE CTT AT THANH CONG SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**3.1. Measures for building the CTT**

**Measure 1: Raising awareness about teacher professional development and the role of the CTT**

To raise awareness among staff and teachers about professional development and the role of the CTT, the school has organized training sessions with the following content:

**Speakers:** Education experts with in-depth research on teacher professional development, especially authors of training materials on "Continuous Professional Development of Teachers."

**Time Allocation:** Utilizing time allocated for regular secondary teacher training to conduct these training contents.

**Training Materials:** Leveraging regular secondary teacher training materials on professional development and peer consultation posted by the MoET on the sector's website to serve the training work.

**Measure 2: Specifying CTT standards for the school**

Based on the MoET's regulations (Clause 1, Article 12 of Circular 20 by the MoET) on CTT standards, the school has specified these standards and established the CTT standards framework for the school. The detailed framework is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: CTT standards framework for Thanh Cong Secondary School**

Standard	Criteria
Degree of Meeting Professional Standards	1. Rated as "good" in the evaluation of secondary school teachers according to the professional standards for secondary school teachers. At least 5 years in the profession.
Professional Achievements and Outstanding Skills	2. Achieve one of the following titles or possess one of the following certifications or certificates: People's Teacher, Excellent Teacher, Outstanding Teacher, Outstanding Homeroom Teacher; patent, invention; city-level A-grade experience initiative, author of secondary school teacher training materials, head of secondary school teacher development projects.
	3. Skills in persuasion and cooperation with others.
	4. Skills in expressing and explaining ideas to others.
	5. Skills in encouraging and motivating others.
	6. Skills in organizing groups and managing group activities.
	7. Skills in time and resource management for task/activity implementation.
	8. Skills in political and social activities.
	9. Skills in error correction during training and practice.
	10. Skills in self-assessment, self-learning, and self-training.
12. Respect for colleagues' preferences and confidence in their abilities.	
13. Understanding colleagues' aspirations and the extent of their professional activities (knowing what and how colleagues teach and educate students); providing guidance based on colleagues' needs.	

Standard	Criteria
Guiding and Advising Colleagues	14. Ability to offer multiple options for colleagues to decide and make colleagues aware of what they need to do to improve their professional activities.
	15. Friendliness, effective communication, and good listening skills with colleagues.
	16. Sense of humor.
	17. Perseverance.
	18. Objectivity.
	19. Honesty.
	20. Subtle.
	21. Fairness.
	22. Tolerance.

**Measure 3: Designing the organizational model for the school's CTT**

**Organizational structure:** Each subject group in the school needs at least 2 CTT members. The number of CTT members will be adjusted depending on the number of teachers in the group, ensuring not to exceed 1/3 of the total number of teachers in the subject group.

**Formation of the team:** Gather CTT members from subject groups to form the school's CTT. This team will include a leader and a deputy leader, directly managed and directed by the school principal.

**Principal's responsibility:** The principal must determine the need for CTT members based on the number of subject groups and the estimated development scale of the school. The principal should identify the necessary number of CTT members to perform professional development support tasks for teachers in the school. Additionally, information on CTT supplementation sources and the ability to train and foster teachers to become CTT members is needed.

**Ensuring quantity and quality:** The principal should maximize existing resources, providing both spiritual and material conditions for CTT members to stabilize their work and effectively fulfill their roles.

**Measure 4: Directing and organizing training for CTT members on peer guidance and consultation in professional development**

**Directive perspective:** Training CTT members aims to elevate the status of teachers in the school, making them professional educators. CTT members must be able to use solid professional knowledge and rich practical experience to handle different situations reliably and appropriately for the benefit of learners and professional ethics.

**Training Program:** The training program and content for CTT members should be built based on analyzing the functions, tasks, and established CTT standards. The training content must be practical, effective, and meet the specific needs of each CTT member.

**Peer Guidance:** Incorporate peer guidance content in professional development into the CTT training program. Basic fields for peer guidance in teacher professional development include:

- **Professional:** Guide and consult colleagues on issues related to expertise.
- **Professional Practice:** Guide colleagues on detecting students' learning difficulties and help students choose study programs, extracurricular activities, and support students in overcoming personal issues related to their needs and relationships.

**3.2. Measures for effectively utilizing the CTT**

***Measure 1: Assigning tasks and organizing work suitable for each CTT member***

Assign tasks according to the plan for CTT members, helping them balance time between self-study and self-training and enabling them to proactively plan their work. The CTT members' plans, especially task functions, should be linked to practical work and specific tasks in the school's professional development activities.

***Measure 2: Expanding the scope of work for the school's CTT***

Beyond their current role as trainers in teacher training and coaching, the scope of work for CTT members is expanded as follows:

**Helping new and less experienced teachers:** CTT members must spend at least 3 hours weekly guiding and consulting new teachers. For less experienced teachers, CTT members should work with them at least once every 3 months to set work requirements, assess, and guide them in solving professional challenges. Every 6 months, CTT members should report their work results to the department heads and school leaders.

**Educational Program Development:** Participate in developing the school's educational program, designing the subject curriculum, and compiling teaching and learning materials for teachers and students.

**Research Evaluation:** Participate in evaluating scientific research results, experience initiatives, and judging outstanding teachers.

**School Management:** Encourage CTT members to participate in school management activities.

***Measure 3: Inspecting and evaluating the core teacher team (CTT) in line with the development of the team and the school's professional development activities***

**Planning the inspection:** Based on the actual professional development activities of the school's teachers and the practical assignment and organization of the CTT's work.

**Adjusting evaluation criteria:** Adjust or supplement the criteria in the standard framework according to the development of the CTT to ensure the evaluation aligns with their activities.

**Selecting inspection personnel:** Select personnel for inspection and evaluation to ensure reliable results.

**Reporting results:** Report the inspection and evaluation results, draw lessons from the inspection and evaluation of the CTT. The report must clearly state the results, strengths, and weaknesses of the inspection and evaluation process, and the direction for using these results.

## **4. RESULTS AND APPLICATION**

### **4.1. Results**

#### **Changes in the school's CTT**

The application of measures to build and effectively utilize the CTT has led to significant changes in both the quantity and quality of this team. These changes are clearly reflected in the data in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: The CTT of Thanh Cong Secondary School over 03 School Years (2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023)**

Time before research implementation (May 2021)	Results after 01 year of implementation (May 2022)	Results after 02 years of implementation (May 2023)
<p><b>In terms of quantity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Studies Group: 02/09 teachers</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 1: 02/09 teachers</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 2: 01/10 teachers</li> <li>• Arts, Physical Education, and Foreign Languages Group: 01/08 teachers</li> </ul> <p><b>In terms of quality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTT members with postgraduate education: 0</li> <li>• CTT members who have not fully performed their functions and duties: 02</li> <li>• Quality of support for colleagues' professional development: Fair</li> <li>• Participation in CTT activities: Average</li> </ul>	<p><b>In terms of quantity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Sciences Group: 03/09 teachers.</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 1: 03/ 09 teachers.</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 2: 02 /10 teachers.</li> <li>• Arts, Physical Education, and Foreign Languages Group: 01 / 08 teachers.</li> </ul> <p><b>In terms of quality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTT members with postgraduate education: 01</li> <li>• CTT members who have not fully performed their functions and duties: 0</li> <li>• Quality of support for colleagues' professional development: Good</li> <li>• Participation in CTT activities: Good</li> </ul>	<p><b>In terms of quantity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Sciences Group: 04/ 09 teachers.</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 1: 04/ 09 teachers.</li> <li>• Natural Sciences Group 2: 03/ 10 teachers.</li> <li>• Arts, Physical Education, and Foreign Languages Group: 02/08 teachers.</li> </ul> <p><b>In terms of quality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTT members with postgraduate education: 02</li> <li>• CTT members who have not fully performed their functions and duties: 0</li> <li>• Quality of support for colleagues' professional development: Good</li> <li>• Participation in CTT activities: Good</li> </ul>

**Impact on the school's teaching staff**

***Enhancing professional awareness and quality of professional activities of the school***

The school's teaching staff have a sense of self-study and improvement to enhance their professional knowledge, skills, teaching abilities, and computer application skills in their work. The school especially focuses on young teachers, identifying them as the key force in leading the school's future innovations.

Teachers have a consciousness of self-improvement according to the criteria of "Exemplary Teachers"; actively participate in the campaign "Each teacher is a moral, self-studying, and creative role model".

The movement "Teach well - Learn well" is vigorously promoted, along with campaigns such as "Democratic - Disciplined - Loving - Responsible", "Study and follow Ho Chi Minh's moral example", "Say no to negativity in exams and achievement diseases in education", and the movement "Building a friendly, proactive learning environment" which are implemented practically and effectively.

The movement "Good People, Good Deeds" is flourishing. Over the course of 3 school years, the school has had 14 teachers recognized as "Good People, Good Deeds" by the City; many articles about exemplary figures achieving high quality are acknowledged and published on the City's media channels.



Evaluation of teacher standards - professional standards, employee evaluation is carried out annually, and commendations for exemplary teachers and advanced laborers are seriously considered, with the school consistently achieving the highest recognition rates.

The evaluation results of the school's teaching staff are shown in Table 3

**Table 3. Evaluation results of teachers at Thanh Cong secondary school**

Content	Academic Year 2020-2021	Academic Year 2021- 2022	Academic Year 2022- 2023
Evaluation of civil servants	Excellent: 30% Good: 70%	Excellent: 30% Good: 70%	Excellent: 30% Good: 70%
Classification of teachers according to professional standards	Good: 85,5% Fair: 15,5 %	Good: 85,5% Fair: 15,5 %	Good: 85,5% Fair: 15,5 %
Advanced labor	Advanced labor: 100 % School level: 55% Exemplary staff: 15%	Advanced labor: 100 % School level: 70% Exemplary staff: 15%	Advanced labor: 100 % School level: 70% Exemplary staff: 15%

### ***Creating significant changes in writing activities and applying the teaching experience initiatives of the teaching staff***

During the academic year, the school's administration board organized and guided teachers to participate in educational scientific research activities, extracting teaching experience. Subject groups disseminated classified teaching experience initiatives, exchanged and applied them in lessons, encouraging teachers to engage in researching and writing teaching experience initiatives for the 2021-2022 school year.

In 2022, the School Research and Innovation Council approved 10 teaching experience initiatives from comrades who registered for the District-level Exemplary staff title. With high practicality, these teaching experience initiatives were applied by colleagues in teaching tasks, contributing to deepening the quality of the school and gaining trust from parents and society.

In 2023, the School Research and Innovation Council approved 12 teaching experience initiatives. Eight of these initiatives were submitted to the District Scientific Council for exemplary staff consideration. Teachers actively wrote and disseminated these initiatives in subject group meetings. Writing and disseminating these initiatives were done genuinely, with a significant spreading effect and high applicability, avoiding superficiality.

### **4.2. Application**

The research results have been applied throughout the school. The school's teaching staff participated in developing criteria for selecting the school's outstanding teachers. Based on these criteria, subject groups introduced outstanding teachers of the group; the School Council and administration board approved and recognized the School's Outstanding Teacher Group (including teachers recognized by the Department of Education and Training).

Subject groups listed new teachers and teachers with limited professional skills through the administration board to be transferred to the CTT group; The CTT group assigned members to develop support plans for these teachers.

Subject groups evaluated the progress of teachers supported by the CTT group in professional development. The administration board relied on the subject group's reports to assess the performance of the CTT group members.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Conclusion

The implementation of the 2018 General Education Program (GEP) has introduced numerous new requirements for the teaching staff at secondary schools. To enhance the capabilities of secondary school teachers to meet these demands, it is necessary to effectively organize professional development activities. Thanh Cong Secondary School, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi City, Vietnam has chosen to utilize the Core Teacher Team (CTT) model to support its teachers in professional development activities.

To effectively implement this model, the school has deployed several measures, including: i) Raising awareness among stakeholders about teacher professional development and the role of the CTT in the school; ii) Defining specific standards for the school's CTT; iii) Designing the organizational structure of the school's CTT; iv) Directing and organizing training for the school's CTT members on guiding and advising colleagues in professional development; v) Assigning tasks and organizing work suited to each CTT member; vi) Expanding the scope of work for the school's CTT; vii) Monitoring and evaluating the CTT in line with the development realities of the CTT and the school's professional development activities.

The results of the research application have led to significant changes in both the quantity and quality of the school's CTT. The activities of the CTT have contributed to positive shifts in the professional consciousness of the school's teachers; the activities of writing and applying experience initiatives have been promoted, and the quality of the school's professional activities has been enhanced.

### 5.2. Recommendations

The Ba Dinh District Department of Education and Training should provide more support to the school and other schools in the district regarding CTT training, especially in planning support for colleagues' professional development and skills in guiding and advising colleagues in teacher professional development.

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