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Theorizing New Pathways for Student Teachers' Professional Development (STPD)

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ABSTRACT This paper theorizes new pathways through which student teachers can develop professionally. It is a qualitative case study of a university in KwaZulu-Natal and informed by the interpretivists paradigm. The participants of the study were six final year student teachers comprising of three males and three females and data was generated using semi-structured interviews and document analyses. Data generated was analysed using grounded theory. Data was categorised into themes and the themes were analysed against the backdrop of literature. The paper proposes a one on one approach to professional mentorship for student teachers using Morrison concept of a hundred thousand theories. From the findings it is clear that professional development is a complicated process and each individual required a more individualized approach if students are to effectively develop into excellent teachers. This paper therefore, concludes that a continuous contextualized approach is needed which will ensure that student teachers develop professionally as they become teachers. It is recommended that, the drive to continuously learn and develop new ideas or theories is what will ensure that the student teacher continuously develops.