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## EdD vs PhD

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*“The professional doctorate in education prepares educators for the application of appropriate and specific practices, the generation of new knowledge, and for the stewardship of the profession.”*

– CPED Initiative EdD

Develops high-level practitioners  
Goal of dissertation is local impact and spirit of inquiry  
Theory description and application  
Primary target audience: Education decision-makers  
Sample will be selected from single site  
A question of practical importance is addressed.

Discussion must contain implications for practice that are logically derived from the study findings

Preparation of professional leaders competent in identifying and solving complex problems in education. Emphasis is on developing thoughtful and reflective scholar-practitioners  
Intended professional career: Managerial or administrative leadership in educational institutions or related organizations (e.g. educational administrator, staff developer/trainer in educational settings or curriculum director)

PhD

Develops high-level researchers  
Goal of dissertation is generalizable theory or knowledge  
Theory testing  
Primary target audience: Community of scholars

Sample may be selected from multiple sites  
Hypotheses are derived directly from a theoretical position

Discussion of the findings emphasizes the theory or theories that provided the impetus for the study

Preparation of professional researchers or scholars. Develops competence in conducting scholarship and research that focuses on acquiring new knowledge

Intended professional career: Scholarly practice, research, or teaching at university, college, institute, or educational agency

The above table is adapted from several resources available via [CPED](#).

You can watch an additional [video](#) that distinguishes the EdD from the PhD.