



Marie Alexander is a literacy specialist at MS 216 in District 12, New York City and has coached teachers since 2001. You can contact her at malexander@ufttc.org.

We help teachers to taste success

Q How do you support new teachers?

You want to support what they're doing. They get on themselves a lot, and you want to celebrate their successes. You want them to work on just one thing, such as how to transition from one activity to the next, or what can we plan to get students engaged, and then move on and keep scaffolding the learning.

You go into the classroom to provide support and talk about what you see, then you try to guide them into being more reflective thinkers and practitioners. You ask, "What worked? Where did the breakdown happen and how can we fix it?"

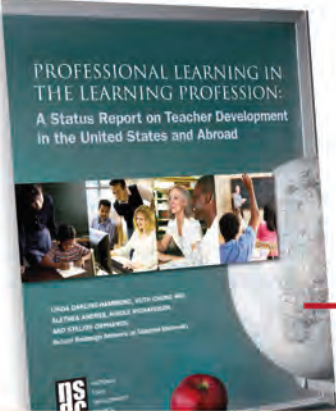
At first, since they're fresh out of college, they're thinking at a college level. I try to have them be more reflective. They have to deconstruct what they want and teach the kids the steps — don't just throw it at them and say, "Do this." They have to learn to take it slowly and teach

students the steps.

New teachers get frustrated sometimes with management. It's breaking that down into what procedures need to be put in place and helping them connect with students, helping them find ways to understand the students and learn how to communicate with them — to not take things personally. They sometimes think, "My students hate me." You have to help them think a different way. "It's not that they hate you. They're the students; you're the teacher. How can you get them to want the things that you want?"


A lot of times, they may not know what to do. You have to break it down to show them. And once they see that they can do it, then you can get them to do different things. Once they taste that success — they've got a great lesson — they're upbeat and ready to start the next day.

There was a teacher who thought about nothing but getting through the day. Now she's thinking differently. "Oh, I'm getting students to learn even more." That's an accomplishment. ♦



“Most states and districts are still not providing the kind of professional learning that research suggests improves teaching practice and student outcomes,” says Linda Darling-Hammond.

Learn more in NSDC’s recently released *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession*.



NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Download the report at www.nsd.org/stateproflearning.cfm