



Pat Roy is co-author of *Moving NSDC's Staff Development Standards Into Practice: Innovation Configurations* (NSDC, 2003).

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## Every child, every day, every opportunity

The equity standard is challenging and multifaceted. The standard is critical, however, if schools are to help every child reach a higher level of achievement. And the principal plays the central role in creating a culture in which students can reach higher expectations. Leaders play a critical role in creating teachers' sense of responsibility for student learning.

The Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona, focused on helping educators attain high levels of achievement for low-income students, set out to identify exemplary principals in low-income neighborhoods. Interviews with principals were illustrative. Betty Paterson, principal of Sunset Elementary, said it well: "Our school community works together to determine our vision and mission, in line with our district vision of 'every child, every day, every opportunity.' We set high expectations, and I strive to model those expectations, supporting and encouraging students and staff to do the same" (Kossan, 2009, February 1). This principal **communicates high expectations for herself and for all teachers and students** (Roy & Hord, 2003, p. 100).

Having high expectations means more than just having tough standards; it also means ensuring that educators have the capacity to affect student learning.

LoGerfo (2006) found that a school's environment can help forge a strong personal commitment to student learning. "Teachers who report that their school's leadership is supportive of their efforts in the classroom have a much greater sense of responsibility," according to

LoGerfo. Expectations are not enough, according to Sharon Brittingham, former principal of a high-poverty school in Delaware (in Chenoweth, 2006), who said, "It is teachers' belief in their ability to make the students successful that is key."

Recently, researchers have identified a second type of expectation called *collective efficacy*. Collective efficacy is a shared belief that the "faculty as a whole can execute the actions necessary to produce the positive outcomes for students" (Jerald, 2007, p. 3). Researchers found that collective efficacy among faculty members was a significant predictor of student achievement — a stronger predictor than student demographics. Research also found that principals can develop individual and collective efficacy among educators. Those who "actively modeled positive behaviors, who recognized and rewarded teachers' accomplishments, and who worked to inspire a sense of group purpose fostered stronger feelings of efficacy among teachers" (Jerald, 2007, p. 5).

Another avenue for building efficacy is powerful staff development that supports teachers until they have mastered new instructional strategies. This ongoing professional learning supports teachers through the implementation dip until they confidently and consistently use new strategies with high quality (Jerald, 2007).

The principal as instructional leader is responsible for working to establish both individual and collective beliefs among staff that educators make a difference for *all* students — every day and with every opportunity.

#### NSDC STANDARD

**Equity:** Staff development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students; create safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments; and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.