

How adults learn forms the foundation of the Learning Designs standard.

By Eleanor Drago-Severson

Understanding how adults learn is an essential component for shaping effective professional learning. The author illustrates how the three strands of the Learning Designs standard — apply learning theories, research, and models; select learning designs; and promote active engagement — can lead educators to create learning experiences with maximum impact.

CYCLE OF SUCCESS: Learning sequence melds disjointed activities into a streamlined structure.

By Colleen Broderick

At Mapleton Expeditionary School for the Arts in Thornton, Colo., professional learning felt disconnected and frenetic until the leadership team created a teaching and learning cycle that connects multiple learning designs into a four-week program that defines a clear path for teacher and student learning.

IN YASIR'S SHOES: A principal gains insight by shadowing an English language learner student.

By Shari Farris

Shadowing a student gives great insight into engaging and motivating English language learners toward academic success and meaningful relationships. The author offers strategies to make shadowing a purposeful and practical experience for teachers and school leaders.

In demonstration classrooms, it's show-and-tell every day.

By Karen Grose and Jim Strachan

In Toronto's demonstration classrooms, small groups of teachers observe a colleague in the classroom, then participate in a collaborative debriefing session with an instructional guide or the demonstration classroom teacher. Participants report improvements in practice and connections with colleagues as well as increased student learning.

A STATE FOR EXCELLENCE: New Jersey boosts learning power with online video resources.

By Victoria Duff, Wendy Sauer, and Sonia Caus Gleason

New Jersey bolsters its professional learning tool kit with Success at the Core, an online resource that aims to strengthen leadership teams as well as offer teachers strategies for improving instruction. The program combines videos of effective classroom practices with materials that encourage analysis, reflection, and action.

TEACHING 2.0: Teams keep teachers and students plugged into technology.

By Michelle Bourgeois and Bud Hunt

The St. Vrain Valley School District in Longmont, Colo., created the Digital Learning Collaborative, a two-year professional learning program that gives teachers an opportunity to learn how to improve instruction and increase student learning by using digital tools in the classroom.

PAUSE, REWIND, REFLECT: Video clubs throw open the classroom doors.

By Miriam Gamoran Sherin and Katherine A. Linsenmeier

By forming a video club, a group of teachers can watch and discuss excerpts of videos from their classrooms. Doing so creates common ground for discussion, provides a place for sustained reflection on classroom interaction, breaks down privacy barriers, and promotes professional community. The authors outline the benefits of a video club as well as guidelines for creating one.

FLYING SOLO: Teachers take charge of their learning through self-study research.

By Anastasia Samaras

Teachers who want total control of their own professional development can improve their practice by following this five-step plan for self-study: Write your own question, work with a critical friends team, plan new pedagogies, document and assess your research, and share what you've learned. Teacher Libbie Edwards illustrates her own self-study research project.

GRASSROOTS GROWTH: The evolution of a teacher study group.

By Dana Maloney, Terry Moore, and Monica Taylor

A teacher study group in Tenafly, N.J., that began as a grassroots professional learning community revitalizes its members, strengthening their commitment to social responsibility and helping them grow as leaders within and beyond their school district. The authors describe the group's format and process and offer strategies for forming a teacher study group.

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feature

What can motivate teachers to learn? Ask them.

By Michelle Vaughan and James McLaughlin

The authors set out to learn what type of professional learning leads to exemplary instruction. After profiling six teachers in four elementary schools, their answer became clear: Teachers' intentions had the greatest impact on change. They recommend giving teachers an increased role in decision making as the route to more productivity and innovation in the classrooms.

columns

Cultural proficiency:

Cultural liaisons serve as bridge between community and school.

By Sarah W. Nelson and Patricia L. Guerra

A science specialist and a cultural liaison team up to increase science achievement and cultural responsiveness in a Texas middle school.

Collaborative culture:

A collaborative, high-performing partnership is possible — some assembly required.

By Susan Scott and Angela Brooks-Rallins

A first-year principal shifts her school's culture by supporting her staff in conducting important conversations.

From the director:

The goals we want for students must be included in the learning designs we create for adults.

By Stephanie Hirsh

Choosing the appropriate learning design is critical to the effectiveness of any professional learning.



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