

# OVERHEARD *at the* CONFERENCE



The iPD (innovative professional development) strand at the 2012 Annual Conference offered many opportunities to hear about the pioneering work educators are doing in professional learning. While technology propels much of the innovative work highlighted, the core questions focus on learning, as these overheard snippets illustrate.

## BARRIERS TO TEACHING EXCELLENCE

“There is limited collaborative time to talk about what quality teaching looks like. Last year, I interviewed about 300 teachers around the U.S., and no one said they were satisfied with the amount of time they have to talk together about what quality teaching looks like. The fact that they determine that for themselves makes it really hard to know if they’re getting it right. It’s very important that we change that dynamic.”

— From “Learning Together,” a distinguished lecture by Pat Wasley, chief academic officer for Teaching Channel ([www.teachingchannel.org](http://www.teachingchannel.org)).

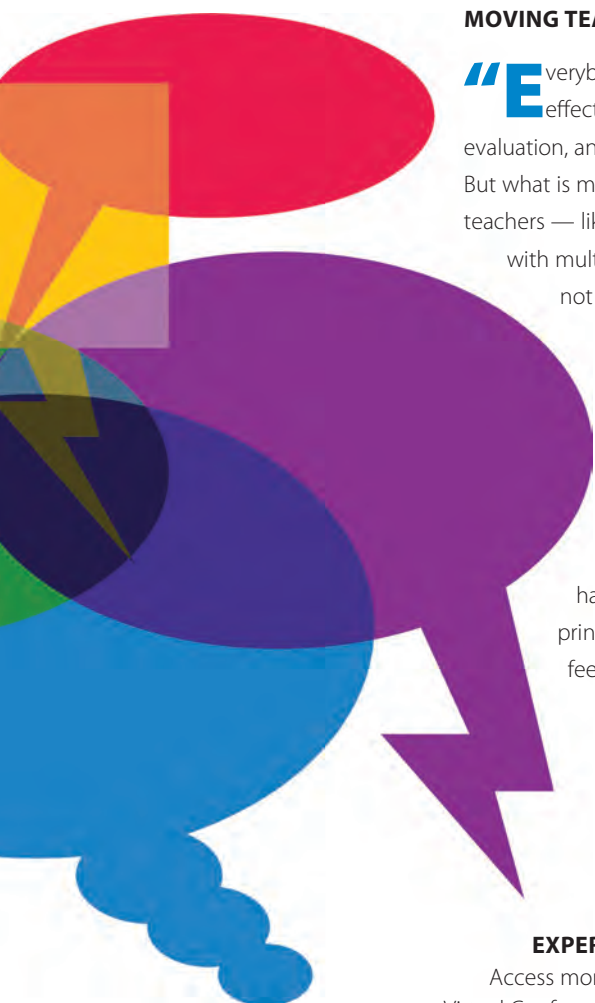
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What's  
next?



As you consider how innovative solutions will become a factor in the professional learning in your school or system, explore the questions at right with your colleagues or learning team.



**MOVING TEACHERS TO EXCELLENCE**

“Everybody talks about teacher effectiveness in relationship to evaluation, and evaluation is important. But what is more important is providing teachers — like me, many years ago — with multiple forms of feedback and not just leaving it to chance that perhaps I teach across the hall from someone who’s phenomenal. Having students actually be able to give me feedback, having peers be able to give me feedback, having thoughtful instructional principals able to give me feedback on how to [improve].”

— From keynote presentation by Irvin Scott, deputy director for effective teaching for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s United States education division.

**KNOWING WHAT EXCELLENCE LOOKS LIKE**

“Observation protocols in essence try to do the work of codifying professional practice. They provide a language and specification around the components of teaching and then provide a common technical language with which to talk about instruction. Observation protocols also break apart the work of teaching, so, for example, when we talk about organizational skills, that’s a big area.

“Part of what observation protocols try to do is break that down into the different components of what it means to organize a classroom, organize instruction, and then also what it looks like at different levels of quality.

“So observation protocols are making both distinctions about the quality of performance as well as distinguishing the different practices. And it’s those levels of quality that allow you then to compare the quality of instruction across classrooms.”

— From “Investing in Teachers: Leveraging Observation Protocols for Instructional Improvements,” a distinguished lecture by Pam Grossman, the Nomellini-Olivier Professor of Education at the Stanford University School of Education.

**EXPERIENCE THE CONFERENCE ONLINE**

Access more than 35 hours of conference video content through the 2012 Virtual Conference Archive. Members can purchase the archive for \$99 through [www.learningforward.org/learning-opportunities/virtual-conference](http://www.learningforward.org/learning-opportunities/virtual-conference).

How will innovation assist learning?

How can we create the appetite for innovation that demonstrates potential to revolutionize our practices?

What impact will innovation have on our capacity to demonstrate student results?

What will guide our technology investment decisions?

How do we see our goals evolving as we integrate more innovative solutions?

How will we rethink the concept of team as we expand our use of technology? What benefits will that bring?