essentials

PUT ASSESSMENTS TO WORK
OECD Test for Schools Implementation Toolkit
EdLeader21, 2014

Any high school interested in assessing its students' problem-solving abilities in reading, science, and math can do so with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Test for Schools. EdLeader21, a professional learning community for school and district leaders, has developed a free tool kit to support the use of the OECD Test for Schools to advance school and district transformation. The tool kit focuses on how to interpret results and tie them to school and district-based improvements for deeper learning. The tool kit includes recommendations for action and case studies from schools across the country.
www.edleader21.com/index. php?pg=27

PEER REVIEW PROCESS
Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products (EQuIP)
Achieve

This initiative is designed to identify high-quality materials aligned to the Common Core State Standards. EQuIP builds on a collaborative effort of education leaders from Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island. From that effort came rubrics and a peer review process designed to determine the quality and alignment of instructional lessons and units to the Common Core. Also available are e-learning modules, training materials, videos, and student work protocol.
www.achieve.org/EQuIP

GLOBAL VIEW
A Global Network of Teachers and Their Professional Learning Systems
Center for Teaching Quality, 2014

A team of seven teachers in six cities collaborated to document teachers' experience with professional learning systems in Denver, Colorado; Lexington, Kentucky; Seattle, Washington; Shanghai, China; Singapore; and Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Among the authors' recommendations: Rethink how teacher time is allocated; connect teacher evaluations with professional learning; establish career paths for teacher leaders; and expand professional learning offerings and access points.
www.teachingquality.org/ globalprofessionallearning

TIME FOR LEARNING
Time for Teachers: Leveraging Time to Strengthen Instruction and Empower Teachers
National Center on Time & Learning, 2014

Time for Teachers examines 17 high-performing and rapidly improving schools around the country that have taken advantage of expanded school schedules to provide students with more time for engaging academic and enrichment classes while providing teachers with more time to collaborate with colleagues, analyze student data, create new lesson plans, and develop new skills. The report includes recommendations for practitioners interested in implementing the strategies outlined in the report as well as recommendations for policymakers looking to support teacher excellence.
www.timeandlearning.org/timeforteachers

EQUAL ACCESS
**Looking at the Best Teachers
and Who They Teach**
Center for American Progress, April 2014

A review of data from the newest evaluation systems shows that poor students and students of color are less likely to get highly effective teaching.

If we want to make sure that every student has access to excellent teaching, then we need to take steps to ensure that there are high-quality teachers in every school. Solutions include identifying high-quality teachers by improving data about teaching effectiveness, increasing the reach of highly effective teachers by creating roles for master and mentor teachers to support and coach their colleagues, and improving the effectiveness of all teachers through high-quality professional learning.
http://bit.ly/1qnZckH

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES
Making Space: The Value of Teacher Collaboration
Rennie Center & EdVestors, 2014

The report documents the collaborative practices of five high-performing Boston schools that serve a range of grade levels and student populations. The authors identified structures and cultural practices that support collaboration. Across study schools, educators report that these collaborative practices have enabled them to increase academic rigor, use data to inform instruction and interventions, and better meet students' academic and nonacademic needs — all factors that directly contribute to student achievement.
http://bit.ly/1l7v7Uw

TEACHER EVALUATION
Alternative Student Growth Measures for Teacher Evaluation: Profiles of Early-Adopting Districts
U.S. Department of Education, April 2014

Administrators in eight districts that were early adopters of alternative measures of student growth were interviewed about how they used these measures to evaluate teacher performance. The study found that districts using student learning objectives chose them as a teacher-guided method of assessing student growth, while those using alternative assessment-based value-added models chose to take advantage of existing assessments. In addition, value-added models applied to end-of-course and commercial assessments created consistent districtwide measures but generally required technical support from an outside provider.
http://bit.ly/1jx5AQT