

From 'gotcha' to growth:

How principals promote learning in the context of teacher evaluation.

By Janice Bradley

The author examines the actions of principals who structured schools to create supportive conditions for teacher growth aligned to the evaluation system and empowered teachers to make decisions about selecting learning designs. These principals recognized that if teachers were to become effective as defined by their state's teacher evaluation rubric, they needed to create structures for job-embedded professional learning along with developing whole-staff capacity for shared ownership in the process.

Tell me so I can hear:

A developmental approach to feedback and collaboration.

By Ellie Drago-Severson and Jessica Blum-DeStefano

Feedback plays an important role in education. But when and where do educators learn how to give feedback, especially to adults who might make sense of others' words, feedback, and ideas in different ways? A new developmental approach intentionally differentiates feedback so that adults can best hear it, learn from it, take it in, and improve their practice.

Two sides of the coin:

Evaluation and support work together to strengthen teaching.

By Jane Kise

Like any profession or talent, mastering teaching takes thousands of hours of deliberate practice. If this is true, how can we rate teachers ineffective as they first enter a classroom or even when master teachers are developing new skills? Stakeholders need to recognize that teacher evaluation and support for teacher growth are two distinct value sets that together form an interdependent pair where each set holds a portion of the truth.

Turn on the light:

Observation tool connects teacher practice with student learning.

By Lori Renfro

In Arizona's Maricopa County, 12 districts collaborated to implement a performance-based evaluation system that supports teachers in attaining,

maintaining, and enhancing core competencies aligned to a common vision of instructional improvement. At its heart is a teacher observation tool where teachers participate in observation cycles and engage in professional learning aimed at improving classroom instruction and student learning.

Inspire learning, not dread:

Create a feedback culture that leads to improved practice.

By James L. Roussin and Diane P. Zimmerman

How professionals receive and apply feedback is the cornerstone in any system for improving teacher performance. Before systems can build a culture that embraces feedback from a growth mindset, leaders have to understand the barriers that inhibit the receipt of suggested improvements and identify the types of relationships that foster positive interpretations of comments so feedback is accepted as a way of improving professional practice.

Partners with a purpose:

District and teachers union create an evaluation system that nurtures professional growth.

By Kathleen Pham and Amanda Heinemann

Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the local teachers union created a standards-based teacher evaluation system that includes both student achievement and teacher reflection. Peer reviewers work with teachers to align their practice with educator performance standards in the teacher evaluation system. The peer reviewers facilitate professional learning through coaching, professional learning communities, lesson study, workshops, and observations.

Policy meets practice:

Districts feel the impact of state regulations.

By Helen M. Hazi and Daisy Arredondo Rucinski

Before the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, specific types of professional learning were left to local discretion. Since then, the legislation introduced a new kind of accountability in states as well as a definition of high-quality learning. States began to intervene in local policy and practice as they modified teacher evaluation statutes. Looking at trends around the country, the authors identify strategies district leaders can use to improve professional learning.

features

Top 10 learning needs for teacher leaders.

By Stephen P. Gordon, Jennifer Jacobs, and Rachel Solis

Based on their studies of and work with teacher leaders, the authors find that, while teacher leaders appreciate learning that focuses on authentic needs, they don't believe they get enough of it. They outline what teacher leaders identify as their top 10 areas of need, including interpersonal skills, knowledge of curriculum and instructional innovations, mentoring, leading reflective inquiry, and addressing diversity.



Learning to lead:

Academy experience sets Class of 2014 member on a new path.

By Kathleen O'Flynn

A member of Learning Forward Academy's Class of 2014 reflects on her experience. Kathleen O'Flynn says she has become a stronger leader, with more skills in taking risks, modeling, and placing greater value on listening and communication skills. More importantly, she understands the steps to the change process in a way that helps her know how to aid others through their own school culture changes.

When is professional learning the answer?

More often than you'd think.

By Frederick Brown

Educators face a range of challenges, and more often than not, they don't see them as professional learning issues, but instead as curriculum or discipline problems, for example. Consider how professional learning might be a solution when the questions are framed in new ways.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

ASCD	15
Corwin Press.....	inside back cover, 21
Dyknow.....	34
ENA.....	23
Heinemann.....	inside front cover
Just ASK Publications & Professional Development.....	outside back cover
My Learning Plan.....	28
School Improvement Network.....	1
Solution Tree.....	13, 19

coming up

in February 2015 *JSD*: COACHING / COACHING SKILLS

columns

Lessons from research:

Research offers little guidance on professional learning for inclusive education.

By Joellen Killion

Researchers examine the findings of a decade of research on preparing and supporting teachers to create inclusive classrooms.

From the director:

Teachers and students benefit when evaluation focuses on learning and growth.

By Stephanie Hirsh

The purpose of a teacher evaluation system must be to help teachers achieve their greatest potential — that's the bottom line.

Writing for JSD

- Themes for the 2015 publication year are posted at www.learningforward.org/publications/jsd/upcoming-themes.
- Please send manuscripts and questions to Christy Colclasure (christy.colclasure@learningforward.org).
- Notes to assist authors in preparing a manuscript are at www.learningforward.org/publications/jsd/writers-guidelines.