

JSD

THE LEARNING FORWARD JOURNAL

Resources

Second in a series on Learning Forward's standards

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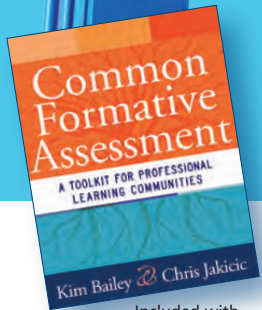
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This article is sponsored by The Wallace Foundation.



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BY STEPHANIE HIRSH



It's your choice — are you making the best one you can?

“I wish I could (*exercise more / read more / devote more time to learning*), but I just don't have time for that.”

How many times do we say something like that? And how many times do we hear it? No one has enough time to do everything he or she wants to do. Even when we know that there are certain actions we should make a regular part of our lives — for our long- or short-term health, for our careers, for the people we care most about — making a choice to change how we spend time isn't easy. Many of us can't see a pathway to make a different choice; some don't recognize there is a choice at all.

The same holds true for how we spend money. “I can't afford it” is a common refrain, both in times of economic strain and in rosier conditions.

When we do ultimately find a way to change how we spend our time or money, we've either had a dramatic shift in circumstances or we've followed the more difficult route. We've carefully examined exactly what our resources are, outlined our highest priorities, and determined how the resources can best be used to support our priorities.

According to the Resources standard, professional learning that

Tracy Crow (tracy.crow@learningforward.org) is director of publications for Learning Forward.

achieves its intended outcomes requires educators to follow that more difficult route. The examination of how resources are spent isn't just internal to a school or system; communities and policymakers are intensely interested in that discussion as well. Making the case to shift resources to prioritize professional learning isn't easy when the stakeholders involved in such a shift don't recognize the value of professional learning, or worse yet, have experienced examples of professional development that would make them believe it should never be a priority. It's difficult to counter the idea that an educator's time with students might be less important than something else, if that other use of time can't be directly connected to a better learning experience for students.

Fortunately, there are many examples of schools and systems that have undertaken the difficult task of examining how resources are spent relative to priorities and found it worthwhile to devote both time and money to professional learning. In this issue of *JSD*, you'll read about a few of those examples:

- A school in Texas, recognizing its dwindling funds for professional learning, envisions a technology solution that embeds external expertise into internal processes for educator support.
- A burgeoning teacher leader propels his mathematics professional learning community forward



through his leadership and skilled facilitation.

- A district in Washington state examines each priority for the district and devotes time and money to building educator capacity to support those priorities.
- A network of schools creates or finds time in the workweek for collaborative learning.

In addition to the rest of the issue, look online at the archive of past publications to find more examples.

Leaders who make wise resource choices take the first step by allocating and prioritizing time, money, human, and technology resources for professional learning. However, until they examine the impact of those choices, they won't know if their course of action achieved its intended outcomes. Without that information, their cycle of improvement is incomplete. They must continuously take the time to understand how their choices relate to their priorities. ■



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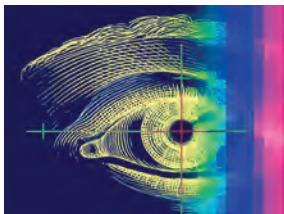


NEW VISION FOR TEACHING

Transforming Teaching: Connecting Professional Responsibility with Student Learning

Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching, December 2011

To prepare this report for the National Education Association (NEA), commission members



interviewed education experts and practicing teachers from around the country about the meaning of effectiveness.

Through these conversations and additional research, the commission draws up recommendations to strengthen the teaching profession. The commission's call to action outlines steps for the NEA, state and local teacher associations, teachers, teacher preparation programs, school districts, state education agencies, state legislatures, and the U.S. Department of Education.

[www.nea.org/assets/docs/Transforming_Teaching\(2\).pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Transforming_Teaching(2).pdf)

HEAR FROM THE EXPERTS

Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation in Improving Teacher Effectiveness

*Center for American Progress,
November 2011*

In two video presentations, leading thinkers discuss ways to increase effective teaching that work and are cost-effective. In the first video, a panel addresses the debate on the purposes and policy drivers of teacher evaluation; the second video focuses on designing evaluation systems for high school teachers. Learning Forward Executive Director Stephanie Hirsh is among the panelists.

www.americanprogress.org/events/2011/11/teacherevaluation.html

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Whole System Reform for Innovative Teaching and Learning

Michael Fullan, October 2011

Fullan examines the findings from the Innovative Teaching and Learning Research project sponsored by Microsoft Partners in Learning. This study was based on data from seven countries: Australia, England, Finland, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, and Senegal. Fullan reviews what he calls the "wrong" and "right" drivers for whole system reform, examines key findings from the research, and focuses on Ontario as a good example of whole system reform. Recommended goals include declaring a focus on describable innovative teaching practices and developing strategies for implementation.

www.itresearch.com/images/stories/reports/Whole%20System%20Reform%20for%20Innovative%20Teaching%20and%20Learning.pdf



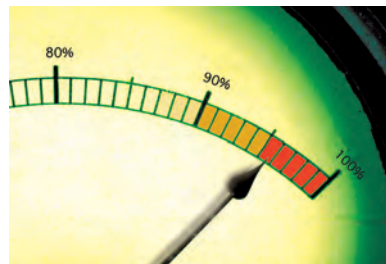
RESULTS-ORIENTED TEACHING

How Better Teacher & Student Assessment Can Power Up Learning

Washington New Millennium Initiative

Teachers in this initiative, one of several projects from the Center for Teaching Quality, draw on their classroom experiences and more than a year of research in this report, which focuses on how to create a results-oriented teaching profession. They advocate for new measures of student learning and teaching quality as well as systems that spread the expertise of effective teachers. Recommendations include a two-tiered assessment system with improved national- and state-level standardized tests; a two-tiered teacher evaluation system with improved school-level annual evaluations; and implementing results-oriented professional learning communities.

www.teachingquality.org/sites/default/files/WA_report_FINAL.pdf



EVALUATION REFORM

Prioritizing Teaching Quality in a New System of Teacher Evaluation

*American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy
Research, November 2011*

This policy brief focuses on where we are and what we need to do to develop a teacher evaluation system that will produce high-quality teaching. The authors state that we must prioritize the quality of teaching — not "teacher quality" — and insist on metrics more meaningful than the current "culture of nice" that gives 97% of teachers a rating of satisfactory or above. In addition, to address objections and shortcomings related to recent reform efforts, states and districts need to design a system of teacher evaluation that works with existing policies to improve teaching and learning. Reforming the evaluation system will bring about the greatest success through resources to help teachers improve their craft.

www.aei.org/files/2011/11/09/eduo-november-2011_130927384655.pdf

DISTANCE EDUCATION**Distance Education
for Teacher Training:
Modes, Models, and
Methods***Education Development
Center, 2011*

Whether upgrading teachers' existing skills, providing teachers with enrichment or continuing education, or helping teachers gain advanced degrees or certification, countries around the world are turning to distance education as an avenue for teacher education. This report examines programs in more than 100 nations and territories, focusing on strengths and weaknesses, examples of programs from each continent, and best practices necessary to develop a high-quality distance education program. Included are web references to existing programs and technology tools; an annotated reference section of distance-based resources; and a glossary of terms and bibliography.

<http://idd.edc.org/resources/publications/modes-models-and-methods>

**FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT****A Background Paper to Inform the Development of a National Professional
Development Network for Teachers and School Leaders***Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, October 2011*

Improving outcomes for students becomes the reason for leaders and teachers to engage in professional learning and forms the basis for judging its effectiveness. The particular challenge for leaders is to develop schools with high adaptive capacity so that ongoing professional learning becomes a planned part of the development of every professional in every school. This report outlines a framework to guide professional learning for Australia's teachers and school leaders.

www.aitsl.edu.au/verve/_resources/Background_paper_inform_the_development_of_national_professional_development_framework_for_teachers_and_school_leaders.pdf

**TACKLING TURNOVER****A System Approach to Building a World-Class
Teaching Profession: The Role of Induction***Alliance for Excellent Education, October 2011*

The authors explore the impact of induction on teacher turnover. Teachers who receive comprehensive induction report higher job satisfaction and commitment, higher levels of classroom teaching practices, and higher student achievement. The policy brief highlights induction programs that work and offers recommendations for developing policies to shape professional norms and practices across schools and districts as part of a coherent system.

www.all4ed.org/files/TeacherInduction.pdf

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HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

JSD is published six times a year to promote improvement in the quality of professional learning as a means to improve student learning in K-12 schools. Contributions from members and nonmembers of Learning Forward are welcome.

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CONNECTING THE STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

As the introduction to the Standards for Professional Learning states, “They are the essential elements of professional learning that function in synergy to enable educators to increase their effectiveness and student learning” (Learning Forward, 2011, p. 14).

STANDARDS →	Learning Communities	Leadership	Resources
<p>QUESTIONS AND LINKS</p> <p>At right are several questions that explore how the Resources standard integrates with the other six standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources do learning communities need to achieve their goals? • How can members of a learning community, working together, conserve resources for professional learning? • Which resources are most essential for the learning within the learning community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do leaders prioritize resources for professional learning? • How do leaders monitor and coordinate resources for professional learning? • How do leaders protect resources for professional learning? • What leaders serve as resources for professional learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of resources support professional learning? • What indicators provide evidence of effective resource use? • What is the decision-making process for allocating resources for professional learning? How are resources coordinated in a school or district?

IN THIS ISSUE OF JSD THE LEARNING STARTS HERE ▼

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ARE EDUCATORS FINDING TIME FOR LEARNING?

Over the past several years, Learning Forward supported a multiphase research study to examine professional learning in the United States. Phase II of the report, which drew upon 2008 data from the federal government’s Schools and Staffing Survey as well as other sources, found mixed progress. Not all educators have access to the kind of intensive learning most likely to result in student learning increases. “Studies have suggested that professional development that is sustained over time and includes a substantial number of contact hours on a single professional development focus (averaging 49 hours in one multistudy review and close to 100 in another) results in increases in student learning” (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Adamson, 2010). The average reported number of hours of professional development in the U.S. was nowhere near that level.

The chart at right shows the number of hours across four key focus areas. From 2004 to 2008, educators experienced a shift overall to professional development of shorter durations in most focus areas. The majority of teachers surveyed found the learning experiences useful or very useful; teachers rated their experiences significantly higher when they had more hours for professional learning.

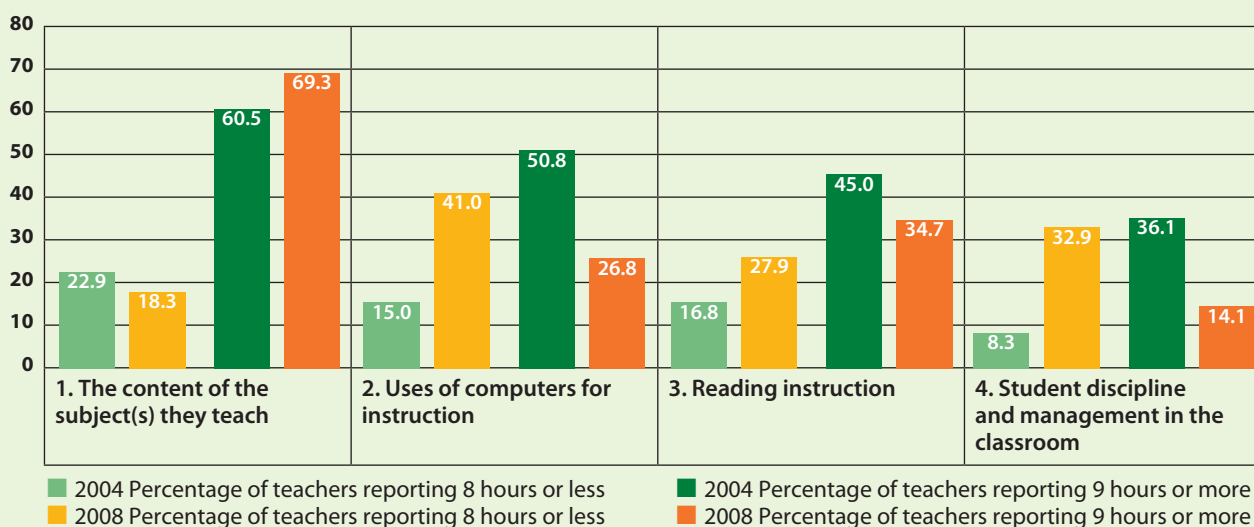
As *JSD* examines each standard individually, we will also demonstrate the key connections between and among all seven standards.

Data	Learning Designs	Implementation	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources are necessary to provide data about students, educators, and systems to inform decisions about professional learning? • What data will be needed to assess the effective use of resources for professional learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources are required for successful implementation of selected learning designs? • Which learning designs require more or fewer resources? • How does the availability of resources influence decisions about learning designs? • How can educators conserve resources with the selection of particular learning designs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When in the implementation process will more resources be needed? • How do educators ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to sustain long-term support for deep implementation? • In planning professional learning, how can educators shift their consideration of the required resources from short-term to long-term support for professional learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which resources provide easy access to information about student learning and educator performance standards to inform decisions about professional learning? • What resources help systems explicitly tie educator learning outcomes to student learning outcomes?

Source: Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: Author.

INTENSITY OF PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON FOUR TOPIC AREAS (2004 & 2008)

Percentage of teachers reporting the length of time they participated in professional development on these topics during the last 12 months



Source: Darling-Hammond, L., Wei, R.C., & Adamson, F. (2010, August). *Professional development in the United States: Trends and challenges. Part II of a three-phase study*. Oxford, OH: NSDC.

By Joellen Killion and Stephanie Hirsh



The **BOTTOM** **LINE** *on* **EXCELLENCE**



What percentage of their budgets should schools and districts invest in professional learning? To answer that question, schools and districts must first know how much they are spending on professional learning and be able to connect that spending to student achievement.

While researchers identify various ways of accounting for expenditures in professional learning (Miles, Odden, Fermanich, & Archibald, 2004; Odden, Archibald, Fermanich, & Gallagher, 2002; Killeen, Monk, & Plecki, 2002), the continuing challenge is that many school systems cannot yet identify what they invest in professional learning and do not link investments in professional learning to student achievement.

Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning include the Resources standard, which focuses on the need to prioritize, monitor, and coordinate resources for educator learning. An important aspect of this need is to ensure that expenditures focus on increasing educators'

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LEARNING THAT
INCREASES EDUCATOR
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STUDENT RESULTS**



performance and student results. After examining research and exploring how high-performing districts and companies invest in professional learning, Learning Forward is increasingly aware that what matters most is how funds are invested. With the current challenges to school funding, it is even more crucial that education agencies carefully examine what investments they are making.



WHAT DISTRICTS SPEND

What districts spend on professional learning varies greatly because of a lack of consensus about what constitutes investments in professional learning. Available examples and research on spending in professional learning report that districts spend between 1% and 8% of their operating budget on professional learning (Miles, Odden,

Fermanich, & Archibald, 2004; Killeen, Monk, & Plecki, 2002; Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Chicago Public Education Fund, 2002). Kieran Killeen, David Monk, and Margaret Plecki (2002; Sawchuck, 2010) report that “U.S. school districts do devote approximately 3% of total general expenditures to teacher professional development, which equates to an annual sum of approximately \$200 per pupil” (p. 26). ... In sum, [studies of average level of spending] demonstrate that teacher professional development expenditures are likely to be well under 10% of overall education expenditures at the school district level” (p. 30).

They add that the studies also point to intra- and interdistrict variability as well as rural and urban variability in spending. Variations are due to how expenditures are defined, calculated, and reported. As noted in a study of professional development practices, what districts report spending on professional development typically accounts for less than two-thirds of actual expenditures (Killion & Colton, 2007). Accounting for investments in professional learning requires more sophisticated accounting and greater vigilance than are currently in place in many school systems.

Some analysis of investments in professional learning in countries outside the U.S. points to variations as well, although comparisons are difficult because of reporting and accounting differences. Singapore provides 100 hours of fully paid professional learning to its teachers annually. When the United Kingdom implemented national curriculum in numeracy and literacy, education policymakers

RESOURCES:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning (*Learning Forward, 2011*).

recognized the importance of substantive professional learning to support implementation. Because resources were not abundant, the ministry repurposed human and financial resources to provide literacy and numeracy coaches, teacher training, and regional directors (Barber & Mourshed, 2007).

In addition to human and financial resources, top-performing countries such as Finland, South Korea, and Japan build time into daily schedules for teacher collaborative planning, professional learning, observing each others' teaching, and reflecting on their practice. Time in the schedule is a resource that supports professional learning, yet it is not often calculated as a cost factor in many U.S. or international school systems.

Top-performing businesses demonstrate the importance of increasing investments in learning and development. Because the methods for calculating investments vary between education and business, direct comparison is difficult. Spending on workforce learning is increasing rather than decreasing, as reported in ASTD's 2011 analysis of workplace learning and development (Green & McGill, 2011). Findings from this report reflect how companies value learning and development as a means to stay competitive in a challenging economic climate and to prepare employees and the company to meet the next phase of business opportunity.

In order to prioritize, coordinate, and monitor resources for professional learning, as required by the Standards for Professional Learning (Learning Forward, 2011), those responsible and accountable for professional learning have three core tasks to accomplish. First, they must know what they invest in professional learning. Second, they must know how decisions about investments in professional learning are made. Third, they assess if their investments are producing the returns they expect in terms of results for educators and students. Each of these core tasks is complex and requires coordination of budgeting, decision making, and evaluation. For many school systems, these complex tasks are insufficiently managed or disparately managed by so many different divisions, departments, or people that looking comprehensively across multiple areas is challenging. School systems are not intentionally mismanaging resources, but rather doing their best to meet the multiple demands for accountability when the budgets come from many different sources.

Technology is rapidly growing as a resource schools and districts tap to support professional learning. When used wisely, technology has the potential to increase collaboration among educators, access to learning opportunities and materials, variety of learning designs, personalization, and management efficiency. Decisions to invest in technology to support professional learning require careful deliberation to ensure that the technology

actively engages learners through interactive learning processes to acquire knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, and develop dispositions.

FUNDING SOURCES

Knowing what is invested in professional learning requires understanding the multiple sources of funding for professional learning, how those funds are dispersed, how the funds are coded, and who manages the expenditures.

Resources for professional learning primarily come from four sources. These sources include federal government, state/provincial/regional government, local government, and external agencies. (See table on p. 13 for details about federal funding.) In countries other than the U.S., ministries of education establish both categorical and special funding for innovations such as the Literacy and Numeracy Initiative in United Kingdom primarily by reallocating resources from other initiatives.

States, provinces, or regions provide the second source of funding for professional learning either through per-pupil, employee, or district categorical, noncategorical, or grant funding. States also provide funding through their own discretionary funding. In the U.S., a third source of funding for professional learning is locally raised tax dollars. A fourth source of funding for professional learning comes from external agencies, including private, public, and corporate foundations as well as other nonprofits. These dollars are typically awarded to support a particular initiative and may not be available for reallocation to other priority areas.

To understand fully what schools and school systems invest in professional learning, it is crucial to know the source of funds invested in professional learning and the parameters for expending those funds.

CATEGORIZING EXPENSES

Understanding what is invested in professional learning requires consensus on what constitutes an expense, consistency in coding expenditures, and sophisticated accounting systems that can aggregate and analyze expense categories across multiple income areas by program, school, or income source. Adequate accounting systems increase districts' and schools' ability to analyze, prioritize, coordinate, and monitor resources for professional learning.

Allan Odden and his colleagues (2002) provide one example of categorizing expenditures in professional learning. While their descriptions of expenditures may not be universally applicable, improving the return on investments in professional learning requires districts and even federal, regional, or grant-making agencies to reach consensus about what constitutes an expense in professional learning and how to account for those expenses. For example, Odden et al. recommend structuring costs for professional learning into these five categories.

1. Teacher time used for professional learning: Includes

Spending on workforce learning is increasing rather than decreasing, as reported in ASTD's 2011 analysis of workplace learning and development (Green & McGill, 2011).

FEDERAL SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Many federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education, National Science Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, offer grant funding to improve educator effectiveness. Included here are several details about federal funding.

— M. René Islas, Director, Center for Results

REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Communications and Outreach. (2011, September). *Guide to U.S. Department of Education programs.* Washington, DC: Author. Available at www2.ed.gov/programs/gtep/gtep.pdf.

U.S. Department of Education. (2011, June). *A summary of highly qualified teacher data.* Washington, DC: Author. Available at www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/resources.html.



The U.S. Department of Education offers more than 40 multimillion-dollar formula and discretionary grant programs that fund professional learning for Pre-K-12 educators.

- **Formula grants** go to grantees on the basis of a predetermined formula. State educational agencies usually receive these funds and in turn subgrant them to local educational agencies and schools. These often considered state-administered programs, though the funding is federal.

- **Discretionary grants** are awarded on a competitive basis.

The two largest federal programs that provide consistent formula funding for states, districts, and schools for professional learning are: Title I, Part A — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, and Title II, Part A — Improving Teacher Quality State Grants.

- **Title I, Part A** has provided nearly \$14.5 billion per year since 2009 to state and local educational agencies for various activities. Title I, Part A schoolwide and targeted assistance programs stipulate that districts and schools receiving these funds “devote sufficient resources” for professional development. The program also requires that schools that fail to meet adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years must reserve at least 10% of Title I, Part A funds for professional development (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Communications and Outreach, 2011).

- **Title II, Part A** is the most direct source of federal funding for professional development. The program has provided states, districts, and schools \$20 billion since 2005 for activities that improve educator quality. The average individual Title II, Part A grant award for 2011 was \$42 million, with some grantees receiving up to \$268 million.

The U.S. Department of Education commissions an annual study of how grantees use Title II, Part A funds to improve teacher and leader effectiveness. The 2010-11 study finds:

- **97%** of school districts received Title II, Part A funding in 2010-11, with the highest-poverty and largest districts receiving the majority of the funds.

- **There are more than 10** allowable uses of Title II, Part A funds but professional development and class-size reduction are the two most common uses of the funds.

- **66%** of districts use the funds for professional development with 9% of all districts spending all of their funds for teacher professional development (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

both time within and outside the normal school day for collaborative and individual planning, days set aside for professional learning, and time outside the contract for professional learning.

2. **Training and coaching:** Includes the costs for staff for professional learning, school and district coaches, consultants, registration fees, tuition, and stipends for master teachers, team facilitators, grade or department chairs when their primary purpose is to facilitate professional learning.
3. **Administration of professional development:** Includes district or school staff responsible for supervising or administering programs for professional learning, learning management, and other support staff who manage the professional learning.
4. **Material, equipment, and facilities:** Includes equipment such as technology, maintenance, or rental of facilities used for professional learning, subscriptions, books, or other materials needed for professional learning.
5. **Travel and transportation:** Includes staff and consultant travel for professional learning both within and outside the district.

Since time is the greatest portion of investment in professional learning, understanding what time is currently available for professional learning and analyzing its use and effectiveness are first steps in increasing the effectiveness and results associated with time available. This analysis can lead to recommendations on how to leverage and improve the use of time for professional learning and common guidelines for coding time expenditures to increase comparability across districts and schools.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide districts and schools in allocating and assessing resources in professional learning. For many districts and schools, these principles require a shift from how they have traditionally supported professional learning to emphasize structures and policies that lead to practices linking educator learning to student learning.

- **Build individual and collective expertise.**

Higher-performing countries tout their commitments to prioritizing collective expertise. They are clear that equity demands educators share collective responsibility for the success of all students. This is translated in the form of higher standards for membership in the profession and accountability to peers and results for all students. Companies, too, recognize the importance of building internal expertise and collaborative environments to support collaboration among employees. A core competency of high-performing educators at the school and system levels shows a commitment to building colleagues' expertise to minimize classroom-to-classroom and school-to-school variance in instruction and learning. Placing the development of collective as well as individual expertise as a criterion

for decisions about resources for professional learning will lead to broad-based improvement efforts that will cultivate ongoing improvement among teams of colleagues.

- **Advance school and system vision and goals.**

Higher-performing school systems and countries have powerful alignment between school and system vision and goals. Resources for professional learning are allocated in a coordinated way to increase effectiveness and efficiency in attaining both a school system's and an individual school's vision and goals. District central office staff coordinates cross-school collaboration and professional learning when individuals, teams, or whole-school faculties share common needs and goals. Professional learning disconnected from school system and school goals is given secondary status and even eliminated when funding for professional learning is lean.

- **Tap expertise of internal and external experts.**

High-performing companies and school systems rely on both internal and external experts for success. Relying too heavily on internal experts minimizes access to research or emerging ideas and competitiveness among peers. Depending too heavily on external experts alone can be costly, increases dependency, minimizes internal capacity building, and is frequently suspended when budgets decrease.

- **Reward contributions, performance, and results.**

In many school systems, there is a practice of awarding stipends for achievements, such as National Board certification or completion of selected courses. There is considerable debate on the benefit of these extra payments to educators. Leveraging these expenditures to ensure they are tied to demonstration and application of new knowledge and skills and impact on classroom performance strengthens the purpose and impact of the investment.

- **Provide comprehensive professional learning.**

A lack of comprehensive professional learning is the norm in too many school systems. Resorting to introductory or awareness-building sessions in lieu of comprehensive support for learning, implementation, and refinement of new practices diminishes the impact of professional learning. Rather than continuing to address multiple priorities, districts that focus on those priorities closest to student learning and prioritize implementation support maximize resources. Districts would benefit from identifying which awareness-level professional learning efforts are nonessential and can be eliminated, and redesign those that are essential for maximum impact.

- **Invest in teachers, support staff, and administrators.**

Research has shown that school leadership is second only to classroom teaching in ensuring student achievement. Within

most school principal job descriptions is expectation to support instructional improvement. Yet few districts develop and implement comprehensive professional learning for principals and other key district staff members. A well-prepared and supported principal is one more important resource for professional learning. In addition, districts and schools must ensure that all support staff meet performance expectations and provide top-level service to students, their families, educators, and community members.

- **Support both collaborative and formal learning.**

In many school systems, what is considered professional learning is only formal or more traditional forms such as training courses, workshops, or conferences, often described as adult pullout programs. Many district and school leaders pay less attention to collaborative learning as formal learning. In studies of workplace learning and of professional learning in high-performing countries, more learning occurs through collaboration with colleagues, just-in-time learning, or modeling in practice. While it is often difficult to quantify less formal learning, it is as important and constitutes a large portion of a school's or district's professional learning program. Collaborative learning occurs during peer observation, instructional rounds, collaborative planning, lesson or book studies, or problem-solving sessions, among other forms. Both formal and collaborative professional learning are necessary to achieve school and district goals for increasing educator effectiveness and student achievement.

- **Differentiate support for educators at various career and performance stages.**

Professional learning frequently follows the one-size-fits-all formula. Yet over the years as the work of educators became increasingly more sophisticated, this approach to professional learning is no longer viable. Providing different options for achieving professional learning outcomes can accomplish two ends. It meets the needs of participants and reduces the overall cost. For example, if teachers can demonstrate mastery of differentiated instruction, why are they required to participate in training on differentiation? Perhaps they provide demonstration classrooms or support to peers as a way of extending their own learning and that of their peers.

There are multiple ways to differentiate learning for educators to align with their career stages, career goals, and performance level, yet many school systems are not providing this level of differentiation as a core part of their comprehensive program for professional learning.

- **Allocate resources to schools and departments based on a weighted formula.**

School systems typically allocate professional learning funding to central office departments and schools. In many districts, formulas are used to allocate funding rather than need. While

a simple formula such as a per-pupil allocation for professional learning may be easy, it is not always equitable if student learning needs differ among schools or because of district program goals. Weighted formulas allocate funds for professional learning to identified need areas such as poverty, English language learners, underperforming students, novice staff or those needing improvement, percentage of special needs students, etc.

- **Expend resources on authentic professional learning.**

Authentic professional learning is frequently confused with informational meetings, gatherings of specific groups, or routine tasks. For example, the back-to-school convocations and celebratory events are not legitimate expenditures for professional learning. Meetings to update, share, or review procedures, policies, or regulations are not professional learning; rather, they are information sharing frequently required by state or district regulations. Districts might look for alternative ways to conduct information sharing, such as through video streaming or web conferences and pay for celebrations from more appropriate budgets. This will allow districts to reallocate resources toward authentic professional learning focused on substantive improvement of educator performance and student results.

Research has shown that school leadership is second only to classroom teaching in ensuring student achievement.

- **Align professional learning to individual, team, school, and system improvement goals.**

Districts that provide resources to support individual professional learning plans with goals disconnected from school and district goals waste resources. Establishing parameters for individual, team, and school professional learning plans that use the district and school vision and goals as the focus accelerates achievement of the vision and goals. Through careful alignment, individuals, teams, and schools can streamline resources and efforts to achieve a small number of high-priority goals rather than diffusing resources and effort across numerous individual goals.

- **Employ technology to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and results.**

Technology solutions for professional learning have emerged rapidly in the last two decades. Early solutions increased the efficiency of knowledge acquisition primarily through passive learning processes. Emerging solutions have the potential to reach well beyond efficiency to increase effectiveness and results as well. To achieve these ends, technology solutions must create dynamic, personalized, and collaborative learning experiences that address needs identified from analyzing student and educator data.

- **Build schedules to include time for ongoing collaborative learning.**

Time is one of the most significant resources available for professional learning. How time is scheduled reflects a school system's or school's beliefs about professional learning. For example, a few occasional days for professional learning scattered throughout a school year sends a message that professional learning is an occasional rather than ongoing part of an educator's work. Creating a schedule that incorporates district, schoolwide, team, and individual time must begin with establishing parameters and agreements about professional learning.

For example, not every school or even every teacher needs to have the same schedule. Novice teachers might have a slightly shorter workday to provide flexibility for more professional learning. Teams of teachers working with students might meet several times per week or weekly based on the learning needs of students, the curriculum, their instructional sophistication, and student results. Building schedules with time for collaboration as an essential rather than add-on condition leads to better results. Time for professional learning does not mean that students are away from school. New and even more effective forms of professional learning, such as coaching and collaboration, can occur while students are learning alongside educators. Altering the structure of the school day, adding time to the school day, using extended learning, scheduling elective classes, differentiating class size, and partnering with community resources open

more possibilities to including frequent, ongoing time for professional learning within the school day without diminishing student learning time.

LINK INVESTMENTS TO LEARNING

Accountability for investments in professional learning requires clear accounting, ongoing analysis of data on investments in, quality of, and results from professional learning, and strategic, continuous improvement effort. In the field of professional learning we lack two essential factors to improving accountability for investments in professional learning: consensus on what constitutes an expense and on what level of investment is needed to produce a return. Taking small steps within school systems to determine current investments for adequacy, analyze those investments for returns, and improve accounting systems so that they provide accuracy and cross-funding stream analysis will improve both the effectiveness and results of professional learning. District efforts to link learning management systems to educator and student data and investing in rigorous evaluation

of initiatives with significant amounts of professional learning are beginning to change how districts think about the role of professional learning in improvement efforts. Without commitment to improve data available about professional learning investments, it will continue to be difficult to answer questions about how much is invested in professional learning and determine whether it is enough to improve student and educator performance.

Using the accounting system recommended by Odden et al. and the tool on pp. 17-21, districts will be better able to connect their investments in professional learning to results for students. Ultimately, as Sawchuk concludes, "The bottom line is that truly focusing professional development requires administrators to figure out where their dollars are spent, whether those patterns align to strategic goals for teacher improvement, and, if not, institute changes to the spending" (2010, p. 16).

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Without commitment to improve data available about professional learning investments, it will continue to be difficult to answer questions about how much is invested in professional learning and determine whether it is enough to improve student and educator performance.

Analyze and plan professional learning investments

The questions and guidelines below will help educators structure discussions and reflections about resource use.

PURPOSES:

- Determine what current investments are made in professional learning.
- Determine adequacy (as measured by results achieved) of investments in professional learning.
- Establish guidelines for effective investments in professional learning.
- Maintain accountability for investments in professional learning.
- Improve results from investments in professional learning.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRIORITIZING, MONITORING, AND COORDINATING RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Understanding the sources of funding for professional learning, how those funds are allocated, who is accountable for them, and how they may be used builds accuracy and consistency into the budgeting process for professional learning.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

General fund: How are funds allocated, i.e. per pupil, employee, initiative, school/unit, etc.?

Private/public grants: How are funds allocated, i.e. per participant, program, activity, school/unit, etc.?

Block grants (federal, state, or local, i.e. Title I, II, A, B, D, Workforce Development, Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture, Perkins, etc.): How are funds allocated, i.e. per pupil, school/unit, etc.?

ACCOUNTABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUND MANAGEMENT

- Who manages and supervises each fund? What specific person/role is responsible and accountable for managing funds once they are allocated?
- What parameters are in place to ensure coherence, coordination, quality, and effectiveness of investments in professional learning? Who is responsible for these areas?
- What assumptions/beliefs guide investments in professional learning?
- What guidelines are in place to ensure that expenditures in professional learning are based on research, standards, and best practices in professional learning?

APPROVED COSTS/EXPENDITURES

- What costs/expenditures are approved for the allocated funds for professional learning? How do those costs/expenditures vary by fund source?
- What budget codes represent each of the approved expenditures? Do definitions exist that define what expenditures are coded to each code? To what degree is there consensus about these approved expenditures? To what degree is there consistency in the coding of the costs/expenditures? How often are accounts audited for accuracy and consistency?

POSSIBLE EXPENDITURE/COST CATEGORIES FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Establishing consistent cost categories for professional learning allows for cross-program, school, or district analysis of financial resources. Odden, Archibald, Fermanich, and Gallagher (2002) suggest the categories on p. 20.

A COST STRUCTURE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cost element	Ingredient	How cost is calculated
Teacher time used for professional development	Time within the regular contract	
	When students are not present before or after school or on scheduled inservice days, half-days, or early release days.	Teachers' hourly salary times the number of student free hours used for professional development.
	Planning and collaboration time.	Not included as a cost; coded as costs for elective teachers.
	Time outside the regular day/year	
	Time after school, on weekends, or for summer institutes.	Stipends or additional pay based on the hourly/daily rate that teachers receive to compensate them for their time.
	Released time provided by substitutes.	Substitutes' wages.
Training and coaching	Training	
	Salaries for district trainers.	Sum of trainer salaries, consultant fees, comprehensive school design contract fees, conference fees, and tuition reimbursement for university training.
	Outside consultants who provide training.	
	Coaching	
	Salaries for district coaches, including on-site facilitators.	Sum of instructional coach/facilitator salaries and benefits OR consultant fees.
	Outside consultants who provide coaching.	Consultant fees or comprehensive/turnaround school design contract fees.
Administration of professional development	Salaries for district or school-level administrators of professional development programs.	Salary for administrators times the proportion of their time spent administering professional development programs.
Materials, equipment, and facilities used for professional development	Materials	Materials for professional development.
	Equipment	Equipment needed for professional development activities.
	Facilities	Rental or other costs for facilities used for professional development.
Travel and transportation for professional development	Travel	Costs of travel to off-site professional development.
	Transportation	Costs of transportation within the district for professional development.

Source: Adapted from Odden, A., Archibald, S., Fermanich, M., & Gallagher, H.A. (2002, Spring). How to figure the cost of professional development: Framework compares costs across a variety of initiatives. *JSD*, 23(2), 53-58.

Guidelines for allocating resources for professional learning

Discuss these questions related to the guiding principles for allocating resources.

Build individual and collective expertise.

- How much time have we allocated for individual and collective expertise?
- How do we increase time available for collaborative learning?
- How do we develop facilitators who will support collaborative learning?
- How are we supporting educators to spread effective practices throughout a school and district?

Advance school and system vision and goals.

- To what degree is there tight or loose alignment between system and school visions and goals?
- How does individual, team, and school- and districtwide professional learning support attainment of the vision and goals?
- What professional learning can be eliminated or redesigned to increase coherence and alignment with school system and school goals?
- How can we repurpose time and funding to focus on priority areas?

Tap expertise of internal and external experts.

- How are we allocating funds toward internal and external capacity building?
- If high-performing companies are currently investing 70% of their resources for professional learning internally and 30% externally, how do we compare?
- Are we moving toward an environment where internal

capacity building focuses resources on developing the expertise of internal staff who will then facilitate professional learning of others rather than using the expertise of external consultants to facilitate professional learning?

Reward contributions, performance, and results.

- What rewards are available for professional learning?
- What accompanying expectations do these rewards carry?
- Have the criteria for granting the rewards been collaboratively established with broad-based input from employee groups who will benefit from the rewards?
- What accountability systems are in place to ensure the rewards are fairly awarded?
- Are there ways to leverage these rewards to increase their impact on educator performance and student success?

Provide comprehensive professional learning.

- To what degree does professional learning meet the criteria of effective professional learning as identified by the Standards for Professional Learning?
- To what degree do current professional learning initiatives include support to build knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices?
- How essential is any professional learning that does not provide support to build knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practice?
- What professional learning currently fails to provide support for implementation?
- How essential is this professional learning?

- How can it be redesigned to include support for both learning and implementation?
- What professional learning can be eliminated so that resources can be reallocated to provide comprehensive professional learning rather than merely introductory professional learning?

Invest in teachers, support staff, and administrators.

- To what degree are principals getting the support they need to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as leaders of professional learning?
- Are there dollars supporting others to fulfill these responsibilities that can be reallocated to investing in principal development?
- Are adequate funds allocated to supporting professional learning for support staff, particularly those providing direct support to students and those with key roles in supporting families, educators, or community members?

Support both collaborative and formal learning.

- Where is informal learning occurring in schools and the school system?
- What support and resources are allocated to improve the immediacy, quality, and results of informal learning?
- How do schools and school systems account for investments in informal learning?
- How do they monitor the results of informal learning?
- Who is responsible for resources allocated to informal learning?

Differentiate support for educators at various career and performance stages.

- How is professional learning differentiated to support educators at various career and performance stages?

- What specific resources are used to support differentiation, e.g. coaching, options for alternative learning, advanced learning opportunities, differentiated roles and responsibilities, etc.?
- How are educators who have demonstrated mastery supporting the development of their colleagues?
- How does the system account for costs in providing differentiated professional learning?

Allocate resources to schools and departments based on a weighted formula.

- How does the school district allocate funds for professional learning?
- How does the formula or process for allocation account for differing levels of needs among schools, their students, and staff?
- How are funds allocated to central office departments for professional learning?
- How do those allocations account for district goals, vision, and priorities?
- How do central office staff budget their allocated resources to serve learning needs associated with the school system's goals, vision, and priorities?
- What accountability measures are in place to measure and monitor results from expenditures in professional learning?

Expend resources on authentic professional learning.

- What whole-school or district events for information sharing or celebrations are currently paid for from funds professional learning?
- To what degree do these events meet the criteria of authentic professional learning, i.e. is their intent to improve educator performance and student success; do they meet the Standards for Professional Learning, etc.?

- How else can these events be supported through technology to minimize cost or alternative funding perhaps from corporate or community sponsors if they are deemed essential?
- To what degree are these essential to the core function of school systems?
- How can we redesign meetings that are typically information sharing as authentic professional learning?

Align professional learning to individual, team, school, and system improvement goals.

- What parameters are in place that ensure alignment of individual, team, and school professional learning with school system and school vision and goals?
- Who monitors individual, team, and school professional learning plans and expenditures to maintain alignment, monitor effectiveness and results, and make recommendations for improvement?
- What proportion of resources for professional learning is allocated to individual, team, school, and district professional learning?
- Does this allocation ratio reflect the district's beliefs about professional learning, provide the greatest leverage for improvement in performance and student results, build a collaborative culture, support implementation of the Standards for Professional Learning, and support differentiation?
- How can the ratio be adjusted to achieve better results for students and educators?

Employ technology to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and results.

- What technology solutions are available for professional learning?

- To what degree do the technology solutions support increased access to learning opportunities, greater efficiency, and variety of learning designs?
- To what degree do they create personalized or collaborative learning experiences?
- Are technology solutions informed by the analysis of student and educator data?

Build schedules to include time for ongoing collaborative learning.

- What time is currently available that can be repurposed for professional learning within existing guidelines for time use?
- To what degree do existing guidelines for time use support or hinder the desire to have time for ongoing collaborative learning?
- Which guidelines create the greatest challenges to creating time for professional learning? How can they be changed?
- What beliefs guide the current allocation of time for professional learning?
- What beliefs about professional learning do we want to guide the allocation of time for learning to educators?
- Is the existing time for professional learning producing the results we want or supporting educators in meeting district, school, team, and individual goals?
- What small changes can lead to more time for professional learning?
- Will these small changes be adequate to achieve the vision and goals?



841 SQUARE MILES *of* COMMITMENT

DISTRICTWIDE PLAN MAKES PROFESSIONAL LEARNING A PRIORITY

By Nancy Ames Slabine

Without adequate time and resources, it is impossible for school districts and schools to support professional learning that leads to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results. That's why one of the seven new standards in Learning Forward's Standards for Professional

Learning (Learning Forward, 2011) focuses specifically on resources. The Resources standard states: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

For the last eight years, Duval County (Fla.) Public Schools has focused its school improvement efforts on enhancing professional learning. Although its annual budget has grown by only 9% since 2003-04, the amount of funding for professional development has nearly doubled during that same period. As a result, teacher practice and

student achievement have both improved. It hasn't been easy, however. The district's 7,300 teachers serve a large student body spread over 841 square miles and four clusters, and 800 to 1,000 new teachers enter the system each year. Moreover, this year, the district experienced a \$97 million shortfall in its overall budget, although it still managed to retain most of its professional learning resources. For all these reasons, Duval County Public Schools serves as a model for others seeking to find adequate time and resources for professional learning.

Dawn Wilson, the district's executive director of professional development, believes that finding these resources is more important than ever because of two national trends. "First, education is increasingly recognized as the major currency of the 21st century, and our schools are the key to an educated electorate and to economic prosperity," Wilson said. "To ensure equity in education, educators will need to improve their practice continuously through professional learning." Second is the increasing emphasis on teacher quality. Wilson believes that educators will seek opportunities for professional learning to enhance their instructional practice and improve student performance. Further, she notes, "when teacher compensation is tied to student success, adequate and equitable resource allocation becomes increasingly important."

Duval County Public Schools has a longstanding commitment to professional learning. By approving the NSDC standards in 2005 and the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning in 2011, the school board recognized that policy was essential to moving the standards into practice. Board adoption of the standards increased public awareness that the investment in professional learning means high expectations for quality teaching and improved student performance. It also signaled the board's strong commitment to learning designs that integrate theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

FUNDING

According to a report by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, "In order to ensure the effective implementation of high-quality professional development, states and districts must have a plan for financing

the costs of professional learning activities" (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011). Florida's Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol states districts must provide sufficient financial resources to conduct the professional learning that faculty in the district need (Florida Department of Education, 2010).

The amount of funding for professional learning in Duval County has grown from \$19.9 million in 2003-04 to nearly \$38.3 million in 2010-11 (see table below). As a percentage of the total budget, this figure has risen from 2.10% to 3.66%.

The district has been able to achieve this level of funding for professional learning despite significant budget shortfalls for three major reasons:

1. The district views professional learning as a top priority. One of its core beliefs is that "high-quality teachers, supported with high-quality, ongoing professional development, must drive our rigorous, intellectually and

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

Duval County Public Schools

SCHOOL YEAR	TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES *	% OF TOTAL
2003-04	\$951,117,800	\$19,949,207	2.10%
2004-05	\$1,000,419,319	\$29,833,249	2.98%
2005-06	\$1,090,396,257	\$31,962,937	2.93%
2006-07	\$977,194,172	\$33,652,788	3.44%
2007-08	\$1,017,532,009	\$37,326,887	3.67%
2008-09	\$1,012,269,221	\$37,799,841	3.73%
2009-10	\$1,027,831,047	\$39,530,587	3.85%
2010-11	\$1,046,082,332	\$38,275,731	3.66%

*These numbers underestimate the total cost of professional learning in Duval County because they only cover the costs of professional development for teachers, not for administrators or noninstructional personnel.

Source: Duval County Public Schools.

artistically challenging curriculum.” (Duval County Public Schools, 2012a). Therefore, it allocates a relatively large portion of its own resources to professional learning activities. In fact, in a recent study of resource allocation in several large urban districts, researchers discovered that Duval County spends the lowest amount of its funds on district management and the highest on instruction, including professional learning (Travers & Ferris, 2011).

“Collaboration results in high-performing networks of professionals, including parents and community members, with collective responsibility for greater student learning and achievement.”

— Dawn Wilson, executive director for professional development

2. The school system coordinates all its professional learning resources.

These include funds from federal programs such as Title I, Title II, Title III, Title V, and Race to the Top; state funds including the Supplemental Academic Initiative; and funds for Exceptional Student Education.

3. It seeks competitive grants and additional funding from a range of sources.

For example, the district applied for and received a five-year, \$9.6 million Teacher Incentive Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Education. By the end of the grant, it will have served more than 2,600 teachers

and principals in 36 of the district’s highest-need schools, affecting nearly 30,000 students. It also received a major Smaller Learning Communities Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, Duval County has received funding from national foundations and several local foundations and high-profile businesspeople over the years. In fact, a recent Fordham report naming Jacksonville the fifth-best city in the nation for school reform cites the high level of civic engagement as a key resource given low public funding (Hess, Palmieri, & Scull, 2010). Wilson asserts that “during a time of diminish-

ing resources, public-private partnerships are critical to leverage resources.”

HUMAN RESOURCES

The district’s vision for professional development states:

“All Duval County Public School stakeholders share a collective responsibility to participate in continuous professional learning resulting in increased and sustained achievement of all students” (Duval County Public Schools, 2012b).

This means that professional learning is facilitated by a combination of district and school coaches and mentors; teachers and teacher leaders; administrators at the district, regional and school level; noninstructional personnel, and consultants and other external service providers. The pie chart below shows the distribution of professional development funds for 2009-10 across the major service providers, a pattern that holds true for 2011-12.

SCHOOL-BASED PERSONNEL

Nearly seven in 10 dollars are devoted to school-level professional learning, primarily to support school-based coaches and mentors. This distribution of resources reflects the district’s commitment to keeping learning primarily at the school level and the fact that each school is required to develop its own professional development plan that encompasses planning, learning, follow-up, and evaluation (Duval County Public Schools, 2012c).

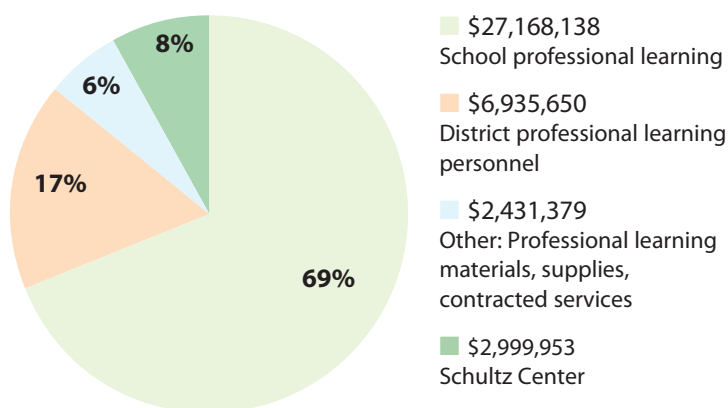
The highest-need schools in the district are designated as turnaround schools based on a complex set of criteria, including performance on state assessments and status on Florida’s Differentiated Accountability System. Each turnaround school receives three site-based coaches, one each for reading, math, and science. These content-based coaches share their content expertise with teachers, model effective instruction, give teachers an opportunity to practice effective instruction, and provide feedback. In the past, non-turnaround schools also had a half-time coach, but these school-based coaches were eliminated due to budget cuts in 2011-12. District coaches continue to provide support to these schools, however.

All school-based instructional coaches receive professional development one day a month through the district’s coaching academy. These interactive sessions, which are designed and facilitated by teams of district coaches, include content, pedagogy, case studies, assessments, application, documentation, and resources. The sessions are anchored on the principles of cognitive coaching and norms of collaboration.

DISTRICT PERSONNEL

Only 17% of the funds remain at the district level, primarily to fund district coaches and mentors. The coaches include 26 professional development coaches who provide assistance with developing professional learning communities, lesson study,

2009-10 professional learning fund distribution
TOTAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FUNDS = \$39,535,121



Source: Duval County Public Schools.

ESOL/diversity, collaborative teacher leadership, instructional strategies, assessment for learning, aligning curriculum and instruction, and using student data to differentiate instruction. Another 30 coaches in the Academic Services Department provide assistance in specific content areas, especially reading and language arts, mathematics, and science. In addition, a cadre of 24 district mentors supports novice teachers and trains school-based mentors.

District coaches and mentors are required to complete the coaching academy. The academy focuses on the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning and helps coaches and trainers deepen content knowledge, understand adult learning theory, model professional learning communities through the use of protocols, integrate technology into classroom learning, and learn cognitive coaching skills.

THE SCHULTZ CENTER

Another major resource for professional learning is the Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership, which receives approximately 8% of the total professional development budget. A major service provider, the center provides professional development services to Duval County and other school systems in the area at its facility, at local school sites, through two-way video conferencing, and through online learning.

OTHER EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Duval County spends approximately 6% of its funds to bring in external consultants from Learning Forward, university partnerships, including Urban Professional Development Schools with the University of North Florida, and school-based initiatives with the University of Florida's Lastinger Center for Learning. Among the issues they address are lesson study, supporting novice teachers and evaluating professional learning. For a complete description of Learning Forward's role in professional learning in Duval County, see the report *Evidence of Effectiveness* (Slabine, 2011).

RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS BASED ON NEED

Wilson states, "The primary factor in allocating resources is ensuring improved teaching quality and student achievement." Therefore, professional learning resources are distributed based on 1) district priorities and initiatives as identified in the strategic plan; 2) student and teacher needs as identified in the teachers' individual professional development plans; and 3) the school improvement plan, which identifies professional learning goals based on teacher needs.

Within these overall guidelines, the district allows variation in resources if the difference gives needier schools the resources they require. For example, in the past, each district mentor was assigned to schools with varying numbers of novice teachers without regard to other school resources. With the needs-based, differentiated model, the cadre of district mentors is assigned

to schools based on the number of novice teachers and additional school resources, which may include content coaches and supplemental funding.

In general, novice teachers receive a significant share of the district's professional learning resources because of their greater needs. According to Wilson, about half of the district's novice teachers enter the system as non-college of education teachers. While they may have content knowledge, these teachers lack formal teacher preparation. To obtain Florida professional educator certification, they must participate in the teacher induction program to master the knowledge and skills of effective teaching. Duval County Public Schools offers novice teachers a range of differentiated programs based on their level of experience and previous preparation, in both face-to-face and online formats.

To ensure that this new learning is applied in practice, each novice teacher also has a school-based resource team to provide ongoing support: 1) the principal; 2) a professional development facilitator who coordinates the teacher induction program at the school; 3) a school-based mentor — a classroom teacher trained to observe and coach new teachers; and 4) a district cadre representative. School-based mentors may elect to participate in a professional development program that includes a summer mentoring academy and additional learning opportunities after school. Once trained, these school-based mentors "build the school's capacity to support additional novice teachers as they come on board," says Wilson.

The district gives each school a great deal of leverage in how it uses the available resources so that it can address its own

HOW TO FIND TIME TO LEARN

At Holiday Hill Elementary School, teachers find time for professional learning in several ways:

- **WOW (Working on the Work) Wednesdays.** One day a week, the principal and assistant principal meet with a grade-level team to look at student work, analyze student data, focus on differentiated instruction, or engage in other learning.
- **Early morning minilessons.** From 7:30 to 8:25, teachers can participate in minilessons to strengthen their practice in literacy, mathematics, and science. Lessons are taught by district coaches and the assistant principal, a former literacy coach.
- **Early dismissal time** gives teachers the opportunity to engage in professional learning after students go home.
- **Class coverage.** The principal and assistant principal cover teachers' classrooms so that they can observe fellow teachers practicing new instructional strategies.

needs and priorities. For example, at Holiday Hill Elementary, a non-turnaround school, principal Denise Ahearn devotes a substantial portion of her resources to the school’s large exceptional student education population. In addition, district coaches provide site-based learning sessions as well as classroom support in reading, math, and science. Teachers may also participate in district professional learning at the Schultz Center, and Ahearn attends professional learning sessions herself. When she returns, she shares what she learns with her leadership team, which then shares it with the teachers. Ahearn says, “The most important thing in this school is that teachers train each other.” When they attend professional learning sessions, they are expected to share what they learn with their peers. Her aim is “generating a lot of conversation, which is essential to improving teacher practice.”

FINDING TIME

Florida mandates that teachers spend 30 hours a year in professional learning, but Duval County provides far more — 97 hours per year. That number includes 73 hours dedicated to professional learning and pre- and post-planning (10 days per year at 7.3 hours per day). It also includes 24 hours a year for early dismissal time, which occurs twice per month. These hours are prescribed in the district’s collective bargaining agreement, as well as in its five-year professional development plan. They do not include hours that teachers spend learning during

the regular school day in professional learning communities — the centerpiece of the district’s professional learning strategy.

Based on state requirements and the district’s own commitment, all elementary and secondary teachers are expected to participate in formal lesson study during the school year. The district uses funding from both Race to the Top and Title II to fund substitutes so teachers may participate in this program. At the secondary level, every school participates in

what the district calls the PLC Plus program, while at the elementary level schools participate in what is called the Continuous Learning Cycle. Both programs involve developing a learning partnership between students and their teachers with the goal of improving teaching and student achievement. The

model focuses on analyzing data, setting goals, developing balanced assessments, integrating student voice, timely analysis of student work, and collaboratively planning lessons. Every school develops a schedule allocating common time for this work.

In addition, schools use common planning time and early dismissal for teachers’ professional learning throughout the year. According to Wilson, that means that Duval County schools meet Learning Forward’s recommendation that schools provide at least three hours of professional learning time for teachers each week, and in most cases they provide much more.

Finally, the school system offers many opportunities for learning during the summer. These include two-day or three-day just-in-time learning opportunities as well as sustained 60-hour courses in various content areas, with a heavy emphasis on literacy, math, and science.

About 350 people from the district’s turnaround schools also participate in a four-day urban institute. While some stipends are available for after-school and summer learning, Ahearn says that “a primary incentive for most novice and veteran teachers is receiving professional development points for recertification.”

USING TECHNOLOGY

Technology is a cost-effective way to facilitate professional learning. Therefore, the district uses technology frequently to “gather information, aid professional networking, obtain research, and gain access to internal and external expertise,” says Wilson.

For example, the district uses web cameras to video novice teachers so that cadre mentors and other content experts can observe them in their classrooms and provide virtual feedback. Cadre mentors and coaches can also use Adobe Connect to have discussions about effective instructional strategies, rituals, and routines. This networking system creates a virtual learning community involving mentors and novice teachers as well as experienced teachers.

As noted above, new teachers have three years to get their certification, which takes 300 hours of coursework. ESOL and reading courses are also required for certain teachers. To make it easy for them, the district provides online courses for every course mandated by the state. Online courses are also offered to other teachers in various content areas.

Finally, a challenge at the high school level is finding common planning time for teachers to meet or observe each other’s practice.

To address this problem, Duval County uses the TeachScape Reflect camera — a hands-free camera that provides a panoramic view of the classroom. It can capture teacher practice, the level of student engagement, what’s on the walls, and any writing on the chalkboard. The web-based system allows teachers, coaches, and mentors to observe other teachers’ lessons and add commentary to the video lesson at their convenience, day or night.

Duval County Public Schools

Jacksonville, Fla.

Number of schools: **172**

Enrollment: **124,288**

Staff: **7,300**

Racial/ethnic mix:

White:	38.9%
Black:	44.5%
Hispanic:	8.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander:	4.5%
Native American:	0.2%
Other:	3.6%

Limited English proficient: **3.1%**

Languages spoken: **Spanish, Burmese, Myanmasa, Arabic, Haitian Creole**

Free/reduced lunch: **54.3%**

Special education: **10.6%**

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INVOLVING MULTIPLE PLAYERS IN PLANNING AND MONITORING

The Professional Development Advisory Council — an advisory board that includes school and district staff, parents, community, PTA, and the teachers' organization — meets regularly to discuss professional development initiatives, monitor progress, and gather input from stakeholders. Duval County looks for evidence of professional learning impact at the individual, school, and district levels. A major asset is the district's information management system, which includes professional development data. Wilson considers the system invaluable because "it allows individual educators, schools, and the district as a whole to analyze information about professional learning."

At the individual level, teacher practice is monitored through observation by principals, coaches, and mentors, examination of individual professional development plans, use of learning rubrics, and changes in student work. At the school and district level, Duval County uses multiple data sources to monitor progress: state and district assessments, progress monitoring tools, lesson study guides, student portfolios, student performance assessments, Learning Forward's Standards Assessment Inventory, and other surveys. Teachers also provide information on changes in practice based on lesson study and district coaches and cadre mentors also provide monthly progress reports. In addition, Duval County Public Schools participated in the state's Merit Award Program, which provided performance pay rewards to outstanding district personnel at schools based on the performance of their students. The district also has a sophisticated system for measuring student growth over time.

RESULTS

In the past, the Schultz Center has carried out a number of evaluation studies on the district's coaching and mentoring programs, reading and math initiatives, teacher induction program, reading/literacy and PLC Plus, and several more studies are under way, including ESOL. Therefore, the district has a growing body of evidence regarding the impact of its professional learning efforts. For example, the center's evaluation of the district's standards-based literacy training for teachers included 2,300 teachers and 58,000 students from 2003-04 to 2007-08. The analyses revealed that the more days that teachers participated in professional learning, the greater the gains in student achievement on Florida's statewide reading assessment. Moreover, each day a teacher spent in literacy training produced discernible results. The average achievement gain in scores on the reading assessment for students whose teachers had less than five days of professional learning was 108.4, five to 15 days of professional learning was 113.2, and more than 15 days was 130.6, statistically significant differences. Literacy training affected teachers at all experience levels, and the relationship between teacher professional development and achievement gains was greater for students from low-income families (Schultz Center, 2008).

These data suggest that if school districts are serious about improving student achievement and closing the achievement gap, they must devote even more time and resources to professional learning.

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The **POWER** *of 2*

**PARTNERSHIP PAVES
THE WAY FOR TEACHER
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

By Jeanne Harmon, Kip Herren, Rod Luke, and Terese Emry

A clear vision is the essential foundation for making decisions about precious resources for implementing professional learning: people, time, and money. The Auburn School District in Washington state learned firsthand how a clear vision drives resource allocation to support strategic actions and how effective partnerships can be the best solution when internal resources are not available. In collaboration with the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, Auburn aims to impact student learning by developing teachers' instructional leadership skills. After just one year of a new initiative, 50 teacher leaders are transforming teacher and student learning through professional learning communities as well as transforming district culture.

VISION DRIVES ACTION

In 2009, a committee that included district office leaders, teachers, principals, parents, and community members completed a district strategic improvement plan, which was then approved by the Auburn School District board of directors. This three-year framework guides allocation of district resources toward strategies that will help the district meet its top priority: student academic achievement. The plan details four main goals, the objectives and strategies used to meet those goals, and evidence to collect along the way. See the goals listed in the box on p. 29.

One strategy in the plan is to implement professional learning communities to give teachers time to collaborate to improve practice. Another strategy is to build leadership skills across the district. District superintendent Kip Herren saw how these strategies could work together: Build-



ing teachers' instructional leadership skills would empower them to positively influence colleagues' teaching practice through professional learning communities, while at the same time distributing leadership across the district.

PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Herren realized that the district did not yet have the internal capacity to develop teacher instructional leadership skills, so he sought an outside resource. At a conference session presented by the nonprofit organization the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, Herren discovered the resource that would link the strategies of the district strategic plan together: the teacher leadership skills framework, which outlines the knowledge, skills, and dispositions teacher leaders need in a variety of formal and informal leadership roles. The list at right shows the key skill areas for teacher leaders. Herren recognized that the center's staff had the knowledge and experience Auburn needed to create high-quality leadership training for teach-

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Student achievement.

With district support, leadership, and guidance, each student will achieve proficiency in the Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program, and all schools will meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by meeting or exceeding the Washington state uniform bar in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and 10.

Goal 2: Dropout rate and on-time graduation.

Schools will reduce dropout rates and meet additional AYP indicators as determined by K-8 attendance and high school on-time graduation rates.

Goal 3: Parents/guardians and community partnerships.

The district and schools will continue to develop partnerships to support student academic achievement and success.

Goal 4: Policies and resource management.

The district will focus on improving student academic achievement and narrowing the achievement gaps in its policy decisions and resource allocation.

ers. Herren consulted with the center's Executive Director Jeanne Harmon and Associate Director Terese Emry, and the Auburn Teacher Leadership Academy was born.

Fifty teacher leaders from across the district were selected to be part of the first academy cohort. To ensure that teacher leaders had school-based partners with whom to collaborate as they developed and exercised their leadership, two teacher leaders from each elementary school and three from each secondary school participated.

TIME IS ESSENTIAL

Learning Forward's research-based definition for high-quality professional learning calls for a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach. With this definition in mind, Auburn and leaders from the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession knew that ample time for learning

TEACHER LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK SKILL AREAS

- Working with adult learners.
- Communication.
- Collaborative work.
- Knowledge of content and pedagogy.
- Systems thinking.

was an essential resource. Additionally, the professional learning experience needed to be meaningful and customized to meet teacher leaders' needs. Before planning began in earnest, teacher leaders completed a self-assessment based on the teacher leadership skills framework, then the center used the results to design academy content.

A four-day summer institute kicked off the academy. On the first day, academy participants grappled with what it means to be a teacher leader and what formal and informal leadership roles they might assume in their own settings. They worked through case studies describing common dilemmas of teacher leaders. For days two and three, the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession tailored academy content to meet the leadership skill needs that emerged from the self-assessment. For example, only 25% of teacher leaders reported that they had the necessary communication skills to consistently lead data-driven dialogue that facilitates informed decisions and appropriate actions. With that in mind, the center designed one full-day session devoted to learning and practicing data protocols

that academy teachers could take back to their schools and professional learning communities. A concurrent session focused on working with adult learners, another need that emerged from the self-assessment. Offering two sessions each day allowed academy participants a choice in what they needed to learn. Other sessions focused on facilitation skills, systems thinking, and effective learning community implementation. Activities that helped build a sense of community among

teacher leaders were woven throughout all institute sessions so that the teacher leaders left on day four knowing they had collegial support as they took their new skills back to their school settings.

After the school year began, the teacher leaders were released from their classrooms once a month for full-day academy sessions. The teacher leaders deepened their leadership skills and shared successes, ideas, and challenges with their academy colleagues. Similar to the summer institute, the monthly sessions were designed to be responsive to teacher leaders' emerging needs in real time. Rather than lay out the entire year's schedule in advance, Auburn and center leaders met monthly

to plan sessions based on teacher leader feedback as well as on needs that surfaced in learning communities across the district.

FINDING FUNDS

The district needed financial resources to secure people and time to bring the Auburn Teacher Leadership Academy to fruition. The academy was established during the state and national economic downturn, when many districts were postponing or scrapping new initiatives. Given the clear vision of how the academy fit into the larger strategic plan, Auburn leaders did not let money become a barrier. Assistant Superintendent Rod Luke looked at the district's monetary resources and asked how each one might connect with the academy's goals and intent. Identifying a combination of local professional development dollars and local, county, state, and federal grant funds, Luke carved out the funds necessary to pay for services from the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, presenter fees, stipend pay for teacher leaders at the summer institute, substitute teachers for monthly sessions, and materials.

Additionally, Luke secured funding to offer minigrants to academy teachers who wanted to formally take their learning back to their buildings. Minigrant funds were used to pay academy teachers for the time necessary to design formal learning opportunities for colleagues and to pay for needed materials. Some teacher leaders used what they learned in a train-the-trainers session on assessment to design building-based professional learning experiences for their colleagues. Others designed and led book studies on relevant content from the academy. Principals also supported minigrant work by securing time and materials for academy teachers to work with their colleagues.

IMPACT

Multiple data sources reveal that year one of the Auburn Teacher Leadership Academy positively impacted teacher leaders, their colleagues, and students.

Academy teachers completed the teacher leadership skills framework self-assessment before and after the yearlong leadership sessions occurred. To complete the self-assessment, teachers indicated how frequently they use the knowledge, skills, and dispositions detailed in each of the five broad areas of the framework. They then placed themselves on a continuum to show their overall leadership ability in that area. On the post-assessment, academy teachers rated themselves higher in every area. The greatest change was in the area of working with adult learners. On the preassessment, only 26% of teachers rated themselves as refining or proficient, in contrast with 74% giving themselves those rankings on the post-assessment. Academy teachers also reported growth on all of the specific skills targeted through the academy, such as their ability to lead data-driven dialogue and developing norms of collaboration.

Additional data gleaned from the academy final evaluation shows impacts beyond the teachers involved. All academy teach-

Auburn School District

Auburn, Wash.

Number of schools: **22**

Enrollment: **14,495**

Staff: **888** certificated staff, **758** classified staff

Racial/ethnic mix:

White:	54.7%
Black:	7.7%
Hispanic:	19.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander:	10.5%
Native American:	2.0%
Other:	5.2%

Limited English proficient: **12.5%**

Languages spoken: More than **45**

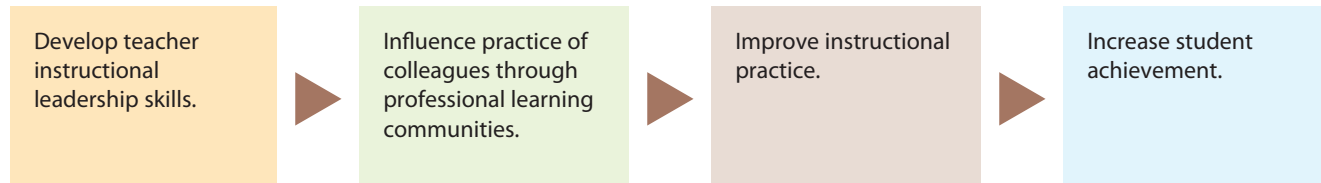
Free/reduced lunch: **52.1%**

Special education: **11.9%**

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THEORY OF ACTION



ers reported that they use what they learned in their professional learning communities, grade-level or department meetings, and in the classroom. More than 80% indicated they used their skills in staff trainings. When asked how his participation in the academy benefited his colleagues, one high school teacher leader wrote, “We brought back all that we received during our monthly trainings, and many have become part of our current and future curriculum.” When asked how her participation in the academy benefited students, another teacher leader remarked, “My students benefited from the collaboration that came from participating in the academy. My team members and I are developing common power standards, and we are working with the grade after us to align our instruction.”

Academy teachers’ comments also reveal their increased sense of competence as leaders. One teacher leader reflected, “I really feel much more confident now as a young teacher.” An experienced teacher leader also felt the academy was beneficial, saying, “This was one of the most valuable things I have done in my career. I have grown as a person as well as a professional.” Many academy teachers pointed to specific skills they learned and how they applied them. For example, one participant remarked, “A strength is having the knowledge of protocols for facilitating discussions that I did not have prior to the academy. I now have not only the skills to lead an effective meeting, but also the tools.”

Principals and district leaders see the benefits of the academy at the system level. An elementary principal noted, “This has improved the overall climate within our school, as teachers now see the strengths within each other and how those strengths improve student learning throughout our building.” A middle school principal agreed, saying “As a principal, it is beneficial to have teacher leaders who can assist in creating a positive culture and help to move the school forward.” According to a high school principal, the academy gave teacher leaders “confidence and enabled them to present to the entire staff with authenticity and credibility.”

The most important impact of the academy will be on student learning. Auburn is analyzing data from formative and summative assessments at district and state levels in order to measure the impact of the entire strategic plan, including the academy. As the instructional leadership of academy teachers continues to develop through cohorts two and three, we anticipate more effective professional learning communities, which will positively impact instructional practice of teachers, and that

will in turn translate to student learning increases across the district, as illustrated in our theory of action (above).

LESSONS FOR LEADERS

The academy’s successes in Auburn can be replicated in other settings. Leaders interested in similar strategic initiatives should consider the following:

1. Start by articulating a clear, long-term vision that drives strategic action steps. Be clear about how building the capacity of teacher leaders fits into the larger plan.
2. Examine existing human resources. If internal resources are not available, reach out and form partnerships to secure needed expertise.
3. Think creatively about how existing monetary resources connect with strategic goals and long-term vision. A variety of sources can complete a total funding package.
4. The resource of time is critical. Teacher leaders must have ample time to build knowledge and skills, practice them, and work within a supportive community of colleagues in order to build efficacy.
5. Choose a framework to guide your work that allows you to customize learning opportunities to meet the unique needs of your teachers. Be responsive to changing needs.

Through the academy, we’ve learned that the resource investment to build the leadership capacity of 50 teachers impacted each of them. However, the academy is not just an investment in individuals; it is a strategic investment to distribute leadership across the district in order to impact many. We anticipate the successes of the academy’s first year will be magnified exponentially in years two and three. Ultimately, this investment will benefit the most important stakeholders in Auburn: students.

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Photo by LAUREN JEFFCOAT

Allison Leonard brings up an image of Sue Chapman on her monitor. Leonard co-facilitates distance learning sessions at McWhirter Elementary Professional Development Laboratory School in Webster, Texas.

TIGHT BUDGET LOOSENS CREATIVITY

SCHOOL TURNS TO DISTANCE LEARNING TO STRETCH DEVELOPMENT DOLLARS

By Sue Chapman

At 8:15, mathematics coach Allison Leonard turns on the webcam and checks the document camera to make sure it is ready to go. At 8:17, Lori Squires, a mathematics staff developer, comes into view on the computer monitor and greets Leonard. They chat for a minute about the weather. It's raining in Texas, where Leonard is adjusting the volume on the speakers,

but it's dry and sunny in Nevada, where Squires sits at her computer. Leonard and Squires review the agenda for the day. Squires will meet with three teams of teachers through distance learning this morning. Each session will last for approximately one hour.

With the kindergarten team, Squires will model a math assessment that teachers have never administered. One of the teachers is bringing a student to the session. The student will sit next to his teacher so he feels comfortable in this new setting. Squires will ask him to perform a series of tasks with manipulatives. She will also ask questions to

assess the student's understanding of foundational math concepts while the kindergarten teachers take notes about his responses. After the student returns to class, Squires will answer teachers' questions about assessment procedures. She'll prompt a discussion of what teachers noticed and guide them in considering what this assessment reveals about the child's current understandings and learning needs. Over the next few weeks, teachers will administer this same mathematics performance assessment to all of the students in their classes. Their next distance learning session with Squires will be used to share and discuss these results, just as the 1st- and 2nd-grade teachers are doing later this morning.

During today's sessions with the 1st- and 2nd-grade teams, Squires and Leonard will co-facilitate a discussion of the teachers' assessment results. Leonard has already emailed Squires class summary charts showing assessment results for students in each of the teachers' classes. At the beginning of the session, each teacher will present her summary chart to the group using the document camera and talk briefly about her reflections. Leonard will paraphrase the teachers' conclusions and ask clarifying and probing questions. Squires will take notes about patterns of results and other interesting findings. After the teacher presentations, Squires will talk with teachers about the implications of these results for whole-group minilessons, small-group instruction, and conferences with individual students as they work in math stations. She will introduce a station

task teachers can use to continue monitoring students' learning progress. Squires will end the session by asking each teacher to share the specific actions she will take to support her students' learning as a result of this discussion of assessment results.





THE PROBLEM

During the 2010-11 school year, McWhirter Elementary Professional Development Laboratory School in Webster, Texas, faced a significant reduction in funds available for professional learning. We had several key professional development initiatives in progress and were challenged to figure out creative means of keeping these initiatives going with limited resources. One of these initiatives aimed to help kindergarten, 1st-, and 2nd- grade teachers deepen their understanding of mathematics teaching and learning. We had worked extensively with Lori Squires, a consultant from out of state, but knew that we could not afford to bring her on site as frequently during the coming school year.

THE PLAN

As we talked with Squires about our dilemma, she admitted that the extensive amount of time spent away from home was difficult and that she would welcome a way to continue her work with us without as much travel. We began to consider the idea of a yearlong professional learning plan involving both face-to-face sessions and technology-

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING SESSIONS

<p>1. Establish a relationship with the people involved. Learning requires risk taking, and teachers must trust the person who will be nudging them to consider new ideas and try new practices. Schedule at least one face-to-face session with a facilitator before beginning distance learning.</p> 	<p>2. Choose a topic of study for distance learning that requires and benefits from active participation by teachers, such as discussion of assessment results, analysis of student work, collaborative planning, or discussion of an article read prior to the distance learning session.</p> 	<p>3. Short, focused sessions work well for distance learning. These sessions can be conducted during a team's planning period or after school to avoid the cost of substitute teachers and loss of instructional time.</p> 	<p>4. Designate an individual or individuals who will prepare and set up for distance learning sessions, facilitate the sessions, and coordinate follow-up activities. These roles provide valuable teacher leadership experiences and can build capacity for teacher-directed professional learning.</p> 
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assisted distance learning. We also talked about how we might help our teachers begin to take more responsibility for their own professional learning. We wanted teachers to see each other as resources as they worked to deepen their understanding of the mathematics curriculum and refine their instructional practices. According to Hirsh and Killion, “When teachers work collaboratively, build on one another’s experiences, and use those experiences as a source of learning, they have the potential to meet nearly every challenge they face related to teaching and learning” (2007, p. 87). We hypothesized that the use of distance learning in combination with a limited number of face-to-face sessions might help us release pieces of professional learning to our teachers and scaffold their development as teacher leaders.

We consulted with our district’s technology department about options for distance learning (see table on pp. 36-37). They scheduled a test run of the equipment. We found the experience of videoconferencing to be surprisingly easy and comfortable. Because of our long-standing relationship with Squires, the discussion had a personal quality. Teachers reported that they felt “as if we were all sitting around the table together” and Squires confided that, although we couldn’t see them in the video, she was wearing her slippers.

Users will need a basic set of equipment to be able to use these services. At a minimum, the computer will need a webcam for video as well as a microphone and a speaker for voice. Some newer laptops have these built in; most desktops do not. Single users at a computer might find it easier to use a headset that contains a microphone and earphone speaker(s). Groups using a single computer will find it easier to use a centralized external

microphone and a set of external speakers. Some setup might be needed to use the external microphone and/or speakers.

It’s best to get all users through the sign-up process and software installation (where needed) for these services a week or so before you actually need to use them. Time permitting, make a trial run using all of the features that your group will need during the actual conference call. This is especially true if all contacts must be on the same service.

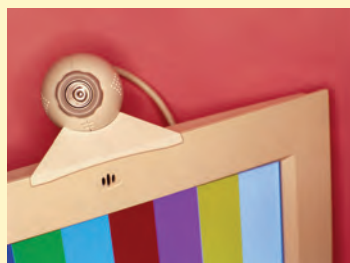
THE PROCESS

One of our specific professional learning goals for the year was to help teachers learn to give a series of mathematics performance assessments, analyze the results of these assessments, and then plan for instruction based on this analysis. In the book *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning*, Victoria Bernhardt advocates for team data analysis as a structure for professional learning. She states, “The more all staff members are involved in collecting and analyzing data, the more they will get involved in implementing the changes demanded by the results” (Bernhardt, 2008, p. 130). We decided that this focus on assessment for learning would be perfect for our distance-learning work, and we scheduled a series of one-hour sessions with Squires to coincide with the district’s assessment schedule. For each of the assessments, Squires would use an initial session to model the assessment with several of our students. Following this initial session, teachers conducted the assessment with their own students. Within several weeks, the teachers submitted a summary chart of their assessment results to Leonard. Leonard then emailed these results to Squires so she could review them before the distance learning session. This next hour-long distance-learning session was spent collaboratively analyzing these assessment results with teachers and discussing ways in which the needs of individual students and groups of students might be met. This cycle was repeated several times for each grade level over the course of the school year.

In addition to this distance learning work, we also scheduled Squires for five face-to-face trainings across the year in collaboration with our math coach. Because we believed our teachers were ready for a more teacher-directed type of professional learning, we used a modified version of lesson study as the platform for these sessions. Lesson study is a form of instructional improvement originating in Japan in which teachers collaborate to plan a lesson, observe the implementation of this lesson together, discuss the lesson’s impact on student learning, and then refine the lesson based on what they learned (Lewis & Hurd, 2011). Each McWhirter team met in advance of its session with Squires to collaboratively craft a mathematics lesson. Understandings gained as a result of the assessment analysis were applied during this planning process. For instance, during a distance learning session, teachers had discussed the types of questions that could be asked of individual students to prompt thinking and promote learning. Teachers then practiced craft-

LESSON STUDY CYCLE

1. Teams collaboratively plan a lesson prior to the arrival of the consultant.
2. Schedule for lesson study session with consultant:
 - Teachers provide an overview of the lesson for consultant. (15 minutes)
 - Lesson is taught in one teacher’s classroom while others observe and take notes on student learning. (60 minutes)
 - Teachers debrief about the impact of the lesson on student learning and refine the lesson. (45 minutes)
3. All teachers who observed the original lesson teach the revised lesson to their classes within two days.
4. Teams meet to discuss the impact of the revised lesson on student learning.



ing such questions within the context of their lesson study planning. The teams agreed to wait to decide who would teach the lesson until Squires arrived so that their planning process could focus on meeting student needs rather than the preparation of a performance lesson. On the date of the face-to-face work with Squires, teachers' classes were covered by substitutes for a two-hour period so that all teachers could observe the lesson and to allow time to debrief about the impact of the lesson on student learning. (See "Lesson study cycle" on p. 34.) After the observation, teams discussed ways to improve the lesson. Each of the teachers who had observed the lesson agreed to teach this refined version of the lesson to her class within the next few days. Time was scheduled during team meetings to reflect on the impact of the revised lesson.

ROLE OF THE MATH COACH

Allison Leonard, our mathematics coach, played a key role in coordinating and facilitating the distance learning and face-to-face professional learning sessions. We have found that the partnership of a consultant working with an instructional coach provides powerful support for teacher learning and can accelerate the implementation of specific initiatives. The consultant serves as the knowledgeable authority and expert guide. The coach encourages and supports teachers as they work to implement new practices suggested by the consultant. As Squires helped teachers build their instructional craft, she also supported Leonard in building her craft as a staff developer. Squires relied on Leonard to keep learning conversations going between sessions. She intentionally released portions of the facilitation of distance learning and face-to-face sessions to Leonard to develop her abilities and confidence as an instructional leader. We are conscious that our professional development budget will continue to dwindle over the next few years, and we want to build our internal capacity to keep professional learning thriving when we are no longer able to bring in external consultants.

THE RESULTS

Teacher learning

Our goals of increased professional knowledge and instructional skill in mathematics were realized beyond our expectations. This teacher learning is evidenced in classroom practice and professional conversations. On her end-of-year reflection, one teacher wrote, "The distance learning and lesson study really transformed my teaching. The strategies have helped me to know my students. I now know which students are missing key concepts and which students are at their edge of understanding." Another teacher reported, "This year I developed my understanding of how students are learning math concepts. I learned not just to recognize what they struggle with but what strengths they have and how I can move them along at a pace that is rigorous but also appropriate for each child. As a team,

we focused our time on doing lesson studies together. We talked about how to adjust teaching points to specifically meet our class needs, how to assess and monitor our students' progress, and what we can do for struggling students within these lessons."

A second set of goals for this professional learning initiative was to build teacher leadership and to help our teachers become more self-directed in their professional learning. These goals were also achieved as demonstrated in the talk and actions of teachers and teacher teams. These teams are eager to continue the assessment analysis sessions on their own next year. They have asked to use lesson study in other subject areas, and they are initiating observations in each others' classrooms more frequently than ever before. One day this spring, I happened upon a group of 2nd-grade teachers having a discussion during their planning period. In the center of the table was a teachers' cell phone set on speakerphone. This teacher had uncovered something puzzling in her assessment of a student and had immediately emailed Squires with her questions. Squires suggested that they talk by phone. Other teachers on the team were also interested in these unexpected findings and asked to join in on the conversation.

This spontaneous teleconference provided teachers with just-in-time professional learning that emerged from their own questions related to student learning. These teachers took the initiative to seek out answers to their questions and used technology in an elegantly simple way to expand their understanding of mathematics instruction.

Student learning

As a result of the mathematics distance learning and lesson study sessions conducted this year, student learning has improved dramatically and continues to climb. During the first semester of the year, 117 students in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades were reported by their teachers to be performing below current grade-level standards in mathematics as measured by the district-required performance assessments.

By May, the number of students performing below grade level had shrunk to only 33. This number of below-level stu-

McWhirter Elementary Professional Development Laboratory School

Webster, Texas

Enrollment: **950**

Staff: **100**

Racial/ethnic mix:

White:	15%
Black:	15%
Hispanic:	67%
Asian/Pacific Islander:	1%
Native American:	0%
Other:	2%

Limited English proficient: **52%**

Languages spoken: English, Spanish

Free/reduced lunch: **78%**

Special education: **10%**

Contact: **Sue Chapman**, instructional supervisor

E-mail: slchapma@ccisd.net

FREE DISTANCE LEARNING SERVICES

This selection of free services includes some that use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones — phones that function like a traditional phone but use the Internet rather than phone lines to transmit data — as well as video and audio services that use your computer and its camera and microphone.

Name, web address	Cost	Windows	Mac	Voice	Video	Notes:
Callcentric www.callcentric.com	Free between Callcentric members	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Basic VoIP phone to VoIP phone service. Users can use a VoIP phone connected to their router using a telephone adapter or use the Callcentric software program to make calls.
FaceFlow www.faceflow.com	Free	Yes	Yes	Within Video	Yes	Video chat live with up to four people for free. No download required because you use your browser. Quickly video chat online with a friend by simply sharing a link.
Google Talk www.google.com/talk/	Free	Yes	No	Yes	No	Chat/text from your desktop. Send and receive files. Requires software download.
Google + http://plus.google.com/	Free	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Works within Gmail and iGoogle. Requires a plug-in download.
iChat http://support.apple.com/kb/HT2515	Free	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Works with your AIM account and makes it easy to stay in touch with others using text and video, whether they're on a Mac or a PC.
JAJAH www.jajah.com/products/web	Free between JAJAH users	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	From the web, you can initiate a call, no download, no software installation required. Use any phone. Select your own phone number, then select the phone number you want to call, press the green call button: Your phone will ring then the other phone will ring; answer and start talking. Can be used for conference calls and scheduled calls.

dents is substantially less than the 49 students reported as performing below grade-level standards at the end of last school year. These teacher teams met their yearlong SMART goal in mathematics: By May 2011, at least 90% of all McWhirter students in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades will be performing on grade level in mathematics as measured by district-established standards.

In reflecting on the impact of this professional learning initiative on her students' learning, one teacher shared the following: "The assessments are fabulous, and math time is running a lot smoother in my classroom this year. Everything I have learned has been a tremendous tool for me as I work with my children. I see that they are learning and growing just the way they should be. I am so proud of them."

LOOKING AHEAD

During the upcoming school year, we intend to explore additional uses for distance learning. We expect to continue using both video distance learning and teleconferencing to support professional learning in mathematics and other subject areas. A portion of our professional learning budget has been dedicated for teacher-initiated distance learning sessions with Squires and other consultants. We also hope to use distance learning to allow our teachers to collaborate with faculty members from the local university and teacher teams from other schools in our district.

According to Dennis Sparks, "Most goals can be achieved in many ways. This awareness frees us from 'one-right-way' thinking and a dependence on 'experts' to 'advise' us. It also engages

Name, web address	Cost	Windows	Mac	Voice	Video	Notes:
ooVoo www.oovoo.com/home.aspx	Free	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Call up to six people at one time. Record and store audio and video calls. Requires software download. If someone on your list doesn't have a video camera, he or she can still have a one-way video chat and hear your voice over this service.
Skype www.skype.com/intl/en/home?intcmp=wlogo	Free for one-to-one Skype users	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Requires software download. Premium service (monthly cost or a one-day-pass) for group video service.
Vbuzzer www.vbuzzer.com/conferencing/web_conferencing.php	Free for conferences of up to four parties with instant messages, voice chat, and videoconferencing capabilities.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hold multimedia conference calls within your web browser with no special installation or configuration needed. To use videoconferencing, JavaScript must be enabled as well as Adobe Flash Player 9.
Voipbuster www.voipbuster.com/en	Free between VoipBuster users	Yes	No	Yes	No	Requires software download.
WalkieTalkie www.domain17.net/walkietalkie	Free between WalkieTalkie users	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Requires software download. High-quality, very low-latency audio. No sign-up or registration necessary, just pick a username and start calling

our creative capacities and promotes responsibility for selecting the most powerful strategies” (2007, p. 16). By rethinking the use of existing resources, educators may be able to find creative means of sustaining professional learning initiatives on diminished budgets. Creative solutions to the challenge of decreased funding can help schools and districts build internal capacity by allowing staff to recognize their own potential for leadership and self-directed, collaborative learning.

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NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL CAPITAL'S STRENGTH LIES IN EXPERTISE, RECIPROCITY, AND RELEVANCE

By Wes Johnson

Over the past few decades, sociologists have used the concept of social capital to describe the various benefits of group membership. More recently, education researchers have used this concept to describe the effects of school-wide teacher professional development (Baker-Doyle & Yoon, 2011; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Penuel, Riel, Krause, & Frank, 2009). This approach to understanding professional development offers valuable insight into the types of resources necessary to transform teachers' professional learning.

Baker-Doyle and Yoon define teachers' social capital

as “the knowledge and resources for teaching practice accessible through a social network” (2011, p.76). The first step to analyzing teachers' social capital is to understand the structure of their social network. Some networks are highly interconnected, offering teachers numerous opportunities to share ideas and receive feedback. Other social networks are more loosely connected. In these networks, teachers can become isolated from their colleagues, and it can be harder for them to work collaboratively to improve teacher and student learning. (See diagram on p. 39.)

The strength of a teacher's professional learning community cannot, however, be measured by just the number and arrangement of connections. Instead, researchers must be able to describe what these connections offer teachers in terms of resources that can be used to support

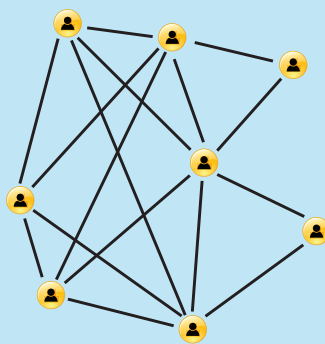
teacher and student learning. According to social capital theory, teacher learning involves accessing and acting on these resources. Professional development can support this process by increasing the amount of social capital available to the teachers in a school community.

Viewing professional development as the accumulation of social capital allows researchers to reconcile two insights from professional development research: Collaboration is important to teacher learning, and teachers respond to learning opportunities in unique and unpredictable ways. Social capital theory allows researchers to explore both of these positions.

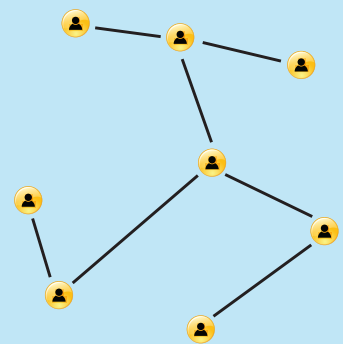
To some researchers, teacher learning is the process of initiation into a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They see teacher development as the process of adopting shared meanings and developing common practices. However, in social capital theory, teachers access knowledge and resources rather than meanings and common practices. Different teachers will use the resources in different ways based on their prior commitments and their individual needs. Social capital theory focuses on the active and self-conscious role teachers play in their own development.

This does not mean, however, that teacher learning is only an individual activity. Social capital refers to teachers' shared resources, not their private property. Because teachers access these resources through social

Highly interconnected social network



Loosely connected social network



ties, the resources don't necessarily stay the same over time. On the contrary, teachers refine and redefine these teaching tools continually as they share them with other teachers and adapt them to new contexts. Unlike with traditional teaching resources such as pencils and chalk, teachers' supply of social capital grows as they share these resources.

CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

In his seminal work on the topic, Coleman (1988) identified three forms of social capital. He viewed social

CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL			
Research	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Adler & Kwon, 2002	Information	Solidarity	Influence
Coburn & Russell, 2008	Access to expertise	Trust and shared norms	Depth and congruence of interactions
Coleman, 1988	Information channels	Obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness	Norms of behavior and enforcement policies

capital as something that can be cashed in by individuals for concrete benefits. For example, Coleman investigated how access to social capital can help a teenager secure a high school diploma. Adler and Kwon (2002) took a somewhat different approach. They explained how social capital could also be used as a tool for describing the qualities of different organizational structures. In their operational definition, Adler and Kwon identify three different effects of having social capital. These different approaches to social capital research illustrate some of the ongoing development of this concept in the literature.

Coburn and Russell (2008) were among the first to apply the concept of social capital to teacher professional development research. They investigated how administration policies affected the social capital available to teachers at different schools. Like earlier research, Coburn and Russell defined social capital as the resources exchanged through connections in a social network. They also identified three dimensions of social capital, which could be used to compare teachers' social networks.

The table above shows the categories used in these three studies to characterize social capital. Despite differences in their research agendas, each researcher found it useful to use similar general categories for describing social capital.

WHAT THESE CATEGORIES TELL US

Category 1: Information or expertise

The expertise in a social network is equal to the sum of the personal knowledge and experience of all the members in that network. This knowledge becomes social capital through its use in two ways. The knowledge is first put to use in the classroom and then is used again as a type of social currency between teachers. Unless teachers have an opportunity to share what they know, their valuable expertise is hidden from their colleagues. As a result, the full value of this expertise to the school community will not be realized.

The term "expertise" refers primarily to the uniquely relevant practical knowledge of teachers inside the school com-

munity (Van Driel, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2001). A school's social network should provide a structure within which teachers can share their hard-won knowledge of successful practices. The same social network can also be used to disseminate new information from outside experts. In neither case, however, does the network play only a passive role. Instead, the network creates a learning environment that influences how teachers respond to the available information.

Category 2: How groups work together

If the first category represents the kinds of resources positioned in the network, the second category refers to how efficiently these resources are transmitted among the links in the network. True collaboration is a two-way street. Full participation in a professional learning community requires teachers to receive new ideas and offer their own contributions. Mutual trust is the essential element that allows for a free flow of information. Trust involves teachers viewing their colleagues' suggestions as meaningful. Trust also allows teachers to have confidence that their comments will be taken seriously.

Collaborative discussions provide the opportunity for much more than just an exchange of knowledge. These discussions are also a key component of teachers' reflective practice. Simple questions like, "Why did you do that?" force teachers to put their ideas into words. This is a necessary first step as teachers adopt an analytical approach to their instruction (Davis, 2003). At the same time, these discussions make reflective practice a social rather than an individual activity (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003).

Category 3: Focus of groups' work

Just because teachers are in contact with one another does not necessarily mean their conversations will improve student learning. Teachers may be swapping stories, or they may be struggling with the tough questions of teaching and learning. Teachers may be complaining about administration policies, or they may be finding new ways to make these policies work.

Relevance is a measure of the extent to which teachers' conversations are oriented towards having an effect on teaching and learning at their school.

There is certainly value in a teacher's friendly conversations with her colleagues. These conversations can play an essential role in helping teachers deal with the many stresses associated with their demanding profession, as well as build trust to help social capital flow within networks. But the difficult work of teachers' professional learning requires something more from their interactions. Administrators and professional developers must also provide a mechanism that facilitates the rigorous exchange of knowledge if they expect substantial results from teachers' collaboration. Simply giving teachers time and space to work together is not enough.

Ideally, the administration would establish a common model of effective instruction to ground the teachers' collaborative activities as well as their personal reflections. At the very least, however, teachers must be able to link their collaborative activities with possible changes to their instruction. In order to make this happen, teachers should be encouraged to seek help from their colleagues to solve practical challenges. By experimenting with ideas they learn about from their colleagues, teachers will become more conscious of the valuable resources available through peer collaboration.

DISCUSSION

For decades, educators have known that isolation can impede an individual teacher's professional learning. Baker-Doyle and Yoon's recent study (2011) approached the issue of teacher isolation from a different angle. They introduced the concept of the isolated expert teacher — someone who has valuable expertise but no mechanism for sharing it with his or her colleagues. In these cases, it is the task of administrators and professional developers to encourage this trapped expertise to circulate through the teachers' social network and increase their social capital.

Although there is no single method for increasing teacher social capital, the following five steps can provide a useful starting point for administrators interested in following this approach to supporting teacher learning.

1. Survey teachers to find out who is talking with whom. Use this information to diagram teachers' social networks.
2. Identify what expert knowledge exists in the school and what additional expertise, if any, needs to be brought in from the outside.
3. Find out whether teachers feel comfortable offering advice to colleagues. Identify any barriers that might exist to a more open exchange of ideas.
4. Ask teachers whether they find their professional development relevant to their instructional practices. Find ways to focus professional development on teachers' specific concerns.

5. Use information gathered from the first four steps to design structures that support meaningful teacher collaboration.

Simply providing teachers with opportunities to meet with one another is not enough to guarantee substantial professional growth. According to social capital theory, teacher conversations must be characterized by expertise, reciprocity, and relevance in order to best support teacher learning. Administrators who keep this in mind will be better able to assess the strength of their school's professional learning community and transform teacher learning at their schools.

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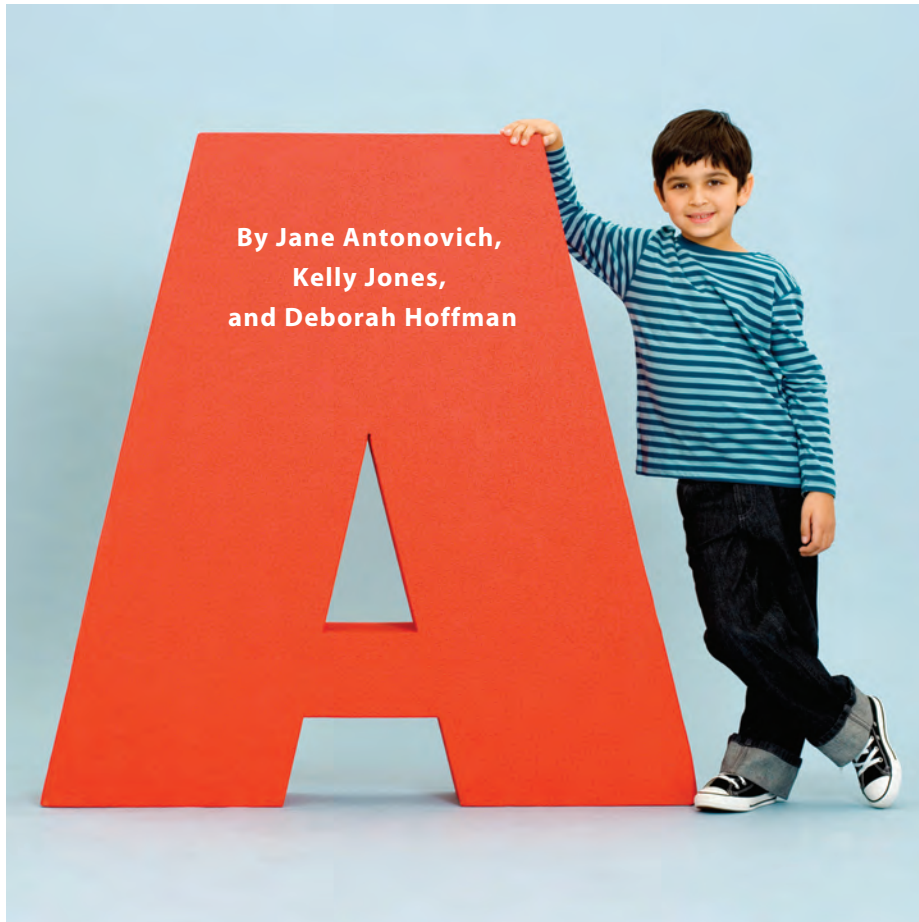
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By experimenting with ideas they learn about from their colleagues, teachers will become more conscious of the valuable resources available through peer collaboration.



By Jane Antonovich,
Kelly Jones,
and Deborah Hoffman



EYES ON THE PRIZE

A STRUGGLING WISCONSIN SCHOOL FORGES A STEADY PATH TOWARD ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

In his book *Complications*, Dr. Atul Gawande writes at the end of his introduction, “Throughout I’ve sought to show not just the ideas but also the people in the middle of it all — the patients and doctors alike. In the end, it is practical, everyday medicine that most interests me — what happens when the simplicities of science come up against the complexities of individual lives. As pervasive as medicine has become in modern life, it remains mostly hidden and often misunderstood. We have taken it to be both more perfect than it is and less extraordinary than it can be (Gawande, 2002).”

At Lincoln Elementary School in Madison, Wis., we,

too, are interested in the simplicity of everyday school, not the quick fixes or flashy programs. Thousands of schools, public and private, educate children daily. Some schools make significant contributions to a child’s growth and development with little to show on a standardized test, while other schools do little, with acceptable results on those same tests. While quantitative educational researchers have developed a valued-added formula to understand the truth about students achieving in schools that may have insufficient test scores, we are committed to leading Lincoln holistically, driven by our core values. Our professional development supports our continuous improvement efforts, and Lincoln has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) two



consecutive years and been removed from sanctions after being a Level 2 school in need of improvement.

CORE VALUES

Core values are critically important to whole-school reform, as they support the central vision and drive all actions taken toward improvement. At Lincoln, we believe the following:

- “We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us; we already know more than we need to do that; and whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven’t so far” (Edmonds, 1979).
- Public schools can be the greatest conduit to social justice.
- Building the capacity of teachers presents the greatest opportunity for students to experience academic, social, and emotional success in school.
- When budgets get cut, our investment in our staff will not be lost on the Lincoln students. Our students deserve our best.

OUR SCHOOL CONTEXT

Lincoln Elementary School serves two neighborhoods that were paired in 1984 following a court order for the school district to desegregate Lincoln. The neighborhoods span about 10 miles in the city of Madison. Our 360 students include the following demographics:

- 1% American Indian, 15% Asian, 16% black, 29% white, 35% Hispanic, and 4% two or more ethnicities;
- 72% economically disadvantaged;
- 13% students with disabilities; and
- 47% limited English proficient (10% Hmong, 32% Spanish, 5% other).

Like many schools across the country, we have achievement gaps between white and all historically marginalized groups — nonwhite, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, and English language learners.

Despite our ongoing gaps, we have made enough continuous improvement to get off the AYP sanctions list through a holistic continuous improvement effort supported by rigorous professional development. We have supported that professional learning through a creative use of resources.

THE BIG PICTURE

Lincoln teachers have many opportunities to access learning that meets their needs and, consequently, their students' learning needs. We believe teachers should reach all students at whatever level they need in their academic, social, and emotional learning. We believe the same holds true for staff. If Lincoln teachers are our patients and one teacher needs CPR, it would make no sense to give CPR to the whole staff to save one teacher. With the range of experience, knowledge, and skills on staff, we strive to provide access to learning that is supportive to the specific needs of all individuals.

Professional development at Lincoln School over the past four years includes the following:

- Professional development days, when teachers have a substitute and meet as a grade level, facilitated by an instructional resource teacher in the areas of literacy and mathematics;
- Spitzer days, when a retired teacher and a substitute take students on a science field trip while teacher teams learn and plan with their instructional resource teacher;
- Visitation days, when teachers are released by substitutes to visit other classrooms;
- Academic book clubs;
- Teachers creating individual professional development plans;
- Staff meetings as professional development;
- Conferences near and far; and
- One hour set aside each week during the school day for teachers to meet one-on-one with the instructional resource teacher.

We also believe there is merit in building a rigorous intellectual community for staff. We have to come together around our core beliefs about our students. The culture of the whole Lincoln community depends on the attitudes and beliefs we

hold about the students. Through examining our own racism, prejudices, stereotypes, classism, and language use, we have been able to combat perpetuating the myth that something is wrong with the students — they're poor, they're homeless, they're disabled. While changing our language about what students cannot do to what students can do can hardly be called professional develop-

ment, we know that how we think and talk about these learners every day has an enormous impact on our brains. Exploring our core values is at the foundation of all professional development and leads to creating a learning environment conducive to each student's assets.

GETTING CREATIVE

Many educators might think their school doesn't have the money or time to do even a few of the professional development ideas mentioned. Or they may think that their contracts won't

allow them to move forward with the creative ideas they already have. Such educators may feel defeated about being labeled a failing school. That's what happened at Lincoln. Four years ago, a new principal was assigned to Lincoln and brought with her a trusted staff member to take on the enormous challenges of this struggling school. Almost daily, with threat of sanctions looming, Deborah Hoffman, the principal, and Kelly Jones, an instructional resource teacher, felt overwhelmed. By the end of the year, the first round of sanctions was instituted. With encouragement from friends, family, colleagues, and staff, these two leaders kept going, one step at a time, with their eyes on the prize: **academic achievement for social justice**. Over the next three years, they formed new teaming structures, used resources creatively, and professional development became part of the way we do things around here.

CREATIVITY SUCCESS STORIES

Spitzer days

First and foremost, core values need to drive the creativity in a school. Here's an example from Lincoln. One day, Hoffman learned that Lincoln would receive grant money because of the impending sanctions. The grant money had to be used for professional development. Hoffman and her instructional resource teacher knew that teachers were already immersed in professional development and were concerned about asking them to absorb more. They also didn't want to create more work for teachers by asking them to write additional substitute plans. They tried to think of a creative way to offer professional development support that would provide meaningful education for students. Aha, they thought — Mr. Spitzer! An extraordinary retired teacher could take their students on a daylong standards-based science field trip to the school forest. While the students were away, instructional resource teachers and teacher teams could examine student work, rethink curriculum implementation, redesign classrooms, and more. Students and teachers would be engaged in a meaningful learning opportunity. Teachers wouldn't have to write substitute plans, and the students would benefit both from the teachers' learning and their field trip. As an added bonus, because all classrooms were included in this schoolwide endeavor, the school community grew more cohesive, which resulted in a more positive overall school atmosphere. A core value of the school, to build the capacity of teachers, resulted in students also having a meaningful experience.

One-on-one coaching sessions

While Spitzer days were funded by a grant, other creative professional development strategies were not, so we had to find other resources. For example, we used Title I money to support instructional resource teacher coaching sessions for one hour each week. During the principal's first two years at Lincoln, teachers voluntarily chose to work with the instructional

First and foremost, core values need to drive the creativity in a school.

resource teacher during planning time to improve their instructional practices. Teachers who chose to do this told the principal that these meetings had significant impact on their instructional practices. We realized it was important to find a way to provide all teachers this support without taking away planning time. For the past year, we have funded four full-time teachers from Title I, allowing for an additional prep time for teachers and reducing class sizes for students. Because this prep time goes beyond contractual requirements, it can be used for coaching. The idea that **teachers need to be their own experts and interventionists** led to a plan for teachers to meet with the instructional resource teacher while their students worked with an educational assistant in a nearby computer lab.

These meetings have led to dramatic improvements in professional learning and student achievement. Each teacher works with an instructional resource teacher for one hour a week. The teacher and the instructional resource teacher meet for 30 minutes to examine and reflect on student work. During this time, the teacher and instructional resource teacher discuss instructional strategies, look at resources, plan next steps for instruction, and explore content. This meeting is followed by a 30-minute session with a student or small group of students where the teacher and instructional resource teacher work through problems or lessons. The instructional resource teacher or teacher leads the lesson while the other observes and takes notes. The observations and notes provide immediate feedback that is used to create goals and plan lessons to improve classroom instruction. The teacher and instructional resource teacher revisit and document the goals and work each week to ensure targeted, standards-based instruction and continued growth.

The frequency of the meetings has allowed teachers and instructional resource teachers to develop trusting relationships. The meetings are nonevaluative

and differentiated based on teacher need. Teachers have time to reflect on student learning, allowing them to make instructional decisions based on evidence from student work. This differentiated professional learning has sparked teachers' excitement about what they know and what they want to know. Just as doctors are assigned patients, teachers are assigned students. Patients have individualized treatment plans, even if they have similar health conditions. Students deserve differentiated instruction even with similar academic, social, and emotional levels.

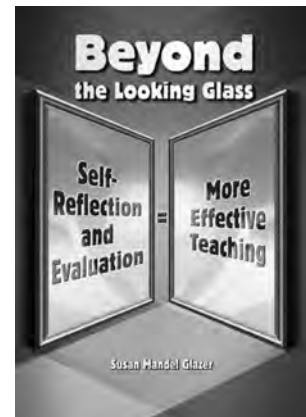
We hope to continue to learn from our students and staff so that we, too, can improve our practices. As Gawande states, "People have proposed two strategies for change. One is to shrink the amount of uncertainty in medicine — with research, not on new drugs or operations (which already attracts massive amounts of funding) but on the small, critical, everyday decisions that patients and doctors make (which gets shockingly little funding)" (Gawande, 2002).

Through professional development, we are providing staff the knowledge and skills they need to make the small, critical, everyday decisions. We do not believe in quick fixes or grandiose canned programs. It's complicated, and we made AYP.

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THE 3 R's OF LEARNING TIME

RETHINK, RESHAPE, RECLAIM

By Shera Carter Sackey

As a Learning School Alliance facilitator, I have had the opportunity to work with schools nationally and internationally, and one of the biggest challenges that school teams face is finding time for collaborative learning. The Learning School Alliance is a network of schools collaborating about professional practice. The network embodies Learning Forward's purpose to advance effective job-embedded professional learning that leads to student outcomes.

A key component of Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning is a focus on collaborative learning, typically in learning communities. These learning communities are committed to collective responsibility, goal alignment, and ongoing job-embedded professional learning. However, collaborative learning must be job-embedded and connected to teaching and learning (Killion & Roy, 2009). Traditionally, most professional development has taken place outside the school day or only during the summer, but many schools and districts are finding time inside the workweek for groups to use for data analysis, lesson study, and investigation of new instructional practices. Many schools also use technology resources such as wikis and e-learning platforms to communicate things that in the past might have been addressed in a faculty meet-

ing. With online communities of practice and other synchronous and asynchronous tools, there are many ways in which schools can plan effectively so that time (or lack of time) won't be a factor in how well professional learning communities function.

CREATIVITY NEEDED

Many schools find creative ways to embed time for learning into their school structures. Belinda Treadwell, principal of Mountain Brook Elementary School in Mountain Brook, Ala., says that her school is very intentional about providing common collaborative learning times for teachers. She believes that the master schedule is one of the most important tools that a principal has and providing teachers with structured time for professional learning is essential to increased outcomes and a high-performing culture of excellence.

How does Mountain Brook do it? The school sends instructional assistants into classrooms to relieve teachers while students participate in sustained silent reading time. During teachers' professional learning team time, they structure their work around the cycle of continuous improvement. They also use Innovation Configuration maps to make sure their collaborative learning time is driven by student needs. Treadwell believes that providing quality professional learning is the most important thing the school can do to impact student learning.

While the school has professional learning communities in place, implementing them was not without its challenges. Parents voiced concerns about the time that teachers were spending outside of the classroom. Therefore, educators at Mountain Brook make sure to remain transparent about their work to ensure buy-in from parents. Treadwell notes that the school uses Learning Forward's

Becoming a Learning School

By Joellen Killion & Patricia Roy
NSDC, 2009

From setting the stage to engaging the community in understanding the purpose of collaborative professional learning teams, this book covers what leaders need to know to implement more effective professional learning. Chapter 5 focuses on scheduling time for both formal and informal learning opportunities. Included are 12 tools to guide schools and districts through the steps outlined in the chapter.

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Ambassadors of learning: Teachers' enthusiasm builds momentum for district's long-running program

By Valerie von Frank
JSD, Spring 2009, Vol. 30, No. 2

A long-term commitment to job-embedded professional development creates a culture of continuous learning in one Michigan district. Every Wednesday, students' day is shortened by two hours to make time for teachers' professional development in Holt Public Schools. Many of the articles in this issue of JSD are devoted to time for professional learning.

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Standards Assessment Inventory and Innovation Configuration maps to evaluate its professional learning growth as a team. "We are on a journey. We have a long way to go, but as our professional learning community grows, I grow as a principal," she says.

Paula Hoff, principal of Westwood Middle School in Blaine, Minn., shares Treadwell's priorities. She has ensured that teachers in her school have time to engage in collaborative learning. Collaborative learning teams are based on common content, common students, and common data. Each core academic team meets in two 25-minute sessions a week. She also ensures that faculty meetings are focused on professional learning. Teams have a continuous focus on data, including building data, grade-level data, department data, and individual teacher data. Her teams use Innovation Configuration maps to evaluate professional learning, measuring where they are compared to where they need to be.

Westwood uses the district's early release days for collaborative learning. Her school gauges the impact of collaboration time by using the Standards Assessment Inventory. Hoff says, "Our biggest challenge was not in receiving pushback, but in the struggles that some teachers

Bargaining time: Union contract spells out how and when professional learning will happen

By Joan Richardson
The Learning System, March 2007, Vol. 2, No. 6

A district undergoes a cultural shift to more job-embedded, results-driven, and standards-based professional development. The new approach was made possible in large part because the teachers union and the district shifted to an interest-based bargaining model rather than the traditional adversarial model. The newsletter also includes a tool, "Strategies for finding time."

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experienced.” These challenges were due to the tension from having clearly defined desired results, examining the current reality, determining next steps, and continually revisiting their progress. Hoff helps alleviate the tension by “providing the balance between pressure and support for staff to meet the needs of our students,” she says. The building leadership team continually asks for feedback from teachers to examine the impact and effectiveness of professional learning. “We are committed to the belief that professional development equates to professional change,” Hoff says.

Many principals note the value in transitioning how meeting time is used. Mina Schnitta, principal of Hogg Middle School in Houston, Texas, makes sure that time is allotted for teachers to “work on the work” of effective teaching and learning during times reserved for traditional faculty meetings.

SUPPORT FROM CENTRAL OFFICE

Leaders cannot implement change by themselves. They need support to implement and maintain it (Killion & Roy, 2009). The role of the central office is very important in assisting schools with planning and implementing change. And, although the central office role is paramount, schools are the “center of change” (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 203). Many of the principals I work with acknowledge that they receive a tremendous amount of support from their districts. Districts help their learning efforts by giving them the flexibility to create the schedule needed to promote collaborative learning. Most of the districts have provided the schools with early release time to focus on collaborative learning. Corey Steiner, principal of West Fargo High in West Fargo, N.D., says that the central office has funded a paraprofessional to staff the school’s intervention room, which provides teachers with more time to collaborate. The school provides substitute teachers on a regular basis so that content-area teams can meet to work toward their goal of providing a viable curriculum with common assessments built in throughout the school year. Hoff at Westwood Middle School says the district offers a balance of pressure and support. “They provide principals with support and autonomy to create the type of schedule needed to support professional learning,” she says.

School’s out. It’s time to learn!

By Karel Holloway

Tools for Schools, April/May 2003, Vol. 6, No. 5

This article outlines six steps to creating a summer professional learning program: Choose your planning team, look at the data, set goals, decide how to achieve them, determine funding and location, and plan follow-up. Included in the newsletter are four tools and a list of resources for planning a summer learning program.

www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=124

To assist with facilitating professional learning communities, districts can use research-based practices to define professional development, develop networks of instructional experts, develop a support system for new teachers, strategically allocate financial resources, and encourage and assist schools in using data. These structural supports are key to fostering effective communities of practice. Hord (2004) writes that if the proper structures such as time are not put into place, professional learning communities and the ongoing work of collaboration will be ineffective. Treadwell at Mountain Brook says, “We have a very supportive central office. The superintendent’s expectation is that principals adhere to Learning Forward’s standards and grow professional learning communities within their schools.”

A STRUCTURE FOR POWERFUL PRACTICE

School-based learning communities have evolved over time and have the power to revolutionize teacher practice. Traditional forms of professional development are no longer the norm as professional learning community research has impacted the ways teachers learn. Hord (2004) suggests that professional learning communities are not “an improvement program or plan,” yet they provides a structure for schools (p. 14) to use for learning experiences. She also writes that the implementation of professional learning communities will not be widespread if we don’t shift our thinking about what the role of the teacher entails. Some stakeholders may hold the perception that the most effective use of the teachers’ time is always working directly with students in class, while others are concerned about the effectiveness of such communities. However, an overwhelming body of research supports these communities of practice as a leading strategy for strengthening organizational outcomes. An important element of ensuring success for these communities is providing adequate time so educators can engage in collaborative learning frequently as part of their workdays. Maybe all schools will have to get creative with how they find time until the field catches up with our understanding that job-embedded learning is the strategy to push student learning forward.

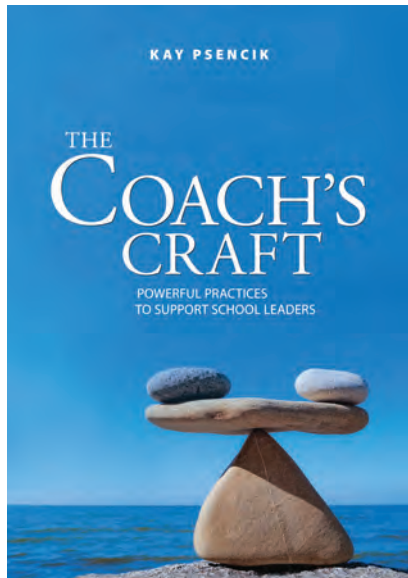
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DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A DOUG FRANKLIN?

TEACHERS CAN BE THE MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE IN THE BUILDING

By Linda K. Hoy, Janice Bradley, and Julie Horwitz

Teachers are powerful human resources who are often overlooked and can serve as assets for school-based change. That was our biggest lesson from a two-year partnership between faculty from a state university and three local, rural middle and high schools. The partnership was created to help facilitate teacher mathematics professional learning communities (Horwitz, Bradley, & Hoy, 2011).

These partnerships happened in multiple ways. All professional learning communities met at the school once or twice a month, either during school hours or immediately after school, and were mandated by building administration yet rarely attended by them. During the two-year tenure of the university/school partnership, other key lessons of what worked to support learning and change included:



1. Administrator and organizational support must be in place for teachers to meet;
2. Participant roles for learning in a professional learning community must be clear and agreed upon; and
3. Teacher/university partner relationships influence what gets accomplished during professional learning community time.

However, the role of teachers as human resources gave us the greatest insights into how to help learning communities succeed.

During the two-year study, three professional learning communities demonstrated varied commitment, ownership, and productivity, yet only one seemed poised to reach its potential. In an ever-changing high school professional learning community, specific teacher actions and behaviors, particularly from one teacher leader, promoted teacher learning and change. His asset-based thinking mindset played a critical role in the learning community as he helped to foster a collaborative learning culture among his fellow teachers.

DOUG FRANKLIN'S STORY

Doug Franklin (not his real name) was a new teacher who arrived at his high school mathematics teaching assignment fresh out of college. The school's math department was very small, four teachers covering grades 6 through 12. Franklin had a strong background in mathematics content and quickly distinguished himself as a leader at his school. He was committed to students and colleagues, willing to work long and hard and do what was necessary to help students succeed over the long term. In his first year, Franklin was a listener. He knew he was an outsider in a rural, small community that wasn't always welcoming. The people in this community were accustomed to new teachers coming in with a lot of energy, starting new programs, and then leaving after a short time. As a member of the professional learning community his first year, Franklin was active but not in charge and often followed others' leads. While there were good conversations during learning community sessions, learning was not always intentional or focused. Talk was often around students and math, yet not concentrated, not always productive, and certainly not thinking about students from an asset-based perspective.

During year two of the professional learning community study, Franklin stepped into a strong leadership role. He became a leader who was respectful, collaborative, and highly organized. As facilitator, Franklin planned all meetings. Each meeting began with an agenda, which had a clear, measurable goal or objective. Here is an example of goals for one professional learning community meeting:

- Teachers will engage in problem solving that enriches their understanding of algebra standards.
- Teachers will plan how to present a problem to students at all levels.
- Teachers will plan how to analyze student work in order to reach a better understanding of algebraic thinking.

During learning community sessions, the group completed a short reading, worked on a math problem, and made plans for implementing change in classrooms. Even-

tually other members of the group brought problems, readings, and ideas to share with the group. This was possible because Franklin created a safe environment where members completed challenging math problems; all ideas and solutions were respected and appreciated. Often someone from the group would remark, "This is fun." Sometimes members would get lost in a discussion about math.

Ultimately, these ideas and solutions led to learning resulting in changes in all members' classrooms. Below is an excerpt from an example of a productive interaction where Franklin showed his strong leadership skills with a reluctant learning community member (called Teacher 1 in this transcript) by pointing out different problem-solving perspectives:

Franklin: *Please work on the crossing the river problem on your own, and then we will discuss how you attacked it.*

Teacher 1: *How do you do this if there isn't a rope attached? I am sorry; there is no way to do this.*

Franklin: *I had trouble with this at first, and I had to draw it for it to make sense.*

The teachers are quiet and working on the problem.

Teacher 1: *I have always hated these problems, and I don't see the point of them. I think students need to see a point in what they are doing.*

Teacher 2: *How could you make this problem relevant?*

Franklin: *What do you see about how the students in the article approached the problem?*

Teacher 1: *She was counting one-way trips, and we were counting round-trips.*

Franklin: *It is interesting to think about where she got the variables from.*

Teacher 1: *But it does work out. That is really cool.*

Franklin: *It does. That is interesting; there are different ways students represent their knowledge.*

They talk about the differences in the students' perceptions of algebraic representation (transcript, September 2, 2009).

Franklin facilitated professional learning among colleagues by employing facilitation skills to create trust among teachers.

TEACHER AS HUMAN RESOURCE

Franklin served as a valuable resource in supporting a collaborative culture in the professional learning community. In education, decision makers typically think of resources as money, books, and professional development. Seldom do they consider teachers and what they bring to the school and classroom as resources. Haycock (1998) explains that the impact on students can be great if the teacher is effective, and negative if the teacher is ineffective. However, it is our belief that teachers' attitudes about their own efficacy and that of their students can have the same positive or negative impact. Franklin's effectiveness

as a human resource can be understood from two perspectives: asset-based thinking and teacher leader actions.

ASSET-BASED THINKING

A teacher can be the most important resource in a school. When the teacher's attitude derives from asset-based thinking, positive impact can occur for both teacher and student. Asset-based thinking is defined as "a way of viewing reality" (Cramer & Wasiak, 2008, p. 7). Those who embrace this model approach things from a positive as opposed to a negative perspective. Asset-based thinkers look for what is working and what strengths or assets exist within themselves, their relationships, and the situations in which they find themselves, and then build on those strengths to accomplish their goals. Asset-based thinking taps inner strengths to realize "personal power [that] comes from leveraging the assets that make you 'you'" (Cramer & Wasiak, 2008, p. 19). In other words, assets that exist within can be used to create change. Cramer and Wasiak (2008) describe asset-based thinking as a model that helps individuals and leaders "expand your influence" (p. 20). Leadership involves influence. When used ethically and positively, this influence opens up doors for creativity, collaboration, and development of other teacher leaders.

Those who use asset-based thinking dig deep inside to identify and commit to areas they feel most compelled to impact. "Making an impact is rooted in what you were born to do. Your impact comes to life at the intersection of your present actions and the future you want to create" (Cramer & Wasiak, 2008, p. 111). Asset-based thinking clarifies where people feel most called to work or serve. Asset-based thinkers answer the question, "What impact or results do we hope to gain from our work?"

With asset-based thinking, the future is an open script to be written by anyone involved in a school. Cramer & Wasiak (2008) describe it this way: "Asset-based thinking collapses the boundaries between past, present, and future, allowing you to focus on all of them simultaneously. You learn to create and tell detailed stories about the future you most desire, as if it had already happened. You make a memory and a vision all at once. The narrative power of asset-based thinking stories creates worthwhile visions of the future that come to life in the present. You become the author and producer of the future you most want so you can live it right now (p. 139)."

Franklin was able to create a learning space for the math department to envision its future. He demonstrated asset-based thinking while facilitating conversations in the professional learning community sessions.

TEACHER LEADER ACTIONS

A teacher leader is an educator who influences educators individually and collectively to improve teaching practices in order to increase student learning (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Franklin's leadership from an asset-based thinking perspec-

tive was essential to fostering a collaborative learning culture among fellow teachers in the mathematics professional learning community. In alignment with the Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2011), Franklin:

1. Facilitated professional learning among colleagues by employing facilitation skills to create trust among teachers;
2. Built ownership of the professional learning community;
3. Supported colleagues to collect and communicate data from classrooms to support student learning;
4. Engaged in reflective dialogue with colleagues; and
5. Served as a team leader to use teacher expertise and knowledge of mathematics and instruction.

All functions that Franklin performed as a teacher leader contributed to asset-based thinking and a continuous learning model in the math professional learning community.

RECOGNIZE ASSETS

With ever-diminishing resources, schools must look within to supply resources for supporting continuous professional learning. Educators must consider each other the most valuable resource in a system, to be developed and supported with leadership, structures, tools, and processes for promoting continual professional learning. We consider Franklin, a teacher who led the professional learning community as a teacher leader using asset-based thinking, a prime example of a resource that is too often left untapped.

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THE EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL

By Pamela Mendels

When most people hear the word “principal,” they think of the noun meaning the chief, the top executive, the head of all others, the person who controls the levers. Not so Dewey Hensley, himself a

former principal and today an assistant commissioner in Kentucky’s Department of Education. Hensley likes to remind people that when it was first used in connection with school leadership in the 1800s, the word “principal” was an adjective in front of another word, “teacher” (Pierce, 1935, p. 11). The “principal teacher,” he says, was a kind of first among equals, an instructor who assumed some administrative tasks as schools began to grow beyond the one-room buildings of yore. The original principal, Hensley stresses, was, like the other teachers in the school, concerned with instruction above all.

Principals in the 21st century, he says, could do worse than keep this 19th-century definition in mind as they face

the challenges of turning around failing schools and work to live up to the ideals embodied in a more contemporary term, “instructional leader.” Today’s best principals, Hensley says, “know what good and effective instruction looks like so they can provide feedback to guide teachers.”

This view of the principalship — that it should center on instruction, not building management or other administrative matters — is one that has gained currency in recent years. So has the idea that if instruction is the heart of their job, principals have a vital role to play in school improvement. Consider a 2010 survey of school and district administrators, policy advisers, and others in the education world. They named “principal leadership” as second only to teacher quality when they were asked to rank in importance 21 education issues, ranging from special education and English language learning to school violence and reducing the dropout rate (Simkin, Charner, & Suss, 2010, pp. 9-10).

A major reason for the attention being paid to principals is the emergence of research that has found an empirical link between school leadership and student achievement. A seminal 2004 study, *How Leadership In-*

fluences Student Learning, asserted that leadership was the second most important school-based factor in children's academic achievement and noted that there were few, if any, cases of troubled schools turning around without effective leaders (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). In 2010, the authors of that study, a team of researchers from the University of Minnesota and the University of Toronto, published a detailed sequel to probe school leadership in depth. They reaffirmed their earlier conclusion, declaring that: "In developing a starting point for this six-year study, we claimed, based on a preliminary review of research, that leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning. After six additional years of research, we are even more confident about this claim" (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010, p. 9). And they found, further, that although school leadership does not make its impact directly, its indirect workings have a statistically significant effect on student achievement (Louis et al., 2010, p. 37).

What exactly is it that effective principals do that ripples through classrooms and boosts learning, especially in failing schools? Since 2000, The Wallace Foundation, which has supported projects to promote education leadership in 24 states and published 70 reports on the subject (including the Minnesota/Toronto research), has been trying to answer that question. A recently published Wallace Perspective report that takes a look back at the foundation's research and field experiences finds that five practices in particular seem central to effective school leadership (The Wallace Foundation, 2012):

1. Shaping a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards;
2. Creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit, and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail;
3. Cultivating leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision;
4. Improving instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost; and
5. Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement.

When principals put each of these elements in place — and in harmony — principals stand a fighting chance of making a real difference for students.

SHAPING A VISION

1 Effective leadership begins with the development of a schoolwide vision of commitment to high standards and the success of all students. The principal helps to spell out that vision and get all others on board with it. "The research literature over the

last quarter-century has consistently supported the notion that having high expectations for all, including clear and public standards, is one key to closing the achievement gap between advantaged and less advantaged students and for raising the overall achievement of all students," write education leadership researchers at Vanderbilt University (Porter et al., 2008, p. 13).

The Minnesota/Toronto team found that principals rated highly by teachers for having created a good instructional climate or taken sound instructional actions had been able to nurture a strong vision that all students can learn. "Clearly, what gets the highly rated principals out of bed each morning is what keeps them awake at night: They have a vision and believe that all students can achieve at high levels," the researchers say. "... They emphasize the value of research-based strategies. They speak about the amount of time that is invested in developing the school's vision, gathering research information, and then applying it to the local setting." In one passage, the researchers quote a teacher and the principal at a school where the vision has been securely planted: " 'My principal is very firm in what she believes,' " the teacher tells the researchers. For her part, the principal makes clear that the vision is "nonnegotiable," as the researchers put it, commenting that her expectations are high and the teachers know that. " 'I simply put it out there: We've got to kick it up a notch,' " the principal says (Louis et al., 2010, p. 84).

CREATING A CLIMATE HOSPITABLE TO EDUCATION

2 To be sure, effective principals shape schools buildings characterized by the basics — safety and orderliness — but they also see to it that schools create an atmosphere in which students feel supported and responded to. For teachers, too, principals set a tone. The feel is nonbureaucratic, and teachers form part of a professional community that is "deeply rooted in the academic and social learning goals of the schools" (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliott, & Cravens, 2007, pp. 7-8). Principals ensure that teachers do not work in isolation from one another, but work collaboratively, giving each other help and guidance to improve instructional practices (Louis et al., 2010, p. 50).

Effective principals work hard at building such school communities, found University of Washington researchers in an examination of leadership in urban schools. "Alongside their efforts to prioritize collaboration and address trust in the building, the principals, aided by other admin-



istrative staff, made improvement of the work culture a central target of their efforts to lead a learning improvement agenda,” the researchers found. “Some had arrived at their job feeling that they needed to change a toxic culture at the school to do what they needed to do. Other spoke of ‘building a culture,’ ‘moving toward a culture,’ or ‘leading a culture of change.’”

The University of Washington researchers went on to list the key elements of a climate hospitable to learning: “a sense of student and staff safety; respect for all members of the school community, without regard to the professional status or position; an upbeat, welcoming, solution-oriented, no-blame, professional environment; an effort to invite and involve staff in various schoolwide functions; and a parallel outreach to students that engaged and involved them in a variety of activities” (Portin et al., 2009, p. 59).

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP IN OTHERS

3 Effective principals know they cannot go it alone. They are not the lonely-at-the-top, hero-principal who has become a fixture of popular culture. Instead, they make good use of all the skills and knowledge on the faculty and among others, encouraging the many capable adults who make up a school community to step into leadership roles and responsibilities.

The more open a principal is to spreading leadership around, the better it is for student learning, the Minnesota/Toronto researchers found. Indeed, a particularly notable finding of their study is that effective leadership from a variety of sources — principals, teachers, staff teams and others — is associated with better student performance on math and reading tests. “Compared with lower-achieving schools, higher-achieving schools provided all stakeholders with greater influence on decisions,” the report says. It then goes on to explore why, suggesting that when it comes to leadership, the adage about two (or more) heads being better than one applies. “The higher performance of these schools might be explained as a consequence of the greater access they have to collective knowledge and wisdom embedded within their communities,” the researchers say (Louis et al., 2010, p. 35).

What’s more, leadership appears not to be a zero sum game. The researchers found that principals “do not lose influence as others gain influence” (Louis et al., 2010, p. 19).

IMPROVING INSTRUCTION

4 Effective leaders focus laser-like on the quality of instruction in their schools. As the Wallace Perspective notes, “They emphasize research-based strategies to improve teaching and learning and initiate discussions about instructional approaches, both in teams and with individual teachers. They pursue these strategies despite the preference of many teachers to be left alone” (The Wallace Foundation, 2012).

Principals spend time in classrooms to evaluate instruction or, especially in the case of secondary schools where they can’t reasonably be expected to be experts in all academic disciplines, they ensure that someone who is qualified does so. They make close observations of what’s working and what isn’t. And they make sure to discuss what they have found with teachers.

The Minnesota/Toronto study contrasted its high-scoring principals with their low-scoring counterparts.

The first group made frequent, short, and often spontaneous classroom visits, which they quickly followed up with feedback to the teacher.

Visits by the second group tended to be scheduled and not for instructional observation, but “most damaging,” the researchers write, is that the low-scoring principals failed to provide their teachers with feedback.

In the cause of improving instruction, effective principals take advantage of the collaborative culture they work to create in their schools, the University of Washington researchers found, noting that the school leaders they observed “consistently expressed” the desire to see teachers working, teaching, and helping one another. “To create opportunities for teacher collaboration and learning, supervisory leaders across school sites turned to the school schedule to create the time and endorsement for this kind of work to occur,” the researchers found. “Some principals moved to a block schedule, others gave up administrative meeting time to create more planning time for teachers, while others used the master schedule as a tool to create opportunities and accommodate for various teacher professional development activities, such as ‘lab sites,’ peer observations, grade-level meetings, and professional development sessions” (Portin et al., 2009, p. 59).

MANAGING PEOPLE, DATA, AND PROCESSES

5 Effective leaders hire well and know how to retain the high performers. They also know how to give their teachers the backing they need to thrive. “Indeed,” writes Stanford University education policy analyst Linda Darling-Hammond, “the number one reason for teachers’ decisions about whether to stay in a school is the quality of administrative support — and it is the leader who must develop this organization” (Darling-Hammond, 2007, p. 17).

At a time when federal and state accountability mandates have made data analysis a fact of school life, effective principals also know how to make the best use of data, learning to ask useful questions of it and taking advantage of it for collaborative inquiry among teachers and helpful feedback to students (Portin et al., 2009).

Strong principals also know how to go about their jobs systematically. The Vanderbilt researchers, who have developed a tool known as VAL-ED for assessing principals, have pinpointed six key steps that school leaders follow in carrying out their central responsibilities: planning, implementing, sup-

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porting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring (Porter et al., 2008, p. 15).

BETTER LEADERSHIP ON THE POLICY AGENDA

Knowing what constitutes good school leadership is one thing. Putting it into effect is another. The good news is that a deeper understanding of what strong instructional leadership looks like is emerging at the same time that policymakers are beginning to take leadership seriously. Once an issue at the margins of school reform, boosting school leadership has climbed high on the policy to-do list. One need look no farther for evidence than the most recent in a series of yearly reports on leadership legislative initiatives. It identifies 23 states that, as a group, enacted 42 laws regarding school leadership in the 2010 legislative session alone. “The emphasis on effective school leadership continues to inform national and state discussions about educator effectiveness and school turnaround,” the report says, noting that, in addition to the state activity, the federal government has taken a keen interest in leadership through competitive grant programs including Race to the Top (Shelton, 2011, p. 2).

To take advantage of this interest, educators and policymakers at all levels would do well to remember that the crux of the principal’s job today is not, as it was in the recent past, to sit at the apex and attend to administrative tasks, but to work collaboratively and unleash potential.

Whether forming a vision for a school or encouraging teachers to help one another burnish their classroom skills, the effective principal is a guide along the path to better instruction. “An instructional leader is someone who first and foremost realizes that the strategies and instructional practices teachers use are the primary mover of student achievement,” says Hensley, who was named to head up a new state school turnaround effort in Kentucky after his own success as a principal at a once-failing Louisville elementary school. “These leaders guide their teachers to recognize how significant what they do is to academic performance.”

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Nelson



Guerra

Face-to-face interaction is best for developing cultural literacy

As schools began installing computers and networks in classrooms two decades ago, few of us could have imagined how integral technology would become to our professional practice and our everyday lives. Technology has facilitated new ways of teaching and learning.

Technology has affected not only the way students learn, but the way teachers learn as well. Informally, teachers learn from one another by documenting and discussing their work on the Internet through video sharing, social networking, and blogging. More formally, teachers take online courses, attend webinars, and participate in virtual conferences to stay current with professional standards and practice. Increasingly, school districts and other professional development providers are turning to technology.

Online professional development has distinct advantages. Because most teachers have access to the Internet at home as well as at school, teachers can access online professional development at their convenience. Whether a teacher works best early in the morning or late

at night, online learning is available when the teacher is ready. Similarly, whether teachers prefer to work incrementally for short periods or go from start to finish in one session, online learning accommodates varying styles. Additionally, teachers can use electronic archives to review previous learning. Much like professional book collections, schools are creating libraries of electronic resources.

Although high-quality online learning is expensive to develop, online learning can be surprisingly cost-effective when the costs are spread across large numbers of users and the content is standardized. A single school district likely does not have the resources to develop its own online modules, but many organizations are developing online learning resources that schools and districts can access through a subscription. Subscription costs are typically based on the number of educators who use the resource and the length of time the subscription is active. This allows schools to match online resources to the district size and budget.

Because of the advantages of

online learning, school districts are increasingly looking to e-providers for professional development. This often makes good sense, especially when funding for professional development is constrained. However, online learning has its limitations. Professional developers must be aware of the kinds of professional development best suited for electronic formats and the kinds of professional development best delivered face-to-face.

VARIETIES OF ONLINE LEARNING

The most common type of online learning is a self-contained course, often called web-based training. Web-based trainings are ready-made courses that present content in a linear fashion as participants work through a series of lessons. Participants are often required to successfully complete a multiple-choice assessment before moving to the next lesson. Although web-based trainings often have built-in supports such as video or graphics to enhance learning, there is no interaction between the participant and instructor. This means there is no opportunity to differentiate the learning, and participants receive little to no feedback. Web-based training is best suited for routine workshops intended to provide participants with standardized information. Web-based training is especially useful for compulsory, compliance-based training since participant progress and completion is easily tracked.

In each issue of *JSD*, Sarah W. Nelson and Patricia L. Guerra write about the importance of and strategies for developing cultural awareness in teachers and schools. Guerra (pg16@txstate.edu) is an assistant professor and Nelson (swnelson@txstate.edu) is an associate professor in the Department of Education and Community Leadership at Texas State University-San Marcos. Guerra and Nelson are co-founders of Transforming Schools for a Multicultural Society (TRANSFORMS). Columns are available at www.learningforward.org/news/authors/guerranelson.cfm.

More interactive forms of online learning are also available. Many online professional development resources use a variety of electronic tools including blogs, wikis, social networks, podcasts, or virtual classrooms to facilitate interaction between and among facilitators and participants. Online learning may involve both synchronous and asynchronous technologies, depending on the purpose of the session. In many cases, these online learning opportunities are just as effective as face-to-face sessions. What many don't realize, however, is that developing and facilitating online professional development that allows for a high degree of interaction and differentiation is far more expensive and time-intensive than face-to-face professional development. Additionally, online learning is not the best mode of delivery for every topic.

WHEN HUMAN INTERACTION MATTERS

Cultural proficiency requires educators to have deep cultural knowledge and asset-based beliefs about students and families from diverse backgrounds. Developing deep cultural knowledge means going beyond surface-level understanding about cultural norms and traditions and learning about hidden and invisible culture, the aspects of culture that drive communication, interaction style, and world views. Educators can acquire cultural knowledge through a variety of activities, including community events, book studies, and film analysis. While a skilled professional developer could facilitate similar activities using online technologies, what is lost in using technology to build cultural knowledge is the opportunity to practice using intercultural interaction skills.

The second aspect of developing cultural proficiency, addressing personal beliefs, is even more difficult to facilitate online. Personal beliefs are deeply held, often unconscious

assumptions that drive our thinking and behavior. Acting as structural frames, personal beliefs help us make sense of the world. They tell us what to expect, how the world should be. When we come across something unfamiliar, we rely on our personal beliefs to help us understand what we see or experience. When what we see or experience is too different from what we expect, our personal beliefs tell us there is something wrong, and we make negative attributions about the person or situation involved. This tendency to assume difference is negative is known as deficit thinking and is at the root of cultural misunderstandings. Developing cultural proficiency requires becoming aware of personal beliefs and reframing those that lead to deficit thinking.

Because personal beliefs are deeply held, they are difficult to unpack. Yet unpacking personal beliefs is essential to becoming culturally proficient. Without addressing beliefs, teaching practices are unlikely to change (Guerra & Nelson, 2009). No matter how unconscious deficit beliefs are or how hard educators try to mask them, students and families know when educators hold deficit beliefs because such beliefs seep out in the way educators communicate, the way they interact, and in the expectations they convey.

As important as it is to surface and reframe deficit beliefs, doing so is a troubling process. Educators who rightly believe they are good people doing good work are disturbed when they learn they hold deficit beliefs about some of the students and families they work so hard to serve. Helping educators come to this painful realization and supporting them in changing their beliefs takes a skilled facilitator who knows the educators well enough to respond to differing needs. Some educators need reassurance that holding deficit beliefs does not make them terrible people or bad teachers. Others need a detailed explanation of where such beliefs come from and how

they can be changed. Still others need to be challenged before they will accept that deficit beliefs even exist. Knowing what kind of support to provide so the experience is one of growth for the educator rather than debilitating largely depends on the professional developer's ability to read the situation and respond to the cues educators give. Cues often come through body language and facial expressions and are not easily detected in online forums.

Additionally, professional development of this type does not solely rely on interaction between facilitator and participant, but also between participants of diverse backgrounds. The goal of developing cultural proficiency is to acquire the knowledge and skills to effectively engage with people of differing backgrounds and experiences. Professional learning sessions provide a safe place to practice with the guidance of a skilled facilitator. With a facilitator's assistance and encouragement, participants are able to recognize hidden and invisible cultural knowledge and begin to address deficit beliefs that surface. In face-to-face settings, the facilitator is able to model working through a culture clash and help all participants engage productively. Current forms of technology do not allow this kind of interaction. In fact, technology reinforces distancing and isolation that contribute to cultural misunderstandings.

Technology holds tremendous promise for helping teach and learn in new ways, but there are still instances when face-to-face interaction is needed. Developing cultural proficiency is one such instance.

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TEACHER LEADER CHALLENGE

www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=342

Search the archives of *The Leading Teacher* newsletter to find articles and tools that explore the challenges and rewards teacher leaders face. In the November 2011 issue, Valerie von Frank illustrates how June Jordan School for Equity, a small high school in San Francisco, is using video to significantly improve its teacher professional learning.



ENGAGE THOUGHT LEADERS

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_forwards_pd_watch/2012/01/keys_to_engaging_thought_leaders.html

Tracy Crow, Learning Forward's director of publications, offers key points to building relationships with community members.



Crow

"Meaningful relationships happen over time, so one phone call, one visit, one elevator conversation isn't enough. Plan to speak with your desired allies repeatedly, in different venues and with ever-deepening but consistent messages. Scaffold the information you share, just as you do with other learners."

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THE BOTTOM LINE ON EXCELLENCE:

A guide to investing in professional learning that increases educator performance and student results.

By Joellen Killion and Stephanie Hirsh

With the current challenges to school funding, it is crucial that education agencies carefully examine their investments in professional learning. Guiding principles based on the Resources standard in Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning can assist schools and districts to prioritize, monitor, and coordinate resources for educator learning.

841 SQUARE MILES OF COMMITMENT:

Districtwide plan makes professional learning a priority.

By Nancy Ames Slabine

For the last eight years, Duval County (Fla.) Public Schools has focused on enhancing professional learning. Although its annual budget has grown by only 9% since 2003-04, funding for professional development has nearly doubled during that same period. As a result, teacher practice and student achievement have both improved.



THE POWER OF 2:

Partnership paves the way for teacher leadership academy.

By Jeanne Harmon, Kip Herren, Rod Luke, and Terese Emry

The Auburn School District in Washington state created a district strategic improvement plan with a three-year

framework aimed at improving student achievement. By enlisting the help of an external partner, the district is getting maximum impact from its resources by focusing on teachers' instructional leadership skills.

TIGHT BUDGET LOOSENS CREATIVITY:

School turns to distance learning to stretch development dollars.

By Sue Chapman

At McWhirter Professional Development Laboratory School in Webster, Texas, shrinking budgets threatened several key professional development initiatives in progress. A combination of face-to-face sessions and technology-assisted distance learning solved the problem for teachers working to deepen their understanding of mathematics teaching and learning.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF CONNECTIONS:

Social capital's strength lies in expertise, reciprocity, and relevance.

By Wes Johnson

Simply providing teachers with opportunities to meet with one another is not enough to guarantee substantial professional growth. According to social capital theory, teacher conversations must be characterized by expertise, reciprocity, and relevance in order to best support teacher learning. Administrators who keep this in mind will be better able to assess the strength of their school's professional learning community and transform teacher learning at their schools.

EYES ON THE PRIZE:

A struggling Wisconsin school forges a steady path toward academic achievement.

By Jane Antonovich, Kelly Jones, and Deborah Hoffman

Once labeled a failing school, Lincoln Elementary in Madison, Wis., looked to its core values to develop a whole-school system of professional learning. With creative use of resources to promote student achievement, the school met its goal of reaching Adequate Yearly Progress.

THE 3 R'S OF LEARNING TIME:

Rethink, reshape, reclaim.

By Shera Carter Sackey

A key component of Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning is a focus on collaborative learning, typically in learning communities. Traditionally, most of this learning has taken place outside the school day or during the summer. Schools that are part of the Learning School Alliance have found creative ways to embed time for collaborative learning into their school days.

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A DOUG FRANKLIN?

Teachers can be the most important resource in the building.

By Linda K. Hoy, Janice Bradley, and Julie Horwitz

When counting up the resources in your school, don't forget about human capital. Teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes are the real treasures that can enrich a learning community. Educators must consider each other as the most valuable resource in a system, to be developed and supported with leadership, structures, tools, and processes for promoting continuous professional learning.

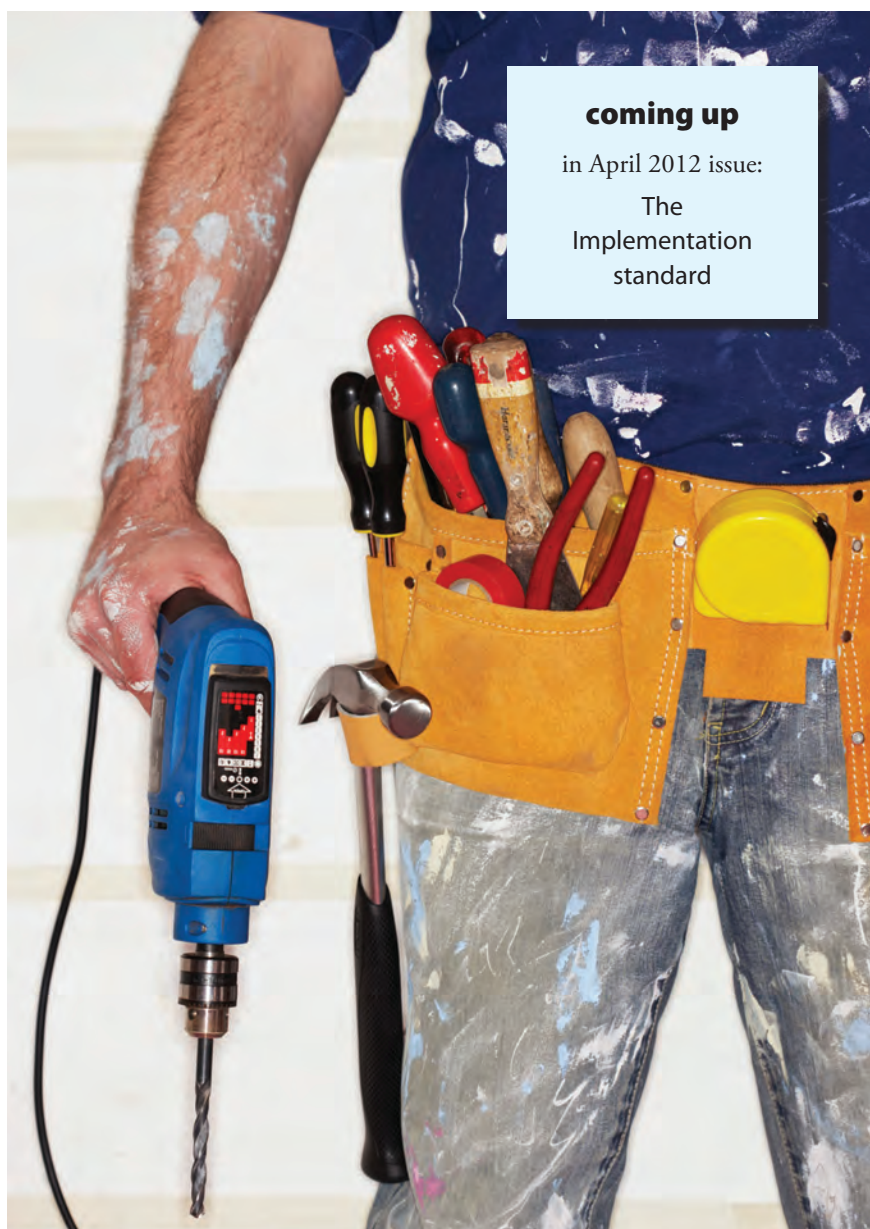
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The effective principal:

5 pivotal practices that shape instructional leadership.

By Pamela Mendels

What exactly is it that effective principals do that ripples through classrooms and boosts learning, especially in failing schools? After reviewing its body of research and field experiences, The Wallace Foundation pinpoints five practices central to effective school leadership: shaping a vision, creating a hospitable climate, cultivating leadership, improving instruction, and managing people, data, and processes. *This article is sponsored by The Wallace Foundation.*



coming up
in April 2012 issue:
The
Implementation
standard

columns

Cultural proficiency:

Face-to-face interaction is best for developing cultural proficiency.

By Sarah W. Nelson
and Patricia L. Guerra

While online learning has many advantages, technology reinforces distancing and isolation that contribute to cultural misunderstandings.

From the director:

Do the homework on your investment in professional learning.

By Stephanie Hirsh

Produce data that can answer questions about and show the results of investments in professional learning.

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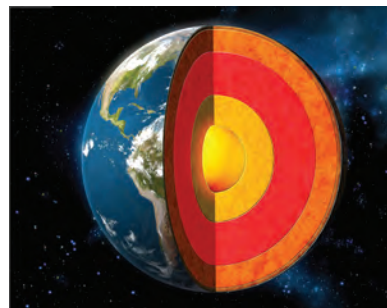
Gates Foundation grant supports Common Core State Standards initiative

Learning Forward has received a grant of almost \$1 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support states adopting and implementing Common Core State Standards. The grant will be used to create innovative professional development technology as well as continue Learning Forward's efforts to create a statewide, comprehensive professional learning system to support educators as they implement Common Core standards and new student assessments.

The grant will fund the development of resources for educators at state and district levels to audit their professional learning and use the results to improve decision making and practices.

"Learning Forward shares the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's commitment to increase the number of students who graduate from high school career- and college-ready," said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward. "We look forward to working with the foundation to support the professional learning and its infrastructure necessary for full implementation of Common Core State Standards."

Learning Forward's initiative aims to create a multiyear, multiyear comprehensive plan that stages professional



development for the standards and assessments. The initiative will use and develop innovative technology solutions for professional learning for teachers and school leaders.

Kentucky, the initiative's

demonstration state, will serve as a learning laboratory for Learning Forward. The state will review its policies, expenditures, and initiatives related to professional learning in order to identify gaps and opportunities to support implementation of Common Core, new assessments, and prepare students for college and careers. Six critical friend states — Georgia, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Utah, and Washington — will contribute to the development of Kentucky's enhanced professional learning framework and will have access to all processes, resources, and tools developed in the demonstration state for use in their states.

book club

PUTTING FACES ON THE DATA: What Great Leaders Do!

By Lyn Sharratt and Michael Fullan

Foreword by Sir Michael Barber

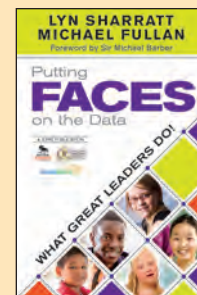
Students are people, not data. *Putting Faces on the Data* shows how to develop a common language for sharing all students' progress with all teachers and leaders and how to use ongoing assessment to inform instruction. Based on worldwide research from more than 500 educators, this book presents solutions organized by:

- Assessment;
- Instruction;
- Leadership; and
- Ownership.

The benefits of personalizing data include increased student

engagement and a positive impact on school culture. This reader-friendly guide helps educators set goals, adjust lessons, identify students' strengths and weaknesses, and implement interventions. Included is a self-assessment framework for implementing improvement at district and state levels. By focusing on connecting all the dots between students and data, educators can accomplish the ultimate goal of helping them learn.

Through a partnership with Corwin Press, Learning Forward members can add the Book Club to their membership at any time and receive four books a year for \$59. To receive this book, add the Book Club to your membership before March 15. It will be mailed in April. For more information about this or any membership package, call 800-727-7288 or email office@learningforward.org.





Being a visionary and a realist means planning for the long-term and preparing for tomorrow

I started to wear glasses at a very young age and was always fascinated by whether my fellow bespectacled friends and family were nearsighted or farsighted. My investigation as a 5-year-old typically began with a series of questions and usually ended with me trading glasses with someone and laughing at how blurry everything looked. I was reminded of this childhood inquiry on vision when I thought about the tension we sometimes have in professional learning between planning for the long-term and preparing for what's coming tomorrow.

Susan Loucks-Horsley and her colleagues said it best: Professional developers “are, simultaneously, visionaries and realists” (2003, p. 73). Nowhere is this more apparent than when we think about the importance of resources in professional learning. We often struggle to have the resources we need to achieve the grand vision we hold for effective professional learning. The Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning are clear about the importance of resources and the need to prioritize, monitor, and coordinate all types of resources, including staff, materials, technology, and time.

While it may sometimes feel difficult to think about meeting these

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Kenneth Salim is president of Learning Forward’s board of trustees.

on board KENNETH SALIM

lofty goals when we are scrambling for resources, it is critical for us to be visionaries and realists simultaneously. Being a visionary and a realist means being creative about how to secure additional resources. At the school level, it might mean tapping into expertise that you didn’t know existed in your building. For a district professional development office, it could be recruiting college interns to support the logistical or technical needs of conducting a learning session to free up substantive planning time. Or for any practitioner, it might mean engaging and raising funds from a community or business partner to support an area of mutual interest.

Being a visionary and a realist means having a plan for using resources just in case they suddenly become available. Whether it is an unanticipated change in a state or federal grant or a spending deadline that has been moved up several weeks, it is not uncommon to have an unexpected request to spend money. The more difficult part is being prepared to efficiently and effectively allocate these resources in a way that supports high-quality professional learning.

Being a visionary and a realist means being a fierce advocate for high-

quality professional learning at multiple levels. Many policies at federal, state, and local levels govern how funds can be used to support effective professional learning. To garner support and much-needed resources, it is critical to share empirical research and personal stories



of how professional learning increases educator effectiveness and student results.

Finally, being a visionary and a realist means asking: Asking your colleagues or your principal for additional time or substitute coverage, your superintendent or your university partner for materials or a part-time coach, your department chair or your staff for technology or extra support. You might just get a “yes.”

REFERENCE

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LEARNING FORWARD'S PURPOSE: Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves.

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Created to honor excellence in professional learning, the Shirley Hord Learning Team Award recognizes a school team that successfully implements the cycle of continuous learning for professional learning that results in student achievement. Based on Learning Forward's definition of professional learning, the award gives Learning Forward the opportunity to recognize and showcase the critical work of effective learning teams.

Teams can apply for this award by submitting a video that demonstrates the learning team in action along with an essay about how the team exemplifies the principles embedded in the definition of professional development.

The award-winning team will be honored at the 2012 Learning Forward Summer Conference in Denver. The award includes funds to support a team of three educators to travel to and attend the conference, a gift to the school to support collaborative professional learning, and a library of Corwin books for the school's professional library. The application deadline is April 13, 2012.

Learn more about the application process at www.learningforward.org/getinvolved/hordaward.cfm.

LEARNING FORWARD CALENDAR

- March 15:** Apply to join the next cohort of Learning School Alliance schools.
- March 15:** Apply to join Academy Class of 2014.
- April 13:** Application deadline for the Shirley Hord Learning Team Award.
- April 30:** Last day to save \$50 on registration for 2012 Summer Conference in Denver.
- July 15-18:** Learning Forward's 2012 Summer Conference in Denver, Colo.
- Dec. 1-5:** Learning Forward's 2012 Annual Conference in Boston, Mass.

HELP US IMPROVE OUR WEBSITE

For almost two years, Learning Forward's website has offered a database that highlights research demonstrating the links between professional learning, changes in educator practice, and student achievement. The Evidence Database includes articles from research publications and occasional reports, and website users can search the database using keywords, the standards, or other criteria.

We're interested in hearing from members about how to make the database as useful as possible. If you visit the database over the next several weeks, you'll have an opportunity to answer survey questions about how you use and what you need from the database. We welcome your input.

NEW MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

We're listening!

Based on member input, Learning Forward has simplified its membership structure in a way that allows members — new and renewing — to make the choices that best fit their needs.

All the member benefits you have come to expect are still part of membership packages: Newsletters based on educator roles, six issues of

JSD each year, member discounts on learning opportunities and in the bookstore, and full access to online communities and publication archives.

The four membership categories are:

- **Digital members** have online access to all publications and receive nothing in print. All discounts apply (\$69/year).
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- **Comprehensive members** receive

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all publications in print and have online access to all. All discounts apply (\$149/year).

- **Organizational members** receive a copy of all publications in print and have online access for five people. All discounts apply for five individuals (\$299/year).

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION
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a. Total number of copies	11,600	11,540
b. Paid and/or requested circulation		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales (not mailed)	None	None
2. Paid or requested mail subscriptions (include advertisers proof copies and exchange copies)	8,422	9,760
c. Total paid and/or requested circulation	8,422	9,760
d. Free distribution by mail	2,500	1,000
e. Free distribution outside the mail	None	None
f. Total free distribution	2,500	1,000
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Percent paid and/or requested circulation	77%	90%
h. Copies not distributed		
1. Office use, leftovers, spoiled	678	780
2. Returns from news agents	None	None
i. Total	11,600	11,540
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	72%	85%

16. Publication of statement of ownership will be printed in the February 2012 issue of this publication.

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Do the homework on your investment in professional learning

At least once a month, I get a call from an educator asking what percentage of the budget should the school system allocate to professional learning. In the most distressing cases, the caller is facing a budget cut and is seeking a rationale to fight to keep the budget allocated to professional learning. In more positive cases, the person is developing a strategy for increasing the budget for professional learning. Unfortunately, there is not a definitive answer to the question (read the article I wrote with Joellen Killion on p. 10 about the complexities of this question). But one thing I am sure about: Whatever information the person provides had better include answers to the following questions.

ON THE INCOME SIDE

What is our current commitment to professional development? This is not easy to answer; however, collecting and summarizing responses to these three questions can help:

- How many federal and/or state dollars do we receive to support

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- professional development?
- How much is allocated in the school system budget to directly support professional development?
- Are there other sources of financial support for professional development, and what does that total?

ON THE EXPENSE SIDE

How much are we spending on professional learning? While it is difficult to account for every single dollar, knowing the answers to these questions is useful:

- What is the approximate personnel cost attached to professional learning? What titles do these people have?
- What is the approximate professional development cost related to program implementation, and what are the most significant expenditures?
- What other kinds of expenditures make up the rest of the budget expense?

ON THE IMPACT SIDE

What are our dollars doing for educators and students? I doubt educators will be successful in safeguarding dollars or adding resources unless they can answer the most important questions:

- What are examples of impact of our investment in personnel? What compelling evidence do we have to show for it?

- What are examples of impact of our investment in program implementation? What compelling evidence do we have to show for it?
- What about the rest of the dollars — what is our return on their investment?

BUILDING THE CASE

With the answers to these questions in hand, educators will be equipped to answer the next set of questions that likely will be raised as they make their requests:

- How many additional dollars are you seeking, or how many dollars can you not afford to lose?
- What will these dollars support specifically?
- What data will you collect, and how will you report the impact of this investment?

As a former staff developer, I know it is difficult to account for every dollar that is spent on professional learning. And yet this should not prevent us from attempting to answer the questions that arise.

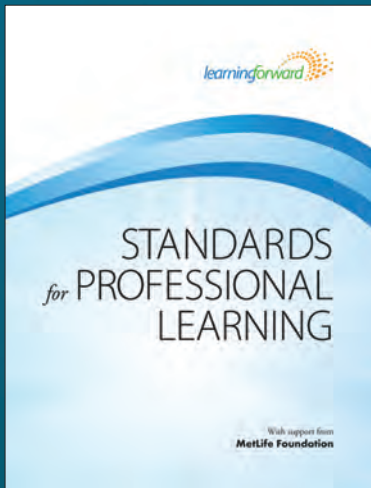
We must find understandable ways to answer the questions our critics and advocates raise. We must recognize that we are the most authoritative source on these questions when we can produce our own data and attach them to results. Results are the universal language. We know we can't achieve results without investment. It is our obligation to align the two. ■

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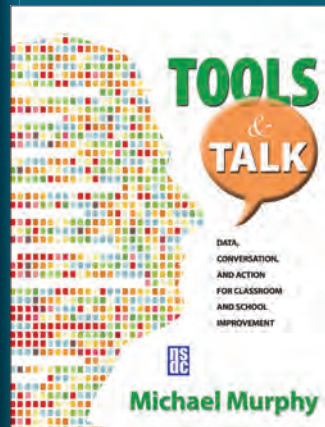
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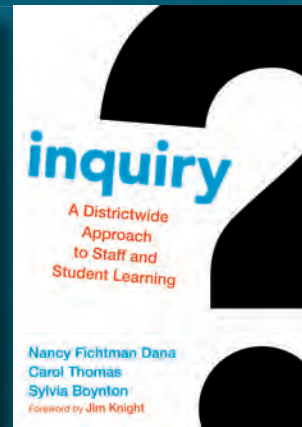
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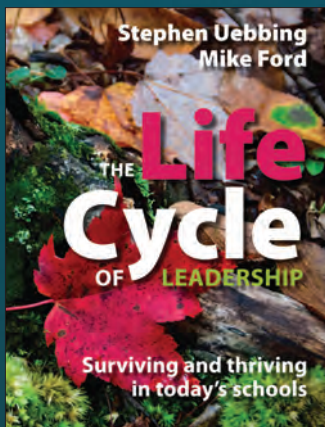
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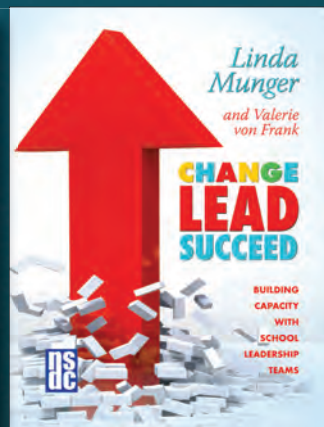
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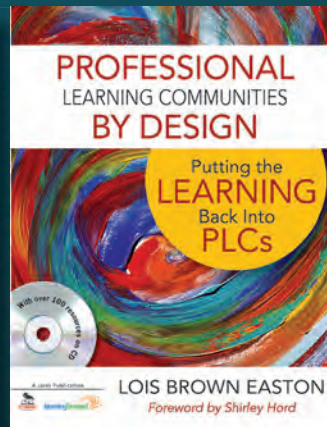
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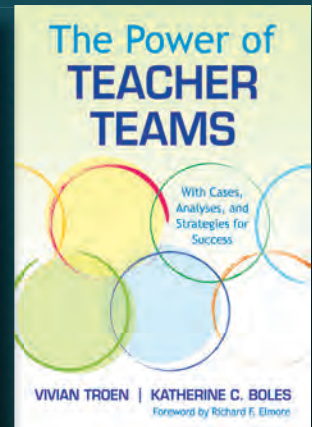
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