



# Professional Development Program

**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning:**  
*Finding Purpose in the Journey*  
**Professional Development Committee Materials**

School Year 2014–2015



**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning:**  
*Finding Purpose in the Journey*

A NEW YEAR OF  
COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:

**Finding Purpose in the Journey**

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# Introduction

We stand at a moment of great possibility for the professional learning of educators in the New York City Public Schools. This year, professional development will be implemented with the understanding that schools best serve their students when they collaboratively determine the goals, content and structures of professional learning. Bringing all parties on board to begin this process is critical to its success. Collaboration means all voices are heard from the beginning of the process.

The materials in “**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning: Finding Purpose in the Journey**” are intended to support your work in building a schoolwide consensus around the use of time for professional development.

This module contains two components. The first is a set of readings for the professional development committee. These are drawn from *Learning Forward*, which is an invaluable resource for professional learning. The second component includes a set of activities and materials for a professional learning session to be carried out in large or small groups. These activities clarify the value of collaborative professional learning and reaffirm the beliefs that led them to become educators.

As a PD committee, you will not only organize professional learning but also continuously strengthen the culture of learning in your school. Please keep in mind that schools that continually improve have the following strengths:

- **Clarity:** A shared and clear idea about what high-quality teaching and learning should look like.
- **Planning:** A strategic approach to schoolwide improvement, including time, structures, and spaces for adult learning.
- **Approach:** A collaborative approach to adult learning that is embedded in practice, and which relies on **engagement and inquiry rather than compliance** (Titel 2013).
- **Trust:** Trust at every level is a necessary ingredient if teachers and schools are to change (Learning Forward 2014). With trust we can better identify how we need to grow as a school and as individuals.
- **Appreciation:** As a way to respect past and present strengths and efforts, appreciation demonstrates mutual respect and has a powerful impact on collaboration and school culture (Whitney, D. & Trosten-Bloom, A. 2003).

Consider these qualities of collaboration as you work with your school community and become the change you wish to see! Good luck and have a great year!



### **I. Professional Reading for PD Committee: To be completed prior to PD.**

We recommend two-hour sessions for reading, discussion, and review and production of materials.

- a. Committee reads and discusses these articles.
- b. Committee reviews the presentation, including the PowerPoint presentation and the Facilitators' Guide.
- c. Committee decides the format: grade-level groups, subject-area teams, diverse teams, etc.

### **II. Introduction to Professional Learning for School Staff: One 1.5–2-hour session (*See Facilitator's Guide for details*)**

- a. "Talk Around" welcome activity
- b. Review norms
- c. Go over outcomes and agenda
- d. Reading: "Why Commit to Collaborative Professional Learning?"
  - Individual reading
  - Partner share
  - Whole group share
  - Facilitator shares: "What do we know about professional learning?"
  - Collaborative poster: "What worked for us in professional learning?"
  - Discussion: Compare our conclusions with those in the slide "What do we know about professional learning?"
  - Exit slips



## Readings for PD Committee

1. "What's Your PD IQ?"

2. "School Culture: Where Adults Learn"





**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning:**  
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# Tools *for* LEARNING SCHOOLS

## Inside

- International perspectives
- Parent and teacher views
- Learning insights
- Policy considerations
- Leadership needs

Fall 2011

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EVERY EDUCATOR ENGAGES IN EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVERY DAY SO EVERY STUDENT ACHIEVES



## Learning Forward BELIEF

Every student learns when every educator engages in effective professional learning.

**L**earning Forward's Professional Learning IQ quiz is a tool to stimulate conversation about what educators and stakeholders know about professional learning. Rather than a quiz of right and wrong answers, this test is designed to surface perspectives and assumptions about professional development.

Each question and answer includes a citation so users can locate the original material to delve deeper into the information.

Learning Forward grants permission to any Learning Forward member to make up to 30 copies of this survey for use with groups in their communities.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USE WITH A GROUP

1. Distribute one copy of the survey to each person in the group. Provide pens and pencils for anyone taking the survey.
2. Allow 15 minutes for individuals to respond to the questions.
3. To present the results, read each question aloud and then provide the correct answer. Since there are clear correct responses to these questions, avoid embarrassing the survey takers by asking them to reveal their responses publicly. They will discover how their perceptions compare to the factual information as the answers are revealed.
4. Lead discussion as appropriate on the implications of correct answers. If time for discussion of the full quiz is limited, use just one or two questions as part of staff or board meetings to explore specific aspects of professional learning.



Your membership in Learning Forward gives you access to a wide range of publications, tools, and opportunities to advance professional learning for student success. Visit [www.learningforward.org](http://www.learningforward.org) to explore more of your membership benefits.

# What is your professional learning IQ?

## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

1. In which of the following topics do teachers around the world report a high level of need for more professional learning?
  - a. Teaching students with special learning needs
  - b. Student discipline and behavior problems
  - c. Instructional practices
  - d. Subject field
  - e. All of the above
2. What percentage of their time do teachers in other countries spend teaching students, freeing the rest of their time for collaboration and planning?
  - a. 90%
  - b. 80%
  - c. 70%
  - d. 60%
3. When the world's most improved school systems move from good to great, they emphasize:
  - a. Providing scaffolding and motivation for low-skill teachers and principals; getting all schools to minimum quality standards; getting students in seats.
  - b. Raising the caliber of entering teachers and principals; raising the caliber of existing teachers and principals; school-based decision making.
  - c. Data and accountability foundation; financial and organizational foundation; pedagogical foundation.
  - d. Cultivating peer-led learning for teachers and principals; creating additional support mechanisms for professionals; system-sponsored experimentation/innovation across schools.



4. 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 multi-study review and close to 100 in another) results in increases in student learning. How many professional development hours are provided to teachers in high-achieving nations?
  - a. 150
  - b. 100
  - c. 80
  - d. 60
5. On average, how many professional development hours are provided to U.S. teachers each year?
  - a. 97
  - b. 75
  - c. 63
  - d. 44

## PARENT AND TEACHER VIEWS

6. Which of the following did Americans in general list as the most important thing a school can do to earn an "A" grade?
  - a. Improve the quality of teaching
  - b. Implement a challenging curriculum
  - c. Help students be more successful
  - d. Implement standardized testing/grading
  - e. Establish closer relations with parents
7. What percentage of teachers said that "strengthening programs and resources to help diverse learners with the highest needs meet college- and career-ready standards" should be a priority in education?
  - a. 91%
  - b. 83%
  - c. 74%
  - d. 44%

8. This percentage of teachers thinks that greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders would have a major impact on improving student achievement.

- a. 27%
- b. 42%
- c. 67%
- d. 87%



9. Out of 10 teachers, how many are likely to say it is “very important” or “absolutely essential” to provide opportunities for relevant professional development in order to retain good teachers?

- a. More than 8
- b. 6
- c. 4
- d. Less than 3

12. Of the following collaborative activities, which one did U.S. teachers engage in the least?

- a. Teachers meeting in teams to learn what is necessary to help their students achieve at higher levels
- b. School leaders sharing responsibility with teachers to achieve school goals
- c. Beginning teachers working with more experienced teachers
- d. Teachers observing each other in the classroom and providing feedback

13. Of the four priorities for further professional development listed below, which one did teachers rank most often as the highest priority?

- a. Content of the subject taught
- b. Student discipline/classroom management
- c. Teaching students with special needs
- d. Use of computers in instruction

14. What percentage of teachers that engaged in professional development of “Student discipline and management in the classroom” found it to be “useful” or “very useful”?

- a. 86%
- b. 67%
- c. 43%
- d. 27%

## LEARNING INSIGHTS

10. When educators choose learning designs for professional learning, which of the following are among several important factors cited in Learning Forward’s Standards for Professional Learning?

- a. High evaluation scores from previous participants
- b. Consideration of learner needs and intended outcomes
- c. Availability of dynamic keynote speakers
- d. Resources available from relevant grant funds

11. In the Standards for Professional Learning, the Outcomes standard ties professional learning to educator performance outcomes and student learning outcomes. This standard also calls for coherence in professional learning. What does coherence refer to?

- a. Analysis of system, school, and educator data
- b. Allocation, coordination, and prioritization of time, people, technology, and money
- c. Attention to change research and the change process as part of implementation
- d. Sustained learning that builds on earlier work and is aligned with curriculum and assessments



15. 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 multi-study review and close to 100 in another) results in increases in student learning. Of the U.S. teachers that received professional development in the content of the subject they teach, how many hours of professional development did most of them receive within a 12-month period?
- More than 48 hours
  - 25-47 hours
  - 17-25 hours
  - Less than 16 hours

### POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

16. The Great Teaching For Great Schools Act, introduced by Congressman Polis (Colo.), aims to:
- Ensure effective professional development
  - Promote continuous improvements
  - Strengthen administrator leadership of schools
  - Direct investments to schools needing the most help
  - All of the above
17. Which of the following was NOT found to be a key factor that determines the impact of state policy on effective professional development.
- Teacher evaluation systems
  - Leadership
  - Infrastructure
  - Resources
  - Intermediaries and outside providers



### LEADERSHIP NEEDS

18. When a national teacher survey asked how important each of the following factors are in retaining good teachers, which two were the only ones to be considered “absolutely essential” by more than half of the teachers?
- Supportive leadership
  - Time for teachers to collaborate
  - Professional development that is relevant to personal and school goals
  - Higher salaries
  - Pay tied to teachers’ performance
19. According to recent research, the single most important determinant of whether a school can attract and keep the high-quality teachers necessary to turn around schools is:
- Higher salaries
  - Leadership opportunities
  - A good principal
  - Punitive evaluation systems
20. Research has shown that to turn around the lowest performing schools, principals need to:
- Share decision making while working collaboratively toward clear, common goals with district personnel, other principals, and teachers.
  - Lead school improvement by creating structures and incentives around a common agenda for learning among all staff.
  - Align resources with learning activities, needs and priorities.
  - Build external relations that can support a schoolwide learning agenda, including garnering community support, providing sufficient resources, and anticipating resistance or conflict.
  - All of the above.

# ANSWERS to professional learning IQ quiz

## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

1. In which of the following topics do teachers around the world report a high level of need for more professional learning?

**e. All of the above**

Source: **Schleicher, A. (2011).** *Building a high-quality teaching profession: Lessons from around the world.* Available at [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/62/8/47506177.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/62/8/47506177.pdf).

2. What percentage of their time do teachers in other countries spend teaching students, freeing the rest of their time for collaboration and planning?

**d. 60%**

What percentage of their time do U.S. teachers spend teaching students? **80%**

Source: **Darling-Hammond, L., Wei, R.C., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009, February).** *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad.* Dallas, TX: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudy2009.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudy2009.pdf).

3. When the world's most improved school systems move from good to great, they emphasize:

**b. Raising the caliber of entering teachers and principals; raising the caliber of existing teachers and principals; school-based decision making.**

Source: **Mourshed, M., Chijioke, C., & Barber, M. (2010, November).** *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better.* McKinsey & Company. Available at [http://ssomckinsey.darbyfilms.com/reports/schools/How-the-Worlds-Most-Improved-School-Systems-Keep-Getting-Better\\_Download-version\\_Final.pdf](http://ssomckinsey.darbyfilms.com/reports/schools/How-the-Worlds-Most-Improved-School-Systems-Keep-Getting-Better_Download-version_Final.pdf)

4. 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 multi-study review and close to 100 in another) results in increases in student learning. How many professional development hours are provided to teachers in high-achieving nations?

**b. 100 hours of "professional development time each year on top of the 15-25 hours per week that they have for collaborative planning and learning."**

Source: **Wei, R.C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, F. (2010, July).** *Professional development in the United States: Trends and challenges.* Dallas, TX: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf).

5. On average, how many professional development hours are provided to U.S. teachers each year?

**d. 44 hours**

Source: **Wei, R.C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, F. (2010, July).** *Professional development in the United States: Trends and challenges.* Dallas, TX: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf).

## PARENT AND TEACHER VIEWS

6. Which of the following did Americans in general list as the most important thing a school can do to earn an "A" grade?

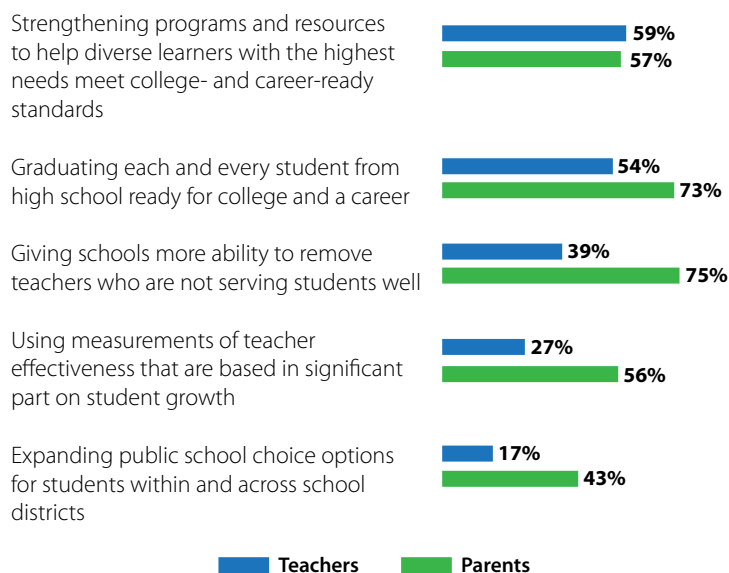
**a. Improve the quality of teaching**

Source: **Bushaw, W.J. & Lopez, S.J. (2010).** A time for change: The 42nd annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(1), 13.

7. What percentage of teachers said that "strengthening programs and resources to help diverse learners with the highest needs meet college- and career-ready standards" should be a priority in education?

**a. 91%**

### Percentage of teachers and parents that feel these reform strategies "must be done — one of the highest priorities."



Source: **MetLife. (2010).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Preparing students for college and careers.* New York: Author. Figure 1.12. Available at [www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife\\_Teacher\\_Survey\\_2010.pdf](http://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife_Teacher_Survey_2010.pdf).



# ANSWERS to professional learning IQ quiz

8. This percentage of teachers thinks that greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders would have a major impact on improving student achievement.

**c. 67%**

Elementary school teachers are more likely than those in secondary schools to think that greater collaboration would have a major impact on improving student achievement (**72% vs. 57%**)

Percentage of principals that thinks that greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders would have a major impact on improving student achievement: **78%**

Source: **MetLife. (2009).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Collaborating for student success.* New York: Author. Available at [www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED509650.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED509650.pdf).

9. Out of 10 teachers, how many are likely to say it is “very important” or “absolutely essential” to provide opportunities for relevant professional development in order to retain good teachers?

**a. More than 8**

Source: **Scholastic & Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2010).** *Primary sources: America's teachers on America's schools.* Available at [www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Scholastic\\_Gates\\_0310.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Scholastic_Gates_0310.pdf).

## LEARNING INSIGHTS

10. When educators choose learning designs for professional learning, which of the following are among several important factors cited in Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning?

**b. Consideration of learner needs and intended outcomes**

Source: **Learning Forward. (2011).** *Standards for professional learning.* Oxford, OH: Author. Available at [www.learningforward.org/standards](http://www.learningforward.org/standards).

11. In the Standards for Professional Learning, the Outcomes standard ties professional learning to educator performance outcomes and student learning outcomes. This standard also calls for coherence in professional learning. What does coherence refer to?

**d. Sustained learning that builds on earlier work and is aligned with curriculum and assessments**

Source: **Learning Forward. (2011).** *Standards for professional learning.* Oxford, OH: Author. Available at [www.learningforward.org/standards](http://www.learningforward.org/standards).

12. Of the following collaborative activities, which one did U.S. teachers engage in the least?

**d. Teachers observing each other in the classroom and providing feedback**

Source: **MetLife. (2009).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Collaborating for student success.* New York: Author. Available at [www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED509650.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED509650.pdf).

13. Of the four priorities for further professional development listed below, which one did teachers rank most often as the highest priority?

**a. Content of the subject taught: 24%**

However, there was significant variation in the top priorities for further professional development by teacher characteristics (beginning teachers versus experienced teachers) and by teaching context (school community, school population), supporting the importance of local decision-making around the needs of specific teachers and the school community.

Other percentages:

- b. Student discipline/classroom management as the next priority: **20%**
- c. Teaching students with special needs: **14%**
- d. Use of computers in instruction: **14%**

Source: **Wei, R.C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, E. (2010, August).** *Professional development in the United States: Trends and challenges.* Dallas, TX: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2010.pdf).

14. What percentage of teachers that engaged in professional development of “Student discipline and management in the classroom” found it to be “useful” or “very useful”?
- d. 27%**

Other professional development topics considered “useful” or “very useful” by a significantly larger percentage of teachers:

- Content of the subject they teach: **59%**
- Uses of computers for instruction: **43%**
- Reading instruction: **43%**

Source: **Darling-Hammond, D., Wei, R.C., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009).** *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad.* Table 3. Oxford, OH: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2009.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2009.pdf).

# ANSWERS to professional learning IQ quiz

15. 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 multi-study review and close to 100 in another) results in increases in student learning. Of the teachers that received professional development in the content of the subject they teach, how many hours of professional development did most of them receive within a 12-month period?

**d. Less than 16 hours**

Source: **Darling-Hammond, D., Wei, R.C., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009).** *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad.* Oxford, OH: NSDC. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2009.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudytechnicalreport2009.pdf).

## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

16. The Great Teaching For Great Schools Act, introduced by Congressman Polis (Colo.), aims to:

**e. All of the above**

Source: **Colorado's Second Congressional District Office.** *Fact sheet: The Great Teaching for Great Schools Act.* Washington, DC. Available at [polis.house.gov/UploadedFiles/Fact\\_Sheet\\_-\\_Great\\_Teaching\\_for\\_Great\\_Schools\\_Act.pdf](http://polis.house.gov/UploadedFiles/Fact_Sheet_-_Great_Teaching_for_Great_Schools_Act.pdf).

17. Which of the following was NOT found to be a key factor that determines the impact of state policy on effective professional development.

**a. Teacher evaluation systems**

Source: **Jaquith, A., Mindich, D., Wei, R. C., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2010, November).** *Teacher professional learning in the United States: Case studies of state policies and strategies.* Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/2010Phase3Report.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/news/2010Phase3Report.pdf).

## LEADERSHIP NEEDS

18. When a national teacher survey asked how important each of the following factors are in retaining good teachers, which two were the only ones to be considered “absolutely essential” by more than half of the teachers?

**a. Supportive leadership: 68%**

**b. Time for teachers to collaborate: 54%**

Percentage of teachers that feel these factors are “absolutely essential”:

- Professional development that is relevant to personal and school goals: **45%**
- Higher salaries: **45%**
- Pay tied to teachers’ performance: **8%**

Source: **Scholastic & Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2010).** *Primary sources: America's teachers on America's schools.* Available at [www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Scholastic\\_Gates\\_0310.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Scholastic_Gates_0310.pdf).

19. According to recent research, the single most important determinant of whether a school can attract and keep the high-quality teachers necessary to turn around schools is:

**c. A good principal**

Source: **The Wallace Foundation. (2011, March).** *Research findings to support effective educational policies: A guide for policymakers* (2nd ed.). New York: Author.

20. Research has shown that to turn around the lowest performing schools, principals need to:

**e. All of the above.**

Source: **The Wallace Foundation. (2011, March).** *Research findings to support effective educational policies: A guide for policymakers* (2nd ed.). New York: Author.



## QUESTION 14

**Professional development topics considered “useful” or “very useful” by teachers:**

- Content of the subject they teach: **59%**
- Uses of computers for instruction: **43%**
- Reading instruction: **43%**

Source: Darling-Hammond et al., 2009.

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**Adults in schools must learn new programs, new strategies, new ways of working together, and even new ways of thinking about who their students are and what it means to be a teacher.**

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# HOW TO BUILD SCHOOLS WHERE ADULTS LEARN

By Kevin Fahey and Jacy Ippolito

**I**n the current, very complex, and even conflicted discourse about schools, one thing is clear: Schools need to be about student learning. Schools need to ensure that students are good readers, proficient writers, capable mathematicians, competent scientists, and knowledgeable historians. Students also need to learn to work together, be healthy, be resilient, and care about others. There is a lot of learning to be done.

However, some leaders of this student learning also understand that, in order for students to learn at high levels, the adults in schools must learn new programs, new strategies, new ways of working together, and even new ways of thinking about who their students are and what it means to be a teacher. In other words, there is a lot of adult learning to be done.

Over the past few years, we, along with our colleagues, have been documenting the work of learning leaders who unmistakably understand that schools need to be places where both students and adults learn (Breidenstein, Fahey,

Glickman, & Hensley, 2012; Ippolito, 2013). This simple insight has broad implications for leadership practice.

Leaders of schools where adults learn understand that:

- Educators need a *learning practice* as well as a *teaching practice*;
- Adult learning practice changes over time; and
- How adults' learning practice changes makes a difference in their teaching practice.

## WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

To improve teaching practice in classrooms, adults in schools need ways to work and learn together — a *learning practice* — that builds on and challenges their teaching practice and persistently focuses on student learning (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010).

Doug Lyons describes the learning practice at the Parker School in Reading, Mass., where he is principal: “In order to learn more and improve our practice, we have to dig deeper into what we do, what our kids need, and what we already know. We need to learn from each other” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 29).

Jennifer Flewelling, former principal of the North Bev-



erly Elementary School in Beverly, Mass., describes the learning practice in her school in simple terms: “Any time we are together as faculty is a time for learning” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 77).

These learning leaders subscribe to a common thesis: School improvement is built on adult learning, which changes over time and can be encouraged and supported by savvy school leaders. Moreover, a learning practice, like a teaching practice, develops in complex ways as teachers grow and learn, and is dependent on critical support from colleagues and principals.

## UNDERSTANDING ADULT LEARNING PRACTICE

Educators broadly accept the notion that *how* a child learns changes over time. From childhood to adolescence to adulthood, students become less concrete and more abstract thinkers. They move, for example, from struggling with memorizing a specific letter’s sound to writing three-paragraph essays to synthesizing multiple documents and viewpoints in an analytical college essay.

Student learning is developmental, and educators know that effectively supporting that learning should take into account the way a student learns, and the way that learning changes over time. The complex, developmental nature of learning is easily accepted when educators think about students, but this same idea is often overlooked when they consider the learning needed to improve their own practice. Adult learning is also developmental.

A useful lens for helping learning leaders understand the complex nature of adult learning practice in schools is constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1998). Constructive-developmental theory makes two broad claims: Adults continually work to make sense of their experiences (constructive), and the ways that adults make sense of their world can change and grow more complex over time (developmental). One implication of these claims is that in any school, each teacher will have her own learning practice — just as she has her own teaching practice.

For example, a new teacher who is worried about shepherding students to the lunchroom without disturbing other classes, as well as supporting the gifted, special education, minority, and privileged kids in her class, will have a very different learning practice from the established teacher who has a broad teaching and classroom management repertoire but questions how her academic language instruction might be improved to better meet the needs of second-language learners.

The first teacher is desperate for a clear, concrete, right answer to hold on to, while the second teacher might refuse

prescriptive answers and prefer an inquiry-based stance toward improving instruction. Both teachers have something to learn, but those things will be learned in different ways.

## HOW LEARNING PRACTICE CHANGES

It is hard to imagine that any teacher would ask 3rd graders to learn the quadratic equation. Most students at that grade level have neither the mathematical content knowledge nor the developmental capacity to understand concepts such as variables, equations, and factors. Nor would a kindergarten teacher hand out copies of *Hamlet* to students who learn primarily by sounding out words and mimicking the teacher.

Good teachers understand that *how* students learn makes a difference. Similarly, in schools where adults learn, leaders understand that the learning practice of teachers, departments, grade-level teams, and schools can be in very different developmental places.

Constructive-developmental theory can be used to characterize two typical adult learning practices as *instrumental* and *socializing*. Understanding the distinction between *instrumental* and *socializing* can help leaders build schools where adults learn.

**Instrumental learning practice.** An instrumental learning practice is built on precise solutions, specific processes, and unambiguous answers. The new teacher who is having difficulty understanding how to organize and manage guided reading groups might simply want a clear, tangible procedure, not an inquiry question or a chance for reflection.

Her learning practice is instrumental because she wants concrete steps and specific advice about how to group kids to read. “Instrumental knowers orient toward following rules and feel supported when others provide specific advice and explicit procedures so that they can accomplish their goals” (Drago-Severson, 2008).

An instrumental learning practice is particularly useful for teachers, teams, departments, schools, and districts needing concrete solutions, practical information, or specialized advice. And while what these schools need to learn can change over time, a school or teacher with an instrumental learning practice always wants to learn clear procedures for making students better writers, or specific strategies for teaching in longer blocks of time, or concrete steps for implementing inquiry-based science lessons.

Publishers, professional learning providers, universities, and researchers have lots of instrumental answers — concrete processes, specific advice, highly articulated programs and initiatives — and many of them have merit. Leaders who support instrumental learning practice in their schools have expertise with explicit teaching and learning strategies, or they need to be able to easily access that expertise.

Sue Snyder, principal of the Hannah School in Beverly, Mass., had a straightforward approach to developing an instrumental learning practice in her school. “We just figured out

**Constructive-developmental theory makes two broad claims: Adults continually work to make sense of their experiences (constructive), and the ways that adults make sense of their world can change and grow more complex over time (developmental).**

that our faculty meetings needed to be classes” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 15). Working with Sue Charochak, an elementary principal in the district, Snyder turned faculty meetings into classes, complete with lesson plans, homework, essential questions, guided practice, and opportunities for reflection.

Beginning with a focus on building classroom community and behavior management, the schools used this instrumental learning practice to address a variety of learning needs. Charochak noted, “It is interesting that in order to have my greatest success as a leader, I became a teacher” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 14).

As teachers implement new learning in their classrooms, the limits of instrumental learning become noticeable. Instrumental learning helps teachers learn the *content* of a new program or strategy, but not necessarily a *process* to integrate that new practice into their teaching.

Integrating a new practice requires discussion, feedback from colleagues, classroom learning experiments, and collaborative work (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Instrumental learning can be useful, but it tells particular teachers little about how to implement new learning in their particular classrooms with their particular students.

**Socializing learning practice.** A socializing learning practice is not dependent on straightforward, concrete answers. Instead, a socializing learning practice focuses on learning about the perspectives of others and taking them into account as part of systematic experimentation with different teaching practices.

Educators who have a clear capacity for reflection, flourish when working in teams, and can sacrifice their own interests to benefit the group have a socializing learning practice. “These adults are most concerned with understanding other people’s feelings and judgments about them and their work” (Drago-Severson, 2008, p. 61).

Developing and supporting a teacher’s socializing learning practice requires a very different kind of leadership. In most schools, there are exceptional teachers of reading, math, social studies, and science, teachers who are expert in helping students think scientifically or adept at engaging students in making historical judgments.

However, content knowledge as well as practical knowledge, good judgment, expertise, and accumulated wisdom in schools is often confined to the classroom of the teacher who possesses that knowledge, wisdom, and expertise. To become better places for adults to learn, some schools intentionally become places where educators learn with and from one another. These schools develop a socializing learning practice.

Jennifer Flewelling developed a socializing learning practice at North Beverly Elementary School. Describing that approach, she says, “There is no other way than collaboration, collegiality, and collective responsibility. This is what we do. We look at our practice and figure out how to make it better. Because you

know what? You don’t have it all figured out” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 2).

Flewelling’s goal was to create a socializing learning practice by building more collaborative school groups, supporting reflective practice, and creating a coherent learning-focused school culture.

Flewelling was unambiguous about her role in developing a socializing learning practice: “My job is not to be expert on everything — I have to be focused on adult learning” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 105). Unlike Sue Snyder, Flewelling was not the content expert. Her goal was to teach teachers to learn with one another, to share what they knew, and to make transparent what they needed to learn. She directed resources to support collaborative work and created a school that had a socializing learning practice.

Flewelling began to advance a socializing learning practice by creating a structure called STARS Club, in which members of the parent and business community regularly came to the school to offer enrichment activities to the students while the faculty worked together in new ways.

During these collaborative times, the STARS Club teachers looked together at student work, analyzed how writing was taught, gave each other feedback about dilemmas of practice, examined the coherence of the curriculum, and developed SMART goals. Flewelling quickly discovered that teachers were very interested in jointly pursuing a wide range of questions connected to their practice.

As the school community became more comfortable taking a socializing learning approach, the faculty took on more challenging topics and incorporated more demanding processes that required them to give one another feedback and build consensus about good teaching. In other words, they shifted the focus from isolated, individual, *instrumental* practice toward a collective, *socializing* emphasis on improving teaching and learning.

At the heart of socializing learning practice is the regular use of protocols to look at student work, adult work, and texts (Ippolito, 2013). For example, the faculty regularly used text-based protocols to build shared understandings of practice, the Tuning Protocol to help each other with lesson planning, the Consultancy Protocol to consider dilemmas of practice, and peer observation protocols to give each other feedback (School Reform Initiative, 2013). Flewelling and the North Beverly faculty used these structures and many more to teach the skills of socializing learning: reflection, collaboration, shared practice, and focus on student learning.

## LEADING SCHOOLS WHERE ADULTS LEARN

The leadership lesson from our work is twofold. The first is simple: Think like — and consequently lead like — a teacher. Think about how the adults in the building learn, think about what they need to learn, and let your teaching/leading decisions

*Continued on p. 39*

Cultivating and intentionally using new technology takes a disposition to risk and try again. It begins by redefining the roles of teacher/student and learner/leader. When educators create inclusive-synergetic learning communities, students often share insightful perspectives and create new possibilities.

Using digital tools to access information and to connect with others is common practice outside the school day. In the classroom, if educators want to learn how to leverage 21st-century skills, opportunities abound to create a classroom learning community where all members are learning and leading together.

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How to build schools where adults learn

*Continued from p. 34*

be driven by these two considerations.

Kathy Bieser, principal of the International School of the Americas in San Antonio, Texas, says that, in the same way that good teachers plan with particular students in mind, she plans every faculty learning experience with the learning practice and needs of the adults in mind. “I have to be open to what is going to happen and adjust, adapt, keep working at it with the teachers, the leadership team, and myself” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 99).

The second lesson is more complicated. It is quite clear that when a group needs an instrumental approach, a socializing approach will not be helpful. Sue Snyder made the right choice in turning her faculty meetings into classes. The adults needed concrete procedures and specific knowledge. However, there are limits to instrumental learning practice.

Jeff Price, principal of Serna Elementary in San Antonio, articulated the limits when he encountered them in his school: “We ask ourselves: Why aren’t we going to scale on this? Why aren’t we seeing whole school learning? When we are not, we know it’s often because teachers aren’t sharing their work and learning, especially from our success. We can’t go to scale without sharing our work” (Breidenstein et al., 2012, p. 95). An instrumental learning practice helps individual teachers improve their teaching practice; a socializing learning practice improves the school.

Building schools where adults learn requires leaders to be persistent, intentional, and transparent in their efforts connecting a learning practice to improvements in teaching practice. While this is easier said than done, with time and systematic experimentation, learning leaders can meet teachers where they

are by providing professional learning that both supports current learning and teaching practices and nudges faculty toward more complex and collaborative ways to work and learn.

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## PD Session Materials

1. Norms

2. Bookmarks

3. Readings for Participants

4. Professional Learning  
Poster Template

5. Toolbox  
Poster Template

6. Facilitator's Guide  
to Presentation



# **NORMS**

A FEW AGREEMENTS FOR OUR WORK TOGETHER:

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- **Ask questions.**
- **Engage fully and respectfully.**
- **Open your mind to diverse views.**
- **Utilize what you learn.**

*"What I wanted was to create thoughtful citizens—people who believed they could live interesting lives and be productive and socially useful. So I tried to create a community of children and adults where the adults shared and respected the children's lives."*

**Deborah Meier**

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*"Sixty years ago I knew everything; now I know nothing; education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance."*

**Will Durant**

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*"Failure is instructive. The person who really thinks learns quite as much from his failures as from his successes."*

**John Dewey**

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*"A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron."*

**Horace Mann**

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*"One of the most important things a teacher can do is to send the pupil home in the afternoon liking himself just a little better than when he came in the morning."*

**Ernest Melby**

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*"Failure is instructive. The person who really thinks learns quite as much from his failures as from his successes."*

**George M. Lamsa**

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*"The dream begins,  
most of the time, with  
a teacher who  
believes in you, who  
tugs and pushes and  
leads you on to the  
next plateau,  
sometimes poking  
you with a sharp  
stick called truth."*

**Dan Rather**

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*"My heart is singing  
for you this morning.  
A miracle has  
happened! The light  
of understanding has  
shone upon my little  
pupil's mind, and  
behold, all things are  
changed."*

**Anne Sullivan**

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*"Teaching is a  
process of becoming  
that continues  
throughout life, never  
completely achieved,  
never completely  
denied. This is the  
challenge and the  
fun of being a  
teacher—there is no  
ultimate end to the  
process."*

**Frances Mayforth**

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*"As teachers we must  
believe in change,  
must know it is  
possible, or we  
wouldn't be  
teaching—because  
education is a  
constant process of  
change. Every single  
time you "teach"  
something to  
someone, it is  
ingested, something is  
done with it, and a  
new human being  
emerges."*

**Leo Buscaglia**

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*"It is the supreme art  
of the teacher to  
awaken joy in  
creative expression  
and knowledge."*

**Albert Einstein**

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*"You laugh, you cry,  
you work harder  
than you ever  
thought you could.  
Some days you try  
to change the world;  
others you are just  
trying to get through  
the day. Your heart  
is full and your mind  
is packed with  
memories. Just  
another day in the  
classroom."*

**Unknown**

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*"I believe that the purpose of public school, whether it delivers or not, is to give quality education to all kids who come through the doors. I want to be part of that lofty mission... I may be naïve, but I believe that what I do day in and day out does makes a difference."*

**Jennifer Welborn**

(from: "Teaching as Political Work: Learning from Courageous and Caring Teachers" x Nieto 2006).

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*"Billions of fires can be set by the light of a single candle, and its light is multiplied. A billion people can be enlightened through one teacher, and his teaching will increase."*

**George M. Lamsa**

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*"One of the most important things a teacher can do is to send the pupil in the afternoon liking himself just a little better than when he came in in home the morning."*

**-Ernest Melby**

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*"Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him."*

*"My mother said I must always be intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy. That some people, unable to go to school, were more educated and more intelligent than college professors".*

**Maya Angelou**

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"When educating the minds of our youth, we must not forget to educate their hearts."

Daalai Lama

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"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

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*"It is impossible to talk of respect for students, for the dignity that is in the process of coming to be, for the identities that are in the process of construction, without taking into consideration the conditions in which they are living and the importance of the knowledge derived from life experience, which they bring with them to school. I can in no way underestimate such knowledge. Or what is worse, ridicule it."*

Paolo Friere

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"I teach because I believe that young people have rights, including the right to their identities and their languages..."

Ambrizeth Lima

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## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Teacher Study Group Co-Planning Sessions Inter-visitation Off-Site Workshop (Japanese) Lesson Study Grade Team Meetings Other: _____	Book Study Group Mentor Visits College Class Demo Lesson Class-Specific Meetings* Other: _____	Peer Coaching Cycle Mentoring Others Webinar Professional Conference Onsite Workshop Department Meetings Action Research Other: _____
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### Professional Learning Areas – “Top 3”

Why They Worked	Possible Challenges

**Discuss professional learning topics that would support success. Note your “Top 3.”**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*\*e.g., all teachers of Algebra 1*



# A New Year of Professional Learning

SCHOOL YEAR 2014-15



*"We must act as if our institutions are ours to create, our learning is ours to define, the leadership we seek is ours to become." Peter Block*

## WHY TAKE TIME FOR COLLABORATION?

We see a rare opportunity this year to shape our profession by taking responsibility for our own learning. Together we will define, prioritize and plan the time we spend learning together, focusing our efforts on student success.

There is significant evidence that schools where staff regularly collaborate around professional learning experience powerful benefits for students and adults (Annenberg Institute 2004). These include a decreased drop out rate, lower absenteeism, greater academic achievement, and smaller achievement gaps. Educators in such schools also report decreased isolation, better morale, increased job satisfaction, and greater confidence. They report that although it was challenging to

learn to work collaboratively, the time was well used because "they had a greater respect for their peers' contribution to their success, and valued the time to learn and work with their colleagues, and had a stronger sense of community with the school. Most importantly, student achievement steadily increased [...] and teachers supported each other's professional growth (Learning Forward, 2013). Educators who have experienced collaborative professional learning consistently report that they would not want to return to a more traditional type of "PD." American educators value

## WITH AND BY TEACHERS. NOT TO TEACHERS

collaboration, yet still report feeling isolated in their classrooms (OECD, Teaching and Learning International Survey, 2013). Our new contract provides time for us to establish a process of professional learning for all

members of the school staff. Each school has established a School-based Staff Development Committee (SDC) charged with coordinating professional learning activities that are appropriate, relevant, and embedded in our work.

Schools will begin the process of developing priorities by "knowing our students well," and then aligning their professional learning with what their students need. *Teacher voice is essential to the process of connecting student needs to relevant professional learning.*

Through the SDC, principals work to support and coordinate professional learning so that it meets the needs of the school community.

I participated in a study group on quality questioning. Together we studied strategies that can empower our students to be critical thinkers. As a collaborative group we learned that teaching and learning should not be done alone. This experience enriched our teaching and therefore enriched the learning in our classrooms. Beyond this, it was great working with teachers on a topic we chose to study. We look forward to more of this kind of learning!



Irene Castro IS 162, Bronx



*Mary Flores-Camacho*  
*Muscota New School, Manhattan*

We chose to focus our inquiry on an area that our school community was already doing well - for *some* students. The goal of was to look at students holistically in order to enable *all* students to have discussions around close reading of complex text. In this way, we could build on what we already knew and deepen our understanding of teaching and learning. We were confident that by choosing student-student discussion as our concentration, we would be able to raise the rigor, and ultimately raise student's level of talk.

Teachers watched videos of their colleagues' classes engaging in rigorous student-to-student discussion. Our professional learning community learned several approaches to engage children in student led discussions.

What made this inquiry effective was that as a community we learned from each other in six consecutive vertical team meetings. We visited each other's classrooms, offered each other suggestions, and together moved ourselves to the next level. Throughout the process, we watched as our students effectively learned to lead discussions.

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*Richard Ciriello*  
*Lower East Side Prep HS*

Every Wednesday, I worked with the Social Studies Department to hold a Collaborative Laboratory. We had a menu of topics that teachers generated based on what they really needed in terms of professional development. Teachers got together to share lessons, and to give each other feedback. It was extremely powerful.



## **of Strategies**

- ☐ Talk Around
- ☐ Reflection Connection
- ☐ Partner Share
- ☐ Collaborative Poster
- ☐ Laser Statements
- ☐ Exit Slips



# FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

## A NEW YEAR OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: FINDING PURPOSE IN THE JOURNEY

Time	Slide/s Number and Title	Purpose: Activity Directions	Materials
15 minutes	1, 2, 3 "Talk Around"	<p><i>Affirming our Identity as Educators</i>            Procedure: Please refer to slides 2 and 3  <i>Note to Facilitators: Please choose the most relevant for your audience from the pages of bookmarks provided. There is also a blank template in which you can create your own.</i>            Debrief the activity: What did you learn about each other?            How does this relate to our school experiences?</p>	Bookmarks (1 set for each table)
5 minutes	4, 5	<p>Review the Norms for Professional development            Outcomes and Agenda            Read from Slides</p>	Poster template in packet
5 minutes	6 "Reflection Connection?"	<p><i>Setting the Tone</i>            React to quote –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does the quote say to you?</li> <li>What does it say about whether PD is done to us or with us?</li> </ul>	
20 minutes	7 Reading: Finding Purpose	<p><i>Why commit to professional learning?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants read letter individually; highlight one sentence or phrase that really resonates.</li> <li>Turn to a partner and discuss how your quote connects to the importance of professional learning in your work</li> <li>Whole group – share three or four comments</li> </ul>	
5 minutes	8 "What Do We KNOW about Professional Learning?"	<p><i>What makes professional development time worthwhile?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator summarizes content of slide and notes that it is based on the authority of an enormous amount of research;</li> <li>Facilitator should share at least one anecdote which affirms that the research is borne out by personal experience. (e.g. "At a PD session I picked up a reading strategy that I used in class the next day.")</li> <li></li> </ul>	





Time	Slide/s Number and Title	Purpose: Activity Directions	Materials
1 minute	9 Not Simply This	<i>Beyond “siting and getting” PD..</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator notes that many people may still think of PD as listening to a presenter.</li> </ul>	
1 minute	10 More of this	From Professional Development to Professional Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator notes that when PD is done with rather than to, everyone has a regular voice</li> <li>Reiterate that it has been found that this kind of experience when directly connected to student needs has the greatest impact on student outcomes.</li> </ul>	
20 minutes	11 Collaborative Poster	Collaborative Poster <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At tables, each participant should check on the menu what learning structures work for them. Circle any item with three or more checks.</li> <li>In the “What Worked” column of the poster, participants should list what has made successful PD “work” for them</li> <li>In the second column of the poster, participants should list some of the challenges that can make PD less successful</li> <li>If large group: Post the posters around the room and share.</li> </ul> <p>Note to facilitators: This activity will generate data about what kind of PD (structure and practice) will engage and sustain the interest of your school community.</p>	
5 minutes	12	Compare to “What We Know about Professional Learning” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How were our posters similar to the statement on this slide?</li> </ul>	
5 minutes	13	Exit slips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please take a moment to help us determine next steps based on today’s work together.</li> </ul>	





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**A New Year of Collaborative Professional Learning:**  
*Finding Purpose in the Journey*