Re-Imagining Teaching:
Five Structures to Transform the Profession

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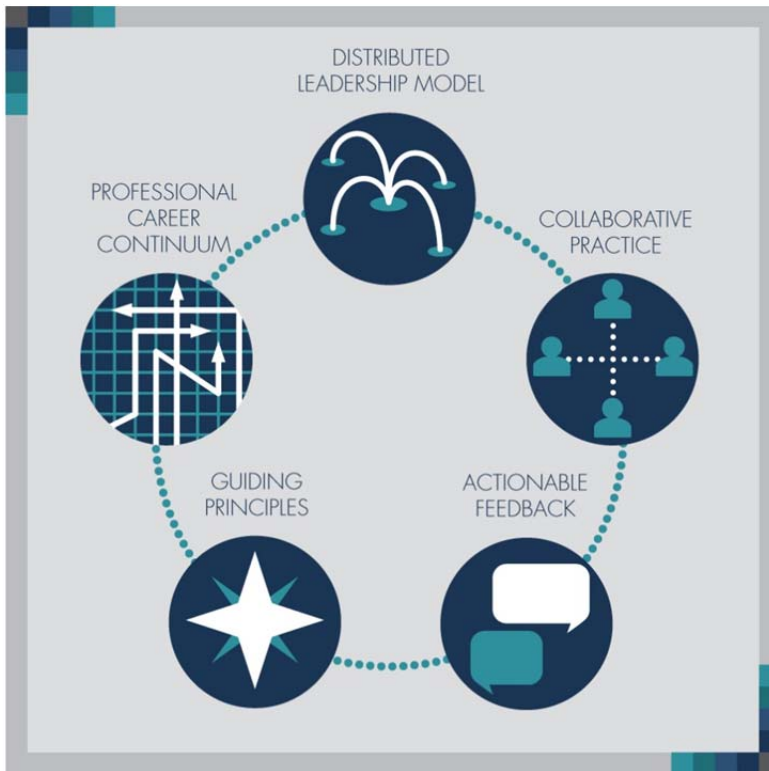
About the National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY)

NNSTOY is a non-profit organization serving as a professional home to State Teachers of the Year (STOYs) in what we call their years of service, following their Year of Recognition when they serve as their State STOY. Our focus is on providing active and meaningful roles for our members, in furthering great teaching and strengthening student learning. We do this through three critical vehicles: policy, practice, and advocacy. This white paper is the first in a three paper series. We will release the other two papers over the next six months. These papers are designed to help you become familiar with our organization as well as our work. We welcome your feedback and encourage you to visit our website for additional information. You can find us online at: www.nnstoy.org.

Introduction

Over the past five years, there has been an unprecedented focus on what constitutes effective teaching and how to measure teacher performance. Efforts to more rigorously evaluate teachers, to hold them accountable for student learning, and to help them improve practice have been initiated at the district, state, and federal levels.[1] In many ways, it is too early to determine the impact of this focus on teachers; however, we do know that many teachers believe that additional accountability, in the absence of efforts to improve the conditions in which teachers work, is a step in the wrong direction.

These widely held perceptions are largely rooted in their belief that the education profession is not viewed as a true profession, and that efforts underway to increase accountability and manage teacher performance look too much like what one may find in other professions. While there is value in adapting approaches used in other professions, adapting practices without first examining what is *missing* from the education profession is short-sighted. The National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY) views education as lacking five critical structures: professional career continuums, distributed leadership models, collaborative practice, actionable feedback to inform practice, and guiding professional principles developed by educators, for educators. We believe that these five structures are inter-connected and build upon one another.

The profession itself must advocate for the inclusion of these critical structures for two primary reasons:

1. As educators, we are best suited and best situated to determine what the profession should look like internally and externally.

2. The inclusion of these structures in the profession creates an educator-developed framework around which district, state, and federal policies can be developed to support what educators have determined is needed most in their profession.

Actionable Feedback to Inform Practice

We know from research that school principals can easily identify which teachers are the most skilled and the least skilled; however, they struggle to distinguish teaching performance for the vast majority of teachers whose teaching practice is average or near average.[2] Most teachers fall within the average range of effectiveness, which means that many principals are simply unable to give teachers the feedback they need to improve their practice. In many districts and states, the responsibility for evaluating teachers is delegated to principals and their assistants, who are already over-burdened with work. They frequently have had little or no training, nor have they been certified to evaluate in the specific evaluation process used in their districts.[3] In the past four years, more than thirty states have taken some action (and many states, significant action) to increase the rigor of the evaluative process, thereby increasing the responsibilities of principals and assistant principals.

While efforts to manage performance are laudable, doing so requires more than conducting classroom observations and filling out evaluation rubrics.[4] It requires conversations between teachers and their evaluators about what can be improved and more important, how it can be improved; and, about areas of strength, and how these can be extrapolated to peers.

Recently, there has been a laser-like focus on teaching evaluators how to use evaluation tools, but less emphasis on what to do with the data collected and how to give actionable feedback to teachers.[5]   Many of the performance management systems created in the past few years rely heavily on professional development to help teachers improve their effectiveness. However, in many instances, there are no clear connections between evaluative feedback and professional learning plans.[6]

Professional development is important, and should be driven by actionable and timely feedback. Principals indicate that for the most part, their training did not include coursework or practical experiences to prepare them to give the kind of feedback teachers need to improve their effectiveness.[7] This is particularly true for secondary school principals who are charged with evaluating teachers who teach courses in which the principal has little to no content knowledge. To achieve the intention of performance management systems, there must be an emphasis on training and supporting principals so that they can have data-informed conversations about teaching practice and help teachers understand what they can do in the near- and long-term to improve student performance.

Further, we believe that relying on administrators alone to conduct evaluation is a mistake. Teacher leaders – those of us who have demonstrated effective practice, been trained as teacher leaders, and who are willing to serve – should be engaged as evaluators, and could be ideally suited to provide actionable feedback. However, structures in which teacher leaders can thrive do not exist in many of today's schools. This brings us to our second structure, continuums of professional practice.

The Educator's Perspective: Peggy Allan
Illinois State Teacher of the Year 1989, former NNSTOY President, and teacher coach

Recently, I was working in Midlothian (a North Shore suburb of Chicago) where I observed in the classrooms of several literacy teachers and social studies teachers. Following each observation I met individually with the teacher observed for a scheduled debriefing lasting from 30-60 minutes. I provided feedback, and we planned together on how the teacher can implement my suggestions. I also work with these teachers in the classroom to model the suggested strategies and techniques, more or less following the gradual release model, if the teacher feels a need for that support. Often they do, and I provide ongoing support throughout the year. In Midlothian, I will continue to work with these same teachers during the 2013-14 school year.

I have been coaching colleagues in a full-time role for seven years and have found that this model is the most effective that I've used. I've done everything (as most of us have in consultant roles) from one hour to one day to week-long teacher workshops and training, but none of these methods ensures that teachers will actually implement what they've learned in the classrooms. Now my training of teachers is followed with demonstrations and observations in their classrooms, debriefing sessions, and continued support for individual teachers within their classrooms. This model also provides accountability because the teachers know there is always follow up. However, the accountability is positive, not punitive, because I don't evaluate them – I am there to help them improve to become the best teacher they can be. They become willing to share very honestly with me, and thus we usually make a lot of progress. I have come to believe that this is the best way to affect real change in education – to get inside the classrooms, because as we all know, what happens there is what really matters.

I use this same model in East St. Louis, a high poverty district, and in Northbrook, Illinois, a very affluent North Shore Chicago district, where it proves equally effective. The need to move beyond the teacher workshops I had been delivering was identified by one of the assistant superintendents that I worked with who said simply, "You're going to have to go into their classrooms and implement the new learning. This will take away the 'Yeah, buts.'" These included: Yes, but it won't work with my kids, Yes, but it won't work in my classroom; Yes, but that may work in your part of the state, but not here; Yes, but you don't know what I have to deal with in my classroom, etc. Those initial responses came from teachers reluctant to change for many reasons. But there were also teachers who were very willing and wanted to improve but were lacking the confidence in their own abilities. The actionable feedback coupled with ongoing support proved very helpful to both groups.

In my experience, teachers want to consistently grow and develop in their craft. They are hungry for information about their own practice and too often do not receive it. I have seen teachers stretch and strengthen their practice as a result of providing direct, actionable feedback to teachers by working closely with them to learn what they are – and are not – doing in their classrooms. As a result of this feedback, practice changes and students learn more effectively. And isn't this what teaching is all about?
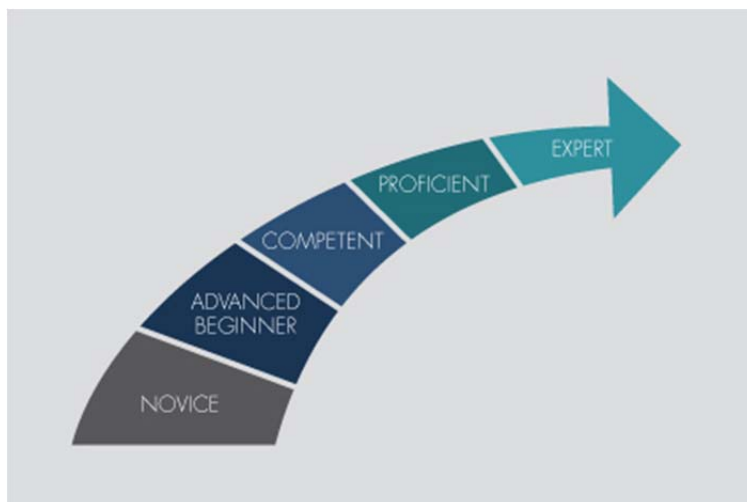
Professional Career Continuums

While most professions have career advancement mechanisms, such as career ladders and lattices in place to provide for professional growth for practitioners, education does not. Unless willing to leave the classroom, there is no avenue for teacher advancement within the profession. As a result, retention rates, particularly for Generation Y teachers, are dismally low.[8] Teachers want and need formal, widely available options to assume leadership roles within a school and to be recognized for their contributions. While these opportunities benefit teachers and have the potential to improve their job satisfaction, they have reciprocal benefits as well. Schools where we are leading peers and mentoring less experienced teachers tend to have higher retention rates, a factor that positively affects student learning.[9]

When we examine data as to why teachers choose to leave the profession, the lack of such advancement opportunities is one primary reason.[10] Research on continuums in other fields tell us that it takes ten years to develop expertise in a profession, and that such expertise is developed through deliberate practice.[11] A loss of over forty percent of teachers annually, inhibits the ability to develop a solid cadre of expert practitioners. Given the time it takes to develop expertise, the annual loss of teachers is exacerbated by the long period of time it takes to replace the experienced teachers that leave. This lack of a cadre of expert practitioners not only impacts the profession but impacts efforts to distribute leadership as there are fewer expert practitioners to take on leadership positions within a school.

In addition, while many professions are moving to flatter organizations with greater value placed on middle-level experts and fewer top-level positions, leadership in teaching is still organized as a top-down structure.[12] While many professions are moving from vertical career ladders to horizontal career lattices, allowing for more flexibility in advancement and in work situations, teaching is still locked into the one or two leaders per school model, in which a teacher must choose to leave the classroom in order to serve in a leadership role. In the 1980s, Dreyfus and Dreyfus were defining potential models of skill acquisition.[13] More recently, researchers like Art Wise and Molly Lasagna have studied and proposed models for continuums.[14] To the left is a sample Dreyfus and Dreyfus continuum.

A number of states, and some districts, are in the process now of establishing continuums of professional practice that set out stages of teacher development and how to move across them, with both differentiated roles and compensation for professionals in

different stages.[15] In these models, it is possible for teachers to advance while staying in the classroom, and to perform as leaders in various capacities as they advance. It is important to note that these models also include a description of performance standards that should be met at each stage. This leads to our third structure, distributed leadership models.

The Educator's Perspective: Megan Allen
Florida State Teacher of the Year 2010

This year, I have the opportunity to work in a hybrid role as a teacherpreneur, thanks to a unique and forward-thinking partnership between my school district and the Center For Teaching Quality. I happily spend my mornings working as a fifth grade teacher at Shaw Elementary School in Tampa, Florida, and my afternoons focusing on efforts to support, advocate for, and elevate teacher leadership in order to create stronger public schools.

This position fulfills a part of me that had before been unsatisfied. See, I don't fit in the traditional role. I am a round peg in a square hole. I don't belong fully in the classroom, but I don't fit fully outside the school building either. I have spent the past three years flitting in and out of that classroom door, trying to find my place. When I served as a faculty member at a local university, I missed my elementary students terribly. But when I returned "forward" to the classroom full-time, I accumulated over 40 professional days, calling in a substitute teacher in order to work with the Florida Department of Education or represent my district in conferences. My current role is the best of both worlds, allowing me to keep one high-heeled foot in the classroom with my students (who are my lifeblood), and one out of the classroom, advocating for them in issues of both practice and policy. It allows me to work on making their education stronger on the ground level and beyond.

This type of role fits a niche for so many teachers. Currently, we are forced to either follow a narrow and archaic career ladder that takes us out of the classroom, or remain in the classroom, yearning to have a greater impact, but not able to have the time or the space.

We need to push our thinking beyond the traditional career ladder and create more hybrid roles and options. Our teacher leaders need the time and space to lead the transformation of education in a way that does not negatively impact their students or just pile more on top of an already overflowing plate. Hybrid roles will allow educators to have a career lattice that will impact both the profession and the students. Multiple career options will help attract and retain intelligent and hard-working educators. It will help fill the leadership yearnings they have, giving them the ability to continue their drive to have impact reaching beyond the classroom walls. And the best part? We can keep these effective educators in front of students at the same time.

Distributed Leadership Models

Distributed leadership is another missing structure in the profession that has the potential to overcome some of the shortcomings of performance management systems. Principals undertake an enormous amount of responsibility. The idea that one person, or one person and his/her assistants can do all of the things required to run a safe, successful school, is an outdated one.[16]

We know from research commissioned by the Wallace Foundation that distributed leadership has a stronger influence on student achievement than individual leadership.[17] We also know that high performing schools employ distributed leadership models.[18] Distributed leadership offers opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles among their peers and to have influence over decisions made about the school community and the instructional program. Teachers who have the opportunity to be influential are more satisfied professionally and their influence has the potential to enhance efforts to improve schools.[19] Such models can result in opportunities for teachers to learn from one another, to model effective practice for colleagues, and to build upon their individual areas of strength in order to benefit others and the system as a whole.

We also know as a result of retention research, including that done by Harvard's Susan Moore Johnson on beginning teachers; University of Pennsylvania's Richard Ingersoll on retention of more experienced teachers; the research on Gen Y teachers by the Ellen Sherratt of the American Institutes for Research; the recent MetLife survey; and the *Irreplaceables* report by The New Teacher Project, that teachers are looking for leadership roles while remaining in the classroom, for at least, some part of the day. The Teacher Leader Exploratory Consortium used this, as well as other data to develop the Model Standards for Teacher Leadership (see: www.teacherleaderstandards.org) defining domains of teacher leadership.

We know from pilot models like one in Hillsborough County, Florida, allowing teachers to spend part of the day modeling teaching, mentoring, and providing professional development for colleagues, and the overwhelming response to an employment posting of a similar opportunity in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Public Schools, North Carolina (http://publicimpact.com/?s=hybrid+roles+charlotte) that teachers are actively seeking the opportunities available to them that allow them to serve as teacher leaders. This leads us to the fourth structure, collaborative practice.

The Educator's Perspective: Jamey Olney
DODEA Teacher of the Year 2000

Research suggests that the quality of instruction has more to do with student achievement than any other variable. Kim Marshall, in *Rethinking Teacher Supervision and Evaluation* notes that "the quality of instruction is the single most important factor in student achievement." Our goal at Aspire is to ensure that every student is taught by a highly effective teacher and graduates from our schools ready to succeed in college and beyond. It would follow that a school leader's number one priority should be instruction.

However, as a principal, I face a dizzying array of competing demands, including facility management, student discipline, parent concerns, special education meetings, and establishing positive school culture. Therefore, I am fortunate to work with a dedicated, talented cadre of teachers who bring to bear their own unique strengths and skills sets. A distributed leadership model enables me to leverage individual teacher strengths to positively impact the entire school and keep my "eye on the prize" of student achievement. With the support of our teacher leaders, I am more effectively able to lead instruction, support staff, students, and families, and make decisions in the best interest of students.

A distributed leadership model provides our teachers with timely, actionable feedback on their practice by Peer Observers and Lead Teachers who are currently teaching in the classroom. The three key components of this model are weekly scheduled observations, key (bite-sized) action steps, and effective feedback along specific indicators in the Aspire Instructional Rubric. Teachers coaching teachers have created more opportunities for teachers to move along the AIR continuum and master their craft.

Along with the individual coaching teachers receive from Peer Observers, the Leadership Team, composed of Lead Teachers and myself, analyze the previous school year's AIR observation data at the beginning of each year. The team then uses this data to create a pacing guide around school-wide focus indicators. This roadmap drives our staff PD.

In the book "The Talent Code," Daniel Coyle asserts that it takes "10,000 hours" of practice to become a master at something. Our organization has created a career path to attract and retain talented teachers by recognizing and rewarding success, creating an incentive for teachers to stay in the profession. We believe that when teachers are happy, satisfied, and feel effective, they will want to put these "10,000 hours" into practice. At Summit Charter Academy, teachers serve in varied leadership roles. Lead Teachers meet with grade-level teams weekly to analyze data, problem solve, and lesson plan. Peer Observers observe and meet with teachers weekly to give feedback and bite-sized action steps based on each teacher's Personalized Learning Plan goals. Teachers are encouraged to participate in focus groups and advisory panels to refine and further the work around teacher effectiveness.

By encouraging all types of leadership roles, the expectation is that teachers will be compelled to stay in the classroom as their primary role, since that is where highly effective teachers have the most impact on student achievement. Many of our teachers have opted to stay at Summit next year rather than moving on because of the leadership opportunities afforded to them, allowing them to remain in the classroom where the most critical work with students occurs.

Collaborative Practice

Collaborative practice within the profession is uneven at best.[20] Unlike many other professions, collaboration among teachers is not standard practice. In fact, many teachers teach inside their classrooms with little to no interaction with their colleagues.   Teaching is often referred to as the most isolated of professions.[21] Although there is value in collaboration for both teachers and students, many of the resources required to collaborate are lacking, in particular, time.[22] [23] There is no time built into the school day for teachers to collaborate and far more often, teaching schedules are not constructed to give teachers who teach the same students or the same subjects or grades time to work together (horizontal collaboration) or to inform and learn from those who have taught or will teach the same students (vertical collaboration). Another missing resource is training on how to use the time that teachers do have together constructively.[24]

With little time to begin with, using the time available wisely is essential. We know from research that when teachers work together, students benefit from their efforts.[25] This is particularly true for students who are behind academically and in schools where turnaround efforts are underway. Collaborative time is not only important for improving academic outcomes for students, but it is essential for educator professional growth and for building trust among teachers.[26] The lack of collaboration within the profession is one of the reasons teachers who leave the profession cite as a reason for their departure.[27] New teachers require collaboration and mentoring to become effective teachers and to persist in what is a challenging profession, at best.

The Educator's Perspective: Stefani Cook
Idaho State Teacher of the Year 2011

Nestled out west in southeastern Idaho you will find Rigby High School–a rural, traditional high school with approximately 1,000 students in grades 10-12. We feel very fortunate to have administrators that have recognized the importance of technology in the classroom and teachers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to see that technology is incorporated effectively into daily lessons, thus helping students engage in the learning process.

During the 2012-2013 school year, Rigby High School piloted a blended learning model where learning became highly personalized and student-centric, and students were enabled, engaged, and empowered. Our goal was to put face-to-face teaching back into the distance learning equation. This model gave teachers the opportunity to individualize instruction at all levels for all students.

An important key to the success of our pilot blended learning program was collaboration amongst staff members. Without such collaboration, a program like this would never succeed. Our administrators recognized this, and a common planning hour was scheduled for all four teachers involved in the blended pilot program. This common planning hour allowed for 70 minutes of collaboration time each day of the week during the entire school year. Our cadre of four teachers included two who were well versed in technology and blended learning and two who had no experience with blended learning and limited technology expertise. From the start, this was a challenge! Together we learned from one another, solved each other's problems, reached for the same goal, and worked successfully together as a team. Without being allowed a common plan (70 minutes a day to work together), this project may not have made it through the first trimester of the school year. We quickly recognized how important our time together was and more importantly how to effectively utilize our time together to solve problems and build and capitalize upon our collective vision.

While we learned many lessons from our pilot, the following key points regarding collaboration were recognized:
- Wikis, blogs, and discussion boards ARE effective collaborative communication tools both for students and teachers. Every student in the classroom has an active voice on a continual basis as well as a captive audience. Students collaborate and work together in various modalities. Community is built within the class.
- Collaboration was able to occur within classes as well as between classes.
- The instructor is allowed to collaborate virtually with each student individually on multiple occasions throughout the course utilizing discussion boards, blogs, wikis, and classroom assignments.
- A deep sense of community was built as an academic team, and we are excited and willing to embark upon future pedagogical endeavors together.
- Other teachers in the building are requesting to be a part of the blended learning team. Next year, 4-8 additional teachers will be added to the blended learning cadre.

Collaboration is the key to this program's success–collaboration amongst teachers, collaboration amid students, and collaboration between students and teachers.

Guiding Principles for the Profession

Most professions have principles by which the profession is practiced. These guiding documents are often referred to in other professions as Professional Principles, Ethical Principals, or Guiding Principles. It is a distinctive characteristic that these sets of principles are typically developed by practitioners in the field. The resulting documents are used by practitioners as one means of accountability for adherence to professional dictates that govern the profession. These are principles to which the profession holds itself accountable.

In the current absence of such principles for teaching, educators are being held to various sets of standards, all with the purpose of holding them accountable to the public. Some of these sets of standards have been used to develop evaluation rubrics to rate educator classroom performance, to form a basis for curriculum content, or for other purposes. These standards – like the InTASC standards for pedagogy and the wealth of content standards, however, are not professional principles of practice. There is no one set of principles to which educators hold themselves accountable.

Moving forward, the development of guiding principles is essential to further professionalize teaching and to ensure that educator accountability is not solely external. Ideally, the principles developed by educators should be used to influence the manner and extent to which educators are held accountable outside of the profession, as well as within.

It is important that educators define the principles that govern the profession. Failure to do so leaves the job of defining the profession to others, something that has already occurred to various degrees. Part of the problem with defining principles for the teaching profession is the notion among many that teaching is not actually a profession. It is hard to determine if principles for the profession have not been defined because of this notion or if the lack of effort to define principles has perpetuated the notion. Regardless, given the increasing amount of accountability for teaching, it is time for educators to take up the charge of defining what it means to be an educator with a firm grounding in principles that work toward increasing respect for educators and professionalizing the job of educating children.

The Educator's Perspective: Katherine Bassett
New Jersey State Teacher of the Year 2000

After 26 years as a middle school librarian, I shifted career gears and worked for twelve years at the Educational Testing Service, and then at the Center for Educator Effectiveness at Pearson in assessment, educator relations, and research capacities. This shift opened a completely different culture of work for me.

Experiencing the ways in which professionals in other careers operated, the structures and systems in which they operated, and the principles to which they held themselves accountable caused me to think deeply about the differences between this world and teaching, and why these differences exist.

I have looked at over twenty different professions; each has a set of principles – sometimes called ethical principles, sometimes professional principles, and even Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) that were developed by professionals for the profession, and to which the profession holds itself accountable. This was eye-opening! In teaching, we have numerous sets of standards, rather than principles, almost always developed by other bodies or organizations (some involving educators) and then handed to us.

In addition, I have examined industrial organization research, studying the acquisition of expertise, career advancement structures, and how professional knowledge transfers into skill, ability, and dispositions. Having served in the development of two sets of standards, and interpreting two more into assessments, I know the complexity of conversations that goes into the creation of such documents. These conversations cannot occur without educator input.

We are having a national conversation now about educator accountability – we don't see this happening in any other profession. One has to believe that this is because in teaching, we have a vacuum – no self-developed accountability principles – and, therefore, others have rushed in to fill this void, deciding for us to what we will be held accountable.

This, quite simply, is wrong. Dr. Troy Hutchings of the University of Phoenix is researching educator ethics, and is focusing on an outcome of educator-developed guiding principles. This is work in which I, as an educator, wish to be engaged; as the Executive Director of NNSTOY, I firmly believe that my organization needs to play a leading role in this work. Who knows better than educators what happens in highly effective classrooms? We don't see legislators, policy makers, researchers rushing in to define accountability for physicians or plumbers or accountants. The same should be true for teaching.

Next Steps: Professionalizing Teaching

Because these structures are part of the foundation of other professions, and because we believe they are needed in teaching, NNSTOY has undertaken, and is partnering with organizations that are undertaking, research on these structures. To date, NNSTOY is involved in four projects that look at these structures to inform our work, as well as the work of other organizations dedicated to helping define the profession and support educators' efforts to determine what it truly means to be a professional teacher. NNSTOY believes that our organizational work is incomplete without engaging in and understanding research about educators and the profession.

We also believe that research conducted on other professions and in other countries is of tremendous value as we recognize that the answers to many of the questions raised by and within our profession can be found elsewhere and that the experiences of other professionals and educators in other countries are potentially similar. It is our commitment to research that drives both our belief that the structures detailed in this paper are the right ones and that investigating the issues surrounding them in a deeper way is an appropriate course of action.

For each structure, we are engaged in the following work:

- **Continuums of Professional Practice and Distributed Leadership Models**: In partnership with the Center for Educator Effectiveness at Pearson (CEE), Public Impact, and the National Education Association (NEA), NNSTOY is conducting research into continuums in other professions as well as in teaching. Our first two papers resulting from this work will be published with the Center for Educator Effectiveness at Pearson in the fall of 2013; the first is a literature review of the continuum models and research; the second is a state-by-state scan. This summer, we will work with CEE to begin data gathering – to include phone interviews with teachers and administrators, materials review, and site visits – with funding from the NEA. Public Impact will collect data from additional sites. The NNSTOY/CEE team and the Public Impact team will conduct data gathering about schools currently using a continuum model, to study the efficacy of the model and its impact on teachers, students, and administrators. As we conduct this work, we will be examining the resulting distributed leadership models that emerge. We and our partners will propose recommendations for continuum models or components of models that appear to be working in schools. In phase three of this work, we would pilot such models or components in high needs schools with an eye to how use of these models impacts teacher performance and retention, student performance, and administrator and teacher job satisfaction, among other structures.

- **Collaborative Practice:** Working with Digital Promise and CEE, NNSTOY is researching the impact on teachers, students, administrators, and systems of utilizing digital tools for truly instructional purposes. This is a two-stage study with the qualitative phase completed. The first papers resulting from the qualitative study will be released later in 2013. Our initial findings show significant impact on the collaborative behavior of adults

and students when digital instructional tools are introduced. For example, teachers in Michigan instituted a flipped learning model. None had taught in this way previously. Intensive cross-content and cross-grade level collaboration emerged as teachers began searching for videos, learned how to use smartphones to assign homework and to blog, and formed outside-of-class online communities to monitor or engage in student collaborative communities that sprung up. Teachers who had never worked together before are now closely connected as a result of the introduction of technology. Use of these tools allowed some of the barriers to collaborative practice – time, physical space, isolation – to break down, resulting in teacher-to-teacher, teacher-to-student, and student-to-student collaboration to thrive. We have also learned some interesting things about the new teacher leader structures that emerge with the introduction of these tools, and, the greater and more frequent opportunities for teacher-to-student feedback.

- **Actionable Feedback to Inform Practice**: Working with CEE, HumRRO, Clowder Associates, and with guidance from scientist Doug Harris, NNSTOY is working to develop and pilot a tiered evaluation system. This system would focus resources on those teachers in most need of assistance, using evaluation feedback to drive professional learning plans for all teachers and conducting more intensive evaluations of those teachers who perform less well on an initial, streamlined evaluation. In doing this work, we will implement a digital card sort model developed by scientists at Pearson and the University of New Zealand, which uses ranking of performances rather than rating of them, and could reduce bias and time spent compiling reports of evidence collected during evaluation.

- **Guiding Principles:** NNSTOY has developed a project plan for conducting the development of such principles for teaching and is identifying potential partners and funders for this work. We are interested in replicating the development model used in creating the Teacher Leader Model Standards, a true collaboration between diverse organizations and individuals representing multiple viewpoints, and forming consensus on what Guiding Principles for the profession would encompass.

NNSTOY is a professional organization of recognized teachers and professionals who deeply value collaboration. We look forward to working with partners to explore these five critical professional structures and to develop meaningful ways to bring them to teaching, the profession to which we have committed our professional lives.

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