

The Handbook for  
*Enhancing*  
Professional  
Practice Using the Framework  
for Teaching in Your School

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# Introduction

Since the original publication of *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* in 1996, thousands of educators around the world have attested to its value in supporting their examination of practice. This book is intended as a companion volume for educators who have experienced the power of the framework for teaching to shape professional conversation. Educators have found that when their discussions are organized around a clear definition of good teaching, the conversations themselves are more productive and focused than is possible without such a structure.

The most powerful use of the framework for teaching is for teachers' own self-assessment. They locate, often informally, examples from their teaching of the different components of the framework and work to ensure that these reflect increasingly high levels of performance.

In addition, educators have found that the framework for teaching contributes to their work in many different settings and for many different purposes: teacher preparation, the supervision of student teachers, teacher recruitment and hiring, teacher mentoring, peer coaching, professional development, and teacher evaluation. However, to use the framework in all these different ways, educators must have specific procedures and instruments to both structure the conversations and provide guidance for the application of the levels of performance.

A framework for teaching, even when it is organized around a clear and research-based definition of good practice, cannot by itself ensure productive conversations about teaching. Simply having a framework, in other words, is no guarantee of productive and professional interactions among educators. Such interactions depend on *how* the framework is used, the professional culture of the school and the district, the degree of respect among and between teachers and administrators, and the commitment of all educators to ongoing improvement of practice. In particular, if adopted by a school or a district for use in a teacher

evaluation system that is governed by a culture of fear, the framework will simply contribute to that culture.

This book, then, is intended to offer practitioners—teachers and their supervisors, mentors, coaches, and others—the tools they need to use the framework for teaching productively in different settings and for different purposes. The tools are designed both to help practitioners examine all aspects of teaching as outlined in the framework in a way that supports the ongoing growth and professional learning of teachers, and to contribute to an overall culture of professional inquiry in a school.

The instruments and protocols offered in this book reflect the combined wisdom of thousands of educators from across the United States and around the world; they represent the best of what has evolved over many years in a range of different settings. It is hoped that the instruments and protocols, with their accompanying recommendations for use, may save practitioners valuable time in developing their own procedures. However, educators should examine them carefully and modify them as necessary to suit conditions in their own schools.

Most of the uses of the framework for teaching—teacher preparation, teacher recruitment and hiring, mentoring and induction, professional development, and performance appraisal—can be clustered into two primary functions: coaching and evaluation. *Coaching* is a nonevaluative process intended to support the development of teaching skill. Teachers and others use it in the following situations:

- Assisting student teachers assigned to their classrooms
- Mentoring colleagues new to the profession
- Providing peers with instruction and guidance

*Evaluation* involves making judgments about the quality of teaching, and is used for the following purposes:

- Certifying teacher candidates to enter the profession
- Deciding whether to offer tenure or a continuing contract to teachers
- Affirming the continuing skill of experienced teachers
- Determining whether an experienced teacher is performing below standard and should be required to work, under the supervision of an evaluator, on an assistance plan

All of these applications require *evidence* of teaching. To provide feedback to a teacher on performance, it is essential to be specific about that performance, and evidence helps to provide such specificity. The issue of evidence is addressed in Chapter 1.

Whether the primary purpose for using the framework for teaching is coaching or evaluation, all the activities may be used—and *should* be used—to promote professional learning. Such support for learning requires engaging teachers in the

thought processes that promote learning—namely, self-assessment, reflection on practice, and professional conversation. These issues are addressed in Chapter 2.

The remaining chapters cover the framework's various specific uses. Teacher preparation, recruitment and hiring, mentoring and induction, coaching, and professional development are addressed in Chapter 3; teacher evaluation is discussed in Chapter 4; and self-directed professional inquiry is covered in Chapter 5. Finally, recommended procedures are outlined in Chapter 6. Instruments and forms to support the procedures and implement the various uses of the framework appear in Appendixes A and B. Regardless of what purpose the framework for teaching is used for or which instruments and procedures are used, readers will find support for two fundamental goals: the evidence-based examination of practice and the professional imperative of promoting teacher learning.

Figure 5.1  
Goal Analysis

Statement	Goal?	Comment
I'm in a master's program and need to finish my dissertation this year. That's my primary goal for the year.	No	Goals should relate to the teacher's learning about a new skill or technique or about student learning. This goal is an appropriate goal for a teacher's professional advancement but not for a focus during a year of professional inquiry.
I want to implement the new reading series.	No	Every teacher in the school is obliged to implement the new reading series. This is a requirement of employment. However, if the new reading series includes an approach to teaching literature that is unfamiliar, the goal might be written like this: "I want to improve my teaching of literature so the students both enjoy it and become proficient at literary analysis."
I'm working with a new team this year. My goal is to concentrate on teaming.	Maybe	This statement is not clear as to what is meant by "concentrate on," and it's possible that in practice this goal would result simply in a teacher's attending team meetings as scheduled. A better way to state this goal could be this: "I am working with a new team this year, and I will be facilitating some of the meetings. I want to learn how to help a group function productively."
I want to create rubrics to use in my classes, especially for long-term projects.	Yes	Although this goal is not stated in terms of teacher learning, creating rubrics inevitably involves considerable learning. The action plan would, presumably, spell out an iterative process of developing rubrics, trying them with student projects, and then revising them based on the experience. That process reflects real learning.
I need to find a more effective way to cover the material in my history classes so students can go into greater depth.	Yes	This goal would be better stated like this: "I want to learn how to teach my history classes in such a way that students go into greater depth but also learn all the important material." This involves understanding student learning and motivation, trying new techniques, and evaluating their results.
I'm teaching 3rd grade for the first time. My goal is to become familiar with the 3rd grade curriculum.	No	Becoming familiar with the 3rd grade curriculum is essential to being successful in that assignment. But gaining such familiarity involves work that is critical to the teacher's position and does not represent new learning for the teacher.
I'm new to the system so I want to be sure I know the discipline policies and follow them in my classroom.	No	This goal represents the work all teachers new to a school must undertake, and it illustrates the steep learning curve that is inherent in any new assignment. But it is, essentially, a matter of implementing school policies, not engaging in new learning related to instruction.
I want to get parents more involved in their children's education.	Maybe	Whether this is a goal or not depends on the reason behind the statement. If the teacher intends to simply reach out to parents, it simply represents work teachers must do as part of their assignment. However, if the teacher has been trying to engage parents but has not succeeded, the goal might represent the teacher's desire to learn new techniques to reach parents of a different culture or parents who are recent immigrants to the area. This new learning would, therefore, be the goal, with increased parent involvement as evidence that the teacher had been successful.