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Standards in Practice Standards and Looking at Student Work

Developed by Ruth Mitchell, The Education Trust.

Get prepared

Select a chair, timekeeper, and recorder. Read and discuss the protocol. Make sure there is a batch of student work that the group will look at in using the protocol. Review the following ground rules:

1. Behavior is professional throughout — no outbursts, no personal attacks
2. Everyone listens to everyone else and does not interrupt or talk over others
3. Praise where possible, but express critical opinions candidly
4. Accept criticism as if it were intended to help improve student achievement
5. Be brief, so that everyone gets lots of chances to talk

Do the assignment yourselves

Every member of the team does the assignment as given to the students.

Make a scoring guide

The group generates a rough scoring guide from the standards and the assignment.

Score the student work

The group scores the student papers, using the guide.

See what students know and can do

The recorder writes the group's answers to the following questions:

1. What does this student work tell us about student learning?
2. What do students know, and what are they able to do?
3. Was the assignment well designed to help students acquire knowledge and exercise skills?

Do something about it

The recorder writes the group's answers to the following question: What needs to happen on the classroom, school, and district so that all students can do this and similar tasks well?

Develop and carry out an action plan

The group plans and carries out action to improve student learning.

Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community such as a Critical Friends Group® and facilitated by a skilled coach. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for new or experienced coaches, please visit the National School Reform Faculty website at www.nsrharmony.org.