

RESEARCH AREA & SOURCE	DESCRIPTION & MAIN FINDINGS / ARGUMENTS
<p>Instructional Supervision</p> <p><i>Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Chicago, April 13, 2007.</i></p>	<p>Glanz, J., Shulman, V. & Sullivan, S. (2007) Impact of instructional supervision on student achievement: Can we make the connection?</p> <p>This paper is the third in a series examining instructional supervision in New York City public schools. The paper looks at the connection between instructional supervision practices and student achievement using a single school as a case study. The school was chosen as an example of a school with successful instructional supervision practices.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview data revealed that the school administration believed the following factors were critical to improved student achievement: 1. <i>Building a collaborative and collegial culture</i>; 2. <i>Building teacher supports</i>; 3. <i>Building capacity (teachers are responsible for PD and mentoring colleagues)</i>; 4. <i>Administrators as instructional leaders</i>; 5. <i>The use of student information to support classroom instruction.</i> • Administrators at the school spend a good part of their day in classrooms and in informal meetings with teachers. • Over the two years since the new building principal was hired the number of students in the school eligible for free or reduced lunch rose from 73.1% to 93.7% and the number of students with limited proficiency in English rose from 173 to 268 out of 755. At the same time average standardized test scores rose from 69.6 to 80.9 in English and from 73.4 to 88.2 in Math, with the number of students falling below standards on both areas decreasing over the same period. • Though the connection between achievement and supervision is correlative rather than necessarily causal, the researchers claim that supervision that is critical for enhancing teacher growth in this way is also clearly central in promoting student achievement. • The researchers link the practices in the school to a model described by Gordon (1997): 1. <i>A collegial rather than a hierarchical relationship between teachers and formally designated supervisors</i>; 2. <i>Supervision as the province of teachers as well as formally designated supervisors</i>; 3. <i>A focus on teacher growth rather than teacher compliance</i>; 4. <i>Facilitation of teachers collaborating with each other in instructional improvement efforts</i>; 5. <i>Teacher involvement in ongoing reflective inquiry.</i>
<p>Teacher Quality</p> <p><i>Journal of Personnel</i></p>	<p>Munoz, M. & Chang, F. (2007) The elusive relationship between teacher characteristics and student academic growth: A longitudinal multilevel model for change.</p> <p>Grade 9 students in a large urban school district were given a standardized reading test three times in a year and the results were investigated to examine potential correlations between progress and 1. Teacher experience 2. Teacher qualifications and 3. Teacher Race.</p>

<p><i>Evaluation in Education</i> Vol. 20, pp. 147 - 164</p>	<p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a significant difference between classrooms with regard to student progress. • None of this difference was explained by any of the three teacher variables investigated.
<p>Assessment <i>Phi Delta Kappan,</i> October 2007, pp. 140 - 145</p>	<p>Heritage, M. (2007) Formative Assessment: What do teachers need to know and do?</p> <p>The article defines formative assessment and the knowledge and skills teachers need to implement formative assessment practices.</p> <p>Main Arguments:</p> <p>Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative assessment is a systematic process to continuously gather evidence of student learning. The data are used to identify a student's current level of learning and to adapt lessons to help the student reach the desired learning goal. There are three broad types: 1. <i>On-the-fly assessment</i>; 2. <i>Planned-for interaction</i> and; 3. <i>Curriculum-embedded assessments</i>. <p>Elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are four core elements: 1. <i>Identifying the gap</i>; 2. <i>Feedback</i>; 3. <i>Student Involvement</i> and; 4. <i>Learning progressions (clearly articulated subgoals that constitute progress toward the ultimate goal)</i> <p>The knowledge teachers need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four basic elements of teacher knowledge are critical: 1. <i>Domain knowledge</i>; 2. <i>Pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge of what instructional strategies are appropriate in particular domain-specific contexts)</i>; 3. <i>Knowledge of students' previous learning</i> and; 4. <i>Assessment knowledge</i> <p>The skills teachers need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers need to be able to: 1. <i>Create the conditions that allow for successful achievement</i>; 2. <i>Teacher the students to assess their own learning and the learning of others</i>; 3. <i>Interpret the evidence</i> and; 4. <i>Match their instruction to the gap</i>.
<p>Instructional Supervision / Action Research <i>Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education</i></p>	<p>Marzano, R. (2007) Using action research and local models of instruction to enhance teaching.</p> <p>This article outlines a model of instructional supervision which aims to improve teaching practices by creating a school-based 'model of instruction', and collecting data about teacher success with the model.</p> <p>Main Arguments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should define a set of instructional strategies that are effective in their particular contexts using action research. • Once the instructional model is defined it should be used initially as a basis for discussing effective teaching. • Teachers should then be given opportunities to observe master teachers (teachers who consistently produce learning in their classrooms) implementing the strategies. • Data should be collected (self-report and observation) on teachers' use of the instructional model and on its effects on student

<p>Vol. 20, pp. 117 - 128</p>	<p>learning and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The data should be used by teachers and supervisors to set individual teacher goals that are aimed at improving student learning.
<p>Teacher Quality / Instructional Supervision / Teaching Strategies</p> <p><i>Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education,</i> Vol. 20, pp. 165 - 184</p>	<p>Stronge, J., Ward, T., Tucker, P., Hindman, J. (2007) What is the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement? An exploratory study.</p> <p>This study identified the top and bottom quartiles of teachers in terms of effectiveness in promoting student learning (while controlling for factors such as gender, previous achievement, socio-economic background etc.) and then conducted in-depth case studies of teachers within each of the two categories (most effective and least effective teachers) to see which instructional strategies were most useful in promoting student learning.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <p>Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teachers provided more complex instruction with a greater emphasis on meaning than memorization. Effective teachers demonstrated a broader range of instructional strategies, using a variety of materials and media to support the curriculum. <p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teachers provided more differentiated assignments <p>Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teachers were more organized, with efficient routines and procedures for daily tasks. Behavioral expectations for students were higher in the classrooms of effective teachers <p>Personal Qualities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effective teachers showed a higher degree of respect for and fairness toward students <p>Teacher Questioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teachers asked seven times as many higher-level questions as ineffective teachers, though the number of lower-level questions did not vary between the two groups. <p>Student Off-Task Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teachers had incidences of disruptive behavior about once every two hours whereas ineffective teachers had a disruptive event approximately every 12 minutes. <p>Results can be summarized around three distinct differences: (1) Differentiation and complexity of instructional strategies; (2) questioning strategies and; (3) level of disruptive student behavior.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Tierney, R. (2006) Changing practices: influences on classroom assessment.</p>

<p>/Educational Change</p> <p><i>Assessment in Education, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 239 - 264</i></p>	<p>The paper notes that despite the increasing evidence for the potential of classroom assessment to support student learning, in practice changing traditional assessment practices has proved far from straightforward. 24 pieces of research on assessment (representing research from 8 different countries) are reviewed to determine trends and examine the influences of knowledge generating sources (evaluative inquiry, large-scale assessment, educational research) and mediating sources (educational policy, professional development, teachers' beliefs) on classroom assessment practices.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No link was found where educational research directly affected classroom practices. At least one other source of influence always sat between research and practice. • There was generally a weak link between large-scale assessment, as a source of information for potential change, and classroom practice. The researchers attribute this to generally low levels of assessment literacy. • Central policy seems to be heavily mediated through local school administrators. Schools where change efforts were more successful exhibited high levels of support from the school's leadership. • Studies where university researchers collaborated with classroom teachers on action research projects demonstrated significant changes in teacher's professional beliefs and assessment practices. • Most studies related to professional development suggest that the flow from PD to classroom practice is not direct and immediate, but diffuses into 'multiple branches' in the encounter with teacher's existing beliefs. • Change in assessment practices usually entailed a change in teacher beliefs about teaching and learning. Critical reflection on beliefs was found in one study to be a precursor to changes in practice. In cases where teacher beliefs are supported by contextual or cultural factors they can prove extremely resilient. • Teacher understandings about assessment are central to the change process. • Time has proved to be a significant factor in many of the studies both from the perspective that real change takes time (those studies that demonstrated change had time frames of 2 – 5 years), and from the perspective that changing assessment practices is time-consuming. • Change proved most difficult in communities where traditional beliefs about teaching and learning dominated. • Most teachers who were successful in changing practice mention supportive colleagues and leaders. • The use of information is critical in changing practice and most teachers exhibit a preference for information that is immediate and contextually relevant. Teachers often identify their colleagues as the most important source of information. This suggests that opportunities for interaction, knowledge sharing and collaboration must be part of the change process.