

Focus Group Questions for the LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework Draft

Questions for Teacher and Administrator Groups:

1. When you think of effective teaching, what does it look like and what does it sound like?
2. Now let's take a look at the proposed Teaching & Learning Framework that the Ad Hoc Committee discussed in December. Please look at the first page of your handout entitled, "Proposed LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework." The first draft of the proposed framework for LAUSD contains 5 major standards. They are Planning, Classroom Environment, Instructional Delivery, Professional Responsibilities, and Professional Growth.
 - a. How do the areas you discussed as examples of effective teaching fit into one or more of these 5 standards?
 - b. Are there examples that don't really fit? (*If yes,*) What additional categories would you suggest to incorporate the examples that don't fit?
3. Please turn to the back side of your Participant's Agenda. In the Ad Hoc Committee discussion, the possibility of combining Standards 4 and 5 (Professional Responsibilities and Professional Growth) was discussed. Take a minute to read through the components of Standards 4 and 5 on the back of your agenda.
 - a. Discuss the appropriateness of the content. First, let's talk about Standard 4, Professional Responsibilities. How appropriate are these components and elements?
 - b. Now let's talk about Standard 5, Professional Growth. How appropriate are these components and elements?
 - c. Let's discuss the pros and cons of combining these two standards into one. What are your thoughts about combining the two standards?
4. In the Ad Hoc Committee discussion, the appropriate place for Assessment in the T&L Framework was a topic of much discussion. Currently, Assessments appear in both Standard 1, Component F, and Standard 3, Component D.
 - a. Read through these components and elements related to assessment.
 - b. What other aspects of assessment (e.g., data analysis), might be included, along with what is given here?
 - c. Discuss whether or not the assessment components should form their own standard and why.
5. Please turn to p. 3 in the Framework draft and look at Standard 2. The Ad Hoc Committee felt strongly that ***Establishing a Culture for Learning*** (Standard 2, Component b) is an important dimension of the proposed framework. Read through Standard 2, Component b.
 - a. What practices should be included in each of these 3 elements? (i.e., what would each element look like in the classroom? Be as specific as you can.)
6. We've talked about many aspects of the framework, but we haven't had a chance to explore it in depth. Perhaps our discussion has raised some questions that you have about classroom observation or this Teaching & Learning Framework. Please take a few minutes to jot down a question you now have as a result of this discussion.

Questions for Parent and Community Groups:

1. When you think of effective teaching, what does it look like and what does it sound like?
2. Now let's take a look at the proposed Teaching & Learning Framework that the Ad Hoc Committee discussed in December. Please look at the first page of your handout entitled, "Proposed LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework." The first draft of the proposed framework for LAUSD contains 5 major standards. They are Planning, Classroom Environment, Instructional Delivery, Professional Responsibilities, and Professional Growth.
 - a. How do the areas you discussed as examples of effective teaching fit into one or more of these 5 standards?
 - b. Are there examples that don't really fit? (*If yes,*) What additional categories would you suggest to incorporate the examples that don't fit?
3. Please turn to the back side of your Participant's Agenda. Take a minute to read through the components of Standard 4 on the back of your agenda.
 - a. What practices should be included in each of these 3 components? Let's talk about specific examples you think should be evident for each component.
 - b. First, what do you think needs to be in place in terms of maintaining accurate records?
 - c. What about communicating with families? What specifically should that include?
 - d. And what about demonstrating professionalism? What does that look like?
4. Please turn to p. 3 in the Framework draft and look at Standard 2. The Ad Hoc Committee felt strongly that Establishing a Culture for Learning (Standard 2, Component b) is an important dimension of the proposed framework. Read through Standard 2, Component b.
 - a. What practices should be included in each of these 3 elements? (i.e., what would each element look like in the classroom? Be as specific as you can.)
5. (*Optional, if time permits*) In the Ad Hoc Committee discussion, the appropriate place for Assessment in the T&L Framework was a topic of much discussion. Currently, Assessments appear in both Standard 1, Component F and Standard 3, Component D.
 - a. Read through these components and elements related to assessment.
 - b. What other aspects of assessment (e.g., data analysis), might be included, along with what is given here?
 - c. Discuss whether or not the assessment components should form their own standard and why.
6. We've talked about many aspects of the framework, but we haven't had a chance to explore it in depth. Perhaps our discussion has raised some questions that you have about classroom observation or this Teaching & Learning Framework.
 - a. Please take a few minutes to jot down a question you now have as a result of this discussion. Please write your question on the index card and we will submit your questions to the Ad Hoc Committee before their next meeting.

Questions for Student Groups:

1. I would like for all of you to take a moment and think back on the teachers you had in elementary, middle and high school. Think of the teachers that come to mind that you remember as being great teachers. What made you think of them as being great?
 - a. How does a great teacher help you get better?
 - b. What do you expect from your teachers?
2. What do you know about Assessment? (Pause for responses). Assessments are when your teacher tries to find out how much you have learned.
 - a. What type of assessments have your teachers used?
 - b. In what other ways could your teacher find out what you have learned?
 - c. Of these assessments, which ones do you feel were the best at assessing what you know? Why?
 - d. Of these assessments, which ones did you have the most difficulty with? Why?
3. Now let's think about how effective teachers instruct:
 - a. First, what do effective teachers do that makes the content/subject matter meaningful to you?
 - b. In what ways do teachers let you know what they expect you to learn and achieve?
 - c. What do your teachers do that motivates you to do your best?
4. Of the teachers you have seen as being extremely effective, how do you recall them addressing the following areas:
 - a. Managing the classroom/discipline
 - b. Instructional delivery: i.e. – lecture, group projects, student presentations, cooperative groups, group pairs, independent seat work, etc.
 - c. Checking for student understanding of content
 - d. Assignments and checking student work
5. If you were the superintendent, what areas of public school education would you change / keep? Why?
6. We've talked about many aspects of the framework, but we haven't had a chance to explore it in depth. Perhaps our discussion has raised some questions that you have about the Teaching & Learning Framework and how it might be used.