

Examining Student Work

What is it?

- Examining student work has always been a part of a teacher's work. In recent years the practice has moved to a more collaborative effort where teachers learn about their practice by sharing and listening to colleagues.
- There are a variety of protocols that have been developed to guide the discussion of teacher and student work. Each protocol is designed to emphasize a different aspect of evaluation from describing student work, focusing on what student work tells you about a particular student's progress on a content standard, to discussing the teacher's unit plan.
- There is usually a trained facilitator for each group
- The groups are ongoing for a period of time.

Why is it important?

Examining student work is important because:

- It is the core of "our work."
- It refocuses school from teacher work to student work.
- It aligns with using student work to drive instruction.
- It acknowledges that each person brings expertise and will contribute learning to the group.
- It creates a climate of shared personal practice, one of the components of building a learning community.

When is it useful?

Examining student work protocols are used:

- When teachers want to focus discussion on "their" students.
- As a job-embedded practice for a school-wide community to study the impacts of instructional practices on students outcomes.

How is it used?

- All participants agree upon and commit to a protocol to use.
- Student work around a project, task or assessment is brought to the whole group for examination.
- The facilitator uses the chosen protocol to guide discussion.
- Ideas are shared as to what students are learning and what might be next steps.

To learn more about examining student work, visit the Annenberg Institute for School Reform which maintains a great deal of information and protocols for learning about student work (www.lasw.org).