

## Why Lesson Study?

There's a number of reasons why TEA chose to get Lesson Study kick-started in Texas. One is it shows value and respect to the teaching profession. One of the things that the commissioner brings up frequently is how we want people to be proud that they're teachers, and we want the teaching profession to be respected. It's hard work, and we want teachers to be seen as the expert and the knowledgeable figures that they are.

It builds a collaborative environment among teachers. One thing that I've . . . talking to people that have gone through Lesson Study on campuses is that the conversations in the teachers' lounge change. They start having more conversations about what they're doing in each other's classrooms, and best practices, and things like that.

It improves the school culture. Again, teachers are collaborating; it's not such a closed-door environment. Teachers are talking to one another and building those positive relationships with each other.

This one's really important, and I really want to draw your attention to it. Many times teachers give formative assessments, and they look at the data at the end of the assessment, and see "Okay, where does it appear that students may not have understood something," but they're not really sure why or how they got the answers they did. With Lesson Study, teachers are going to get to see the learning process taking place during the lesson observation. They're going to be observing students and seeing how students are interacting with the material; where they're misunderstanding may occur and which step. So, they're going to be collecting some really valuable data.

It promotes student growth in social and academic development. It seems kind of obvious that it's promoting academic development, but it is important to note that some of the goals that can be set during Lesson Study meetings can be around positive character development for students and making them good citizens in our society. So, that it doesn't always have to be academic-focused; it can also include some social benefits as well.

And it does a number of helpful things for teachers. It enhances their pedagogical skills, their content knowledge, their motivation to keep going and sticking with it, and their capacity to predict and observe student thinking. It can sometimes be difficult to predict what a student is going to do and trying to elicit how they solved problems or where they're going wrong at something, and Lesson Student helps teachers develop that skill of being able to predict what students are going to say and just anticipated responses.

This is an important piece of research that I found. "Research suggests that it is a lack of a collegial work environment that leads teachers to leave the profession, more than any factor, including salary." So, just having each other and building those relationships in a collaborative environment for teachers really can have a huge impact on keeping teachers in the classroom and in the profession.