Why Are Some Teachers More Effective Than Others?

The Challenges and Opportunities of Defining "Great" Teaching

Battelle for Kids

Bringing clarity to school improvement

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Introduction

Ask any student about what makes a "great" teacher and you might receive the following response: "A great teacher encourages me and makes learning fun. "Ask the student's parent, and you might get this response: "A great teacher ensures that my child is challenged and is being successfully prepared for college and the workplace." Policy-makers and business leaders may respond by saying: "Great teachers know what they are doing is important and hold themselves accountable for student learning."

Simply put, students, parents, educators, policy-makers and others have strong and varied opinions about what makes a "great" teacher. But the truth is that great teachers add value to students' educational experiences in many ways–some that can be easily measured and some that cannot.

For decades, experts and practitioners have debated how to accurately measure teacher effectiveness. And, in a 2008 synthesis of what is known about the evaluation of teacher effectiveness, Goe, Bell and Little (2008, p. 34) conclude that "an enormous underlying problem with teacher evaluation relates to lack of agreement about what constitutes great or highly-effective teaching." Without universal agreement on the things that characterize good teaching, there will be no universally accepted tools created to measure those characteristics. And, without quantitative data from such instruments, prescriptive advice for making average teachers good and good teachers great becomes difficult.

While the onset of value-added analysis in recent years has significantly changed the understanding of how to accurately measure a teacher's influence on student performance, the challenge of how to connect the practices of these highly effective teachers in the ever-changing classroom environment still remains. The reality is that classroom variables are changing constantly. Students move into and out of the classroom. Teachers leave or are reassigned. Students are taught by multiple teachers. As a result, teachers are continually challenged to manage or "balance" these changing variables.

After reviewing numerous teacher effectiveness rubrics and evaluation tools, and reflecting on the results of qualitative research focused on highly effective teachers from nearly 50 different school districts, Battelle for Kids has adapted a theoretical framework from Quinn's Competing Values Framework. While Quinn's framework is designed to analyze organizational effectiveness and leadership roles, Battelle for Kids' framework is designed to capture the balancing of essential behaviors by highly effective teachers. The new framework also provides a tool to guide teacher reflection on practice in support of student growth in terms of the complex classroom and school environments.

This concept paper highlights how teacher effectiveness has historically been measured through the use of evaluation systems and rubrics and links recent research findings that connect with existing teacher effectiveness rubrics. Additionally, Battelle for Kids introduces its new framework, which provides a theoretical basis for teacher professional development, designed to help teachers align their own practice to those of highly effective teachers.

The Challenges of Defining "Great" Teachers

When Bill Gates asked the question, *"How do you make education better?"* he answered, *"(G)reat teachers make great schools."* Some may debate whether Gates is right or not. And, some may argue that there are societal issues that work against the sustained impact of teachers on student learning. But, let's face it, if teachers are not the foundation of great schools, classrooms could be filled with knowledgeable robots and everyone would save money.

Recognizing that teachers have significant influence on students' academic success, it is imperative to understand what highly effective teachers do in the classroom. But how do we accurately identify those teachers and how can their behaviors and practices be replicated by other teachers?

Researchers and educators have struggled with these questions for years. In their inability to easily define the characteristics of good and effective teachers, they are not all that different from the general public. Ask adults about "great" teachers they remember. Their responses will often center around how those teachers made them feel about learning. Or they will focus on what the teacher did to have an impact on that person's life. But few can put into clear language just what the one teacher did that was any different from the things that were done by other teachers whose actions had far less impact. And, complicating things further is the fact that, aside from capturing information about the effective teacher, identifying good instruction is impacted by the ever-changing nature of the classroom environment.

Classrooms Are Complex

Think about all the variables that change in a classroom within a single day. There are changes in instructional content, presentation style, student engagement and motivation, the effect of disruptive students, teacher energy level, etc. The reality is that the classroom environment changes continuously and in multiple ways.

Furthermore, there are hundreds of variables that distort certainty around the "outcomes" of teaching. Teachers and students come to school with input variables. On the teacher side, these include content knowledge, preparation and expectations for learning. On the student side, these may include hunger, poverty, homelessness and lack of English language proficiency. Independent of the teacher or student are school variables, including resources in the classroom and school leadership. Ultimately, all of these variables impact the "outcomes" of what each student learns. Because of the complex nature of classrooms and the reality that students do not arrive at school with the same knowledge, skills or motivation to learn, there has been reluctance to "judge" teachers for student learning or growth.

If teachers taught one student at a time, the determination of whether or not that teacher was "effective" would be more straightforward. One would know the credentials of the teacher, how the student and teacher interacted and what the student learned. There would be few contaminating variables, such as the interactions or needs of other students during class, discipline issues, ability of the teacher to manage learning for a wide range of students, etc. The "input" variable would be the knowledge and skills a teacher brings to the relationship. The "process" would be the interactions around learning that occur between the teacher and student. The "outcomes" would be what the student knows and can do. But, we all know this is not the case.

Fortunately, there are methodologies and tools that allow us to identify teachers who cause their students to make significant, incremental growth as evidenced by scores on high quality assessments. This analytic approach is often described as value-added analysis. And, though there are different analytic models in use, each is designed to help attribute, with a specific degree of precision, the amount of incremental growth a teacher has contributed to students' academic gains.

Battelle for Kids is intrigued by the idea of comparing a classroom to a complex organization. This notion may provide insights into the dynamics among and between teacher behaviors and practices in ways not captured in current teacher evaluation tools. Furthermore, classrooms literally resemble small, complex organizations like decentralized businesses or entrepreneurial start-ups. Before addressing this new concept in detail, let's begin by looking at how teacher effectiveness has been measured historically.

Traditional Measures of Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness research dates back to the early 20th century. Carter (2008, p. 2) tracks this work in terms of who is framing the question around teacher effectiveness and how these framers identified variables of interest.

Research on teacher effectiveness has its beginnings in the 1920s with much of the earlier works being framed around the administrator perspective (Duncan & Biddle, 1974; Gage, 1965). The 1930s and 1940s gave rise to presage-process-product studies where various characteristics of teachers were examined for their relationship with teacher effectiveness on student learning (Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs & Robinson, 2003). These studies considered the formative experiences, called presage variables, of the teacher that were present prior to her entering the classroom. Variables that represented actions that occurred in the classroom, i.e. activities of the teacher and the students, were called process variables. The product variables were the outcomes that most often related to the progress determined as a result of the process implemented (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974)...

From the 1960s forward, much of the attention on teacher effectiveness research has concentrated on teacher knowledge and beliefs and their relationships to student progress (Campbell, et al., 2003)...

Many educators, researchers and organizations have developed tools to measure teacher effectiveness. Some methods are grounded in the artifacts of learning represented by student work (e.g. portfolios, work samples, etc.). Others focus on the artifacts of instruction (e.g. lesson plans, teacher logs, assessments, bulletin boards, posted learning targets, connection with family, etc.). Others require structured observations (e.g. using a rubric of some sort, principal's informal observation, walk-throughs) or use surveys and rating forms completed by students, peers and parents.

What Do These Instruments Have in Common?

All of the rubrics reviewed for the purpose of creating this paper focus on behaviors independently, with the assumption being that the higher the score in every behavior, the more effective the teacher. On each rubric, a teacher receives a score for each behavior. The rows of scores are then tallied and used to provide feedback to teachers about their strengths and weaknesses. In theory, the scores on each variable represent what effective teachers do.

In a 2008 synthesis of what is known about the evaluation of teacher effectiveness, Goe, Bell and Little developed a definition of teacher effectiveness that underscores the broad range of roles and responsibilities. Effective teachers:

- **Have high expectations for all students** and help students learn, as measured by value-added or other test-based growth measures, or by alternate measures.
- **Contribute to positive academic, attitudinal and social outcomes for students,** such as regular attendance, on-time promotion to the next grade, on-time graduation, self-efficacy and cooperative behavior.
- **Use diverse resources to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities,** monitor student progress formatively, adapting instruction as needed; and evaluate learning using multiple sources of evidence.
- Contribute to the development of classrooms and schools that **value diversity and civic-mindedness**.
- **Collaborate with other teachers, administrators, parents and education professionals** to ensure student success, particularly the success of students with special needs and those at high risk for failure (p. 8).

At a high level, these findings are consistent with and support the domains used on most teacher evaluation rubrics.

A Look at Common Teacher Evaluation Systems

Dwyer and Danielson

Dwyer (1993) and Danielson (1996) sharpened the research around teacher effectiveness and introduced Pathwise®, a rubric useful for evaluating novice teachers. The goal of the tool was to provide systematic feedback to novice teachers so that they could grow professionally and become effective teachers early in their careers.

The Pathwise® rubric consists of four domains and 22 components across those domains for evaluating teachers. The domains include planning, environment, teaching and learning, and professionalism.

The System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP)

TAP's Teaching Performance Standards also have four domains: planning instruction, learning environment, responsibilities and implementing instruction. While the domain names are different from those used in Pathwise®, the alignment between the two is clear.

Teach for America

Teach for America's Teaching as Leadership (TAL) rubric defines many more behaviors than most of the other rubrics used to evaluate teachers. TAL has six components, each with multiple elements, including:

- Set big goals
- Invest students and those who influence them in working hard to achieve big goals
- Plan purposefully
- Execute effectively
- Continuously increase effectiveness
- Work relentlessly

Value-Added Analysis: Shifting the Conversation from "What" to "How"

Another challenge in determining effective instructional practices is the lack of quantitative data used to identify highly effective teachers. For nearly three decades, outstanding teachers have been identified based on assessment processes, such as the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards or classroom observation instruments or rubrics. However, there has been no systematic examination of how much the students in these teachers' classrooms have learned. In the absence of these data, one could suggest that the data around teacher effectiveness have had little value.

The onset of value-added analysis has significantly changed the education landscape–shifting the conversation from defining "what" constitutes great or highly effective teaching to "how" to objectively and reliably measure the impact great teachers have on student learning. For the first time in the history of American education, the definition of "great" teachers is grounded in students' academic growth, not just student achievement. The difference is subtle, but extremely important.

If "effective" teachers are defined by the number or percentage of students who reach specific achievement levels, those teachers who create significant, incremental learning in low-achieving students will be overlooked. Likewise, teachers who have classrooms of high-achieving students, but do not cause these students to make any significant academic growth, will receive unwarranted credit for being effective.

This is not a paper about value-added analysis. However, it is important not to underestimate the importance of having an empirical measure of effectiveness independent of behaviors that are directly observable. This outcome-based metric identifies highly effective teachers who can be engaged in helping to uncover the specific behaviors and practices they routinely use in their classrooms. These behaviors and practices can then be directly compared with the behaviors and practices included in various teacher evaluation systems.

Lessons Learned From Highly Effective Teachers

With value-added analysis growing in use across the country, one question to ask is whether or not the same domains and components for evaluating teacher effectiveness remain valid. Do traditional variables and domains still capture the majority of the teachers whose students learn more than expected every day in the classroom? If not, which variables remain salient and which become less important?

Researchers at Battelle for Kids have used qualitative methods to elicit from highly effective teachers (as measured by value-added analysis) their practices and reflections on what they believe creates a powerful learning environment for their students. Working with 47 Ohio school districts and the Houston Independent School District over several years, Battelle for Kids has identified four themes from its highly effective teacher research. Common across these teachers are:

- Instruction that supports and engages all students;
- A student-centered focus that fosters relationships and meets individual student needs;
- A consistent and predictable classroom environment that is positive, safe, organized, and conducive to high quality learning for all students; and
- Professional self-efficacy and continuous improvement through collaboration, personalized professional development, and supportive leadership.

Balancing the Tensions Between and Among Practices

These highly effective teachers spoke about balancing the tensions between and among their practices during a class or throughout a day. They mentioned the tensions between productivity and student-driven learning. And, they cited the tensions between innovation and control and between respecting individual learning styles and productivity.

They understand that sometimes one behavior is more important than another and that there are no rules governing this notion. Highly effective teachers also recognize that their practice must respond to the environment of the moment and understand that what works at one point in time may not work at another.

Battelle for Kids' research suggests that highly effective teachers understand the elements of teacher effectiveness as expressed in the many rubrics used to evaluate teachers. But, they also understand that these behaviors cannot and should not be thought of in isolation. The clear challenge that these highly effective teachers have mastered is the management of the tension among these behaviors, or the give and take between teacher practice and the classroom environment. It may be that the ability to balance these competing tensions is at the core of understanding what differentiates highly effective teachers from effective and less than effective teachers.

What Battelle for Kids concluded is that there is real power in understanding not only the themes, but the interrelationships that exist between and across these themes. These relationships begin to shed light on the dynamism and complexity inherent in the teaching and learning process. Interestingly enough, none of the current or historical teacher evaluation tools capture these dynamic and complex interconnections among their components. Each component is examined separately rather than in conjunction with teacher practice required by the ever-changing classroom environment.

Making Sense of a Dynamic System of Behaviors

Implicit in historical teacher evaluation findings are the assumptions that certain behaviors or actions are additive and that the higher a teacher scores on any particular behaviors or actions, the more effective the teacher.

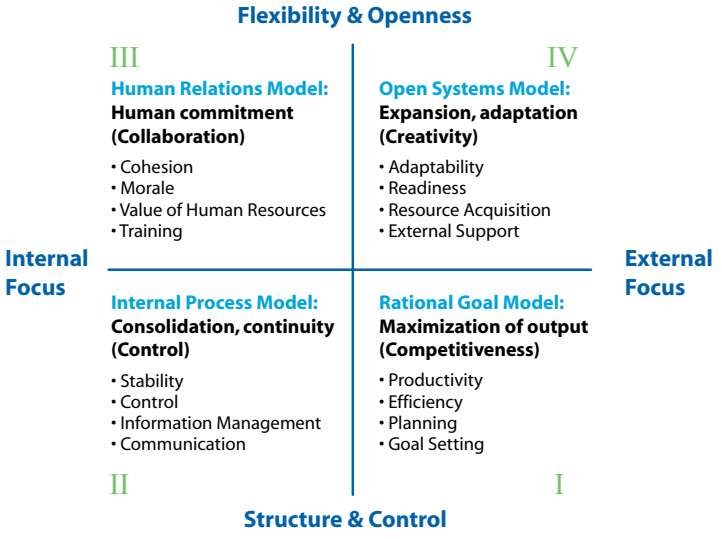
No longer does a higher score on a characteristic or behavior necessarily mean better or a lower score on a characteristic or behavior mean worse. This insight caused Battelle for Kids' researchers to look outside of education to help make the connection. As a result, Battelle for Kids identified a theoretical framework with considerable potential—the work of Robert Quinn.

In the mid-1980s Robert Quinn and John Rohrbaugh were intrigued by this question: *Why are some organizations, groups, and people more effective than others?* After an extensive review of the organizational literature, Quinn and Rohrbaugh discovered that there were, in fact, many different conceptions of what it means to be effective. To sort out and understand these differences, Quinn and Rohrbaugh decided to conduct research on how organizational researchers make sense of the concept of effectiveness. Following is how Quinn describes what they did and learned:

"To study how people perceive effectiveness, John and I identified the criteria of effectiveness that we found in the research literature (such as profit, quality or growth). We asked experts to rate how similar they thought each criterion was to each of the others. Analyzing these ratings, we found that all of the criteria could be mapped along two dimensions."

One dimension (the vertical axis) describes the flexibility versus the stability of an organization. The second dimension (the horizontal axis), describes the degree to which an organization focuses on internal or external issues. Laying these two dimensions on top of one another creates four quadrants, or four broad lenses through which we can understand an organization's effectiveness:

- Competitiveness
- Control
- Collaboration
- Creativity



Quinn & Rohrbaugh (1983)
Used with permission.

Quadrant I: Rational Goal Model

This lens defines effectiveness in terms of an organization's ability to be competitive in the external world. To this end, productivity, efficiency, planning and goal setting are critical.

Connecting Quadrant I to the Teacher: A teacher well centered in this quadrant might say: "My class will be effective if every student understands what he/she is supposed to know and be able to do and if we work to make sure that each student achieves at the highest possible level."

Quadrant II: The Internal Process Model

This lens defines effectiveness in terms of the internal organization processes and hierarchical controls that define people's work. To this end, internal stability, control, information management and internal communication are critical factors.

Connecting Quadrant II to the Teacher: A teacher operating out of this notion of effectiveness might say: "My class will be effective if we have the right rules, routines and structures in place so that students always know what they are supposed to be doing."

Quadrant III: Human Relations Model

This lens defines effectiveness in terms of a collaborative, satisfied and mutually respectful group of people. To this end, cohesion and morale are critical.

Connecting Quadrant III to the Teacher: A teacher operating out of this notion of effectiveness might say: "My classroom is effective when the students and I demonstrate on a daily basis that we care for one another and that we all work together to make this classroom and school the best it can be."

Quadrant IV: Open Systems Model

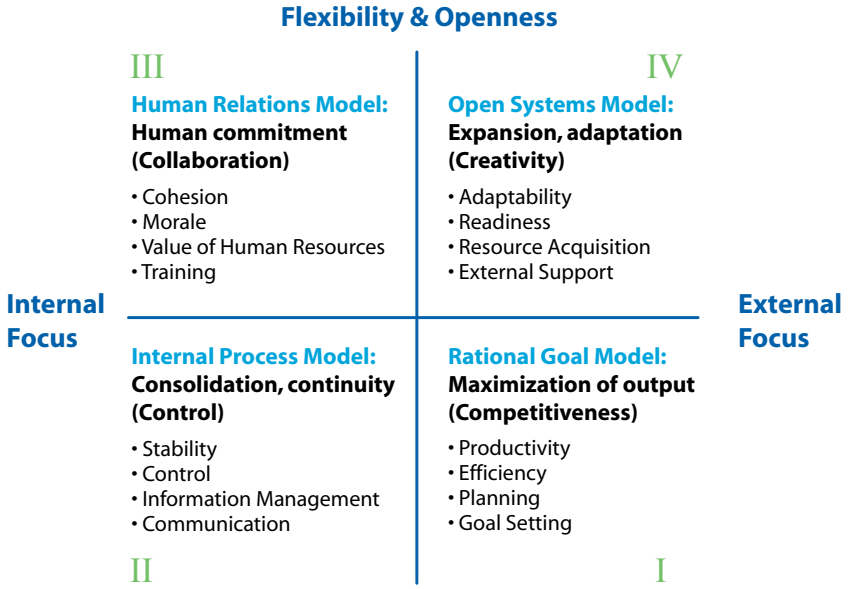
This lens defines effectiveness in terms of an organization's ability to innovate and create products and services that serve a real need in the world. The core values of this quadrant are adaptability, readiness, resource acquisition and external support.

Connecting Quadrant IV to the Teacher: A teacher operating out of this notion of effectiveness might say: "My classroom is effective to the extent that we are able to remain on the cutting edge of educational practice and successfully adapt to any and all circumstances with which we are faced."

A Closer Look at the Competing Values Framework

Looking closer at the Competing Values Framework, notice that the four lenses embed some teacher practices that traditional teacher evaluation schemas identify more directly. For example, content expertise is embedded in Quadrant IV. Involvement in the professional community is embedded in Quadrant III.

Each of these four ways of defining what is important produces a coherent, but limited definition of organizational effectiveness.



Quinn & Rohrbaugh (1983)
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Connecting the Competing Values Framework to Education

As one makes sense of these four domains of effectiveness, it is important to understand that each of these quadrants is equally important and valid, but that each is, in fact, partial.

Organizations get stuck when the employees who make up the organization obsessively see their professional environment through one of these lenses to the exclusion of the others.

For example, a classroom or school that focuses obsessively on student productivity and high test-scores (Quadrant I) can become an "Oppressive Sweat Shop" characterized by perpetual exertion, exhaustion and blind adherence to district-designed guidelines. Similarly, a classroom or school that focuses obsessively on collaboration and relationships (Quadrant III) can become an "Irresponsible Country Club" characterized by permissiveness, individualism, inappropriate participation and unproductive discussion. Collaboration and productivity are essential for the long-term viability and effectiveness of a school. But, if either of these values is taken to the extreme, an unhealthy and ultimately dysfunctional school is the result.

The primary way to keep one set of values from overwhelming and dominating the others is to pay attention to the values in the opposite quadrant. If, for example, a school is obsessively focused on the values in Quadrant I—competitiveness, productivity, high test scores, etc.—the best way to appropriately rein in these values is to pay attention to morale and people's willingness to collaborate across the organization. By attending to these values, the school can guard against becoming an "Oppressive Sweatshop."

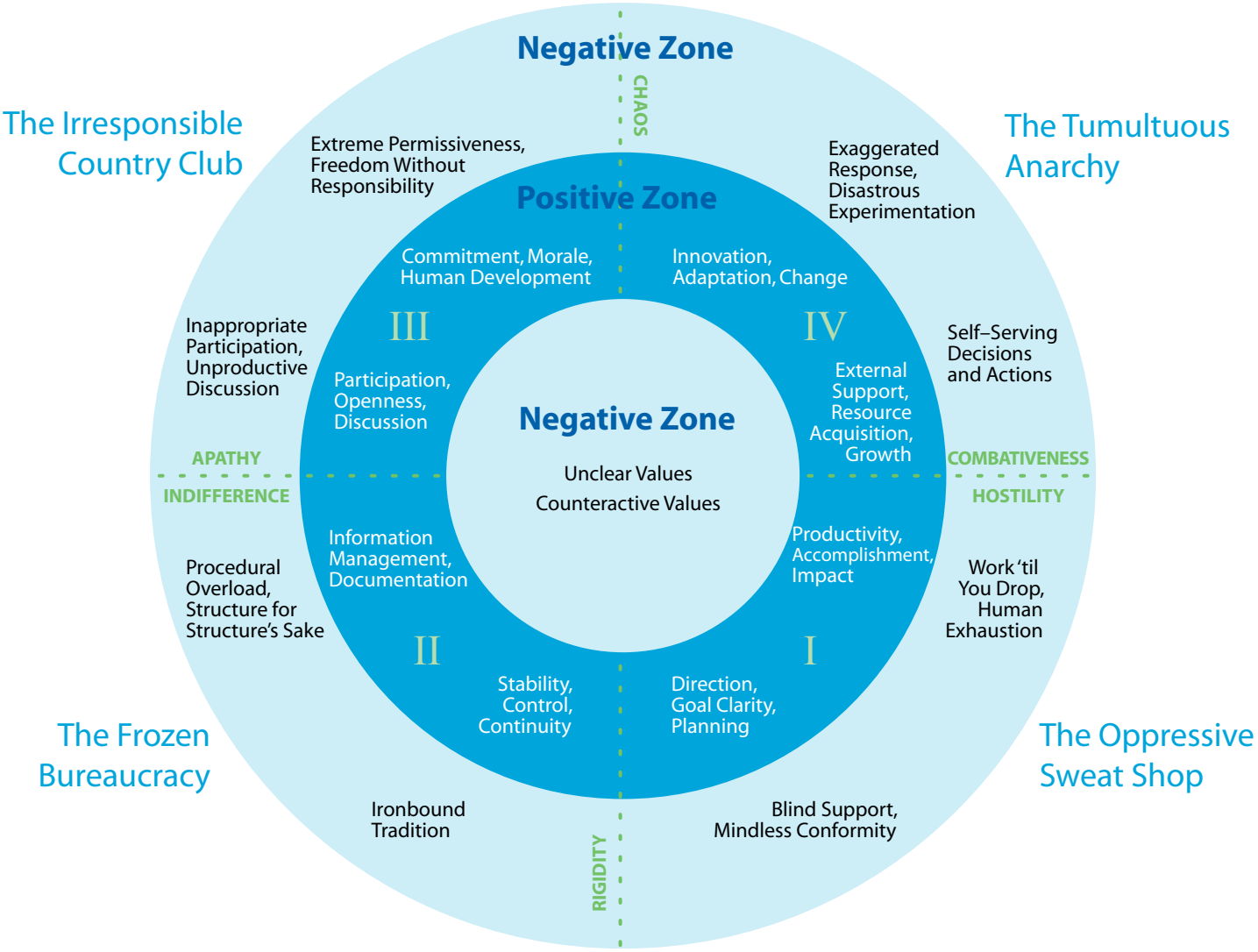
Similarly, an obsessive tendency by a teacher to standardize the processes, routines and work flows can result in a classroom becoming a "Frozen Bureaucracy." This can be mitigated by drawing attention to the need for the class environment to be open to the opportunities, challenges and best practices that may exist outside the school. Only by connecting the need "for" to the need "to" remain flexible and open can the organization keep from becoming a dysfunctional "Frozen Bureaucracy." It is by attending to the relationship between these "competing values" that an organization, like a school, remains vibrant and viable in a changing and demanding world.

The good news is that some organizations do, in fact, manage to pay attention to these important values. They learn how to:

- **Listen to and appropriately connect to** the external environment;
- **Provide the necessary structure and hierarchical control** to make sure the organization realizes its mission and vision;
- **Pay attention to the internal workings** of their organization to assure that it operates efficiently and effectively; and
- **Be flexible and open** enough to remain viable in an ever-changing world.

And when these organizations pay attention to these values, they find themselves becoming very successful.

Positive and Negative Zones of the Competing Values Framework



Framework adapted with permission from Quinn's (1988) original framework by Battelle for Kids (2010).

Teachers as Managers of Complex Organizations

Battelle for Kids quickly realized that the similarities between the four quadrants of Quinn's framework, and the four teacher-generated themes identified through its own research were too strong to ignore. The same competing values that define effectiveness in an organizational context also appeared to define effectiveness in terms of highly effective teachers' classrooms.

In retrospect, this should not have been a surprise. Classrooms are complex and evolving organizations and teachers are managers/leaders of those complicated systems. It makes sense that the values associated with organizational effectiveness have some relationship to classroom effectiveness.

The fundamental difference between Quinn's theoretical framework, as applied to teacher effectiveness, and the work of other researchers looking at what makes a teacher highly effective, rests on Quinn's assertion that an organizational environment is dynamic. A primary characteristic of effective management is successfully managing through change, ambiguity, unpredictability and sometimes chaos by maintaining a balance between essential behaviors and attitudes.

The dimensions that define the two axes are: **Structure versus Flexibility** and **Internal versus External Focus**. Spread throughout the four quadrants are specific instances that operationalize those variables. In Quinn's framework, the blue circle is where one would expect highly effective teacher practice to be. One also expects that highly effective teachers use practices from each of the four quadrants. One can hypothesize that highly effective teachers, like highly effective business managers per Quinn, tend to be more balanced across the value quadrants. That is, highly effective teachers tend to display a balanced expression of each of these behaviors, attitudes and values.

As the dynamics of their classrooms change, highly effective teachers seem to successfully strike a balance between flexibility and control and look inward at the classroom and outward at the demands of the larger, societal context. As Quinn states:

> "The people who come to be masters of management do not see their work environment only in structured, analytic ways. Instead, they also have the capacity to see it as a complex, dynamic system, which is constantly evolving. In order to interact effectively with it, they employ a variety of different perspectives or frames" (1988, p. 4).

A Look Into Highly Effective Teachers' Classrooms

Battelle for Kids has identified characteristics of highly effective teachers' classrooms through its research. Common across these teachers are classrooms that are:

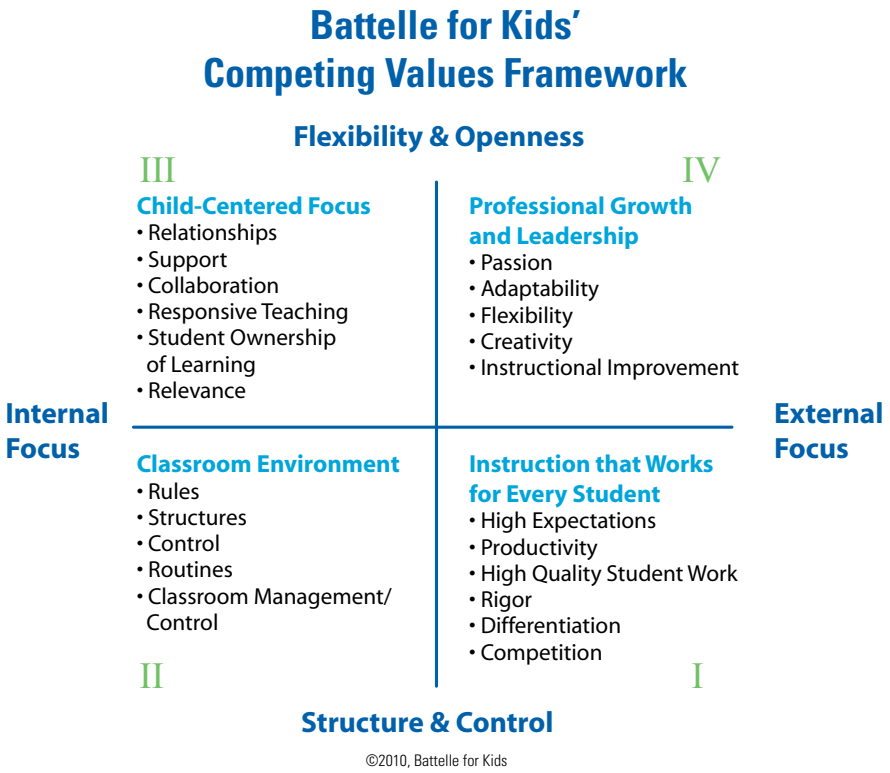
- **Productive and rigorous.** All students learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes to successfully compete in the external world.
- **Structured and controlled.** Students work within classrooms that are defined by rules, routines and multiple kinds of structure.
- **Collaborative and supportive.** Learning is a social activity. Relationships are at the center of this process.
- **Flexible and adaptable.** Standards, methods and the external world change. Teachers must be able to operate amidst this constant novelty.

Battelle for Kids' Competing Values Framework

The leap from Quinn's theoretical framework based on business organizations to Battelle for Kids' work with schools as complex organizations is bold and rational.

Quinn asks the fundamental question, *"If there is such a thing as a master of management, what differentiates him or her from others?"* Battelle for Kids asks, *"Are these the same patterns found in those masters of management we call highly effective teachers?"*

Recognizing the alignment between Quinn's work and Battelle for Kids' highly effective teacher research, researchers took the comments reported by highly effective teachers and mapped those comments onto the Quinn theoretical framework. Based on preliminary findings, Battelle for Kids created a map of what teacher behaviors and attitudes are and where they may be positioned.



Early feedback from highly effective teachers suggests that the adapted framework makes sense. It not only describes the complex environment of a classroom, but also the complexity associated with being a highly effective teacher. The highly effective teachers Battelle for Kids spent time with spoke passionately about the four themes noted earlier. Highly effective teachers care about productivity, high expectations and rigor, but they also care deeply about establishing caring, supportive and collaborative relationships within their classrooms. Just like any organization, if either of these priorities becomes dominant, the classroom can become dysfunctional.

Battelle for Kids' emerging research suggests that highly effective teachers strike a balance between and among:

- Productivity;
- Structure and control;
- Freedom; and
- Innovation.

Highly effective teachers remain in the middle ground in which they strive to keep these "competing values" connected and complementary as the classroom environment changes.

Using Battelle for Kids' Competing Values Framework to Map Teacher Profiles

The scenarios which follow present thumbnail sketches of teacher profiles that align with each quadrant. In each scenario, students would benefit from their teacher working to create more balance across the different sets of competing values.

Casey—A Quadrant I Centered Teacher

Casey is typically described as a competent, business-like teacher. The room is always neat, orderly and organized. The walls in Casey's classroom are full of charts and posters designed to document and support student learning. State content standards and often finer-grained instructional information such as benchmarks, student expectations and grade level indicators are posted on the sides and in the back of the room. The instructional target for the day is posted prominently in the front of the room.

To an outside observer, Casey's classroom seems to run pretty well. He and his students are usually busily engaged. If you were to ask his students what they were working on, they would each be able to tell you the current learning objective and where each was relative to proficiency or mastery.

I

Instruction that Works for Every Student

- High Expectations
- Productivity
- High Quality Student Work
- Rigor
- Differentiation
- Competition

There are not a lot of social conversations in this classroom. All the resources are focused on efficiently learning the prescribed content and how to communicate that knowledge in ways that connect to the yearly state test. At the beginning of every day Casey pulls one of the previous years' test questions out of a large jar and students spend the first few minutes of class time working on that question. At the end of every month, students take assessments that are modeled after the state tests and cover the material that the class is currently working on. Grades on these tests are important to Casey and to the students because the grades from these tests appear on students' interim reports. Casey also uses these results to decide who needs intervention.

Recently, there have been some behavioral flare-ups in Casey's classroom, especially from some of his lower-achieving students. These students often feel frustrated as Casey pushes everyone to produce high quality work. Sometimes these flare-ups disrupt the work for several minutes and sometimes Casey has a hard time getting himself refocused after these episodes. His principal has suggested that Casey spend more time, especially early in the year, developing closer, more personal relationships with his students. Casey would like to do this, but there is simply no time because of everything that must be accomplished over the course of the school year. Because of the secondary value of relationships in his classroom, Casey's room sometimes feels a bit sterile and cold. The stress is especially apparent around the May testing time. In the time leading up to this event, the stress is palpable and sometimes students get discouraged and uncooperative.

Jesse—A Quadrant II Centered Teacher

Jesse is typically described as a very structured, disciplined teacher. Her classroom is neat and orderly with students' desks in evenly-spaced rows. When students arrive on the first day of school they are taught the rules and routines that will govern their activities in her classroom. These rules and their associated consequences are posted prominently in the front of the room.

Jesse believes it is her responsibility to provide students a structured learning environment. This is especially important to Jesse because, in her view, students today are provided insufficient structure at home. Every day in Jesse's classroom looks similar to the last. Students always know where they are supposed to be and what they are supposed to be doing. Jesse protects this continuity like a tigress. She has become famous in her school for complaining to the principal every time there is a school activity, an assembly or a program that interferes with the routine that Jesse has established.

II

Classroom Environment

- Rules
- Structures
- Control
- Routines
- Classroom Management/ Control

Jesse is also a master records keeper. She tracks every classroom and homework assignment as well as attendance and behavioral incidents. She knows which students have turned in which assignments and what grade each student received for his or her work. These records are shared with parents at parent-teacher conferences and on end-of-term and interim reports. Jesse is currently experimenting with a classroom behavior chart that displays each student's behavioral record. Students with one or zero disturbances over the course of the month get to attend a classroom movie and receive treats.

To the outside observer, Jesse's classroom looks a bit old-fashioned. It is eerily quiet. No one but Jesse speaks other than to respond to questions. Jesse believes that an effective teacher is one who keeps some professional distance between herself and her students. Emotions and external issues only get in the way of learning.

Unlike most of the teachers in the building Jesse has not bought into the standards movement. She believes she knows best what students need to know and be able to do. Over the last several years Jesse's students have not done exceptionally well on the statewide proficiency test in May. The passing rate of her students tends to hover around 70 percent and her value-added results are poor, especially for her highest-achieving students. When asked about these results Jesse says that many of her students are simply not applying themselves and that parents don't seem to care.

Maria—A Quadrant III Centered Teacher

III

Child-Centered Focus

- Relationships
- Support
- Collaboration
- Responsive Teaching
- Student Ownership of Learning
- Relevance

When other teachers think of Maria, they often focus on her ability to personally engage each and every student in her classroom. She is diligent at discerning the individual needs and interests of her students. This interest is clearly evident in the enormous variety of student-created artwork and class assignments that are displayed on the walls and bulletin boards around her classroom. Her philosophy is, "If students cannot see themselves in their learning environment, they won't connect to me or to the instruction I'm providing." Outsiders entering Maria's room for the first time might be overwhelmed by the hodgepodge of visual stimuli displayed, but would soon realize they were in a classroom in which students felt safe, valued and happy.

Maria spends the first several weeks of school engaging students in lessons and assignments that assist her in getting to know her students well: interest surveys, writing assignments that focus on personal interests, the sharing of artifacts that have personal meaning, and creating "All About Me" posters with personal photos and short anecdotes about each. At the beginning of each quarter Maria has students brainstorm potential learning projects that incorporate their interests. Maria believes that when students have a say in what they study, they develop a sense of ownership that helps develop a stronger commitment to learning. She views district curriculum guides, pacing charts, and other instructional materials as resources that may or may not be used on any given day. Maria's students have traditionally not performed as well on quarterly and yearly assessments as students in the other classrooms in her school, but she knows they have collaborative learning skills that far outweigh, in her view, the importance of any standardized test results.

Maria faithfully attends professional development sessions in the areas of cooperative learning, peer process writing, and other topics that help build her repertoire of skills associated with student learning groups. In order to create a classroom environment conducive to team learning, Maria requested and received tables to replace the individual student desks in her classroom. She can now easily arrange students into groups of up to six members each. She highly values the team approach to learning, even though it often takes students quite a bit longer to work through particular lessons.

Maria realizes that much of the content she provides for her students is neither sanctioned by the district nor reflective of the state content standards. But she strongly believes that when students are provided learning options and the time to process information collaboratively, they value learning. Some of the content "dictated" by the district curriculum guides is of little or no interest to her students and, at times, confusing. How can she effectively teach content that she herself does not value? Besides, if you effectively teach students how to learn together, they can learn practically any content on their own. This may be why the value-added results for her middle- and lower-achieving students are below expectations, while the higher-achieving students hover around typical growth levels. Maria knows that she should incorporate more of the district curriculum into her instruction and directly address the content standards, but she is greatly concerned about the negative impact it could have on her students. After all, isn't it more important that students develop social skills and a lifelong love of learning rather than merely exceeding expectations on a state-mandated test?

Colin—A Quadrant IV Centered Teacher

IV
Professional Growth and Leadership
- Passion
- Adaptability
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Instructional Improvement

To the uninitiated, Colin's classroom looks chaotic; lots of different things are going on simultaneously. Some students are working together in learning centers, while some are working with a partner and others are working by themselves in an isolated corner of the classroom. It is often not apparent if everyone is even working on the same project. When asked, Colin says a little chaos is a good thing; new ideas and new events sometimes trigger necessary changes in the substance and intent of a project. From Colin's perspective, the world is the classroom and if learning isn't relevant and inherently interesting it isn't remembered by students.

Colin works hard to create a classroom culture that honors diversity, curiosity and passion. He spends a lot of time helping students understand how their experiences in his classroom connect to the larger world. Current events and their implications frame many of the things that go on in Colin's classroom. Unfortunately, from the point of view of his principal, the connections between current events and state standards are sometimes tenuous. He sees that most of Colin's students are engaged, but questions whether they are really learning the "right" things? It's nice when learning is engaging and fun, but it can't always be that way. Sometimes students need to learn about things that they don't care about.

Colin also spends considerable time thinking and talking about teaching and learning with people inside and outside the school. He is constantly looking for new and better ways to engage his students in learning. As a result, a lot of the instructional approaches that Colin tries are innovative, but some backfire, and most are seen as risky by many of the teachers in the school. Colin often finds himself in conflict with teachers who don't support his methods or goals.

In Colin's last evaluation, his principal questioned the rigor and relevance of the work that takes place in Colin's classroom. On a typical day, most students look busy, but are they learning anything that will serve them well when the state tests are administered in May? Colin's past results have been all over the map. Some students really thrive in his classroom, but others seem lost. These students tend to go along with whatever their peers are doing but, for them, there is little real engagement and probably very little "making of meaning." Colin understands that this discrepancy exists and works hard to reach these students, but is often unsuccessful. Colin also has issues with some of the bureaucratic requirements of the school, including record keeping, getting his grades done on time and returning phone calls to parents. Colin's students also seem to have some difficulty when they transition to other classrooms, either within the school year or as they move on to another grade level. The teaching methods and expectations he conveys have been such a departure for students that they have a difficult time adjusting to more traditional educational approaches.

Theresa—A Teacher Striking a Balance Between All Four Quadrants

Finally, there is Theresa. She is a fully-integrated teacher using the power of each quadrant appropriately to accomplish her goals and boost the academic growth of her students.

Theresa has been teaching for seven years. She entered the profession after the rise of the standards movement, so she has always known and believed in the importance of standards. Theresa also believes it is her job to make sure that all of her students not only pass the state proficiency tests, but are also prepared for whatever they choose to do after graduation. At the beginning of each school year, Theresa spends a day talking to her students about how important their time together is and how much she believes in every student's ability to be successful in her classroom. Theresa learned the importance of this kind of activity the hard way.

In her first few years of teaching, Theresa discovered that setting high expectations and pushing hard on students was not enough. Near the midpoint of her second year a group of students and their parents challenged her teaching values. From their perspective, there was too much homework, too many expectations and little flexibility. This was an important lesson and one she has never forgotten. Highly motivated and engaged students are more than just the result of pushing hard. As a result, she now has at least two other strategic aims that frame her students' year.

First and foremost, high achievement emerges from high-quality, productive relationships. Students will do almost anything for a teacher if they know the teacher truly cares about them as people. This is not something that students know on the first day of school. They must see this belief in action every single day. Because of the importance of relationships, Theresa spends the first week of school getting to know her students in different ways. Together, they produce classroom rules and expectations. They also jointly develop a set of expectations for Theresa. As a member of this classroom community, it is everyone's responsibility to live up to their part of this contract and to call attention to times when people are not. Now, Theresa has an incredible relationship with her students. It is this relationship and trust that they place in each other that allows Theresa to demand the very best from each student.

Theresa's second strategic aim is to provide students the tools and experiences they need to be successful. As a part of activities at the beginning of the school year Theresa assesses her students' level of knowledge with respect to her curriculum. This "test" does not count as a grade, but it serves to establish each student's baseline for the year's learning. With this knowledge and continual formative assessment, Theresa is able to carefully structure the learning for each student. Some need more support in one area; others may need it in another. Because of the lengths to which Theresa is willing to go with each student, the students are willing to work hard to meet her high expectations.

Aligning Professional Development & Battelle for Kids' Competing Values Framework

While Battelle for Kids continues to test Quinn's adapted framework among educators and others, early feedback and support have been positive.

Battelle for Kids believes in structuring teacher professional development around the adaptation of the Quinn framework and using teacher archetypes (profiles) to drive and guide reflection and conversations. By doing this, teachers will begin to understand how they can change and grow around the zone of proximal effectiveness and join the ranks of highly effective teachers.

Prior to testing Quinn's theory in the education space, Battelle for Kids contacted Dr. Quinn about making small revisions to his survey instruments to more closely align with schools and classrooms. With Quinn's approval, Battelle for Kids' researchers modified the survey instruments, removing references to business and replacing them with common education language. This modification was extended to produce three survey tools: one for the teacher, the teacher's supervisor (principal or team leader) and one for students (if appropriate e.g., grades 6 and up).

Battelle for Kids is currently validating these survey tools and other professional development resources with educators. Through further research, Battelle for Kids is striving to answer a two-part question. First, *What are the essential differentiators between highly effective teachers and less effective teachers?* And, secondly, *Are these differentiators the same or do they vary depending on variables such as grade level, content area or student demographics?*

Having made those determinations, the million dollar question for educational leaders becomes *"Can less-effective teachers be coached and mentored to become highly effective?"* Battelle for Kids is optimistic.

"By focusing on improving professional practice and professional dialogue, our students will be the ultimate winners."

- Highly effective teacher

Conclusion

There's no doubt that teachers have an impact on people's lives. Whether it's the way a "great" teacher makes a student feel or how a teacher motivates a student to learn and excel, teachers connect with people on an emotional level. While these emotional factors cannot and should not be ignored, the need to accurately measure and understand what constitutes highly effective teaching, independent of directly observable behaviors, has never been greater.

Using a theory originally applied to organizational effectiveness, Battelle for Kids has adapted Quinn's Competing Values Framework to test the concept of whether the behaviors that define organizational effectiveness also apply to effectiveness in the classroom. Working with highly effective teachers, as identified through value-added analysis, Battelle for Kids has tested this framework to uncover key behaviors and characteristics. Initial feedback suggests that the adapted framework makes sense and captures the complexity of the classroom and the interrelationships between the teaching and learning processes.

This concept is bold and different from the conceptual underpinnings of traditional teacher effectiveness tools. However, if the framework continues to prove that it accurately differentiates between highly effective and less effective teachers, then there are incredible opportunities to help less effective teachers become more successful in increasing student performance. And, imagine how this information could be extended beyond the classroom–to inform teacher preparation programs, professional development initiatives and conversations in professional learning communities.

Teachers are the lynch-pin to improving student performance and transforming American education. And learning what our most effective teachers are doing in the classroom and the behaviors and attitudes they embody are the first steps toward helping all teachers become more successful.

Interested in Learning More About This Work?
Battelle for Kids invites interested teachers, principals or educational organizations to contact us for possible collaborative research around this concept.

To learn more, visit www.BattelleforKids.org.

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About Battelle for Kids

Battelle for Kids is a national, not-for-profit organization that provides strategic counsel and innovative solutions for today's complex educational-improvement challenges. Our mission-driven team of education, technology, communications and business professionals specializes in creating strategies that advance the development of human capital, the use of strategic measures, and the implementation of effective practices in schools. We partner with state departments of education, school districts and education-focused organizations to advance these strategies with the shared goals of: improving teaching effectiveness and student progress; informing instructional practice in real time; recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence; and aligning goals and maximizing impact in schools.

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