

# **Bridging the Gap Between State Standards and Classroom Achievement: The Challenge of Curriculum and Professional Development**

**March 20–21, 2002  
Grand Hyatt  
Park Avenue at Grand Central  
New York, New York**

*Sponsored by:*  
**Achieve, Inc. and The Albert Shanker Institute**

*The sponsors believe that the issues before this forum represent the next frontier for standards-based reform. Because this forum was structured to facilitate an open exchange about complex, research-based information and difficult policy questions, the speakers have been asked to respect their allotted time limits to ensure adequate discussion*

## **Day One**

11:30a.m. –12p.m.     **Registration**

12p.m. –1:30 p.m.     **Opening Lunch**

*Welcome and Remarks:*

- P.M. Condit, Chairman and CEO, Boeing; Co-Vice Chair, Achieve, Inc. and Co-Chair, The Business Roundtable
- Sandra Feldman, President, American Federation of Teachers and the Albert Shanker Institute

1:30p.m. –1:45 p.m.     **Break**

1:45p.m. –3:15 p.m.     **The Big Picture**

*Overview:* Richard Elmore, Professor, Harvard University

*Panelists:*

- Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington
- James Stigler, Professor, University of California, Los Angeles

*Moderator:* Robert Schwartz, President, Achieve, Inc.

*Discussion Questions:*

- Is standards-based reform facing a professional development “gap”? A curriculum development “gap”? Why are these issues coming into focus now, and at the same time?

- Is the state-district relationship changing in regard to curriculum and professional development? What is the proper state role in ensuring that school staffs and district leaders are equipped with curriculum and professional development that can help them raise student achievement? Do state and federal accountability provisions create additional obligations for states regarding curriculum and professional development?
- To what degree should the substance of professional development and curriculum be left to local districts? What quality controls can states put in place?

3:15p.m. –3:30 p.m. **Break**

3:30p.m. –5:00 p.m. **What Do We Really Know?**

*Panelists:*

- David Cohen, Professor, University of Michigan
- Uri Treisman, Director, Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas

*Moderator:* Eugenia Kemble, Executive Director, Albert Shanker Institute

*Discussion Questions:*

- What does research tell us about the relationship between quality professional development and student achievement?
- How important is it that professional development be tied to the specific content that students are being taught?
- What models are most promising now, and why?
- Why does quality professional development seem to exist in so few places?
- What research do we have on how best to implement quality professional development?

5:00 p.m.

**Cocktail Reception for Panelists and Participants**

## **Day Two**

7:30a.m. –8:30 a.m. **Breakfast**  
(Participants may choose to meet in state-specific groups.)

8:30a.m. –10:00 a.m. **The Missing Curriculum: An Essential Pillar of Good Professional Development**

*Panelists:*

- William Schmidt, U.S. National Research Coordinator, TIMSS
- Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Schools, Montgomery County, Maryland
- Randi Weingarten, President, United Federation of Teachers

*Moderator:* Lynn Olson, Senior Editor, Education Week

*Discussion Questions:*

- Why think about professional development in terms of student curriculum and vice versa?
- What do other countries do? How does having a common curriculum affect the quality and coherence of their professional development programs?
- How can states ensure that every student has access to a high-quality curriculum and how does this relate to the issue of local control?

10:00a.m. –10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:15a.m. –11:45 a.m. **Overcoming Implementation Challenges: The Practice of Professional Development**

*Panelists:*

- Barbara Byrd-Bennett, CEO, Cleveland Public Schools
- Mari Pearlman, Vice President, Educational Testing Service
- Timothy Knowles, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Boston Public Schools

*Moderator:* Phyllis Hunter, Consultant, Texas Reading Initiative

*Discussion Questions:*

- Besides the curriculum challenge, what are the other major barriers to large-scale implementation of quality professional development? Who are the implementation players and what are their respective roles? Where do states fit in?

- How can federal, state, district and school accountability levers best be used to ensure that all teachers have access to quality professional development? What would such a system look like at each level?
- What incentives exist to changing professional development? Are there significant disincentives? If so, what can be done to overcome such obstacles?
- Are there successful models that should be studied and publicized?
- How can states and districts ensure that their professional development dollars are being well invested? Can the effectiveness of professional development be judged, in part, by its success in improving student achievement?

12:00p.m. –1:00 p.m. **Lunch**

1:00p.m. –2:30 p.m. **Funding Professional Development:  
Opportunities, Challenges and ESEA**

*Panelists:*

- Nancy Grasmick, Superintendent of Schools, State of Maryland
- Danica Petroschius, Chief Education Counsel, Office of Senator Edward M. Kennedy
- Cheri Yecke, Director of Teacher Quality, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education

*Moderator:* David Cohen, Professor, University of Michigan

*Discussion Questions:*

- What are the implications of the new federal law for states, schools and districts as they act to improve curriculum and professional development? What federal incentives exist to change existing practice?
- How much additional funding does the new legislation provide for professional development and how will states, districts and schools ensure it is used to provide quality professional development aligned to state and district instructional goals? What other funding sources are available to states, districts and schools?

2:30p.m. –3:30 p.m. **Where Do We Go from Here?**

*A discussion to elicit ideas about “next steps” at the local, state and federal levels.*

*Discussion Initiators:*

- Thomas Corcoran, Co-Director, Consortium for Policy Research in Education
- Sandra Feldman, President, American Federation of Teachers and the Albert Shanker Institute
- Robert Schwartz, President, Achieve, Inc.

*Discussion Questions:*

- How can we facilitate a broader understanding at the state and district levels about the crucial, make-or-break place of content-driven professional development in a successful standards-based education system? How can we ensure its addition to the standards agenda and “alignment” discussions at every level?
- What do we know from research that takes us beyond generic principles to specific designs?
- What role can and should state policymakers, local officials, and teacher organizations play?
- How can we best involve the business community?
- What prejudices, expectations and practices will be the hardest to change?
- Where will the resources come from and how will we make sure they are invested wisely?
- Are the key players in your state willing to work together on this? And if not, how might this be facilitated?