

## **PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW: PITFALLS AND PROMISE**

### **A THOUGHTFUL APPROACH TO TEACHER EVALUATION**

Jennifer Goldstein & Pedro Noguera, *Educational Leadership*, March 2006

Peer assistance and review (PAR) reduces the burden on principals, the isolation of the classroom teacher, and sometimes even the antagonism and hostility between labor and management by involving teachers in the formal evaluation of other teachers and making them responsible for employment recommendations. Coaches who have been identified for their excellence in teaching and mentoring support new teachers as well as veterans experiencing difficulty in their teaching. Findings from a study of a California urban school district suggest that PAR creates time for teacher support and evaluation, links professional development and evaluation, increases the transparency of the evaluation process, fosters a district/union partnership, and leads to greater confidence and accuracy in teacher evaluation.

### **THE TOLEDO PLAN: PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR BEGINNERS**

Dal Lawrence, Toledo Public Schools and Toledo Federation of Teachers, 2003

This excerpt from a booklet on the Toledo Peer Assistance and Review Plan spells out the standards of practice by which new and struggling teachers are assessed.

### **EVALUATION OF TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW PLAN**

Kaboolian, Sutherland, Wayne, Fashola, & Fleischman, paper by the Kennedy School of Government and American Institutes for Research, 2005

This commissioned evaluation of the Toledo Peer Assistance and Review Plan (PAR), the first and one of the most successful K-12 PAR programs in the country, provides information on how the Toledo Plan's guidelines and procedures compare with similar efforts to evaluate new and veteran teachers. It also provides an efficacy and cost-benefit analysis of the program in comparison to the non-PAR teacher evaluation systems that are typical in other school districts.

### **TRANSFORMING THE PROFESSION OF TEACHING: IT STARTS AT THE BEGINNING**

Adam Urbanski and Carl O'Connell, paper commissioned by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003

The authors describe the Rochester mentor/intern program and its outcomes, including better labor-management collaboration, the cultivation of good teaching practices, increasing the involvement of teachers in providing instructional leadership, gaining acceptance for peer review, and improving student achievement. "We believe that transforming the teaching profession begins appropriately at the beginning—the first few years of teaching—and should be carried through all the years of a teacher's career. A framework that begins with teachers supporting teachers, and continues in all aspects of their professional life together, represents the best vehicle for launching reforms aimed at creating a more genuine teaching profession, advancing shared accountability for improving student achievement, and building true learning communities in all schools."

**TEACHER QUALITY: PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW—THE DUTY OF FAIR REPRESENTATION**  
David Strom, American Federation of Teachers

Some critics fear that participation in collectively bargained peer review and/or mentoring programs will make the union unable to meet its legal duty of fair representation. This memo explains why a properly run peer review program should not leave the union vulnerable.