

JEFFERSON PARISH, LOUISIANA

Implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials

In our work with partners, we have identified common cycles and strategies that school and teacher leaders can take to strengthen professional learning for teachers and make a deeper connection across instructional practices and curriculum — ultimately making the learning richer for students. Two frameworks support instructional leaders as they coach teachers in this process.

First, it is crucial for school leaders and coaches to gauge where individual teachers are in the progression of learning a new, more rigorous curriculum. NIET's *Teacher Learning Progression on Curriculum* outlines connections between curriculum and instructional skills at various levels of expertise, tied specifically to indicators on the *NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric*. For example, more demanding curricula require teachers to support students to take ownership of their own learning and to engage in thinking and problem-solving with their peers, described in the curriculum progression as “student-led learning.” Courtney Kesterman, a first-grade teacher at Bissonet Plaza Elementary School in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, is working on strengthening her students' engagement in part by helping them understand what they need to know and be able to do. “If I don't know the why behind my lesson,” she said, “I can't express it to my students.”

Once leaders assess where teachers are, NIET's *Steps for Effective Learning* protocol provides instructional leaders with a systematic process to ensure that the valuable time teachers spend in collaborative team meetings is focused, productive, and useful. As schools adopt new materials, the *Steps for Effective Learning* can be used by leadership teams to identify and address challenges teachers are facing in curriculum implementation. “What teachers find valuable is timely, detailed feedback on their lesson and where they can strengthen it,” said Laura Roussel, Chief Academic Officer for Jefferson Parish Schools. “High-quality feedback is motivating and actionable, helping teachers to build on their strengths and identify where they can step in with more student support.” These frameworks



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COURTNEY KESTERMAN | First-grade teacher at Bissonet Plaza Elementary School

enable teacher and school leaders to coach teachers to more effectively use high-quality instructional materials to support each student in their classroom. For more, read our report, *High-Quality Curriculum Implementation: Connecting What to Teach with How to Teach It*.

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LAURA ROUSSEL | Chief Academic Officer for Jefferson Parish Schools