

# CHANGING INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND THE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

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We discuss a longitudinal investigation of teacher change in the context of an urban school initiative with teachers' professional development as the central focus. Our theoretical perspective reflects a view that teaching encompasses more than knowledge of content and students but also involves supporting social interaction. In describing teachers' changing practice, we use Wood & Turner-Vorbeck's (2001) theoretical framework that describes three distinct patterns of classroom social interaction: Report Ways, Inquiry, and Argument. We acknowledge the critical nature of the teachers' role in managing student learning, orchestrating discourse, and, in particular, in the negotiation of the classroom norms (Simmt, Calvert, & Towers, 2002).

We are in our third year of collecting data on six upper-elementary mathematics teachers' development. The teachers were observed several times each year by instructional coaches and the researcher made formal visits three times throughout the year. These observations were transcribed and the teacher was interviewed after each observed lesson. In our analysis, we examined development of report ways, inquiry, and argument interaction patterns and related this change to the social and analytic scaffolding in the changing classroom community. The most benefit of this professional development was for teachers skilled in social scaffolding whose mathematical knowledge became more rich and connected.

## References

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