

## ACTIVITY 2.3: PASSIONS PROTOCOL

*This activity was developed based on Chapter 2 of our book by National School Reform Faculty members Pete Bermudez and Linda Emm. This activity, as well as other tips for helping teachers develop a wondering, appear in our companion book to this text, The Reflective Educator's Guide to Professional Development: Coaching Inquiry-Oriented Learning Communities, also published by Corwin Press.*

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:** Handout: "Passion Profiles," paper or teachers' personal journals to write reflections, newsprint, markers

### Directions:

**Step 1:** Read the passion profiles and identify the passion that most accurately describes who you are as an educator. If several fit (this will be true for many of you), choose the one that affects you the most, or the one that seems most significant as you reflect on your practice over time. (5 minutes)

**Step 2:** Without using the number of the passion profile, ask your colleagues questions and find the people who chose the same profile you did to form small groups of people who share the same passion. (5 minutes)

### Directions for Small Groups:

**Step 1:** Choose a facilitator/timer and a recorder/reporter.

**Step 2:** Check to see if you all really share that passion. Then talk about your school experiences together. What is it like to have this passion—to be this kind of educator? Each person in the group should have an opportunity to talk, uninterrupted, for 2 minutes. (10 minutes)

**Step 3:** Next, each person in the group privately identifies an actual student, by name, who has been affected by the group's profile. Write in your journal. (5 minutes)

- What have I done with this student?
- What has worked? What hasn't?
- What else could I do?
- What questions does this raise for me?

**Step 4:** Talk as a group about the questions that teachers who share this passion are likely to have about their practice. List as many of these questions as you can. (15 minutes) The recorder/reporter should write on the newsprint, and should be ready to report out succinctly to the large group. Be sure to put your passion profile number at the top of the newsprint page.

**Step 5:** Whole-group debrief (after hearing from each passion profile group). (15 minutes):

- What strikes you as you listen to the passions of these educators? Listen for the silences. Where are they, and what do you make of them?
- Which of the questions generated intrigues you the most? Why? How might you go about exploring this question with colleagues? What would you do first?

*See the handout “Passion Profiles” that follows.*

## PASSION PROFILES

*passion n. 1. A powerful emotion, such as love, joy, hatred, or anger. 2. a. Ardent love. 3. a. Boundless enthusiasm.*

### Passion 1: The Child

You became a teacher primarily because you wanted to make a difference in the life of a child. Perhaps you were one of those whose life was changed by a committed, caring teacher and you decided to become a teacher so that you could do that for other children. You are always curious about particular students whose work and/or behavior just doesn't seem to be in sync with the rest of the students in your class. You often wonder about how peer interactions seem to affect a student's likelihood to complete assignments, or what enabled one of your English language learners to make such remarkable progress seemingly overnight, or how to motivate a particular student to get into the habit of writing. You believe that understanding the unique qualities that each student brings to your class is the key to unlocking all their full potential as learners.

### Passion 2: The Curriculum

You are one of those teachers who are always tinkering with the curriculum to enrich the learning opportunities for your students. You have a thorough understanding of your content area. You attend conferences and subscribe to journals that help you stay up to date on current trends affecting the curriculum that you teach. Although you are often dissatisfied with “what is” with respect to the prescribed curriculum in your school or district, you are almost always sure that you could do it better than the frameworks. You are always critiquing the existing curriculum and finding ways to make it better for the kids you teach—especially when you have a strong hunch that “there is a better way to do this.”

### Passion 3: Content Knowledge

You are at your best in the classroom when you have a thorough understanding of the content and/or topic you are teaching. Having to teach something you don't know much about makes you uncomfortable and always motivates you to hone this area of your teaching knowledge base. You realize that what you know about what you are teaching will influence how you get it across to your students in a developmentally appropriate way. You spend a considerable amount of your personal time—both during the school year and in the summer—looking for books, materials, workshops, and courses you can take that will strengthen your content knowledge.

### Passion 4: Teaching Strategies

You are motivated most as a teacher by a desire to improve on and experiment with teaching strategies and techniques. You have experienced and understand the value of particular strategies to engage students in powerful learning and want to get really good at this stuff. Although you have become very comfortable with using cooperative learning with your students, there are many other strategies and techniques that interest you and that you want to incorporate into your teaching repertoire.

### Passion 5: The Relationship Between Beliefs and Professional Practice

You sense a disconnect between what you believe and what actually happens in your classroom and/or school. For example, you believe that a major purpose of schools is to produce citizens capable of contributing to and sustaining a democratic society; however, students in your class seldom get an opportunity to discuss controversial issues because you fear that the students you teach may not be ready and/or capable of this, and you are concerned about losing control of the class.

### Passion 6: The Intersection Between Your Personal and Professional Identities

You came into teaching from a previous career and often sense that your previous identity may be in conflict with your new identity as an educator. You feel ineffective and frustrated when your students or colleagues don't approach a particular task that is second nature to you because of your previous identity—for example, writer, actor, artist, researcher—in the same way that you do. What keeps you up at night is how to use the knowledge, skills, and experiences you bring from your previous life to make powerful teaching and learning happen in your classroom and/or school.

### Passion 7: Advocating Equity and Social Justice

You became an educator to change the world—to help create a more just, equitable, democratic, and peaceful planet. You are constantly thinking of ways to integrate issues of race, class, disability, power, and the like into your teaching; however, your global concerns for equity and social justice sometimes get in the way of your effectiveness as an educator—like the backlash that resulted from the time you showed *Schindler's List* to your sixth-grade class. You know there are more developmentally appropriate ways to infuse difficult and complex issues into your teaching and want to learn more about how to do this with your students.

### Passion 8: Context Matters

What keeps you up at night is wondering how to keep students focused on learning despite the many disruptions that go on in your classroom or building on a daily basis. It seems that the school context conspires against everything that you know about teaching and learning—adults who don't model the behaviors they want to see reflected in the students, policies that are in conflict with the school's mission, and above all a high-stakes testing environment that tends to restrain the kind of teaching and learning that you know really works for the students you teach.

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Retrieved from the companion website for *The Reflective Educator's Guide to Classroom Research: Learning to Teach and Teaching to Learn Through Practitioner Inquiry* (4th ed.) by Nancy Fichtman Dana and Diane Yendol-Hoppey. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, [www.corwin.com](http://www.corwin.com). Copyright © 2020 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reproduction authorized for educational use by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book.