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# Preface

There is something about a construction site that fascinates me. From my 12th floor office, I enjoy watching new shapes and structures across campus emerging from the ground. By any measure, each of these projects is evidence of a dynamic university that celebrates and extends the boundaries of teaching, learning, and research. Each new facility adds to the physical infrastructure that supports the multiple missions of our university community well into the next century. But something is missing, and I begin to wonder about connections between designs for buildings and designs for learning. While we spend enormous sums on physical structures, how much do we invest in reflecting on creating teaching and learning spaces within these buildings. More specifically, what pedagogical infrastructures are we designing to support faculty learning that enhances student learning? Is there a planning commission for faculty professional development? Creating physical space is the work of architects and contractors; teachers create optimal spaces for teaching and learning in their work. As a teacher and an architect, my campus walks and my professional journey bring me to a place where I propose *A New Architecture for Professional Development*.

Because professional development is closely linked with school improvement and student learning, strengthening professional development needs to be at the center of educational reform in the United States and around the world. Not least because it is difficult to find educational reform reports that do not include professional development as a component of school improvement. The good news is that, unlike many areas of education, the need for high-quality professional development is not part of education's disputed terrain. Teachers and their unions, administrators, board members, policy makers, and other community members understand the need for ongoing professional learning that strengthens professional practice and supports educational reform and school improvement focused on student learning. Within this context, there is a compelling need for professional learning, both individual and collective, to be legitimized as professional work and embedded in the daily work of teachers and administrators. Professional development is "time on," not "time off."

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The new architecture for professional development is anchored in six design principles.

- Professional development is about learning.
- Professional development is work.
- Professional expertise is a journey, not a credential.
- Opportunities for professional learning and improved practice are unbounded.
- Student learning, professional development, and organizational mission are intimately related.
- Professional development is about people, not programs.

The purpose of this book is to propose a set of design principles for expanding and legitimizing learning opportunities for teachers and other professional educators in schools. Using the metaphor of architecture, the book proposes new designs for creating learning spaces for professional educators that challenge the boundaries, forms, and purposes of traditional design, delivery, content, and outcomes of professional development. Building on empirical research and exemplary practices, the book provides examples of professional learning expressed in this new architecture in its most natural setting—in schools and classrooms. Formal and informal professional learning beyond the school are also included in the landscape for professional learning.

My hope is that by using the metaphor of architecture for professional development, this book will be as intellectually evocative as it is practically grounded. The new architecture for professional development is helpful as a guide to educators, individually and collectively, as they think about, plan, and engage in professional learning and growth. New designs for professional learning spaces in and beyond schools provide a highly accessible framework for planning, carrying out, and assessing the impact of professional development in schools. The new architecture for professional development is nested in the landscape of real schools with real people, in real communities. New designs for professional learning are not isolated sketches in design studio portfolios. They are dynamic, oftentimes organic, creations built in communities of professional practice. Through careful descriptions of exemplary practices, I attempt to provide both an evocative intellectual and practical catalyst that stimulates educators' thinking, promotes professional learning and growth, and enhances practice. The proposed new architecture requires three fundamental shifts in the landscape of professional development—rethinking, restructuring, and reculturing to create professional learning communities that expand the horizons for professional learning beyond models and activities. The text's architecture also invites the reader to interact with new ideas, dimensions, and designs for professional learning. Internet sites and hot links to research, exemplary practices in schools, educator networks, and assessment tools are provided

for immediate access and use by preK–12 teachers and administrators, education specialists, staff development personnel, educational trainers, higher education personnel, and consultants.

Because there have been significant changes in educator certification and licensing standards across the nation, I believe this book also provides a timely and helpful framework for addressing both practical and policy issues related to new educator licensing regulations and career advancement. The design principles in the new architecture provide guidelines for understanding and designing opportunities for professional learning that promote individual growth and improved professional practice, meet school improvement and educational reform goals, and support new licensing regulations, all of which ultimately better serve students.

You might ask: *What is new here? Do we really need another book on professional development?* Let me offer my response. To begin, the reader will find much that is familiar in the elements of architecture for professional development proposed here. But as architects design structures that make use of common elements (concrete, wood, and glass) often in unique and creative ways, architects for professional learning use familiar elements (workshops, study groups, and collaborative networks) to create artful designs with structural integrity appropriate to teachers' and administrators' needs. As such, the new architecture for professional development is not about creating the one, best model. The illusion of getting it right and establishing the best professional development practice does not fit the realities of schools nor the complexities of who teachers and administrators are and what they do. The new architecture for professional development is an ongoing creative process that brings new designs, interprets new realities, and at times, helps us rediscover those essential features that touch the minds, hearts, and souls of educators.

## AUDIENCE

This book is intended for educational professionals who work daily to create learning spaces for students and themselves. Teachers, principals, curriculum and staff development specialists, superintendents, and professional association personnel will find this book anchored in the realities of their work lives in schools. Educational consultants, especially training and development personnel, will find this book helpful as they design learning opportunities for professionals in schools and in many other types of organizations. Though the book focuses on professional learning in schools, the design themes, exemplary practices, frameworks, and tools for designing, implementing, and assessing professional development are grounded in principles of adult learning and human cognition that underpin professional learning and growth in all organizations.

This book is also intended for the broader audience of local, state, and national policy makers. The designs for professional learning described in the book provide useful frameworks, examples in practice, and assessment tools that will inform policies that nurture and support the creation of learning enriched environments in schools for students and staff.

At the university level, professors of teacher education, educational leadership and policy studies, adult education, and continuing education will use this as a primary text for courses in the area of professional development and as a supplementary guide for training and staff development program planning and for designing innovations in professional development practices in organizations.

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

In the first chapter, “Breaking the Box: New Designs for Professional Learning in Schools,” I use the metaphor of architecture to propose that we need to break the mold of traditional staff development and training by rethinking, restructuring, and reculturing schools and communities for professional learning. I introduce a set of design principles for creating a new architecture for professional development that reconsiders the design, delivery, content, context, and outcomes of professional learning. In “Building Beneath the Surface: Footings and Foundations in Professional Development,” Chapter 2, I define professional development and describe how to prepare the site and lay the foundations for new designs for professional learning. Foundations must be wide enough, deep enough, and durable enough to provide the support—personal, structural, political, and cultural—on which new structures for professional learning are built. Chapter 3, “Creating a Professional Learning Community,” examines the essential elements used to build professional learning communities. The chapter ends with a discussion of how authentic professional learning communities deal with the persistent paradox of learning and unlearning by developing individual and collective capacities to systematically unlearn (abandon) unproductive or outmoded structures, processes, practices, and ways of thinking. In the next five chapters of the book, I present rich illustrations of professional learning that express the designs features of the new architecture for professional development. In Chapter 4, “Professional Development ‘As’ Work,” I go beyond traditional views of professional learning and practice by arguing that professional development is not something in addition to work, it is an essential part of educators’ professional work. In “Professional Development ‘In’ Work,” Chapter 5, I describe how professional learning is inextricably embedded in teachers’ and administrators’ daily work. While carrying out their primary work, educators can tap into continuous opportunities to gain new knowledge, practice and refine skills, reflect on individual and collective

experiences, and deepen insights on teaching and learning. Chapter 6, "Professional Development 'At' Work," describes on-site workplace professional learning including in-service training, workshops, meetings, and school exchanges as another dimension of the new architecture for professional development. I explore the important advantages of "at" work learning as well as some potential negative effects. I make the case that professional learning communities find ways to create optimal conditions that support professional development "at" work while mitigating any potential negative learning outcomes. Off-site professional learning is the focus of Chapter 7, "Professional Development 'Outside' of Work." After a discussion of the wide variety of professional learning opportunities away from school, I describe how successful learning communities build collective professional capacity by developing strategies to share new knowledge, skills, and wisdom from off-site, oftentimes individual learning experiences. In Chapter 8, "Professional Development 'Beyond' Work," I examine the terrain of various enriching life experiences and learning opportunities away from work and school that have the potential to enhance professional practice. I describe two types of professional development journeys beyond work. The first is a journey *out there* far beyond schools and work. The second is an inward journey connecting work, life, and learning. Both take teachers and administrators well beyond daily routines to vistas that give them new insights and deeper understandings of themselves, their work, and the world in which they live. "Evaluating the Architecture of Professional Development," Chapter 9, focuses on the assessment of the new architecture for professional development. I use several frameworks to illustrate ways to evaluate four key evaluation concerns—purpose, value, methods, and utility. The chapter also provides a framework of essential components for building credible and useful evaluations of new designs for professional learning. In Chapter 10, "From Design Studio to School Site," I review the landscape of professional development and describe challenges that confront policy makers and practitioners as they rethink, restructure, and reculture the architecture for professional development in their schools and communities. Using the six design themes as a reprise, the chapter closes with a discussion of the messages and meaning communicated in the new architecture for professional development.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completing a book project is both an exhilarating and a humbling experience. It is exciting to see the book I had once only vaguely imagined take shape after two years of reflection and writing. At the same time it is a humbling experience to know that this work represents only a small part of a much larger mosaic of professional practice and scholarship in the area of professional development. I am indebted to all of those authors, researchers,

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staff development personnel, teachers, and school administrators whose work, whether in print or in practice, have contributed immensely to my thinking and writing. As with any project, there are some people who deserve special thanks for their support. I am grateful to Corwin Press and to Rachel Livsey for her enthusiasm and encouragement in writing this book. I am truly thankful for professional colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and others around the world whose work and ideas have stimulated and enriched my own work. I am especially indebted to Olof Johansson for his generous invitation to spend a significant part of my sabbatical leave at Umea University in northern Sweden where I wrote the prospectus for this book. I also want to acknowledge the special contributions to form and content made by Eric J. Anctil. His background and resource work, as well as his editing suggestions, were invaluable contributions to this book. I also want to thank Maureen Adams and Van Lori Himbergen for sharing their work in this book. Though they remain unknown, I am deeply appreciative to three external reviewers, all of whom are practicing professionals, whose thoughtful and constructive reviews of the initial draft of this book helped me sharpen some of the arguments, enhance the overall presentation, and illustrate key points with examples in practice. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Mary C. Bredeson, a Learning Resource Coordinator in Verona Area School District, Verona, Wisconsin, for sharing her own commitment to professional learning and for being a daily reminder to me that the new architecture for professional development is about people who dedicate their lives to the challenges and joys of learning in schools.

The contributions of the following reviewers are gratefully acknowledged:

Susan Mundry  
Project Director  
WestEd  
Stoneham, MA

Laura Crehan  
Educational Consultant  
San Diego, CA

William A. Sommers  
Executive Director  
Minneapolis Public Schools  
Minneapolis, MN

Elizabeth Lolli  
Director of Curriculum  
Mayfield City Schools  
Highland Heights, OH