

## Three Habits of Effective Lesson Study Groups

### **A Learning Stance**

Lesson Study rests on the assumption that everyone can learn. Every group member—even ones who are coaches or “experts”—should bring genuine questions (not just answers) to the group’s work. Lesson Study differs from mentoring or coaching in its emphasis on inquiry conducted by equals, and it provides an opportunity for even experts to pose and pursue questions about teaching and learning.

### **Commitment to Collective Growth**

In their work together, team members should come to feel that the research lesson is “our” lesson and that students are “our” students, not “your” students or “my” students. The point of Lesson Study is not to polish the skills of a few star teachers but to help all teachers grow, and to create the interpersonal relationships, school culture, and personal and collective habits of inquiry that support continuing growth every day. Members view every participant as having something valuable to contribute to the group.

### **Emphasis on Study of Students, Not Evaluation of Teachers**

Lesson Study focuses on student learning and development. It provides a rare and valuable chance for teachers to be in a classroom solely to investigate student learning, unencumbered by the need to manage students or provide instruction. A first-year U.S. teacher from Mills College pointed out that Lesson Study differs from the lesson observation familiar to U.S. teachers: “In the U.S., if you are being observed, it’s a critique of you. Lesson Study focuses on student learning, on student “aha’s.” It takes what we’re doing to a more professional level.

