



Dear TOSA

It is time for the annual Dear TOSA edition of the TOSA TIMES. Do you have a question? Is there something that doesn't sit right? Perhaps you need to ask your TOSA.

Dear TOSA,

Most of the teachers in my building are excited about teaching inquiry science, but there are two teachers I just can't get through to. What can I do about those resisters?

-Frustrated

Dear Frustrated,

Remember that people resist change for a number of different reasons and some may never change. Maybe they do not know enough about the change or don't know what is expected of them. Have you been clear in your communication about the change?

Consider whether anyone has made a clear case for the change. Teachers need to believe the change is an opportunity for them and beneficial for students. Also, don't forget that people often resist change because they are afraid they will fail or feel that the way they are currently teaching is the best way.

When dealing with resisters first ask yourself, "Why is this person resisting?" Dialogue and inquire into the resister's thinking, rather than advocating your position. Once you understand their point of view, address their concerns. Give them what they need – more information, professional development, resources, risk free environment to try new things.

Include them in the process of implementing the change. Make sure you have acknowledged valid objections to the change (e.g., Will it really improve student learning?). Examine the negative and positive aspects of the change together. Dialogue with all teachers, including resisters, can help you create a shared vision for what you are trying to accomplish.

Sincerely,
Your TOSA

Dear TOSA,

Am I missing something? I teach science, follow teacher guides, and am using notebooks better than ever. But I have this nagging doubt that I'm *Grade Level Expectation* deficient and *Evidence of Learning* challenged.

I wake up seeing the little light grey Ws at the end of most *GLEs* before my eyes and think that somebody at the next grade level doesn't like me. It doesn't help that in the *GLE* book it says that *Evidence of Learning* statements serve as the basis for the development (what does that mean?) for assessment items on the Science WASL. Then they tell me the bulleted list is not exhaustive and we are encouraged to seek additional evidence of student learning from *NSES* and *AAAS Benchmarks*.

I keep questioning myself, am I teaching students what they need to learn and assessing them on what they should know. Is there help for me?

Yours truly,
Just Trying To Teach

Dear J.T.T.T.

Breathe. OK. May I suggest you open *Atlas of Science Literacy* to the Table of Contents and find a chapter heading, a cluster, and a map that feels right to you for what you are currently teaching? Remember at this point it only has to feel right. Look at your grade band and read the benchmarks. Helpful? Reread them using the arrows to make connections between benchmarks. Following each statement is a reference to a *Benchmarks for Science Literacy* chapter, section, and benchmark such as 4B/2. This may help you deepen your understanding of your content. You may find that more than one map is needed to help get the big picture of what your teaching. That's enough for now. Take it slow and be reflective about what you are doing. Teaching important science topics well will help your students achieve the *GLEs*.

MOST IMPORTANTLY: attend the March LCF near you and learn the purpose, importance, and usefulness of resources like *Benchmarks* and *Atlas*.

Sincerely,
Your TOSA



If you have a question you would like answered in a future Dear TOSA column, please e-mail it to your TOSA.



CALENDAR

March 10—Peninsula Learning

Community Forum, using the GLEs and Project 2061 Resources to Understand Coherent Curriculum. Keyport

March 24—Skagit/Whatcom

Learning Community Forum, using the GLEs and Project 2061 Resources to Understand Coherent Curriculum. WWU

Please note: There is no LCF in April



ANNOUNCEMENTS

If your lesson study group will be conducting a lesson study cycle in the next few weeks, NCOSP is looking for volunteers to be videotaped while doing so.

We will be sharing some of the Partnership's lesson study work at the upcoming NSTA conference, and video footage of our teachers in action is the most powerful aspect of any presentation. We would like more footage of research lesson planning, classroom instruction with observers present, and debriefing. If you are planning any of these activities, we would love to hear from you. Please contact your TOSA to make arrangements.

REMINDER: As you finish your lesson study cycle, please post your report on the NCOSP website. See <http://www.ncosp.smate.wvu.edu/Resources/LessonStudy> for instructions.

Dear TOSA continued...

Dear TOSA:

I'm still confused by what NCOSP wants me to do for my building/district. What's with this leadership stuff?

Thanks,
Ima Teacher

Dear Ima,

Remember there are many different ways to be a leader. Leadership is not defined by a single action or single event.

To be a true leader, start by being a learner: Understand science content, consciously apply insights from professional development in your own classroom, school, and districts. Have a repertoire of instructional strategies to engage students; model effective science teaching and methods. Be enthusiastic about what you're doing and let others know how exciting it is.

Take what you have learned and reflect on your leadership attributes and how to apply them with your peers, principal or other administrators. Decide on what steps you will take to fulfill this leadership role. Remember collaboration is critical. "Leadership is about learning together, and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively." *Linda Lambert*

REMEMBER: Your TOSA and NCOSP are resources to help you along this leadership journey. Let them know when you need information or other help.

Sincerely,
Your TOSA

Dear TOSA,

What was up with all of the data at the Jan. LCF? Who collects all that information and what in the world will happen to it? When we did our afternoon discussion group, some people got excited about what was happening in their district and others were bothered because not too much was happening. How do I deal with "keeping the faith" about Science reform?

- LSBHTR (Love Science but How to Reform?)

Dear LSBHTR,

Hey, remember all of those evaluations you have been filling out? That was data from the partners you reviewed! Isn't it great? You have a voice in the partnership and the internal and external evaluators take your 'voice' and tell us what the partnership is feeling over time. Consider it our temperature at the half-way point of the grant. An elementary teacher from Skagit County shared this comment about the work done during the afternoon. "The discussion group this afternoon was a good opportunity to share because I know the partnership will value the comments which help drive what we do." Keep filling out those evaluations, you are valuable to the partnership!

Sincerely,
Your TOSA

A NOTE FROM YOUR TOSA