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Authors: Raphael, T. E., Vasquez, J. M., Fortune, A. J., Gavelek, J. R., & Au, K. H.

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Abstract:

In this chapter, we build on work of Taylor and colleagues (2011) who distinguish between “curriculum-driven” and “professional development-driven approaches.” sustainable school change relative to episodic (Raphael et. al, 2014; Webster-Wright, 2009) school change efforts. We use the Vygotsky space to describe the process of learning within a sociocultural lens and focus on five principles that underlie and support teacher movement among the quadrants of the Vygotsky space as they engage in professional development (PD) that leads to learning and the potential for sustainable school change through appropriation, transformation, and conventionalizing what has been learned. Drawing on extant research, we contrast the typical approach and sociocultural approaches to professional development for each of the underlying principles that PD should: 1) position teachers as empowered agents of change, 2) be situated in actual settings and problems of practice, 3) involve participants in dialogical learning, 4) be systemic, and 5) be sustainable. We illustrate how this occurs with examples from our own experiences and work and conclude with comments and recommendations for future research on professional development from a sociocultural perspective.