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Teachers, tasks, and tensions: lessons from a research-practice partnership.

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Summary: How teachers make sense of new academic standards significantly shapes the implementation of those standards. Professional development organized around the analysis of mathematical tasks has potential to prepare teachers for standards implementation by helping them develop common understandings of standards and how to help students meet ambitious new learning goals. In practice, however, designers and participants bring different goals to the professional development context, which becomes evident when teachers engage in task analysis. In this article, we use the *design tensions framework* to analyze these tensions within a research-practice partnership comprised of five university researchers, three district curriculum leaders from a large urban school district, 12 high school Algebra 1 teachers from nine schools in the district, and a small team of Web engineers. Primary data for the study consist of participant observation and field notes of meetings in which project stakeholders negotiated the design of the professional development, as well as interview and survey data. An analysis based on the design tensions framework helped our partnership surface, both in the moment and retrospectively, the need for designers of professional development focused on standards implementation to be adaptive and willing to evolve activities to satisfy multiple stakeholders' goals for participation.

Classification: D30 D40 B50

Keywords: mathematical tasks; design tensions; professional development; standards implementation
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