



Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

Guide for Bringing Student Work

Developed in the field by educators.

Why bring student work?

The work of a Learning Community is centered on student learning. Thus, the work students do and the ways in which teachers guide their work is essential. The same is true of practitioners who are not classroom teachers, since the work done by those you interact with does, ultimately, effect student learning.

What kind of student work should you bring?

In our day-to-day work in schools we experience some successes, and usually some pitfalls. When we think about choosing student work to learn from with our colleagues, we are faced with a choice: “Do we strut our stuff by bringing an assignment that shows how successful we can be?” Or “Do we mine our mistakes, by bringing the work that didn’t meet our expectations?”

If we accept that all of us want to do our best learning for the sake of our students, then we need to bring our confusions, our failed efforts, our uncomfortable dilemmas, our wondering about individual students and groups of students to the table. Being willing to work in our “risk” zones means opening up to the kind of powerful learning that can help us reach the students we are not currently reaching. It means asking the hard questions that get to the issues of equity and achievement in our classrooms and schools. Playing it safe by remaining in our “comfort” zones means a continuation of the status quo, where the achievement gap continues to grow.

So, as you think about what to bring to the session, please consider bringing the work you’d like to forget, the work that keeps you up at night, the work that makes you question our craft and your role within it. If you are not in the classroom full-time, you should bring work from students to whom you are connected — either through their teacher, or because you work directly with them. In any case, bring work that links directly to *your* practice.

Please bring ten copies of the student work, with the name removed from it, along with the appropriate assignment, standards, and/or assessment that guided the creation of the work if appropriate. Think in advance about the question you have about the work and your purpose for bringing it, and then select a protocol that will best meet your needs.

Possible Samples

- A single piece of work from *one* student in response to a *single assignment*;
 - Two or three pieces of work from *one* student in response to *different assignments*;
- OR
- A single piece of work from a *whole class* in response to *the same assignment* — or a single piece of work from *two or three students* in response to the *same assignment*. For the latter option, at least one piece of work should be from a student who completed the assignment successfully, and at least one piece of work should be from a student who was not able to complete the assignment successfully. If you choose the latter option, also bring copies of the assignment itself, and any rubric or evaluation criteria you used to assess the work.