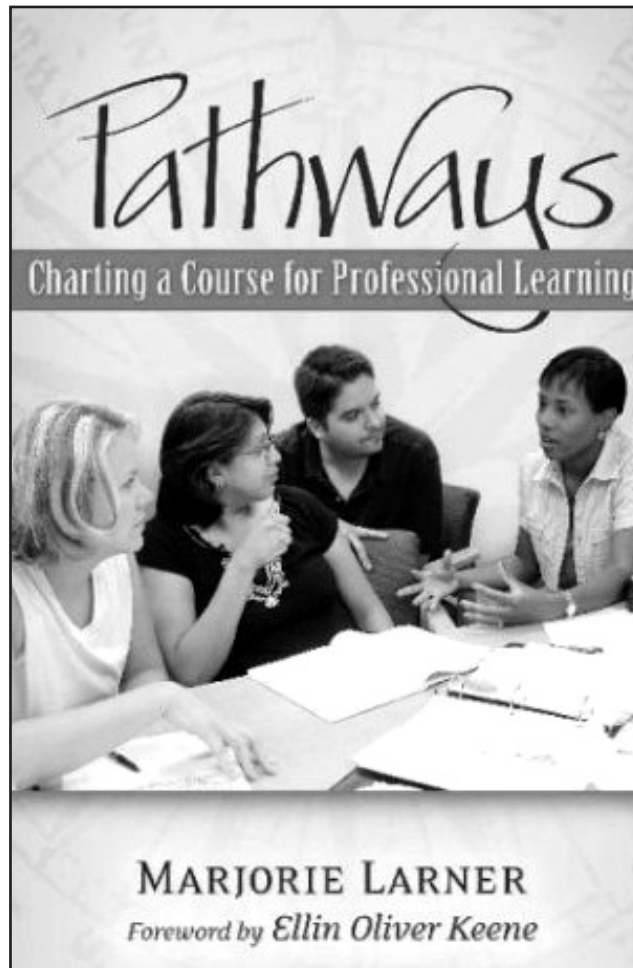


Pathways: Charting a Course for Professional Learning

Book Review by Debbie Bambino, Pennsylvania

It's the first Saturday of the month and here in Philadelphia that means our leadership CFG is meeting. We had just finished our "opening moves" and one of the principals was puzzling over how to offer space and time for the diverse professional learning needs of her staff. After hearing her concerns, I slipped out of the meeting and ran upstairs, to get Marjorie Lerner's new book, *Pathways: Charting a Course for Professional Learning*. I had had an "aha" earlier in the week when I was reading the book and thought our CFG would benefit from it.

I know we all talk about customizing agendas and processes to fit the needs of our groups and schools, but there's something about Marjorie's book that makes this customization tangible. She shares a "Continuum of Participation" template and a "Ways to Participate in Professional Development" menu that empower teachers and groups to chart their courses in very specific ways. It was this notion of differentiation that struck a chord for me. Have we been guilty of too narrow a focus on the ways and



times adults learn?

As a coach, I am continually doing the dance between mandated and voluntary professional learning, worrying about buy-in and whether mandated teacher "learning" has

any impact or value for our kids. We know "one size fits all" doesn't work for our students, but we often still try to use this model for adults. I have a really strong hunch that using the tools in *Pathways* will help us develop differentiated learning plans that empower teachers and administrators to move forward using many paths toward their shared destination of greater student success.

Members of my CFG are ordering copies of *Pathways* as they begin working on their plans for summer trainings and school improvement. I look forward to hearing about the ways they use this new resource at their schools and I urge others to use this tool too! ■

Marjorie Lerner is a former teacher and administrator. She is currently a staff developer at the Denver-based Public Education and Business Coalition (PEBC). Marjorie is a member of NSRF and Colorado Critical Friends Group. You can contact her at larnerm@earthlink.net, and order Pathways at www.heinemann.com

NSRF Mission Statement

The mission of the National School Reform Faculty is to foster educational and social equity by empowering all people involved with schools to work collaboratively in reflective democratic communities that create and support powerful learning experiences for everyone.

CONNECTIONS

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