

# Aligning Professional Development with the Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model



By: [Martha Hightower, Ed.D.](#)

## “What Can We Do to Improve Our Teachers and Ourselves Next Year?”

Education leaders everywhere are asking a critical question: *How will we support teacher growth—and our own—in the year ahead?*

The most successful school years don't begin when students arrive in the building. They begin when leaders come together to **design systems that support growth from day one.**

Whether you're revisiting your [teacher evaluation system](#), refining [feedback practices](#), or simply aiming to [lead more intentionally](#), now is the time to plan with purpose.

## What Makes Professional Development Powerful?

Professional development (PD), when thoughtfully designed, becomes the engine of school improvement—shaping classroom practice and ultimately, student outcomes.

Impactful PD requires:

- A clear focus on an **instructional framework**
- **Intentional alignment** with your teacher evaluation model
- A **system of support** that turns theory into daily practice and promotes growth

At the heart of it all is strong leadership. Leaders are the architects of the school's learning culture! When they lead with clarity and vision, professional development becomes more than a compliance measure—it becomes a powerful lever for improvement.

## Is Your Professional Development Aligned with an Instructional Framework and Evaluation Model?

If you're using—or considering—the [Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model](#), now is the time to ensure your PD plans are aligned to your evaluation system and instructional framework, not treated as a separate initiative.

Ask yourself:

- Are our professional development goals aligned with our **teacher evaluation model**?
- Do our teachers receive **meaningful, timely feedback** that leads to growth?
- Are our observers and leaders **calibrated and confident** in identifying strong instructional practices?
- Are we developing **instructional leadership** at every level?

When these questions guide your planning, professional learning becomes a driver of progress—not a checklist.

## How the Marzano Evaluation Center Can Support Your PD Goals

At the [Marzano Evaluation Center](#), we help schools and districts design and implement PD that is grounded in proven models and supported through coaching and leadership development.

- ✓ **Research-Based Evaluation Models:** The [Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model](#) identifies 23 key elements that clearly define effective instruction and guide teachers to improve their practice.
- ✓ **Focused Professional Development:** PD on the Marzano models is designed using active adult learning strategies that engage teachers and school leaders and bring your instructional vision to life.
- ✓ **Calibration & Coaching:** Expert-led calibration training and individualized coaching ensure your observers deliver consistent, growth-focused feedback.
- ✓ **Leadership Development:** Empower your principals and district leaders to become true instructional leaders—not just evaluators—through a blend of training, onsite practice, and ongoing support.

## Ready to Lead for Greater Impact This Year?

As you build strategic plans for the year ahead and beyond, ask yourself:

*Is our professional development aligned with a research-based evaluation system—like the Marzano Evaluation Models—and is our PD driving real results?*

Let's reimagine professional learning not as merely a requirement, but as a transformative force in your school! Consider how a partnership with the Marzano Evaluation Center can elevate your work.

**>> [Connect with us](#) to explore how we can support your vision for a stronger, more focused year of professional growth.**

## About the Author

### Martha Hightower, Ed.D.

Dr. Martha Hightower serves as the Product Development Specialist for Marzano Evaluation Center. In addition, she delivers professional development to both teachers and school leaders in various schools to improve planning, instruction, and evaluation.

She has extensive experience in education ranging from special education to general education in primary and secondary schools. She also was a school leader for over ten years in Orlando, Florida where she resides. She received a doctorate degree in Organizational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Hightower is affiliated with several local non-profit organizations and is committed to leading change and helping others develop systems and plans to sustain better living after trauma.