



All professionals are expected to account for their performance. In fact, one of the hallmarks of a profession is a forum established for the critical appraisal of and explications on one's actions. The professional teacher in public schools has precious few settings for providing this kind of account. Indeed, many teachers have so little practice in explaining their choices, actions, and assessments that they are often uncomfortable when called upon to do so.

[...] In schools that [provide forums for professional inquiry and explanation] 'teacher accountability' is coming to be understood as the responsibility to understand how and why deep learning is (or isn't) taking place in one's classroom and how to make it happen more often and more deeply. It is this introspective, probing creation of a professional knowledge base that, more than external mandates, will obligate educators to respond to students' learning needs with rigor and compassion.

Alexandra Weinbaum, et al., *Teaching As Inquiry: Asking Hard Questions to Improve Practice and Student Achievement*, 2004.