

IZfB-Talk and Workshop

Thursday, 14 March, 2024

in S06 S00 A40

(Time will be announced soon)

Tailoring to Context:

Teachers as Leaders in School Reform

Dr. Sara Sands, Instructional Associate Professor
University of Houston, Hobby School of Public Affairs

Talk (90 minutes):

The objectives guiding current school reform efforts are strikingly similar across countries, emphasizing the improvement of student competencies in language and mathematics; teacher quality and professionalization; school leadership and culture; and family and community engagement. Undergirding these efforts is an acute awareness that for many students, particularly students who are from marginalized populations or lower-income communities, schools and school systems struggle to provide educational experiences that lead to improvement in student achievement, postsecondary, and career outcomes. In her talk, Dr. Sands will provide an overview of key themes from education reform in the United States that may offer perspective on current school reform efforts in Germany. Dr. Sands will then discuss the importance of tailoring reform efforts to the unique context of each school and explore the utility of “teacher leadership” in deciding, implementing, and sustaining new education policies and processes in schools. Drawing on her experiences at the New York City Department of Education and her research, Dr. Sands will show how empowering teachers to lead changes in their school community may help schools adopt and sustain reforms and yield real results for students.

Workshop (90 minutes):

Building on her presentation, Dr. Sands will lead a workshop on the role of researchers in supporting schools to tailor reforms to their local context. An interactive session, the workshop will offer participants an opportunity to learn from each other’s experiences helping school leaders and teachers design, implement, and evaluate reform efforts. Participants will discuss the successes, challenges, and opportunities for teacher empowerment within schools and systems, and how it might support evolving German education policies that target school improvement.

