



*ASQ Primary and Secondary Education Brief*

### **Editor's Note: Team Players or Lone Rangers?**

By Megan Schmidt

Teachers have one of the hardest jobs—and most teachers operate in a vacuum. Teachers typically spend their days isolated from their colleagues and have few opportunities to share ideas or get help from other educators and administrators. A study by Scholastic and the Gates Foundation found that [teachers spend only about 3% of their day](#) collaborating with colleagues. This makes me wonder if education is one of the most siloed sectors in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Why isn't more teamwork happening among educators and administrators? Aside from the fact teachers and administrators are busy, [a recent national survey by MetLife](#) found some educators feared that collaboration could jeopardize individual accountability, infringe on independence in the classroom and create blurred management hierarchies and responsibilities.<sup>2</sup>

If education is to transform itself and bring greater student achievement and operational efficiencies, more teamwork among educators is needed, according to Henry Lindborg and Stephen Spanghel, educators and hosts of a preconference workshop on team building and project selection taking place Nov. 16 at the [National Education Quality Conference \(NEQC\), Nov. 17-18, in Milwaukee](#). In "[Learning to Work Together](#)," Lindborg and Spanghel provide a preview of their workshop and explain how successful project teams that transcend organizational silos can create permanent and systematic improvements.

The greatest asset to any organization is its people. And one person can only do so much by him or herself. Do you have an example of educator teamwork at your school or district? Email me at [mschmidt@asq.org](mailto:mschmidt@asq.org).