

**Every Child Deserves the Finest  
Teaching Possible!**

**Sharing a Journey of Rewards and  
Challenges**

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**WERA Conference  
March 25, 2010**

# Today's Work

## Goals:

Understand and be able to apply the Cycle of Instructional Improvement as a graphic organizer for building instructional skill in building staff..

Determine implications for building leadership work to apply the cycle effectively in individual settings.

One measure of your team's intelligence is the depth of its shared understanding.

# Leadership voice

Case study of Grandview  
Administrative Team Meeting

# What led to my beliefs about the power of great instruction in every classroom?

- Anthony Alvarado –District 2 NYC and San Diego Unified
- Dr. Richard Elmore - Professor Harvard University
- Harvard Institute for School Leadership
- UW Center for Educational Leadership Summer Leadership Institutes
- Benchmark visits to San Diego and New York City
- Skillful Leader - Alexander Platt

# Seven Core Tasks for Improving Instruction my beginning framework

- 7 core tasks came from research by the Change Leadership Group, Harvard University
- An analysis of districts which demonstrated proven changes within the instructional core and student achievement had these common attributes.
- District 2 in NY City was a pioneering district with Anthony Alvarado as its Superintendent.

- Seven Core Tasks for Improving Instruction

# Building blocks

- Clear theory of action
  - 7:50
- Establish a culture where
  - Instructional improvement is the key to academic success.
  - Performance based system
    - 39:38
  - Adult learning/capacity building.
  - Students are college bound.
  - Feedback/collaboration are common.
  - Coaching for everyone.
  - It is about the practice not the person.

# Reasons for a Theory of Action

- Helps establish a culture by developing a common language for what we are trying to accomplish.
- Helps diagnose critical or weak links in your improvement strategy
- Helps cut through the clutter.
- [Grandview's Instructional point of view](#)

# Building blocks

- Principals are the key to the work
- Instructional Improvement Cycle

# Building blocks

- Instructional Improvement Mini Cycle
  1. **Strategic/Focused Walk-through based on expectation of implementation**
  2. **Meet with teachers and debrief lessons**
  3. **Identify Next Steps**
  4. **Schedule a Follow-up Visit**
  5. **Provide Written Feedback with next steps and follow up dates**
  6. **Provide Support: Coaching, Inter-visitation, Study Groups, Video-Reflection, Collaborative Lesson Design, Plan/Observe/Debrief, Cross-Visitation (building to building or district to district) Structured Collaborative Time (PLC).**
  7. **See step one and repeat!**

# Building blocks

- Effective use of collaboration time (Early release, late start). Dufour's PLC model
- Aligned curriculum with a balanced assessment system

# Structures for action

- Admin team – central office and principals, Vice Principals, Admin interns, interns plus
- Instructional Leadership teams
- Grandview Instructional Support teams
- School Board
- Cabinet
- District Improvement Team
- PLC's, Grade level and department
- School Improvement teams
- Principal meetings

# Accountability

- Expectations/evaluation
- Superintendent visits and walkthroughs
- Coaching
- Instructional Leadership Teams
- Principal and staff developer/coaches notebooks
- Assessment results

# Staff expectations

- Reciprocal relationships , with push comes support
- Skillful Leader
  - You are only as good as the weakest teacher you do nothing about. All the other teachers above him/her are inoculated from intervention. - Andy Platt
- It is not a sin to not know how. The sin is refusing to try.
- The bigger the bite the bigger the push back. Analyze thoughtfully what and how much to bite off.
- You will need Teacher Leaders and early adopters.
- Everyone plays. No one can opt out, however with push comes support and we are where we are. What is the very next level of work?

# Voice and vision

- Theory of action
- Instructional point of view
- Opening/closing
- Instructional letters
  - Example
- Attendance at All PD's
- Learn alongside, vulnerable
- Phrases that make the work clearer
- Letterhead, cards, IPV posted
- Constant mantra: Every child deserves the finest teaching possible!

# Building adult capacity

- SharePoint
- Calendar
- Subs
- Alignment of strategies and PD
- Staff developers and content coaches
- Principal and Superintendent coaches

# What work is our work?

- The teacher's work is the students work,
- The Principal's work is the teacher's work,
  - The Superintendent's work is the Principal's work.

# Coaching for administrators

- Must be the Sustaining sponsor
- Must inspect what you expect
- Must try on the work as well
- Go to coaching sessions
- Follow up in between

# Working with Principals

- Clear expectations
- Supervisory visits
- Lead Learner
- Jump in and do it. (feedback sessions, teach, wonder aloud, instructional letters)
- Focus evaluations
- Recognize the pace and demands of the job
- Gradual pressure relentlessly applied.

# Five bedrock skills Principals need to lead the work.

- Vision of what is good teaching focused on rigor, engagement, and effective strategies to personalize learning to meet children's needs.
- Ability to provide meaningful feedback and expectations for improvement to teachers.
- Ability to plan PD for staff based upon building observations and data.
- Use their leadership voice to bring a clear set of expectations, a relevant rational and progress reports for the work.
- Working with teachers who need red zone intervention.

# Johnny One Note

- The problem we face in education is a capacity issue. The adult capacity in the system is not able to get all kids to high standards.
- The interaction between an adult and student is where all learning occurs.
- Superior instruction in every classroom, everyday.
- Every child deserves the finest teaching possible.