Mentoring the Beginning Principal for Instructional Accountability by Establishing Systems to Monitor Instruction

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TEPSA Conference June 14, 2013
Co Presenters:
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Resources for mentoring:

• National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)  
  www.naesp.org or 800-386-2377  
  Ask about the National Principal Mentor Program

• Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA)  
  www.tepsa.org or 512-478-5268
Resource Referenced for PLC’s

- Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker and Thomas Many
Goals of This Presentation:

• To share the value of an organized approach to mentoring new principals

• To promote new principal mentoring as a means to impact teaching and learning for students and staff

• To show the connection between student achievement and an organized approach to campus meeting structure, such as the Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting
The New Principal’s Lament
by Jack M. Hill

• If I make quick decisions, I am an autocrat.
• If I make deliberate decisions, I am indecisive.
• If I call staff meetings, I have no regard for teachers’ time. If I don’t call meetings, I do not believe in teacher participation.
• If I correct teachers, I am picking on them. If I don’t correct teachers, I am a weak administrator.
If I speak up for new programs, I am on the reform bandwagon....

• If I’m cautious about changes, I am living in the past.
• If I attend community affairs, I am a politician.
• If I stay away, I have poor public relations.
• If I suspend students, I do not understand children. If I don’t suspend enough students, I am a weak disciplinarian.
If I visit classrooms often, I am being intrusive......

• If I don’t visit classrooms often, I don’t care about what’s going on.

• If I clear decisions with the superintendent, I don’t have a mind of my own. If I make my own decisions, I am assuming too much authority.

• If I attend conferences for principals, I am goofing off. If I don’t attend them, I am being unprofessional.
If I am walking around, I’m not getting my paperwork done.

• If I stay at my desk, I am neglecting my staff and students.

• If I complain about things, I am a malcontent.

• If I can live with them, I’m a principal.

“The New Principal’s Lament” by Jack M. Hill
Source: MESPA Advocate Advocate September 2008
Principal Turnover Rates and the Impact on Student Achievement

Tenure and Retention of Newly Hired Principals in Texas (Fuller and Young, 2009)

• Elementary Principals after 3 years= about 50% still in the same school
• After 5 years= about 30% still in the same school
Principal tenure on the campus....

• Has an independent impact on student achievement.
• Schools with the same principal over time had greater gains in student achievement than other schools in Texas.
• Stability helps to build strong relationships and more positive working conditions for staff.
• Principal turnover negatively affects teacher retention and quality as well as student achievement.
Principal Turnover: Student Achievement and Teacher Retention (Miller, 2009)

North Carolina study found that...

• It usually takes three years for student achievement scores to rise after a principal change

• Teachers were 20% more likely to stay on a campus if the principal had been there for at least two years

• Systematic improvement takes 3-5 years; major restructuring can take from 5-10 years
Why do new principals need mentoring?

• Demands of the new role
• Lack of preparation for the myriad of responsibilities
• Never enough time, so you have to be organized
• Sounding board, someone to rehearse major issues before presentation
Can be an isolated and lonely role....

Emotional conflicts in a new role:

• Living in the spotlight
• Moving from supervising students to supervising adults
• Accepting that the job is never finished
• Balancing relationships with productivity
• Not personalizing issues
Fragmented tasks during the day

Numerous tasks which may be short in duration but rapid in pace....

• Most interactions last from 1-2 minutes
• About 50-60 within an hour
• 85% of the principals’ time is spent on tasks lasting less than nine minutes
• A mentor can help a new principal learn how to manage the tasks and responsibilities.
Successful leadership

• Need to stay on a campus to positively impact student achievement; turnover impacts the campus and the district
• Mentoring gives the new principal a better chance of being successful
• Must be the right match for new principal and mentor
• Must follow guidelines for effective mentoring, including confidentiality
Effective mentoring ......

Should focus on Principal Standards:
• Provides a framework for all the job responsibilities for the role
• Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do (NAESP, 2008)
NAESP Principal Standards

• Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center

• Set high expectations and standards for the academic, social, emotional and physical development of all students
Demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement of agreed-upon standards
Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals
Manage data and knowledge to inform decisions and measure progress of student, adult and school performance
Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student performance and development
Organize and lead through the use of systems..........

- Keep the focus on what is important
- Save time, manage information, be aware
- Promote support for expectations
- Provide a structure for monitoring results
Systems support leadership...

• Provide opportunities for modeling and developing leadership

• Provide opportunities to develop leadership in others
Organizing and managing campus meetings .....  

- Value of regularly scheduled meetings  
- Importance of agenda development and the follow up with meeting minutes  
- Keep teaching and learning as the primary focus for all meetings
Being organized saves time...

• Organize required meetings to fit the needs of the campus (Example: Grade Level Leaders’ Team is also the Campus Advisory Team Sub-Committee for Budget and Staff Development)
Assist the new principal by:

• Determining what groups need to meet and how often
• Using alternative ways to share information on a regular basis (such as morning announcements, “heads-up” email for the week, etc.)
• Articulating the purpose of each meeting
• Building trust through regular distribution of decisions and information; Predictable environment builds trust and contributes to a positive school culture
Sharing information after a meeting

• Using a standard format for agendas and meeting minutes
• Expectations for follow up from discussion/agenda items
• Timeline for meeting minutes to be distributed
• Sharing electronically
Examples of campus meetings:

**Weekly:**
Administrators
Grade Level Teams
Professional Learning Communities (PLC’S)

**Monthly:**
Grade Level Leaders
Staff
Campus Advisory Team
As needed meetings....

- Special Education ARD (Admission, Review and Dismissal) Meetings
- Student Assistance Team
- Special Program Team

A meeting should only be scheduled if necessary and has a specific purpose.
The PLC meeting can help the principal stay focused on the Principal Standards previously reviewed

- Instructional Leadership is the primary role of the principal.
- The PLC can be the format for developing effective instruction, monitoring results, adjusting resources, providing training, and determining the effectiveness of programs.
The Professional Learning Community (PLC) Development at Popham Elementary:

We are in the process of evolving and improving our system as we continue the day to day work.
The information we will share is not intended to be a review of the research for PLC’s

• We will share what we have in place and how it is working for us
• The importance of having a system in place with agreed upon expectations for the PLC weekly meetings
• Our next steps as we refine and improve our process
Moving from only team meetings to effective PLC meetings

• We already had a meeting structure for weekly team meetings.

• Grade Level Leaders planned the agendas and facilitated the meetings.
Effective but not focused enough on learning......

- Meeting minutes were written and distributed to all campus leaders.
- Team meetings tended to cover day to day operations; not enough time to focus on teaching and learning.
Value of the PLC System

For principals:

• Provides a format and structure to address the principal standards
• Keeps the focus on teaching, learning and the results
• Builds collaborative teams who then work together for common campus and district goals (does not replace the weekly team mtg.)
More benefits of the PLC meeting...

• Provides an opportunity to develop and use data to inform instruction
• Provides a weekly opportunity for identifying staff training needs
• Provides a venue for sharing required district information in a timely manner (ex: content coordinator’s Tips of the Week, monitoring the implementation of district initiatives, etc.)
How do you find the time to schedule weekly PLC meetings?
Process for Scheduling

• 45 minute special area periods which leaves time at the end of the day
• Designed an hour (1:30-2:30 daily) for PLC meetings
• Use of counselor and special area teachers to supervise students
• Extra PE, Music, Art, and Technology weekly for grade level students while their teachers attend PLC meetings (lessons meet the grade level and student needs)
Not enough days in the week...

• Grades 1-5 each have a regularly scheduled PLC meeting on the same day each week

• The PLC does not interrupt the daily conference period for grade level teachers

• PK/K PLC occurs on Mondays from 3-3:30

• Special Program Team meets once or twice a month instead of weekly for their own PLC meeting. This is a challenge with our schedule.
Development of the PLC Weekly Agendas/Protocols

• Initially, the same agenda/protocol was used for all PLC meetings
• Availability of assessment data from the district influenced the agendas
• Principal and Instructional Administrator determine the focus for the PLC agendas with input from the teams
• Agendas are organized based on the work that needs to be done, keeping in mind the campus and district goals and the direction
Good News: DIP Big 5

Solid Tier I Instruction
R-B Tier 2
R-B Tier 3
Tutorials

Responding/Intervening when Students Don’t Learn

Analyzing Data

CNA
Formative
Summative

Teaching the TEKS

More than just the Law!

Relationships and Teamwork

High Impact Vital Few Research-Based (R-B) DIP & CIP

Informal
Formal
District
PLCs
Teachers

Assessing Student Learning

Implementing Strategies/Best Practices

Whatever It Takes
Growing Support of Protocols

(from Best Practices, TEPSA News, Many and Sparks, January/February 2013)

• Use of protocols are highly correlated with high functioning teams
• Provide a structure for conversations
• Protocol format and content vary based on need (ie Looking at Student Work, Professional Practice, Issues and Concerns, Professional Reading, etc)
Sample PLC agenda/protocol

Popham Elementary Meeting Agenda and Minutes

**Type of Meeting:** Professional Learning Community

**Date:** Week of September 24, 2012

**Time:** Choose an item: 1:35 – 2:35

**Location:** GLL Classrooms

**Attendees:** See attached sign-in sheet (Professional Staff)

**Resources:** Website: DeValleSD.stemscopes.com

**Objectives:**

PLC: Identify strengths of Kinder instructional and classroom management strategies as well as learn about new ideas – with DVISD Consultant, Sherri Crossett

1st – 2nd: Discover online resources available through the district (See agenda below)

5th Grade: Review details and timeline for 5th Grade “Stories” Project with Ms. Thomas, Technology App Teacher

To prepare for next meeting, please:

- Increase personal level of lesson closings/reflections
- Continue student talk time every 7 minutes (DIP: Implementing Strategies/Best Practices)

**Schedule for covering the agenda:**

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<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Activity/Agenda/Decisions (meeting minutes)</th>
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| 1:35 – 1:40 | 5       | DIP Big 5: Implementing Strategies/Best Practices
Share list of ideas for creative lesson reflections/closings from Sherri Crossett (DVISD Consultant). Teams will share their favorite type of reflection. |
| 1:40 – 2:00 | 20      | STEMscopes Website Application: Teachers will meet in the computer lab to review the various components of this website and how it can be incorporated into their lessons this school year. |
| 2:00 – 2:15 | 15      | DVISD Online Resources and Websites (Address usernames and passwords page on technology page)
- Learning.com
- Reading A-Z
- ThinkCentral |
| 2:20 – 2:35 | 15      | DIP Big 5: Analyzing Data - DIBELS BOY Data
Share data with team for district, campus, classroom, and individual students.
- Review goals for next benchmark or MOY assessment
- Review process and materials for progress monitoring Tier 2 Students |

* Follow Up/Next Steps (if applicable): Be prepared to share how your grade level is using your DIBELS data to create your intervention groups.
Sample protocol to use when watching a PLC meeting in progress

**Professional Learning Community Agenda**

**Materials:**
- District assessment data containing:
  - Data of student performance on each question
  - Disaggregated data of student subpopulation performance (e.g., Special Education, ELL, ethnicity, etc.)

**Identify trends and patterns among the student expectations. Questions for review:**
- What were the concepts and levels of cognition of the student expectations that students **underperformed** over performed?

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- Were there some groups that outperformed or underperformed others? What were some potential causes?

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View video of a PLC at work..
Next Steps for our PLC’s

• Continue to monitor how to schedule weekly PLC meetings without losing teacher conference periods
• Manage common agenda items while differentiating the agendas for specific PLC teams with diverse needs and areas of focus
• Determine how to schedule PLC meetings for special area teachers and special programs teachers and/or find a way to rotate their attendance in grade level PLC meetings
more next steps....

• Monitor the balance between review of data and time spent developing interventions and core lessons that address the needs of specific students and groups of students
• Share the leadership of PLC meetings between the grade level leaders and administrators
• Determine common and individual teacher training needs and provide differentiated support for teachers
Evaluation and Goal Development

• Each team evaluates their PLC effectiveness by using Cultural Shifts in a Professional Learning Community (Learning by Doing 2006, 2010 Solution Tree Press; go.solution-tree.com/PLCbooks)

• Develop team goals for 2013-14 based on 2012-13 end of the year performance by campus and by teams

• Ensure that the team goals match the focus and direction of the Campus Improvement Plan and the District Improvement Plan
Many thanks to...

- NAESP staff
- TEPSA staff
- DVISD staff
- Popham Elementary students and staff