University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership: August 17 Training

Foundational Ideas

- If students are not learning, they are not being afforded powerful learning opportunities.
- Teaching is a highly complex and sophisticated endeavor.
- Practice of sophisticated endeavors only improves when it is open for analysis and critique.
- Improving practice in a culture that is "public" requires reciprocal accountability.
- Reciprocal accountability implies a particular kind of leadership to improve teaching and learning.
- Leaders cannot lead what they don't know.

Common language for what is high quality instruction + Knowing how to lead for that= instructional effectiveness

The instructional core

A way to describe what teaching and instruction are

1. Teachers: Increase knowledge, skills, and expertise
2. Students: Change the role of the student as learner
3. Content: Increase the level of complexity of the curriculum/ content

To really improve teaching, we have to work on all three factors.

Context is important and influences each of these factors.

Instructional framework:

- A set of descriptions of teaching behaviors
- Linked to improved student learning
- Based on research and the work of practitioners

The UW 5D Framework

- The result of a study on what highly effective principals look for in a classroom
- Validated by research
- Organized into dimensions, sub-dimensions, and guiding questions
- Vision statement= north star- what we are aiming for

Calibration Work

- Allows educators to develop a common vision of what student engagement looks like.
- An ongoing process.
- This could be great for schools to bring back and do in departments using the tool that they use locally.

Descriptive Observation

Visual Thinking Strategies- a way to just look without bringing our own biases into our observations and what we see.

Three questions:
- What do you see?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What else do you see?

Observation process

Name your look fors before entering the classroom
Collect descriptive data- "I notice"
- It is challenging to enter a classroom without infusing judgment immediately.
- Description without judgment creates a record of what actually happened so that teachers do not debate this when debriefing.
- Specificity of evidence
- Important to notice when our bias has been activated

Identify your wonderings- "I wonder"
- The purpose of wondering is to assume positive intent and not become overly committed to our initial judgments.
- Wonderings are a way to collect additional evidence needed to provide feedback to the teacher
- If you know the answer, it is not a wondering.
- The wondering should generate conversation.
- Wondering needs to be associated with something you actually saw
- Wondering stems
  - How did you make the decision about ?
  - What is your vision for?
  - How do you typically . . ? How was that like or not like what you did today?
  - What did you learn from/ about your students today when you . . . /when they . . . ?
  - Talk me through . . .

Identify teacher strengths
- When you . . . it resulted in students . . .

Define Can vs. "Verge of"
- Can means there is strong evidence that the practice is in place (with intention) and effective
- Verge of means there is evidence of the practice in place (with intention) but it may not be as effective as it needs to be.

Effective Feedback
- Timely
- Descriptive
- Positive
- Clear and specific
- Differentiated

Characteristics of Effective Targeted Feedback
1. Framed around actionable improvements
2. Based on evidence of teaching strategy and/or student response
3. Situated within a context

Basic Coaching Conversation Structure
1. Set the context
2. Research

3. Share evidence
4. Decide
5. Determine or reflect on the coaching plan

Targeted Feedback Cycle: Next Step Conversation

1. Set the context if needed
2. Share evidence
3. Ask for teacher responses in relation to their area of focus and ask for teacher's next step
4. (Provide a next step if teacher didn't' decide upon a next step)
5. Commit to follow up

Questions to guide reflection on department time

- What is the purpose of your department meeting time?
- What do teachers understand as the purpose?
- How does the time fit with the school's professional development?
- What would be ideal outcomes for a year of department meetings?
- What strengths does your department already have?
- What is a next step you can imagine for that time?