

A Focus on Our Work- Until We are Confident in the Work We Do and Can Reflect, Collaborate and Adjust We Cannot Expect to Make Change.

This Journey has Proven Just That, When We Receive the Feedback from Our Peers We Take Risks and Gain Confidence in our Work to Make Changes for the Better

By: Jennifer Korfhage, Thomas Jefferson Elementary

Team Members Names: Casey Downing, Heidi Hubbard

Contact: jkorfhage@gccschools.com

Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

After completing the MARzano surveys and many building leadership team conversations our team realized that to move forward as a more cohesive collaborative team we would need to look further into how we support our teachers.

Marzano's leading indicator 2.2 focuses on providing support to teachers and teachers creating individual goals around our school-wide instructional initiatives. We felt we could improve on how feedback is given and the timing in which feedback is used to support our instructional initiatives. As a team we felt this would be a positive, individual way to provide feedback and move our collaborative teams to the next level of reflection. We currently have school-wide literacy and math goals which are set by our ISTEP data. These goals would allow us to focus at a finite level in order to celebrate smaller areas of growth.

TJ has worked extremely hard the past two years on the recreation of our literacy blocks and now we would like to focus individual work. The goal as a team would be to group teachers according to where they would like to learn more, grow and reflect. They would not be alone in the process and feedback would be enhanced.

Therefore, the purpose of our action research was to determine if teachers focused on their own chosen area and our focus on feedback will enhance our instructional practices.

Statement of Your Team's Wondering:

With this purpose we wondered if providing support to teachers through goal setting, feedback and ongoing reflection would enhance our pedagogical skills.

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insights into our wondering we began with staff surveys. There was evidence that teachers wanted more feedback. As a leadership team we decided to have each teacher develop two goals that aligned to literacy and instruction. First, we identified the two focus areas so we could work at a finite level with our teams. Teachers were then paired with other teachers with similar goals for reflection, feedback and next steps. Working with the reading coach teams met to discuss, reflect, and share their work toward reaching

their goals. Lastly, teachers took a follow-up survey about how they felt the creation and work towards their goal enhanced their work in literacy and instruction to help create a more collaborative environment.

Stating Your Team's Learning and Supporting it with Data:

As a result of analyzing our data, three important things we learned include teachers felt feedback increased, our focus was able to go deeper and the teachers enjoyed the goal setting process.

As we analyzed the data it was evident that teachers wanted more one on one discussion with the principal. 72% of our teachers agreed that this was increased but not necessarily as much as they would have liked. Most of the 72% that agree with increased feedback felt that the feedback received from their peers and the reading coach was the most valuable. Many commented that it helped with collaboration and sharing of ideas.

During the goal setting we learned that we were able to focus at a deeper level and accountability increased. 27.8% of teachers strongly agreed and 61.1% agreed that they kept track of their progress through collaboration.

Lastly, we learned teachers would like this process to become the new norm. Teachers were reflective with themselves and the element of risks taking increased due to working closely with their peer group. The data taken from the survey included some of the following "I feel I am becoming more aware", "I like that we have time to discuss with other people who are working towards the same goals", "I see so many differences in our conversations and interactions"

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

Through the action research process we have learned that our school continues to grow culturally, and our teachers want to learn and grow as well. This process has allowed us to take risks and has created an awareness of who we are as school leaders.

As a team we will continue the process of goal setting from the beginning of the year. We will allow more time for feedback and collaboration and with district level changes the principal will now have more time for individual feedback after formal observations as well. There is excitement for the direction our staff is moving. Our next wondering will be if we begin this process with our students how will we change our culture of academic excellence? Will goal setting with students and classes increase the ability to persevere and ultimately move our thinking to a more growth mindset.?

References:

N/A