

Building a Solid Foundation with Constant Instructional Practices

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Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

The team had questions on how to effectively talk about data. Would norms help us to get through our data meetings in a productive way that would produce strategies that would then shape teaching in the classroom. As a school we posted the norms and have started using them in all school wide and grade level meetings. This has made meetings more productive and on task. Our team started looking at our district and how we have rolled out consistent practices for math, reading, and technology. Yet we have not talked as a whole about best instructional practices. Are we all viewing the walk through form in the same way? Do we know as teachers what we would all expect to see in a classroom and what we would never want to see? This led the team to wondering if we had school wide instructional practices, would this lead to consistent practices and expectations in the classroom. Would we see an improvement in test scores, student behaviors, and student engagement? Therefore, we decided that our action plan would be looking at best instructional practices.

Statement of Your Team's Wondering:

The team wondered if mapping out what we should always see, may see, and never see in the class would lead to better instruction in the classroom. We were wondering if having posted best instructional practices would not only help all teachers in the classroom become consistent from year to year, would the students also know what is expected of them? Would this increase student engagement? Would this increase student testing scores? Would this lead to teacher strengthened core teaching skills? Would running all new initiatives up against these best instructional practices help us stay focused and not just start another program?

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insight we started by looking at our district walk through form. The SIT team went through the form and marked what should we always see, what should sometimes see and what we should never see in our classroom. From this the SIT team developed common practices that we should be following in every classroom. The outcome desired from doing this is that common best practices produced by a whole staff that as a result increase student engagement, consistent instructional practices should increase students' performance on daily work and district and state testing.

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

As a result of analyzing our data

1. In order to go deep with consistent instructional practices we need to develop our goals to reflect these common practices.
2. We need to give time for teachers to feel confident in the Framework and form a solid foundation.
3. We need to continue to go back to the consistent instructional practice chart as a guide for what we do.

1. As a team we took the chart of always see, sometimes see, and never see we noticed common themes that we want to see in all subject areas.

By looking at what we value as educators and what we would want to see in every classroom we developed a constant practice model that tied both school and district initiatives together.

2. As a team we started getting in to core standards and common vocabulary. After taking a look at consistent practices we learned that we need to give time for teachers to feel comfortable with the district Framework that was laid out this year and tie it back to the consistent practices.

3. As the team reflected back over our journey of this action plan we learned that it is difficult to stay focused and to not move ahead too fast. We will take what we created and let that be our focus for what we do in our building.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

Our team has discovered that teachers that lead different subject matters see value in the same common practices. Teachers agreed to what we should never see in the classroom. The team discovered that in order to create a solid foundation as our school population increases we will need to continue to use our consistent instructional practices. These consistent practices will need to be hung in every room and be a part of our new teacher program.

As a team we started to explore common essential standards and common vocabulary. This seemed like a good next step. When bringing it back to our school we quickly realized that we need to take a step back and make sure that we first focus on the consistent practices as it relates to the district common practices in the area of math, reading, and technology. We went back to our district mapping and will continue to implement this in conjunction with our consistent practices that we mapped out for our school.

References:

N/A