

Identifying Best Practices Through Instructional Rounds



Mt. Comfort Elementary School
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Background Leading to this Inquiry

Last summer all MVCSC schools went through the Highly Effective Schools Accreditation process through Solution Tree. Part of that process was to identify components of a maintenance plan and a growth plan aligned with HRS Levels 1-3 and the 3 big ideas of a PLC. One area of focus was HRS Level 2: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom, specifically allowing teachers the opportunity to observe and discuss effective teaching.

Purpose of This Inquiry

The purpose of this inquiry was to use instructional rounds to identify and discuss best practices in teaching and to become familiar with a new model of instruction. We used the New Art and Science of Teaching framework to guide our instructional rounds and post observation discussions.

Our Wondering

Will participating in instructional rounds using the New Art and Science and Teaching model lead to increased discussions about effective teaching and a better understanding of this new model of instruction?

Our Actions

- Team leaders attended a one day training by Shelley Gies from Marzano Associates on the New Art and Science of Teaching Model in October 2021
- All certified teachers were given a copy of The New Art and Science of Teaching Handbook (Fall 2021).
- Our Director and Asst. Director of Curriculum and Instruction did an overview of the model and how to use the handbook with our entire staff (Nov. 17, 2021)

Our Actions



Objectives/Goals

- Teachers will better understand what *The New Art & Science of Teaching* (NASoT) handbook is, and what it is not.
- Teachers will understand how NASoT is organized.
- Teachers will hear key information about the NASoT handbook as suggested based on peer feedback.
- Teachers will understand where and how instructional strategies align with our current work.



This book:

Gives us common language to talk about good teaching.

IS a resource to find strategies you haven't tried yet or forgot about.

IS a resource to find language for effective strategies that you already use and can share with others.

IS rooted in research and meta analysis of PROVEN strategies with high effect size.

This book is NOT:

A book that we'll read cover to cover.

A book study.

An end-all-be-all to teaching.

"Another thing."

[LINK](#) to Overview that was presented to all staff

Our Actions

- Staff meeting to give an Introduction to Instructional Rounds-*January 11, 2022*
- Surveyed to staff to get their thoughts on Instructional Rounds prior to starting them.
- Did our first set of Instructional Rounds by watching classroom lessons that were recorded. K-2 teachers watched a 2nd grade teacher and 3-5 teachers watched a 4th grade teacher-*Jan. 24 & Feb. 1*
- Each team watched the lesson and then we discussed strategies we noted from the NASoT model.

Our Actions



FEEDBACK	1	Learning goals are clearly communicated <i>Students understand the progression of knowledge they are expected to master and where they are going along that progression.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scales and rubrics • Tracking progress • Celebrating success
	2.1		
FEEDBACK	2	Using assessments <i>Students understand how test scores and grades relate to their status on the progression of knowledge they are expected to master.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal - whole class • Formal - individual student
	2.5 2.4		
CONTENT	3	Direct instruction provided <i>When content is new, students understand which parts are important and how the parts fit together.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chunking • Processing • Recording & Representing
	4	Practicing and deepening lessons <i>After teachers present new content, students deepen their understanding and develop fluency in skills and processes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured practice • Similarities and differences • Examining errors in reasoning
	5	Conducting knowledge application lessons <i>After teachers present new content, students generate and defend claims through knowledge application tasks.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks • Resources and guidance • Generating and defending claims
	2.6		
CONTENT	6	Using effective strategies <i>Students continually integrate new knowledge with old knowledge and revise their understanding accordingly.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previewing • Highlighting • Reviewing • Revising • Reflecting • Purposeful homework • Elaborating • Organizing interactions
	2.6		
CONTEXT	7	Using engagement strategies <i>Students are paying attention, energized, intrigued, and inspired.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing and reacting when students are not engaged • Increase response rates • Physical movement • Lively pace • Demonstrating Intensity and enthusiasm • Unusual information • Friendly controversy • Academic games • Students talk about themselves • Motivating and inspiring students
	2.3		
	8	Implementing rules and procedures <i>Students understand and follow rules and procedures.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish rules and procedures • Organizing physical layout of classroom • Demonstrating withitness • Acknowledging adherence to rules and procedures • Acknowledging lack of adherence to rules and procedures
	2.7		
CONTEXT	9	Building relationships <i>Students feel welcome, accepted, and valued.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal and nonverbal indication of affection for students. • Understanding students' backgrounds and interests • Displaying objectivity and control
	2.8		
CONTEXT	10	Communicating high expectations <i>Teachers communicate high expectations for all students.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value and respect for reluctant learners

New Art and Science of Teaching Model Observation Tool

NORMS

- ★ REMEMBER THAT ROUNDS ARE FOR SELF-LEARNING, NOT FOR EVALUATING.
- ★ DO NOT USE ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO WRITE OR RECORD DURING THE OBSERVATION.
- ★ HAVE CLIPBOARD, BLANK OBSERVATION FORM, AND A WRITING UTENSIL WITH YOU.



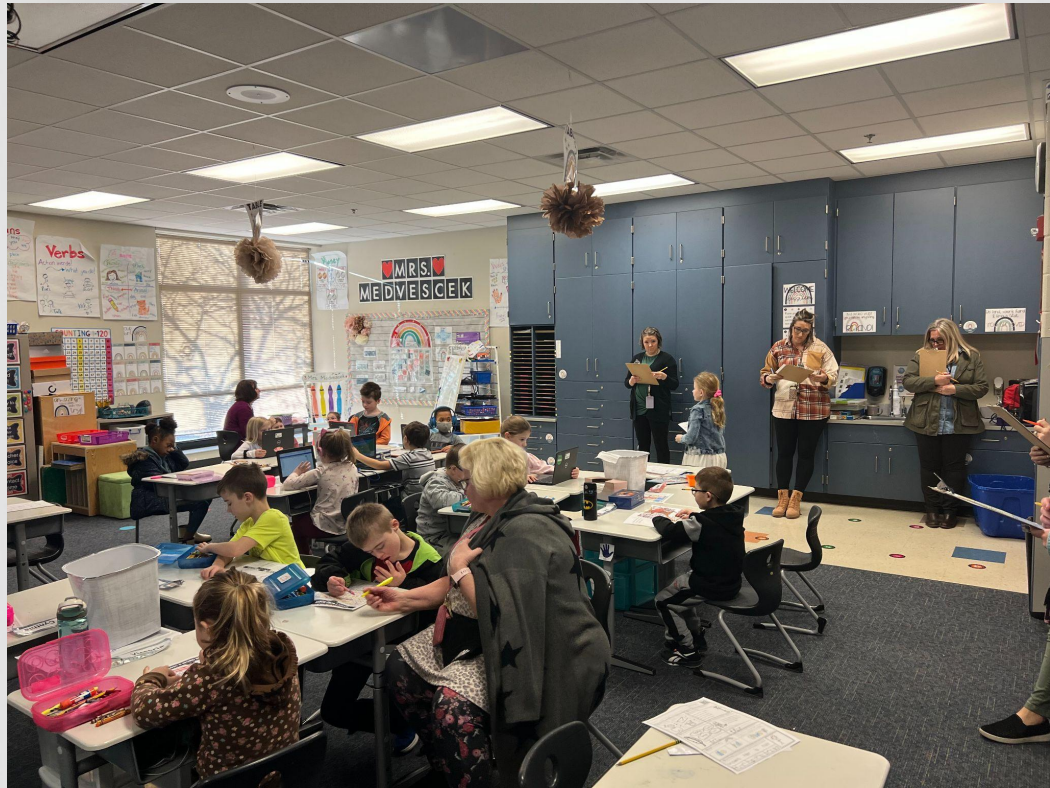
NORMS

- ★ NOTE ANY OBSERVATIONS ON THE FORM.
- ★ FOCUS NOT ONLY ON WHAT STRATEGIES THE OBSERVED TEACHER IS USING, BUT ALSO ON HOW THE STUDENTS ARE RESPONDING.
- ★ TIME IS PROVIDED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EACH OBSERVATION TO FINISH WRITING/SELF-REFLECT.



Our Actions

- Second set of Instructional Rounds were done by going into classrooms. Teams of 5-7 teachers visited 6 different classrooms March 1st and March 2nd.
- After each visit we met outside the classroom to discuss effective teaching using the New Art and Science of Teaching model.



Our Actions

- Reflection questions that were given to teachers
 - As a result of today, what aspects of my teaching were validated?
 - As a result of what I saw today, what questions do I have about my own teaching?
 - What are two new ideas that I want to try to incorporate into my teaching practice?
 - What changes am I hoping to see when the new strategies are implemented? How will your practice improve?
- Post Survey given to teachers with the same 3 questions.

Data Collection

- Qualitative Data-Observations during rounds and classroom observations/walkthroughs after rounds
- Quantitative Data-Survey Sent to staff before and after we began Instructional Rounds

Survey Questions

Instructional Rounds are a process for school improvement that brings groups of educators together to look at what is happening in their schools, develop a collaborative learning environment, and improve student learning. How knowledgeable do you feel about the Instructional Rounds Process?

1 2 3 4 5

1-Do not know Anything 5-Understand the Process

How would you rate your proficiency level using the common language / terminology found in NASoT?"

1 2 3 4 5

Not proficient Fully confident in the language and model

Do you feel that participating in instructional rounds will benefit the teaching and learning in your classroom?

1 2 3 4 5

No, just another thing.. I think teaching and learning will improve as a result of rounds

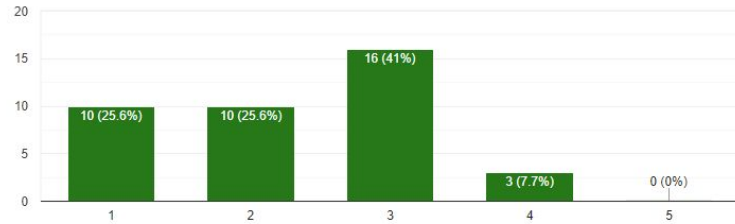
- 51% of people did not feel knowledgeable about rounds prior to starting them.

- Post rounds, only 4.8% of people didn't feel knowledgeable about rounds and 90% felt knowledgeable.

Instructional Rounds are a process for school improvement that brings groups of educators together to look at what is happening in their schools, develop a collaborative learning environment, and improve student learning. How knowledgeable do you feel about the Instructional Rounds Process?

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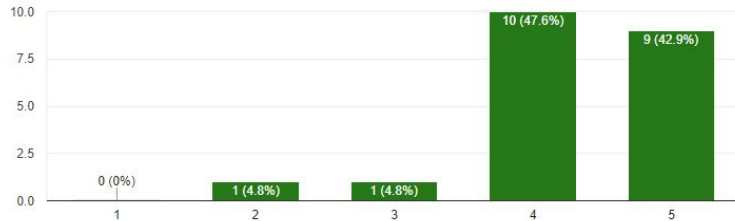
39 responses



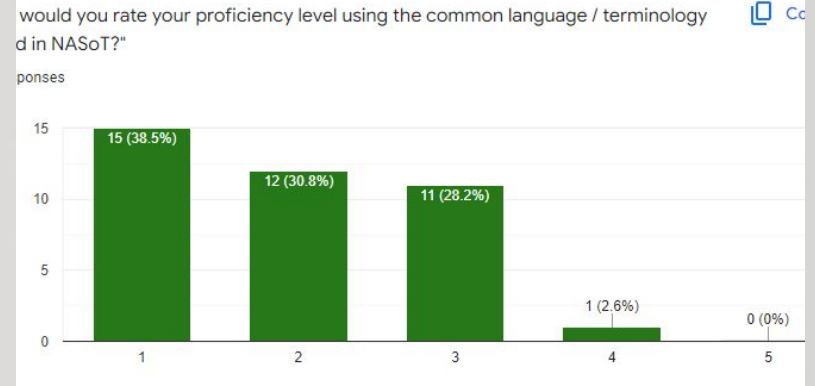
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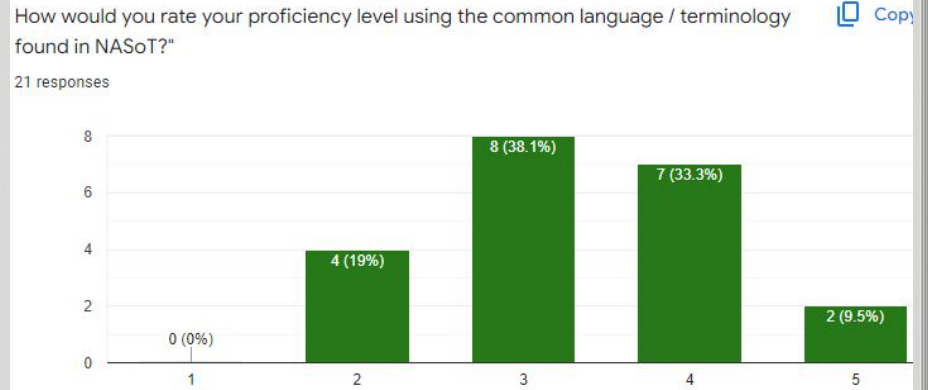
21 responses



- 69% of people did not feel proficient in using the language in NASoT prior to starting them.



- Post rounds, only 19% did not feel proficient with the language.

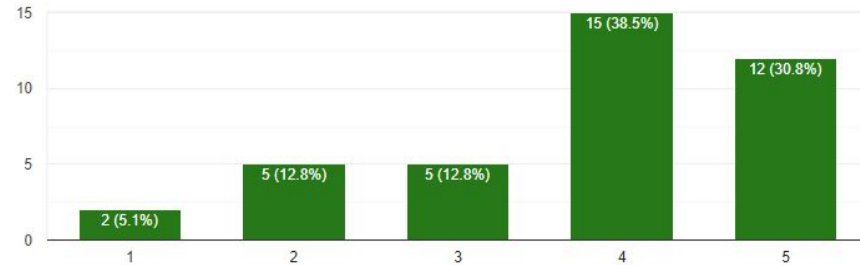


- 18% of people did not feel participating in rounds would benefit teaching and learning prior to starting them.

Do you feel that participating in instructional rounds will benefit the teaching and learning in your classroom?

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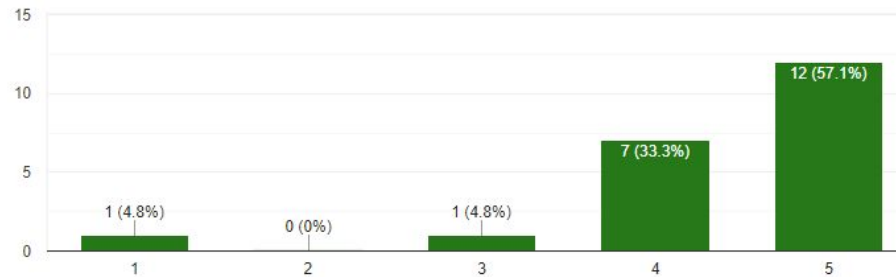
39 responses



Do you feel that participating in instructional rounds will benefit the teaching and learning in your classroom?

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11 responses



- Post rounds only 4.8% of people (1) didn't feel rounds would benefit teaching and learning.

Comments Shared from the Survey

- *I enjoyed going into the classroom this time!*
- *As a newer teacher, I am very thankful for the experience. I really enjoyed seeing how other teachers instruct and manage their classrooms.*
- *I enjoy seeing the different ways other teachers teach. I still feel new to teaching and watching others is a great way to learn new strategies.*
- *I love going into other classrooms! I feel like I can learn so much from observing and seeing what other teachers do in their classrooms.*
- *I really loved getting to see J. B.! Our team actually went after school yesterday to talk to her about some questions we had about how she sets up her class to run so smoothly! We really learned a lot!*

Our Discoveries

- Having a framework to discuss what we observed in classrooms makes rounds more effective and gives us a common language to use when discussing effective teaching.
- Teachers enjoyed going into the classroom for “live” rounds. They liked this approach better than watching recorded lessons.
- Meaningful discussions were taking place after each round when we would gather right outside the classroom in the hallway.

Where We Are Heading Next

- We will continue to provide opportunities for teachers to observe and discuss effective teaching in the 22-23 school year. Our goal is at least 2 per school year.
- Discussing using the New Art and Science of Teaching model as our walkthrough tool for the 22-23 school year. This will replace a very generic tool currently used in SFS.
- Use the data gathered from classroom walkthroughs to drive what professional development teachers would need/like.



Balance is Not Something You Find, It's Something You Create

Action Inquiry Project, Year 1

Principal Name: Alissa Lockwood

Team Members' Names: Liz Moan & Brianne Williams

School Name: Mt. Comfort Elementary School

Principal's Email Contact: alissa.lockwood@mvcsc.k12.in.us

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Presentation

Lockwood, A. (2022). Identifying Best Practices Through Instructional Rounds, Action Research Project. Presented at the annual Indiana Principal Leadership Institute Action Research Showcase, Indianapolis, IN.