



NH Intermediate School

Making Time to Visit Classrooms!!!

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Snodgrass IPLI Year 1 Action Research



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In 2014, I became an elementary administrator after spending 16 years as a high school teacher. I soon learned that the difference in being an educational leader is much different on the elementary level than what I was used to seeing on the secondary level.

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Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to continue to learn and grow as an instructional leader.

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As I contemplated my role as an Instructional Leader, my first thoughts revolved around my ability to lead professional development, my ability to lead collaboration, and my ability to improve the pedagogical practices of the school. After studying my IPLI staff survey and my IDOE Panorama Data, I decided to go back to my staff for direction.

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After discussion with my local cohort and my school leadership team, I arrived at the following definition to guide my staff in a direction that I could best serve them:

“Nothing within a school has more impact upon students in terms of skills development, self-confidence, or classroom behavior than the personal and professional growth of the teachers. When teachers examine, question, reflect on their ideas and develop new practices that lead toward their ideals, their students are alive. When teachers stop growing, so do their students.” (from *The Principal as Staff Developer*, R. Barth, 1981)

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I created google forms survey...

QUESTIONS

RESPONSES

26

How can Snodgrass best assist your development as an educator?

Form description

How can Snodgrass best assist your development (Nothing with in a school * has more impact upon students in terms of skills development, self-confidence, or classroom behavior than the personal and professional growth of the teachers. When teachers examine, question, reflect on their ideas and develop new practices that lead towards their ideals, their students are alive. When teachers stop growing, so do their students. From The Principal as Staff Developer (Journal of Education) R. Barth 1981) as an educator?

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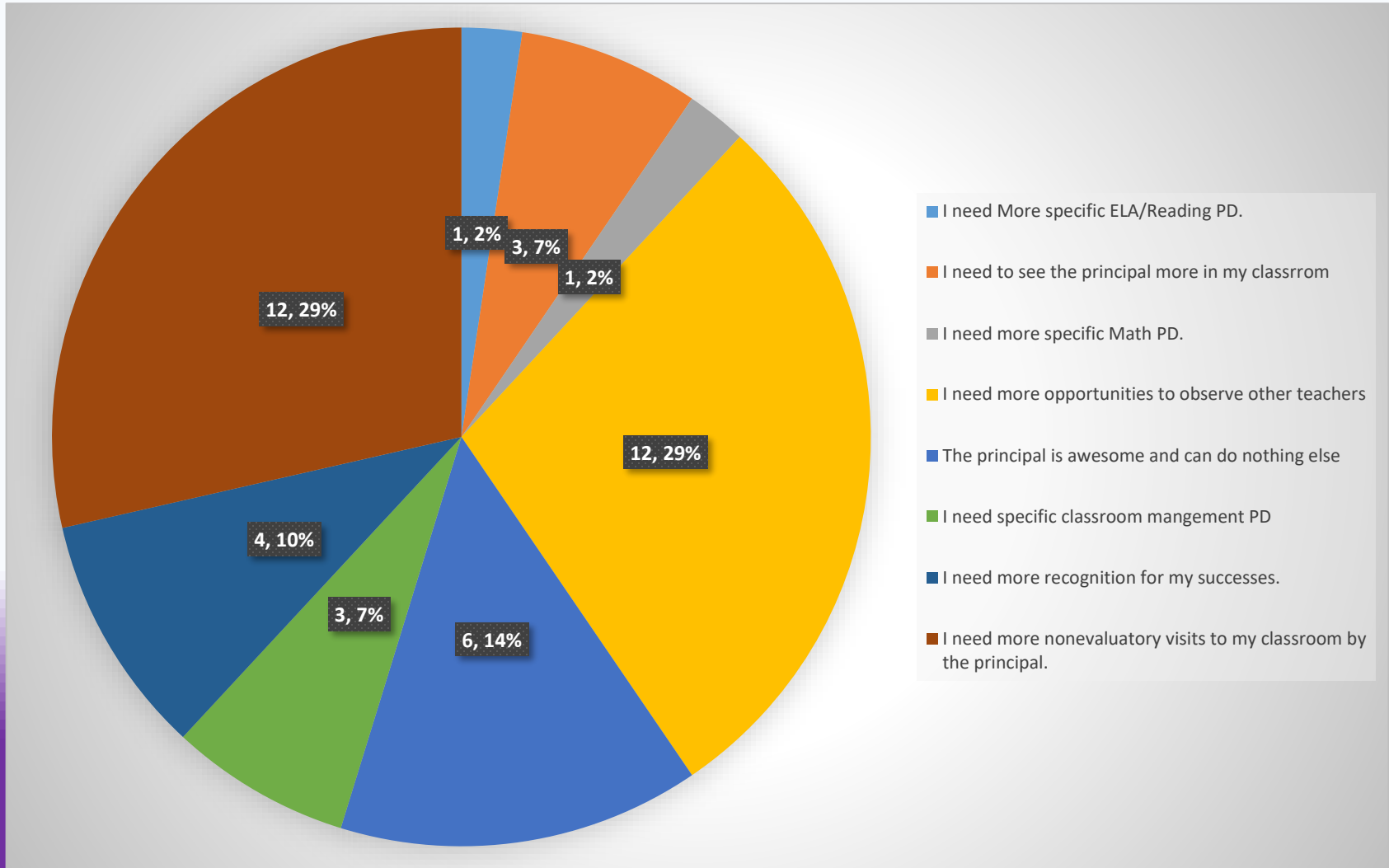
Met with leadership team and established 8 answers..

- I need more specific E/LA Professional Development.
- I need to see the principal in my classroom more.
- I need more specific Math Professional Development.
- I need opportunities to observe other teachers.
- The principal is an awesome leader and I need nothing else!!!)
- I need specific behavior management professional development.
- I need more recognition for my successes.
- I need more frequent non-evaluation based observations in my classroom.



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Data Collected...





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Data Collected Showed that my teachers:

- 1. Needed to see me in their classrooms more (15 total)***
- 2. Needed to observe other teachers more (12 total)*** *Contacted asst super and arranged title 2 funds for a rotating sub for staff to visit other teachers with the instructional coach.*

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Announced the staff that I was going to make a commitment to visit their classroom for at least 5 minutes a week to sit, be calm, and observe the good things that were done in their classroom.

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Began Tracking My Visits:

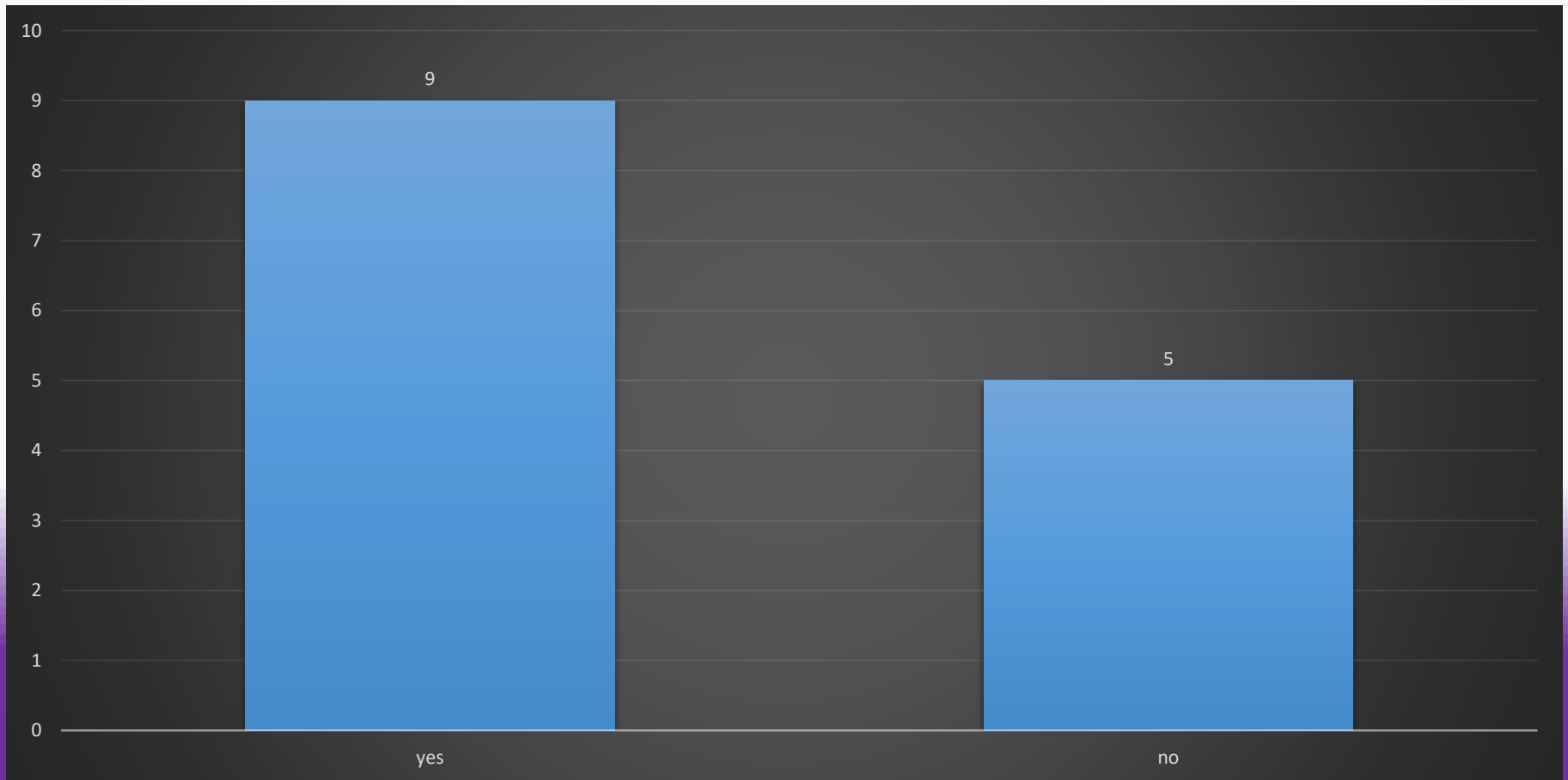
	1/7	1/14	1/21	1/28	2/4	2/11	2/19	2/25	3/4	3/11	3/18	3/25	4/8
Andrews	x	x		x					X		x	x	x
Bradtmueller	x	x	x		x	x			X			x	x
Dommer	x	x	x		x			x	X	X	x	x	x
Fletcher	x	x	x		x			x	X	X	x	x	x
Hawthorne	x	x						x	X			x	x
Irving	x	x	x		x	x		x	X	X	x	x	x
Johnson	x	x		x	x		x		X		x	x	
Neuhaus			x		x				X		x	x	
Palmer	x	x	x		x			x	X		x	x	x
Price	x	x		x	x			x	X			x	x
Reed	x	x		x	x			x	X	x	x	x	
Richter	x	x	x						X	X	x	x	
Scheumann	x	x	x				x		X		x	x	
Sorg	x	x	x		x				X			x	x
Stabler					x				X		x	x	
Steier	x	x	x		x			x	X	X		x	x
Walker	x	x	x									x	x
Wolf	x	x			x				X			x	x
Smith	x	x	x		x			x	X	X			x



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Staff feedback on my success:

Did you see Snodgrass more in your classroom?





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What Have I learned:

1. It was a very difficult goal to accomplish.

57.4%

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What Have I learned:

1. It was a very difficult goal to accomplish.

Why?

a. snow days

b. behaviors

c. parents

d. management

e. building project

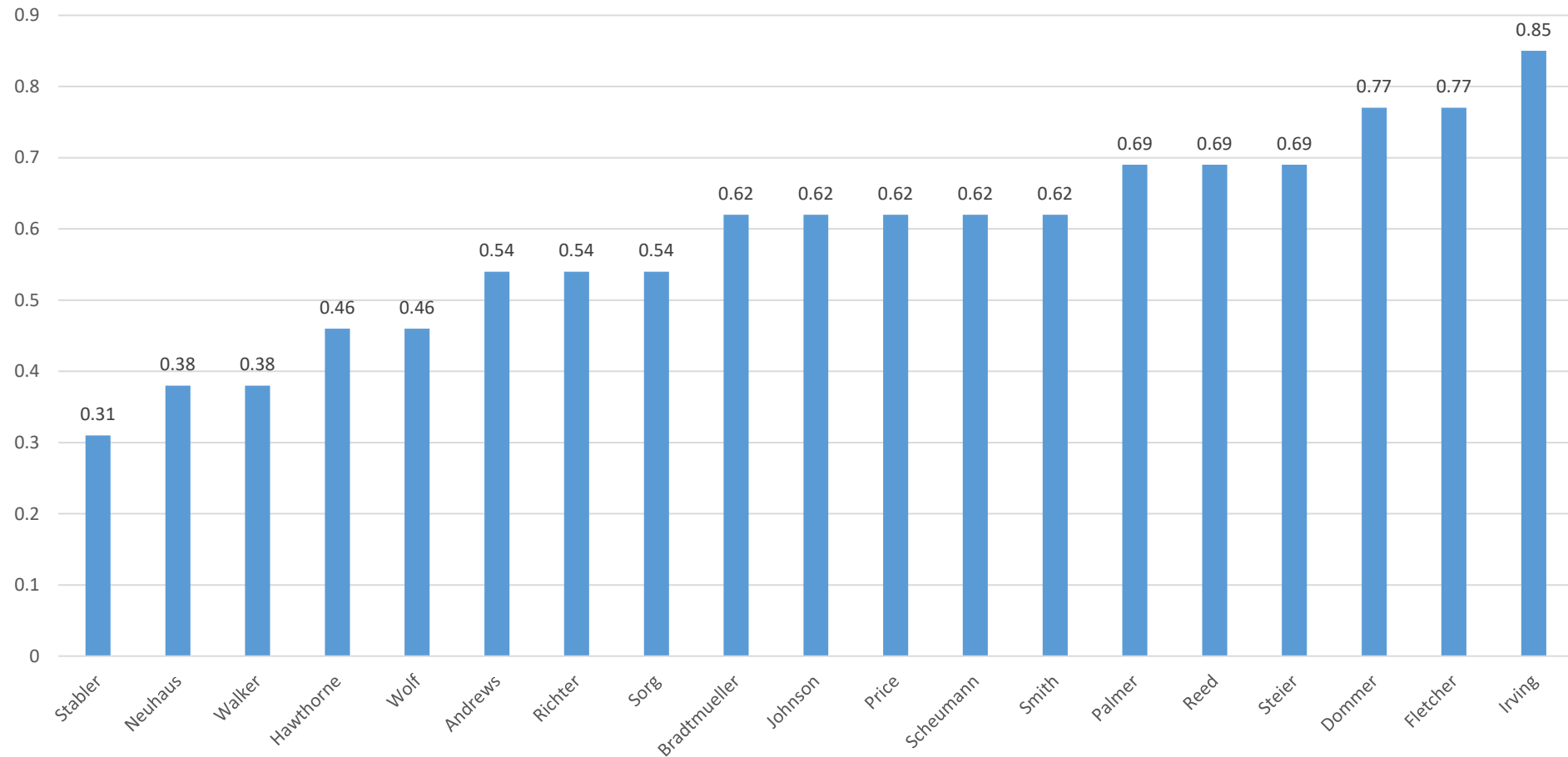
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What Have I learned:

2. There were teachers that I was missing.





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What Have I learned:

2. There were teachers that I was missing.

Why & Who?

a. Intense Program

b. Those with strong management

c. Less personally fulfilling to me



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What Have I learned:

3. Setting a goal and having transparency can improve staff moral.

Why?

a. I relayed my success or lack of on a monthly basis in my weekly newsletter.

b. Teachers verbalized their appreciation for my transparency.



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Going Forward:

As I continue as an elementary principal I need to continue to make more classroom visits.

I will attempt to accomplish this by walking into classrooms as I walk the halls. I will not worry about 5 minutes, but I will walk into each classroom I walk past.



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Bibliography:

- The Principal as Staff Developer.
- Barth, Roland S.
 - *Journal of Education*, v163 n2 p144-62 Spr 1981
- Examines the role of the school principal in promoting the professional development of teachers under conditions of mutual visibility while fulfilling regular school responsibilities.



Making Time for Classroom Visits

Principal Name: Steve Snodgrass

School Name: New Haven Intermediate

Principal's Email Contact: ssnodgrass@eacs.k12.in.us

Background Leading to My Inquiry

In 2014, I became an elementary administrator after spending 16 years as a high school teacher. I soon learned that the difference in being an instructional leader is much different on the elementary level than what I was used to seeing on the secondary level. In the secondary environments that I had worked the principal was more a manager than a visible instructional leader. As I arrived in the elementary setting I can clearly remember telling my wife I would soon return to the secondary level, but after three to four months I had fallen in love with the elementary environment.

My learning curve was steep as arrived at a primary building with a 60% English Language Learner population. In addition to learning the management of the elementary building I was very conscious of my high school background and the need to have credibility as an instructional leader.

The Purpose of My Inquiry

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to continue to learn and grow as an instructional leader. As I contemplated my role as an Instructional Leader, my first thoughts revolved around my ability to lead professional development, my ability to lead collaboration, and my ability to improve the pedagogical practices of the school. After studying my IPLI staff survey and my IDOE Panorama Data, I decided to go back to my staff for direction.

My Wondering

After discussion with my local cohort and my school leadership team, I arrived at the following definition to guide my staff in a direction that I could best serve them:

“Nothing within a school has more impact upon students in terms of skills development, self-confidence, or classroom behavior than the personal and professional growth of the teachers. When teachers examine, question, reflect on their ideas and develop new practices that lead toward their ideals, their students are alive. When teachers stop growing, so do their students.”
(from *The Principal as Staff Developer*, R. Barth, 1981)

My Actions

With the preceding definition used to guide me as an instructional leader I created a google forms survey to establish how the staff at New Haven Intermediate needed to be serviced. The following categories were used:

1. More specific ELA Professional Development
2. More specific Math Professional Development

3. Opportunities to observe other teachers
4. More specific Classroom Management Professional
5. I need more recognition for my classroom success
6. I need more frequent non-evaluation based classroom visits from the principal.

35% of the teachers responded that they needed to see the principal more in their classroom which led me to set a goal of visiting each classroom for five minutes a week.

Data Collection

I announced to the staff my goal at an in-service day at the beginning of 2nd semester and began classroom visits the week of January 7th 2019. I used a google sheets file to keep track of my classroom visits from the week of January 7th to the week of April 8th.

My Discoveries

I learned that even though this sounds like an easy goal to accomplish, it was actually very difficult. I had a 57.4% success rate, I was only able to visit 50% of the classes! Factors that made it difficult were snow days, student behaviors, parents, building management, and a school building project.

I also learned that there were areas that I was not frequently visiting. The classes that I was not visiting included the severe and profound special education program, the classes with strong classroom management, and the classes that are less personally fulfilling to me. This data was eye opening and forced to me be more visible in these areas.

Finally, I learned that having a personal goal that is shared with the staff can improve staff morale. As I push my staff to improve they appreciated the ability to see me set a goal and then see the results of that goal.

Where I Am Heading Next

As I continue as an elementary principal I need to continue to make more classroom visits. I will attempt to accomplish this by walking into classrooms as I walk the halls. I will not worry about 5 minutes, but I will walk into each classroom I walk past.

Bibliography

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