

# SILO/SOLO Teaching? How You Can Build Highly Effective Collaboration for your Teachers

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## **Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:**

This is my first year as the principal of Adams. I met with our IPLI team to analyze data from our Level 2 survey for reliability, (Effective Teaching in Every Classroom.) The results of the survey indicated that our staff needed improvement in the following indicators: Leading Indicator 2.1: The school leader communicates a clear vision as to how instruction should be addressed in the school. Leading Indicator 2.2: Support is provided to teachers to continually enhance their pedagogical skills through reflection and professional growth plans. Leading Indicator 2.5: Teachers are provided with job-embedded professional development that is directly related to their instructional growth goals. We developed a plan based on the three levels of the survey to improve, vision and collaboration.

For the first indicator, we decided to build an instructional framework to identify what highly effective instruction looks like. Instruction was sporadic through the building. Teachers had different ideas of what highly instruction should look like.

It was also evident that teachers were working in silos and not using collaboration to learn from one another. They would also not tap into the resource of the instructional coach. Teachers did not feel like they could take risks to improve their instruction.

Lastly, the PLC's needed structure for more collaboration. PLC time was random and teachers were not analyzing data on a deeper level. Feedback and accountability were not given to tie PLC times together.

## **Statement of Your Team's Wondering:**

How does intentional PLC time, defined instructional framework, and instructional rounds improve teacher collaboration and student achievement?

## **Methods/Procedures:**

To gain insights into our wondering, analyzed the survey results in the fall and shared it with the staff. Then over winter break, gave the staff a graphic organizer to digest and think about that showed "Must See, Might See, and Should See." Teachers were given time to work with the grade level team to fill in the graphic organizer. Then, to start the second semester, we met as a staff and defined the graphic organizer together. All teachers now have this hanging in the classroom.

Next, we provided PD on risk taking. We discussed that it is ok to take risks and break down the walls to get better. Along with this, we introduced instructional rounds. We gave the teachers Wednesday afternoons to

attend or host instructional rounds. Teachers were given a survey to identify areas of strength so that they could host instructional rounds. Teachers were provided with sign up sheets to attend.

Finally, we identified roles and norms for PLC time. We provided a short PD on highly effective collaboration and tied it to our instructional rounds to encourage teachers to share and take risks. We also created a new feedback form for teachers to weekly submit through Google Forms so I could provide feedback.

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

As a result of analyzing our data, we learned that teachers were more open to attending instructional rounds once they were given permission to take risks and admit they needed help in their instruction. We conducted over 70 instructional rounds in one year. Teachers completed exit slips that shared positive thoughts about the process.

Another result of analyzing our data showed us that teachers collaborated more during PLC by providing weekly feedback forms. These forms provided valuable feedback and improved communication. It allowed me to listen to the teachers and give them what they needed.

### **Providing Concluding Thoughts:**

This cycle provided very strong and positive results for my school. It assisted me as I entered the new school setting and allowed for positive change. This made a huge improvement for my teachers and me.

Teachers felt such relief to know that they could take risks and actually learn from one another. They learned that the best sustainable and meaningful professional development can occur within the school setting.

We also learned that survey data is powerful. It gave us valuable information to work toward improvement. The HRS survey is a tool that I will use in the future. It has also encouraged our teachers to implement surveys to parents so they can improve communication for the benefit of students.

### **References:**

Marzano, Simms, and Warrick. High Reliability Schools: The Next Step to School Reform.