



Comfortable Conversations

Principal Name: Kellie Pearson

School Name: Columbia Elementary, Logansport

Principal's Email Contact: pearsonk@lcsc.k12.in.us

Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)

- My professional teaching experience prior to administration was not at the elementary level. I am licensed in three areas of Special Education: learning disabilities, mild disabilities, and severe disabilities. My first four years of teaching were as a resource teacher for grades 7-12. My next 8 years of teaching were still at the high school level, teaching life skills to students ages 14-22. I accepted the position of assistant principal at Columbia Elementary the same year I began working on my administrator's license. I took over as principal of Columbia Elementary after only 2 years as assistant principal, when the sitting principal unexpectedly left.
- My dilemma is that I am now the head instructional leader with very little elementary background in the curriculum being taught!

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to ultimately feel confident in my conversations with teachers about their instruction. I want to provide them with sound and helpful advice regarding their instruction. I want to be the best I can be for my amazing staff.

My Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose, I wondered . . . In what ways would increasing my time in classrooms to observe instruction, influence my confidence in having conversations with teachers during our professional learning communities (PLC)?

My Actions (Slide 5)

To begin my action research, I started by creating a walkthrough observation schedule. I assigned myself two teachers per day and put them on a calendar. I then created a google form for data collection purposes. I would complete this form after each walkthrough. I then would complete walkthroughs for 10 teachers per week. The goal was two teachers per day.

Data Collection (Slide 6)

My first method of data collection was the Google Form that I created. After I completed a walk through I completed the form. The form included the following information:

- Teacher name

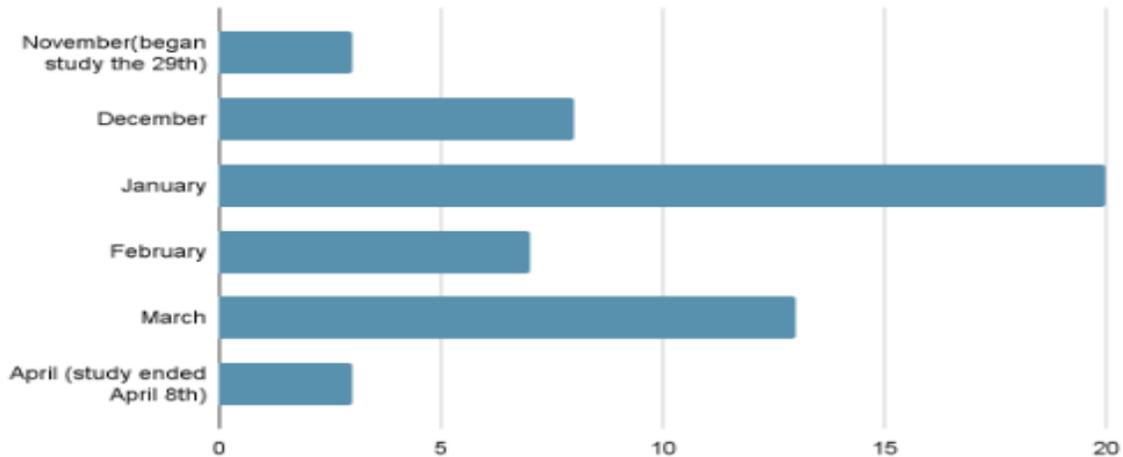
- Date
- Time
- Lesson/Standard being taught
- Observations
- Feedback given to the teacher Yes/No
- Additional comments about the given feedback

My second method of data collection was a journal. After each conversation I had with teachers regarding their instructions, I wrote how I felt during the conversation.

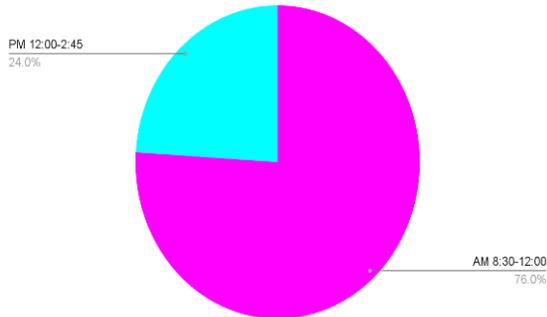
My Data (Slides 7-8)

- Completed 51 observations beginning November 29th-April 8th.
 - Goal: complete 30 in this time frame.
 - Some of these data points ended up being long and short observations instead of just a walkthrough.
 - 25 of the data points are documented as walkthroughs only

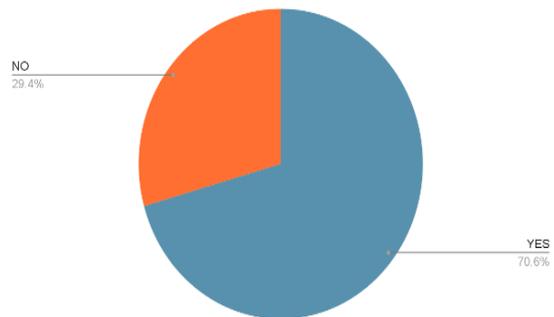
Number of Observations per Month



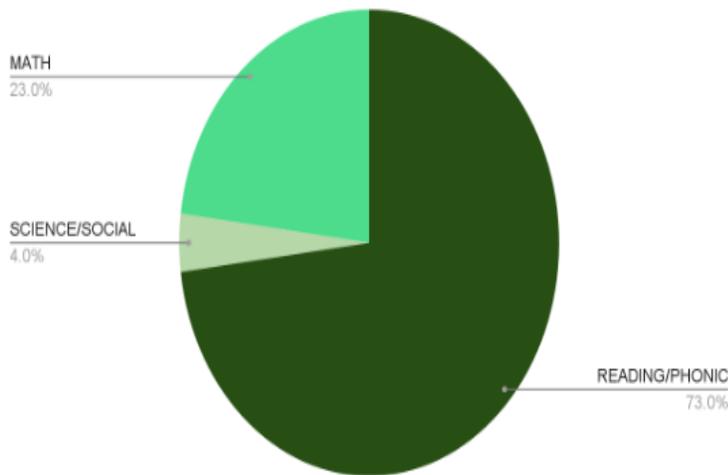
Time of observations



FEEDBACK GIVEN TO TEACHERS



LESSONS BEING TAUGHT



- Journalled for 25/36 feedback opportunities
 - 12 occurrences of teachers stopping me to talk after a walkthrough
 - 92% of journal entries quoted a positive feeling in conversations

My Discoveries (Slide 9)

Below are my three learning statements from this action research project:

- Learning Statement One: When and who I observe matters.
- Learning Statement Two: Teachers are more comfortable with me coming into the classroom.
- Learning Statement Three: My confidence in conversations with teachers about instruction has been boosted.

When and who I observe matters. I found I am observing certain teachers and in certain areas of the building more than others. I am observing more in the morning than in the afternoon. 76% of my observations were completed between 8:30am and 12:00pm. Only 24% of my observations were completed between 12:00pm and 2:45pm. I am seeing a lot of instruction during the reading/phonics block (73%) but missing instruction during the math (23%), science and social studies block (4%).

Teachers are more comfortable with me coming into the classroom. I have had several conversations spurred with teachers just by me observing for a few minutes. In my journal entries I had recorded 12 occurrences of teachers stopping me before I left the room to speak to me about something great happening in their classrooms. They are excited to quickly share things that have been happening or that are in the works in their classrooms.

My confidence in conversations with teachers about instruction has been boosted. 92% of my journal entries quoted a positive feeling in conversations that I had with teachers regarding their instruction.

Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 10)

During my action research journey, I made discoveries about myself, my school, and my teachers. I set out to improve something just about me and feel that during this process I absolutely did. However, I also learned a little more about what my school and what my teachers need. Liz Wiseman, author of *Multipliers* stated “Multipliers invoke each person’s unique intelligence and create an atmosphere of genius-innovation, productive effort, and collective intelligence” (p.10). Throughout this research, spending more time in classrooms watching my teachers do their “thing” made me realize that I desperately want to be a multiplier! I also learned that my staff want to have someone to be their multiplier. They are so willing to improve and grow. Learning to be confident as an instructional leader has helped me in my quest to be that multiplier for my school.

For the last two school years I have been trying to implement meaningful PLC time. Moving forward, I am going to work on continuing my walkthroughs each week. I will be evaluating how I can open more of my day to spend more time in classrooms. I will also evaluate how I can make sure I am getting into ALL of the classrooms to see ALL of the subjects being taught. Columbia will start having PLC meetings weekly. We will have more of a focus on students, and data and talk about what instruction is looking like in their classrooms.

Bibliography (Slide 11)

Wiseman, L. (2017). *Multipliers: How the best leaders make everyone smarter*. New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Comfortable Conversations

Columbia Elementary
Kellie Pearson
pearsonk@lcsc.k12.in.us

Background...Steps leading to my why

- My professional teaching experience prior to administration
 - Licensed in Special Education: Learning Disabilities, Mild Disabilities, and Severe Disabilities
 - First 4 years of experience: resource teacher for grades 7-12
 - 8 years of experience as a Life Skills teacher for students ages 14-22
- Accepted an Assistant Principal's position at Columbia Elementary the same year I began working on my administrators license.
- Took over as principal of Columbia Elementary after only 2 years as assistant principal, when the sitting principal unexpectedly left.
- I was now the head instructional leader with very little elementary background in the curriculum!

Purpose

- To be the best I can be for my amazing staff.
- To provide them with sound and helpful advice.
- To be aware of what is happening in each classroom.
- To feel confident in my conversations with teachers about their instruction.

My Wondering

In what ways would increasing my time in classrooms to observe instruction, influence my confidence in having conversations with teachers during our professional learning communities (PLC)?

Actions

- Create a walkthrough observation schedule.
- Create a Google form for data collection.
- Complete walkthroughs for 10 teachers per week.
 - Goal 2 teachers per day.

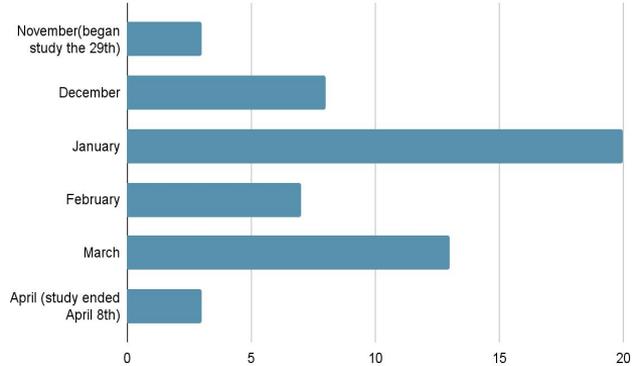
Data Collection

- Google Form
 - Teacher name
 - Date
 - Time
 - Lesson/Standard being taught
 - Observations
 - Feedback given to teacher yes/no
 - Additional comments about the given feedback
- Journaling
 - Brief description of the conversation that these observations inspired and how I felt during and after the conversations.

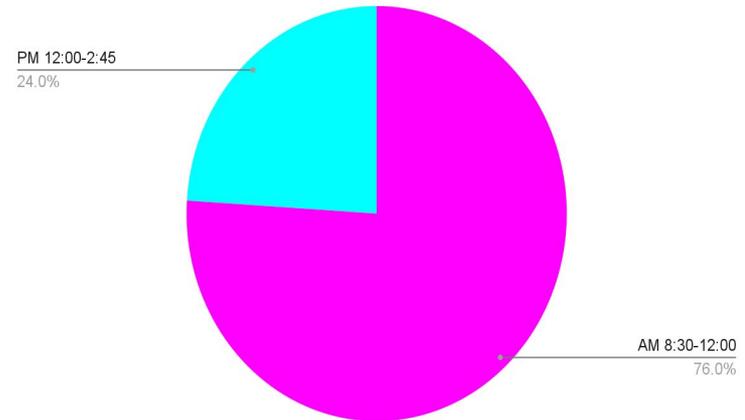
Data

- Completed 51 observations beginning the week of November 29th-April 8th.
 - Goal in this time frame was 30
 - Some of these were short or long observations for evaluation purposes
 - 25 are documented as walkthroughs only

Number of Observations per Month

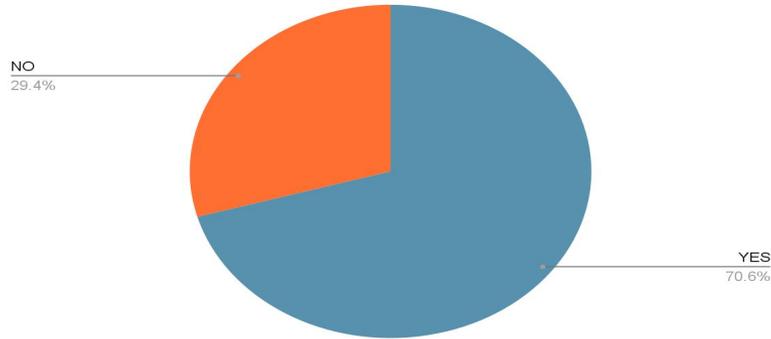


Time of observations

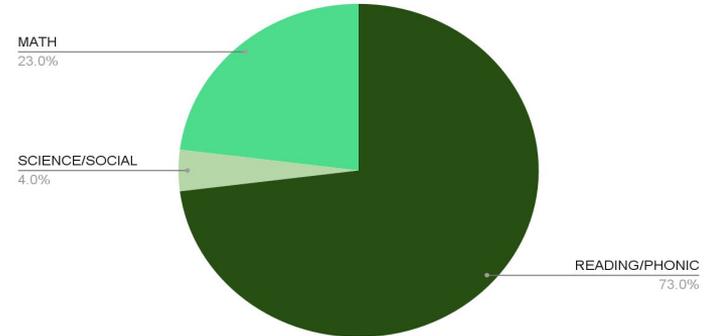


Data

FEEDBACK GIVEN TO TEACHERS



LESSONS BEING TAUGHT



- **Journaling**

- Journalled for 25/36 feedback opportunities
- 12 occurrences of teachers stopping me to talk after a walkthrough
- 92% of journal entries quoted a positive feeling in conversations

Discoveries

- When and who I observe matters.
 - found I am hitting certain teachers/areas of the building more than others
 - Observing more in the morning than in the afternoon
 - During the reading/phonics block
 - Missing instruction in math, science and social studies
- Teachers are more comfortable with me coming into the classroom
 - Several conversations have been spurred just by me observing
 - They are excited to quickly share things that have been happening or are in the works in their rooms.
- My confidence in conversations with teachers about instruction has been boosted.

Where am I heading next

- Become a multiplier
 - Liz Wiseman, author of Multipliers stated “Multipliers invoke each person’s unique intelligence and create an atmosphere of genius-innovation, productive effort, and collective intelligence” (p.10).
- Plan for next school year
 - How can I open more of my day to spend more time in classrooms?
 - How can I make sure to get into ALL of the classrooms more equally?
- Start having PLC meetings weekly
 - More of a focus on students, data and what instruction is happening.
- Spend time diving into new math curriculum
 - We are adopting a new curriculum for next year
 - Spend some time this year watching our pilot teachers work with the possible new program

Bibliography

Wiseman, L. (2017). *Multipliers: How the best leaders make everyone smarter*. New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers.