

Observation Collaboration

Success Academy

Dean Fecher

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Background Leading to this Inquiry

- ▶ I find that my skills as an instructional leader have been limited as are my communication skills based on the most recent staff survey. Therefore, I wanted to find a way I could be a better instructional leader within my building and improve upon my communication skills with teachers.

Purpose of this Inquiry

- ▶ I am required to do two formal observations and two short observations each year for every teacher. With 40 teachers this amounted to 160 observations. However, because these were a part of the evaluation process, I found that teachers appeared stressed, communication could be difficult at best, and it was hard to have a constructive conversations because “evaluations” were on the line.

My Wondering

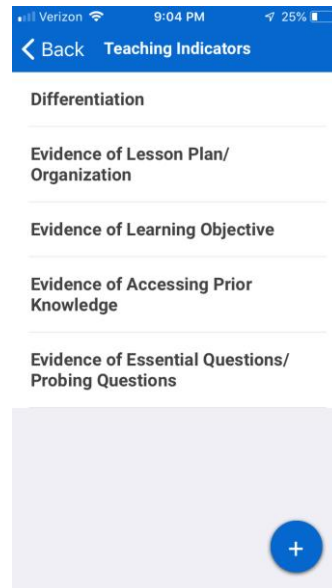
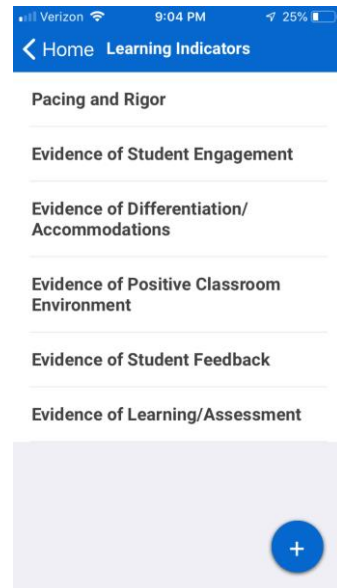
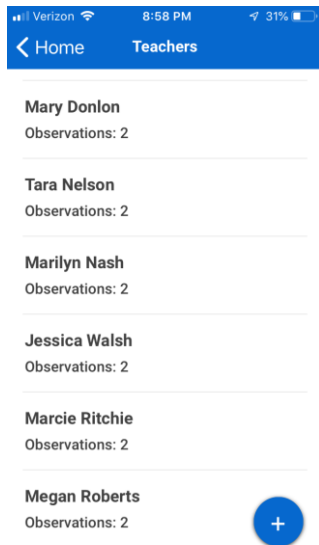
- ▶ In addition to the evaluation requirements, I wondered if I could consistently observe each teacher at least once every two weeks, would this help me to be a better instructional leader, and also help with the conversations revolving around best practice in the classrooms?

My Actions

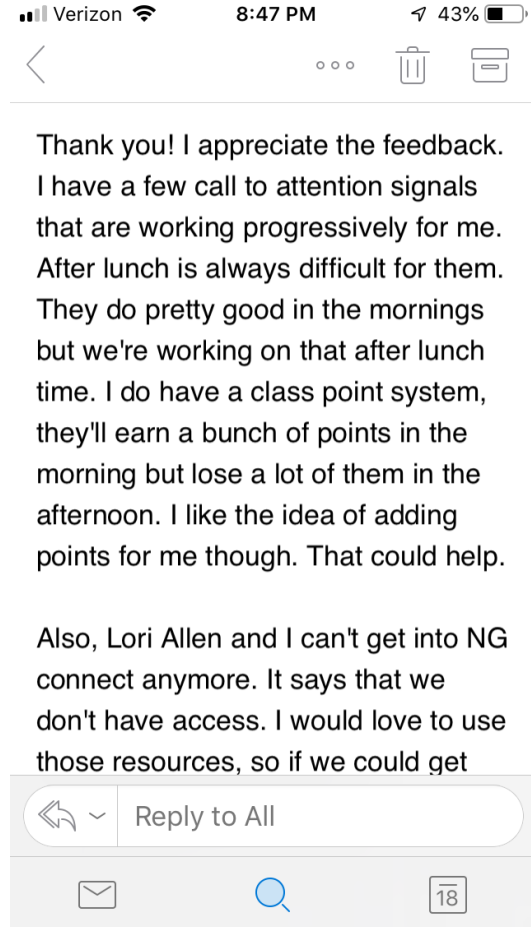
- ▶ I first created a schedule that I put in my calendar. My goal was to see the primary teachers (K-2) one week and then see the intermediate teachers (3-5) the second week. I communicated with teachers that when I was using my phone these were informal observations.
- ▶ I used the Teach One app to help me record these observations and to provide a quick e-mail to the teacher as I exited the classroom.

Data Collection

- ▶ Teach One is a classroom observation App that allows me to efficiently and easily conduct quick 10 minute observations. I can choose both the teaching indicators and learning indicators that I am looking for by simply using a dropdown menu. I am also able to make notes and immediately send this information to the teacher as I am exiting the classroom. This data is all collected through my cell phone.



My Data



My Data



To You



Thank you for the feedback.



To You



Thank you so much!

Thank you for asking me the hard questions and pushing me to be my best self. I know I can finish strong.

I believe in you

My Discoveries

- ▶ I have discovered that students are not as surprised to see me in the classroom. Previously when I walked in they would shout out my name or the younger kids would run to give me a hug. The more I am in the classrooms the less of a distraction I become.
- ▶ I have discovered that teachers are more appreciative of me being in the classroom more often, and more willing to have those critical conversations which leads to collaboration and discussion about best practice in the classroom
- ▶ I have also discovered that many of our teachers have definitive strengths in subject areas and greatly enjoy teaching those subjects.
- ▶ Unfortunately the data obtained from this App was not as useful as I would have liked. I would have been helpful to have this information in a spreadsheet.

Where Am I Heading Next

- ▶ My leadership team and I have shared an idea with my staff based on this last discovery. We have almost 85% buy-in. We have five teachers in Kindergarten, 1st grade and 5th grade, and four teachers in 2nd grade, 3rd grade and 4th grade. Teachers in each grade level will be working in teams of two. One teacher will be teaching E/LA and Writing, while the partner teacher will be teaching Math/Science during the first semester and Math/Social Studies during the 2nd semester. This is called platooning. Teachers will become experts in their subject areas.
- ▶ This leads me to my next inquiry. I wonder if platooning (similar to departmentalization) will be a more effective means of teaching. Currently there is very little research.
- ▶ We will have one self contained classroom in Kindergarten, 1st and 5th grades which will serve as control groups.



Observation Collaboration

Principal Name: Dean Fecher

School Name: Success Academy

Principal's Email Contact: dfecher@successacademysb.com

Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)

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The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)

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My Actions (Slide 5)

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My Data (Slides ?)

I had multiple teacher share their appreciation.

- ▶ “Thank you! I appreciate the feedback. I have a few call to attention signals that are working progressively for me. After lunch is always a difficult time for them. They do pretty good in the mornings, but we’re working on that after lunch time. I do have a class point system where they will earn a bunch of points in the morning but lose a lot of them in the afternoon. I like the idea of adding points for me though. That could help.”
- ▶ “Thanks, Dean! The kids and I love it when you come in.”
- ▶ “Thanks Dean. It’s good to see you stopping in so consistently
- ▶ “Thanks for asking me the hard questions and pushing me to be my best self. I know I can finish strong.”
- ▶ “Thank you for the feedback.”
- ▶ “Thank you so much.”

My Discoveries (Slide 9)

- ▶ I have discovered that students are not as surprised to see me in the classroom. Previously when I walked in they would shout out my name or the younger kids would run to give me a hug. The more I am in the classrooms the less of a distraction I become.
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