

Creating Instructional Observation Habits Within Our School

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Background

- Many changes are in place for our school year. Our district preschool program initiative sparked many physical changes to the building, including the separation of many teachers from peers that they were once located closer to. The school also experienced a change in leadership with a new principal.
- Initially we set out on a journey to implement a school wide instructional model. We chose instead to incorporate a simplified version of our plan. Teachers simply needed to visit other classrooms while instruction was taking place.

Purpose

- Create a peer observation component as a new measure of supporting a strong culture of teacher growth and development in our school.

Wondering

- What impact can be made in our instruction at Avilla Elementary by creating an instructional model together?

Our Actions

- Our team asked teachers to study the 43 given indicators from The New Art and Science of Teaching. Together, we selected 20 that we wanted to implement over the next stages of our professional development.
- COVID-19 protocols required much effort from all staff. Given these necessary expectations, our staff decided to pause the instructional model and move forward with observational “Pop Ins”, as we decided to call them.
- Our team created a simple Pop In form that teachers would give to their peer that they observed.
- Our staff agreed to complete three Pop In visits from January until spring break.
- Our leadership team tracked staff visits in a spreadsheet in order to measure outcomes over time.

Teacher Selected Instructional Model Indicators

Feedback	Content	Context
<p><i>Providing and Communicating Clear Learning Goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Tracking Student Progress 3. Celebrating Success <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Informal Assessments of the Whole Class 5. Formal Assessments of Individual Students 	<p><i>Direction Instruction Lessons</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Chunking Content <p><i>Practicing and Deepening Lessons</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Structured Practice Sessions <p><i>Knowledge Application Lessons</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Engaging Students in Cognitively Complex Tasks 13. Providing Resources and Guidance <p><i>Strategies That Appear in <u>ALL</u> Types of Lessons</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Highlighting Critical Information 17. Reviewing Content 19. Reflecting on Learning 	<p><i>Engagement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23. Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting 25. Using Physical Movement 27. Demonstrating Intensity and Enthusiasm 31. Providing Opportunities for Students to Talk About Themselves 32. Motivating and Inspiring Students <p><i>Rules and Procedures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33. Establishing Rules and Procedures <p><i>Relationships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38. Using Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors that Indicate Affection for Students 39. Understanding Students' Backgrounds and Interests <p><i>Communicating High Expectations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 41. Demonstrating Value and Respect for Reluctant Learners

Data Gathering

1	Teacher Name	Teacher Visited/Date	Teacher Visited/Date	Teacher Visited/Date		
2	Jackie Foster	K Rupert 3/17/21				
3	Donna Hinrichsen	Art Chesebrough 2/8/21	1 Garl 2/24/21	5 Smith 3/24/21		
4	Jaren Shepherd	5 Smith 3/17/21	K Rupert 3/17/21	K Newcomer 3/17/21		
5	Josie Urig	K Newcomer 3/10/21	1 Leffers 3/12/21	2 Bloomfield 3/15/21		
6	Anita Zollars	K Pozorski 2/26/21	5 Smith 3/17/21	1 Garl 3/17/21		
7						
8	Liz Newcomer	5 Smith 2/3/21	4 Schutte 2/10/21	2 Kerr 2/18/21	4 Amstutz 2/26/21	3 Collins
9	Kirsten Pozorski	3 Collins 2/25/21	1 Garl 3/10/21	P Urig 3/25/21		
10	Morgan Rupert	3 Collins 2/3/21	1 Garl 3/25/21	?? No name 3/19/21		
11						
12	Erin Garl	3 Onion 2/23/21	5 Smith 3/4/21	K Rupert 3/8/21		
13	Trina Leffers	3 Onion 2/26/21	5 Smith 3/15/21	5 Hudson 3/22/21		
14						
15	Sylvia Bloomfield	2 Kerr 2/4/21	5 Smith 2/23/21	Preschool Urig 2/25/21	1 Garl 3/1/21	
16	Beth Kerr	2 Bloomfield 2/12/21	1 Leffers 3/16/21	K Rupert 3/15/21		
17						
18	Alana Collins	K Newcomer 3/4/21	5 Smith 3/19/21	1 Leffers 3/24/21		
19	Sheri Onion	K Newcomer 3/2/21	1 Garl 3/16/21	5 Hudson 3/19/21		
20						

Sample Completed Pop In Form

Trina

Thank you for letting me
POP in today!

**You are an amazing teacher!
I'm so glad I got to see how you
create a fun classroom today!**
environment!

Date 3/23/21 From Alana Collins

I loved the students enthusiasm
for learning! 😊

Discoveries

- Our Leadership Team found that our staff was very receptive to an instructional model. There was much discussion and positive dialogue regarding the original 43 indicators.
- The excitement of instructional observations became the driving force of our project.
- Although the instructional model indicators have established importance to our teachers, we decided that building a habit of visiting others and hosting others was more valuable for this year.
- Most teachers completed their decided upon three visits to other classrooms within our goal timeline.

Next Steps

- At this time our Leadership Team does believe that our teaching staff are authentically engaged in promoting the habit of instructional peer observations for the future.
- Next year we will begin highlighting our selected instructional model indicators upon visiting classrooms. This feedback will be incorporated into our now existing Pop In form.
- Non instructional school staff will have the opportunity to visit classrooms. Being able to discuss what happens within our school day with an authentic understanding of our instruction should increase our ability to strengthen relationships and school culture.

Bibliography

- Mazano, Robert J. (2017). *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. Bloomington, Indiana: Solution Tree Press.