Highly Effective Teaching at NHI

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Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

Our teacher's contract expired in June 2016 leading to several changes with how teachers would be evaluated in the next school year. Later that summer all district administrators went through 3 days of rigorous evaluation training. Those two situations alone lead to some tension as to what evaluations would look like for this school year.

In addition, we were coming off of several years of accolades. In 2013, we were named a Nation Blue Ribbon School. In 2014 and 2015 we earned an A letter grade with the state. In 2016, we were one of only two schools in Allen County designated as a Family Friendly School. Our Principal and Instructional Coach were noticing less sense of urgency building wide.

Therefore, the purpose of our action research was to re-create the sense of urgency needed everyday in education while making teachers feel comfortable with the changes to the evaluation processes. All the while, showing student academic growth.

Statement of Your Team's Wondering:

With this purpose, we wondered will the breakdown of the Teacher Evaluation Rubric (TER) impact the instructional methods used in the classroom?

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insights into our wondering, we sat down to decide which indicators we would break down in what order. This was based on last school year's evaluations and which indicators had the lowest scores. During our first meeting of the year, we covered two standards. Teachers were given yellow highlighters to highlight those words that stood out to them in the Effective column. Our team used chart paper to note what was said. Teachers were then given pink highlighters to highlight what stood out to them in the Highly Effective column. Another chart paper was used to record notes. A third chart paper was used to list what a Highly Effective classroom would look and sound like based on what they noted.

Difference Bewteen Effective and Highly Effective at NHI 2016/2017

2.1 Lesson Objective

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
easy to understand	beyond repeating	student led activities
specific and measurable	students explain why and what	check out tickets / exit slips
well organized	students demonstrate through work & comments	students explaining what they are learning & why
connections	prior knowledge	
why and what	teacher effectively engages	
student friendly	students understand connections	
prior knowledge		
importance explained		
move toward mastery		

2.2 Clearly Communicates

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
clear, concise, well-organized	sparks students' excitement	excitement and investment
demonstrates and delivers	sparks students' interests	engaged
factually correct	students ask higher order	students collaborating
multiple ways	make connections independently (S)	students asking questions
restates and rephrases	connects content to other areas (T)	student interests being met
relevant	teacher makes content relevant	
developmentally appropriate lang	students collaborate	
instructional strategies	connects to students experiences, interests and current events	teachers teaching students how to ask questions

3s are: teacher led and typically DOK 1/2   4s: students are independent/taking ownership and typically DOK 3/4

Difference Bewteen Effective and Highly Effective at NHI 2016/2017

2.3 Engaged in Academic Content

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
Appreciate accommodations Skills to help them benefit from whole group instruction 3/4 or more actively engaged Different learning modalities Sustains attention/dynamic presence Multiple ways of engaging Hard work and deeply active	Effectively integrates technology Provides ways to significantly engage and promote student mastery Differientiated for individual students' needs Appropriate pace / never disengaged / meaningful work for early finishers	Collaboration Technology is being used by students and teacher Kids doing different activities

2.4 Check for Understanding

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
checks at almost all key moments uses a variety of methods modifies as needed uses effective wait time doesn't allow students to opt out cycles back to students systematically assesses mastery of objective for every student at the end of every lesson	checks at higher level asking scaffolding questions accepts only high quality of student response	exit tickets spirialing incorrect answers to correct answers w/help of other students explaining answers student self-assessment ALL students open ended questions

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Difference Bewteen Effective and Highly Effective at NHI 2016/2017

2.5 Modify Instruction

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
teacher never gives up checks for understanding differentiates delivery appropriate adjustments scaffolding responds increase understanding different techniques diverse students needs assessment data	teacher anticipates misunderstandings and preemptively addresses them teacher responds to and modifies instruction without loss of flow	teachers have activities prepared for modifications based on checks anticipate struggles based on past academic experiences scaffolding

2.6 Higher Level of Understanding through Rigorous Instruction and Work

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
almost all students accessible and challenging teacher patience effective questioning differentiation of instruction each student's level of understanding meaningful practice apply and demonstrate persist with difficult material	all students accessible and challenging students give meaningful responses students pose higher questions to teacher and each other teacher highlights student work to motivate student work meets high expectations teachers encourage students interests additional opportunities beyond classroom	questions planned out teachers have DOK lessons planned high quality of work is displayed students asking/answering their own high level questions students engaged and motivated in their learning students are challenged at their level

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Difference Bewteen Effective and Highly Effective at NHI 2016/2017

2.7 Maximize Instructional Time

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
Starting on time	Never idle	Self-driven procedures
Only idle for brief periods	All student are on task without much prompting	Appropriate volume
Routines, procedures, tranistions without prompting	Students share responsiblities and work well together	Procedures for early finishers (self-driven)
Disruptive behaviors addresses without major interruption		On-task & engaged
Almost all students on task without much prompting		Reteaching procedures when needed

2.8 Classroom Culture

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
students are respectful of peers and teacher	students are invested in the success of peers	students offering to help peers
teacher reinforces positive character and behavior	reinforce positive and discourage negative behavior	expectations - students asking 2 friends before asking teacher
teachers have a good rapport/genuine interest	unprompted collaboration	classroom goals and rewards
opportunities for students to collaborate		"we don't do that here" peer to peer
teachers discourage negative behavior		
appropriate and positive consequences		
students support each other		

2.9 Set High Expectations

Effective (3)	Highly Effective (4)	What Does 4 Look Like?
all levels	high expectations	students set goals / data folders
students are invested in work	students are excited	DMR graphs
students value academic success	students know why it is important	students have a plan to improve
teacher celebrates and displays high quality work	students forms goals and analyze progress	realistic individualized goals
students take risks		math facts/star charts
classroom is a safe place		goal meetings/conferences
		incentive charts

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At least once a month, we came back to the TER and broke down an indicator or two. At the end of each of the meetings, our Principal would go to her office, type everything into a table format on excel and email out to the whole staff.

As we finished indicators, our Principal would note strategies she saw used in the classroom for the whole staff with positive emails. Our Instructional Coach planned staff professional development in areas where the staff had been weak the year before and where the staff noted they needed the most help this year.
This process took about 7 months from start to finish. It was an authentic process that allowed the staff to have real dialogue about what we think we look like, what we want to look like and what we actually look like.

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

As a result of analyzing our data, three important things we learned include: 1. Evaluation scores dropped but morale did not. 2. Educators, like students, want expectations to be as clear as possible. 3. We still have work to do, but if we continue to move forward as we have; we will get there together.

Evaluation scores dropped but morale did not. Teachers end of year scores on the evaluation rubric was not as high as it had been in previous years, but no one walked away wondering what happened or why their score dropped. We attribute this to everyone being a part and having a voice in determining what Highly Effective looked like and knowing expectations had been clearly laid out.

Educators, like students, want expectations to be as clear as possible. During our meetings we were able to have dialogue and hear from each other how we interpreted different parts of the rubric. This process allowed us to close several gaps that had been there before. It also brought forth those areas that are hard to identify and how we can better recognize them.

We still have work to do, but if we continue to move forward as we have; we will get there together. The work will never be done. Laws, policies and expectations will continue to change. The NHI staff at least has a living document to work through and a laid out process to follow as these changes occur.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

Because education is ever-changing, we must always have a sense of urgency.

What gets measured, gets done. Change is easier when dialogue and ownership takes place. When you support your team, everyone is better.

Moving forward the Principal and IC will continue to plan PD together, targeting our areas of need based on teacher feedback and classroom observations.

Brief video clips of Highly Effective Teaching will be provided for the staff.

The agreed upon expectations were provided after each session, but the completed document will become a part of the staff handbook and reviewed a few times a year. The completed document is a living document that will be evaluated and changed as needed.

References:

N/A