Inquiry Into Action

By: Karrianne Polk-Meek, Starr Elementary School
Contact: karriannep@rcs.k12.in.us

Background That Led to Your Inquiry:

In the fall of 2015 I became a building-level administrator at Starr Elementary. During my first year RCS adopted the 8-Step process, an inquiry based model, to analyze CFA data and improve instructional practices. As a new building level leader I found myself pulled in many directions but it became immediately obvious that I needed to invest more time in learning about the inquiry process.

Statement of Your Wondering:

With this purpose, I "wondered" how modeling the inquiry process would improve data-driven meetings and instructional decisions in my building.

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insights into my wanderings I set out to model the inquiry process for my staff. This began with a review of the inquiry process for myself. As articulated above one of my primary frustrations had been the meaning behind data meetings. I decided to model the inquiry process by asking How do we define data as meaningful (what data is most significant?) How do we use data to identify instructional or learning gaps? I next gave a survey to all staff members using Google Forms located at:
https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%2F1FAIpQLSekYxdZtt0TzBNE4ehk0nWr0WT_FYylUFUWXM31l-R6nCVIRQ%2Fviewform%3Fusp%3Dsf_link&data=02%7C01%7CLori.Davis%40indstate.edu%7Ce18b4125ff4043af132c08d5cb2539df%7C3eeabe396b1c4f95ae682fab18085f8d%7C1%7C0%7C636638283102616540&sdata=%2BLWXsiliJTLOjk645afCDkthszXca7D6%2FPL13fBk%2BP4%3D&reserved=0.

Stating Your Learning and Supporting it with Data:

I leaned that surveying my staff led me to find that data has many meanings to many teachers. If they are being asked to consider data points they don't find significant they are unwilling to consider its impact on practice. The initial survey results revealed that the use of data across the building was different. I also soon discovered that modeling the inquiry process with staff required clear and consistent protocols. From this I created a template that required staff to consider what data they would analyze, create a growth goal based on their analysis and then choose an instructional tactic that would be tracked and analyzed at the end of the cycle. Results of this can be found at
https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdrive.google.com%2Ffile%2Fd%2F1iT_Mg8Hy_YzY-VmsK6dac5hI-K6yL0f1%2Fview%3Fusp%3Dsharing&data=02%7C01%7CLori.Davis%40indstate.edu%7Ce18b4125ff4043af132c08d5cb2539df%7C3eeabe396b1c4f95ae682fab18085f8d%7C1%7C0%7C636638283102616540&sdata=ItneG9jQiC6kbb4jMzCnIUlNV3OSKnrShwiE2xkFXV4%3D&reserved=0.

Creating a short video highlighting the dilemma protocol, I then asked teachers to create their own focus question for the upcoming school year. The form and video can be found here:
https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%

.   I am excited to begin the 2018-19 school year using the results of the dilemma protocol to frame the inquiry process all year. These results can be found at

The introduction of the inquiry cycle and modeling it as the building leader has had initial success. As I continue my time in building leadership I hope to see the results in the form of increased student achievement.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

My initial action research short cycle has taught me many things as an administrator. Chief among them is that I must model what I expect my teachers to do. If I believe that the inquiry process matters I must model it myself. I also found that just like a teacher, it is helpful to start with what my teachers already know or understand about a topic prior to introducing it. In the future the basis of our data conversations will be driven by first asking why and how the data used BEFORE analyzing it.

I will continue to model the inquiry process for my staff and will continue to use the protocols introduced as a result of this short-cycle action research project.

I do wonder how I can ensure that the inquiry process is used even when I am not present at meetings...how and why would teachers find fidelity in its use? I hope the continued modeling and focus of the inquiry process will solidify its impact.

References:

O. (2014, September 03). Daniel R. Venables: Making Data Less Intimidating. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBIpMFQYCh4
Venables, D. R. (2014). How teachers can turn data into action. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Action Plan Tracking Sheet Starr Learning Logs 3/5-3/9					
Grade One Goal: 80% of students will be able to decode words with R controlled vowels.					
Instructional Tactic *What will be done?*	**Tactic Method** *Specifically, how will it be done?*	**Acting Party** *Who will do it?*	**Frequency** *How often will this task be done?*	**Completion Date**	**Verifying Artifacts** *Which artifacts will serve as evidence that the instructional tactic has been implemented?*
Rapid Word Chart	Small group (past practice: whole group)	T's and S's	3 x's a week	Learning Logs April 9-13th	Spelling list results...critical need to show evidence of TRANSFER during reading. Will track 3 students EACH and bring running records that show decoding of words with R controlled vowels.
Grade Two Goal: 80% of students will be able to transfer place over multiple context and formats. (Processing standard)					
Instructional Tactic *What will be done?*	**Tactic Method** *Specifically, how will it be done?*	**Acting Party** *Who will do it?*	**Frequency** *How often will this task be done?*	**Completion Date**	**Verifying Artifacts** *Which artifacts will serve as evidence that the instructional tactic has been implemented?*
Deliberately restating and re-teaching place value.	Use of manipulatives, students will draw manipulatives and state place value in word form.	T's and S's	3-5 x's a week	Learning Logs April 9-13th	Grade level created post assessment.
Grade Three Goal: 80% of students will persevere in solving multi-step math problems.					
Instructional Tactic *What will be done?*	**Tactic Method** *Specifically, how will it be done?*	**Acting Party** *Who will do it?*	**Frequency** *How often will this task be done?*	**Completion Date**	**Verifying Artifacts** *Which artifacts will serve as evidence that*