

Indiana Principal Leadership Institute - Action Research Narrative

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Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2-3)

Throughout this narrative, I refer to the Process Communication Model, created by Dr. Taibi Kahler (Regier, 2020). The Leadership Profile I received after taking the PCM survey categorized me as a thinker base with a harmonizer phase. My inquiry was developed with this in mind, and elements of this profile are referred to throughout.

My thinker base really enjoys when I am engaged as a learner myself. Doing things like planning professional development, participating in new learning myself, reading a professional book, etc. all feel energizing.

But I know I don't always meet this need. I tend to put the needs of others first, and personally engaging as a learner doesn't feel like taking care of my teachers or students. Is that my harmonizer phase?

When I asked myself why I don't always engage as a learner, a few reasons came up:

- I get caught up in supervision and management - it doesn't feel like there is time.
- I sense others do not want to engage with ideas in the same way, so I choose to temper my enthusiasm as a learner to create greater harmony or comfort for others.
- It feels pretentious to pursue intellectual engagement, and I worry that others will see it as inauthentic or intimidating.

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 4)

The purpose of my action inquiry was to prioritize learning for myself to create greater personal satisfaction.

My Wondering (Slide 5)

I wondered how intentionally prioritizing time spent as an active learner will impact my leadership.

- Will feelings of satisfaction be higher on days I engaged as a learner?
- Will engaging as a learner help meet my harmonizer phase psychological need to ask for what I want and care for myself?
- Will engaging as a learner help build closer connections with those I lead - either because we have learned together OR because my own needs were met so I could meet theirs?

My Actions (Slides 6-8)

First, I created a simple form to record each day the answer to two questions. I collected responses on each work day. The questions were:

Did I engage as a learner today? (Yes or No)

What was my level of satisfaction today? (1, 2, or 3, with 3 being the best.)

Second, I intended to review my calendar at the start of the week to make time for engaging as a learner. I realized early on I was not very good at doing this. A few weeks in, I shifted to a reflection at the end of the week, noting where my calendar showed times to engage as a learner. I reviewed my calendar (as reflection at the end of the week) and kept those notes each week.

As I was collecting data, I noticed that I felt really good on days I was in classrooms and providing feedback to teachers, which often led to follow-up conversations where I felt engaged as a learner as I worked with teachers to consider classroom challenges together. Classroom visit data is kept in our SFS evaluation system, so data about when I was in classrooms was already recorded. I decided to consider this record in addition to the data I was collecting.

Data Collection (Slide 9)

Satisfaction and Learning Data: I complete the form I created on 43 work days, starting in December. Most data came from January and February.

Calendar Data: I reviewed my calendar for 9 weeks in January, February, and March.

Classroom Visit Data: All observations and walkthroughs are recorded in Standards for Success. I looked at how many classrooms I visited each day during the project.

My Data (Slides 10-16)

Figure 1

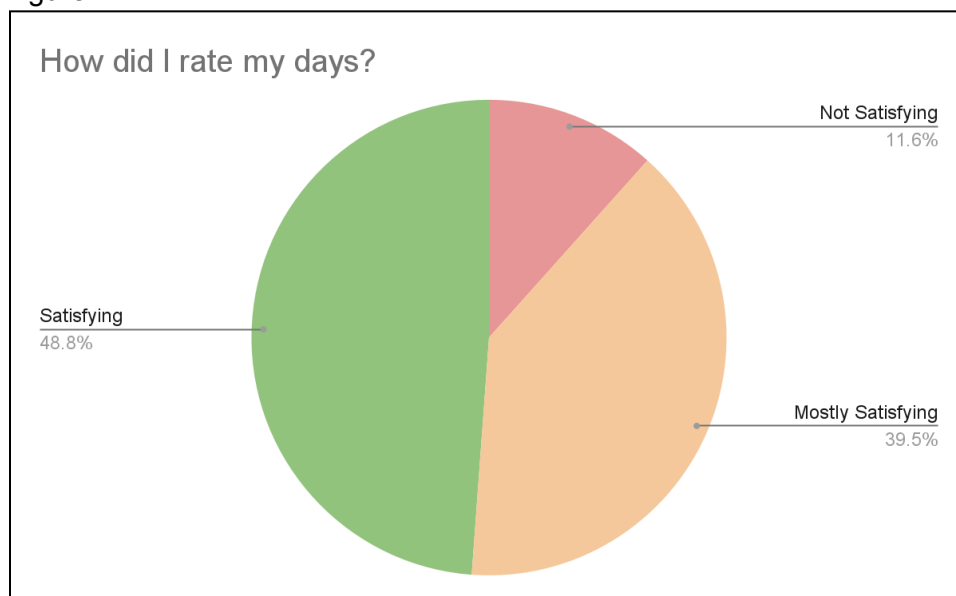


Figure 2

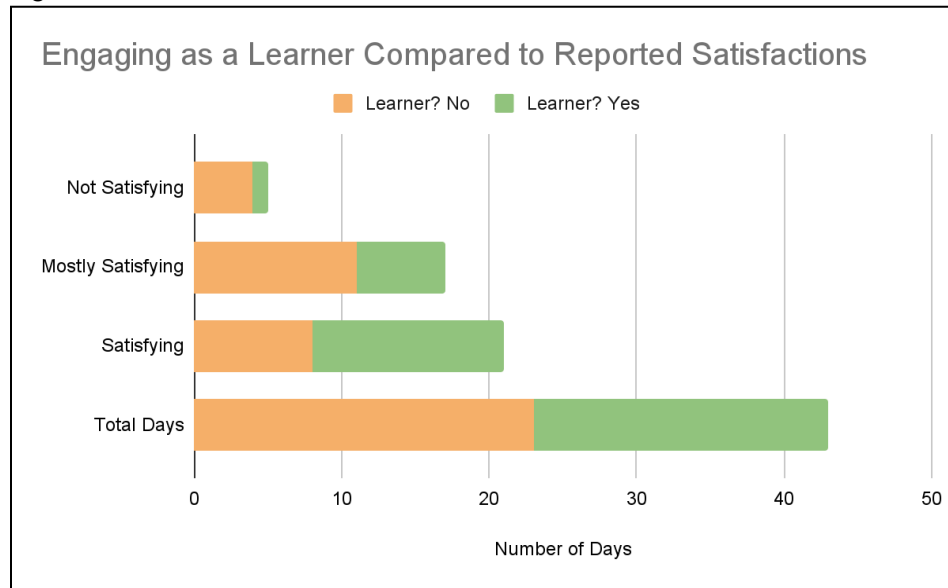


Figure 3

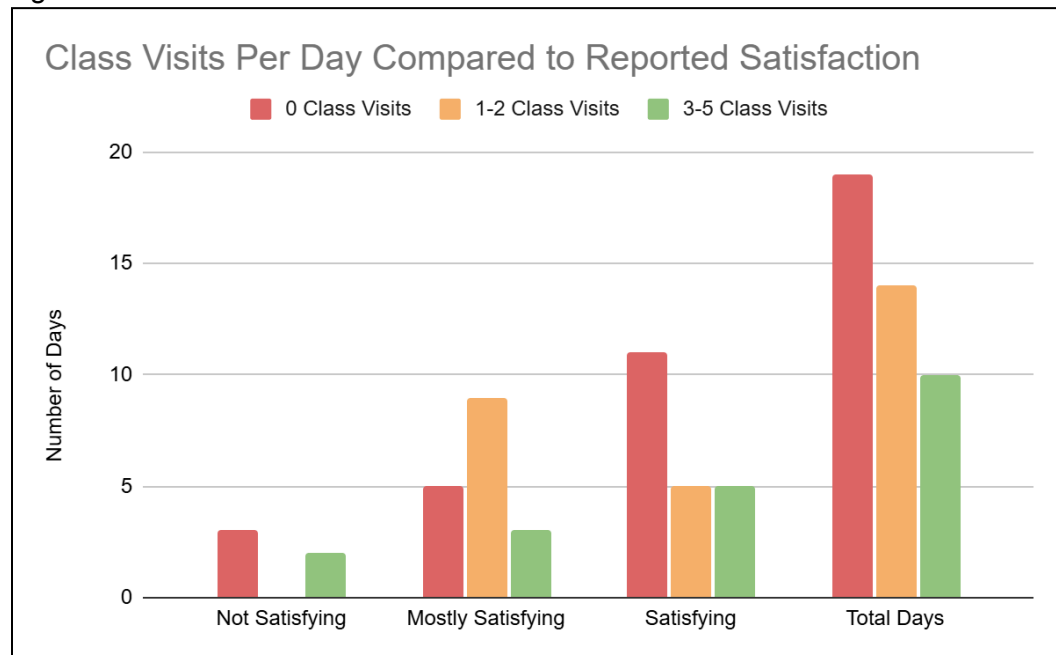


Table 1: Data set for Figures 1-2

	Not Satisfying	Mostly Satisfying	Satisfying	ALL DAYS
Total Days	5	17	21	43
% of Days Engaged as a Learner	20%	35%	62%	47%
Avg Class Visits Per Day	1.40	1.47	1.33	1.40

Table 2: Data Set for Figure 3

	Not Satisfying	Mostly Satisfying	Satisfying	ALL DAYS
0 Class Visits	3	5	11	19
1-2 Class Visits	0	9	5	14
3-5 Class Visits	2	3	5	10
% of Days with Visits	40%	70%	48%	56%

My Discoveries (Slide 17-20)

I was able to draw three main conclusions after conducting this action research.

- *Being a learner is connected to my satisfaction.* Feeling satisfied does have a correlation to engaging as a learner. 62% of satisfying days included engaging as a learner (compared to 20% of not satisfying and 35% of mostly satisfying.)
- *Classroom visits play a part in overall satisfaction.* But not as much as I thought... When I reviewed my calendar, several of my zero classroom visit days had time off-campus being a learner (like at IPLI or another conference).
- *Considering my own satisfaction matters.* Tracking my own satisfaction felt like a silly metric at first, but then it turned into feeling somewhat radical and important. The principalship is so often about taking care of others, this forced me to consider my own needs in a way I haven't before. (And I want to avoid burnout that is common in novice principals.)

Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 21)

I have two next steps. The first is to prioritize engaging as a learner and visiting classrooms. This will help maintain my own satisfaction. I think these appeal to me because they include thinking, but also time structure and connection (through classroom feedback.) After completion of IPLI, completion of graduate courses may be a way to stay engaged as a learner.

The second step is to remember that my own satisfaction is a worthy goal. While it's certainly not the only goal I have at school, meeting my own needs helps keep me out of distress behaviors that are ineffective, like micromanaging or losing confidence.

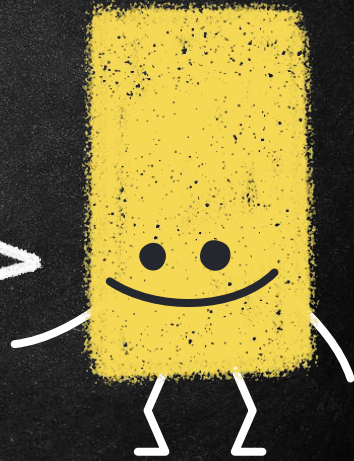
Bibliography (Slide 22)

DeMatthews, D. E., Reyes, P., Carrola, P., Edwards, W., & James, L. (2021). Novice principal burnout: Exploring secondary trauma, working conditions, and coping strategies in an urban district. Education Research Center, University of Texas at Austin. Retrieved from www.texaserc.utexas.edu


Regier, N. (2020). *Seeing people through: Unleash your leadership potential with the process communication model*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

BETTER WHEN
I'M THINKING?

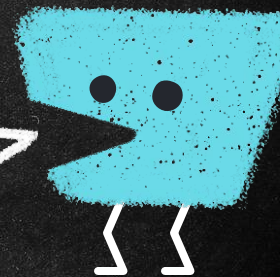
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BACKGROUND LEADING TO THIS INQUIRY:



My thinker base really enjoys when I am engaged as a learner myself. Doing things like planning professional development, participating in new learning myself, reading a professional book, etc. all feel energizing.

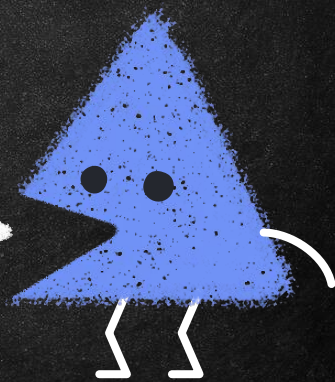


But I know I don't always meet this need. I tend to put the needs of others first, and personally engaging as a learner doesn't feel like taking care of my teachers or students. Is that my harmonizer phase?

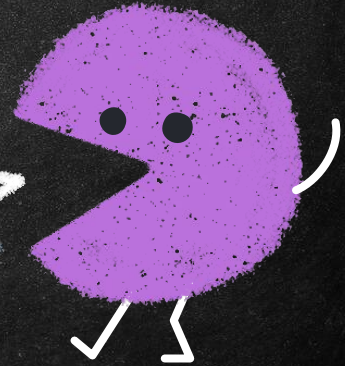
MORE BACKGROUND

When I asked myself why I don't always engage as a learner, a few reasons came up:

- I get caught up in supervision and management - it doesn't feel like there is time.
- I sense others do not want to engage with ideas in the same way, so I choose to temper my enthusiasm as a learner to create greater harmony or comfort for others.
- It feels pretentious to pursue intellectual engagement, and I worry that others will see it as inauthentic or intimidating.



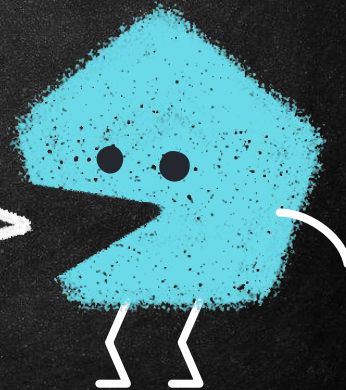
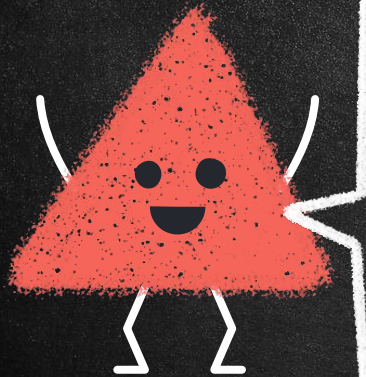
THE PURPOSE
of my action inquiry
was to prioritize
learning for myself
to create greater
personal satisfaction.



MY WONDERING

I wonder how intentionally prioritizing time spent as an active learner will impact my leadership.

- Will feelings of satisfaction be higher on days I engaged as a learner?
- Will engaging as a learner help meet my harmonizer phase psychological need to ask for what I want and care for myself?
- Will engaging as a learner help build closer connections with those I lead - either because we have learned together OR because my own needs were met so I could meet theirs?



ACTION STEP #1

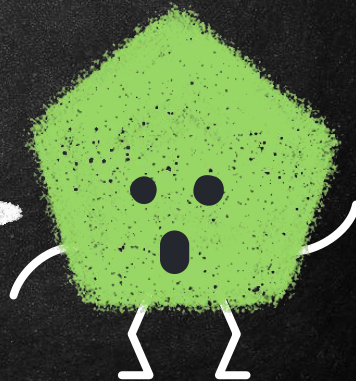
Track Satisfaction and Learning Engagement

First, I created a simple form to record each day the answer to two questions:

Did I engage as a learner today?

What was my level of satisfaction today?

I collected responses only on work days.



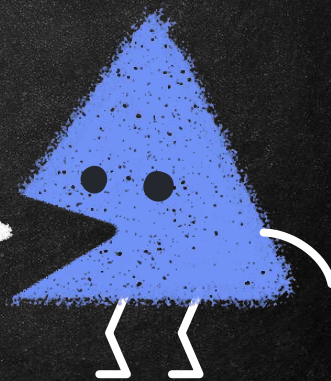
ACTION STEP #2

Calendar Work

Second, I intended to review my calendar at the start of the week to make time for engaging as a learner.

Turns out, I was terrible at this. In January I shifted to a reflection at the end of the week, noting where my calendar showed times to engage as a learner.

I reviewed my calendar (as reflection at the end of the week) and kept those notes each week.



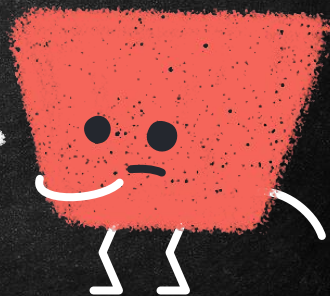
ACTION STEP #3

I noticed...

I felt really good on days I was in classrooms and providing feedback to teachers, which often led to follow-up conversations where I felt engaged as a learner as we considered classroom challenges together.

Classroom visit data is kept in our SFS system, so data about how often I was in classrooms was already recorded.

I decided to consider this record in addition to the data I was collecting.



DATA COLLECTION

Satisfaction & Learning Data

I completed the form I created on 43 work days, starting in December, but most data came from January and February.

Calendar Data

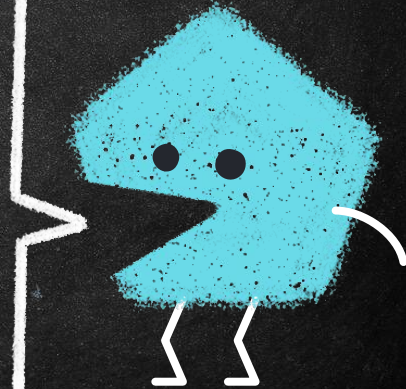
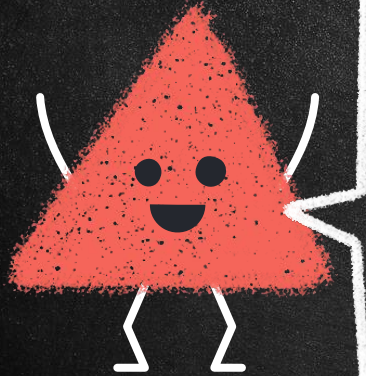
I reviewed my calendar for 9 weeks in January, February, and March.

Classroom Visit Data

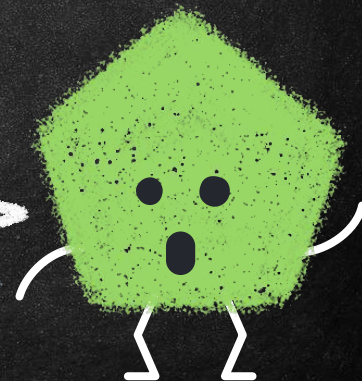
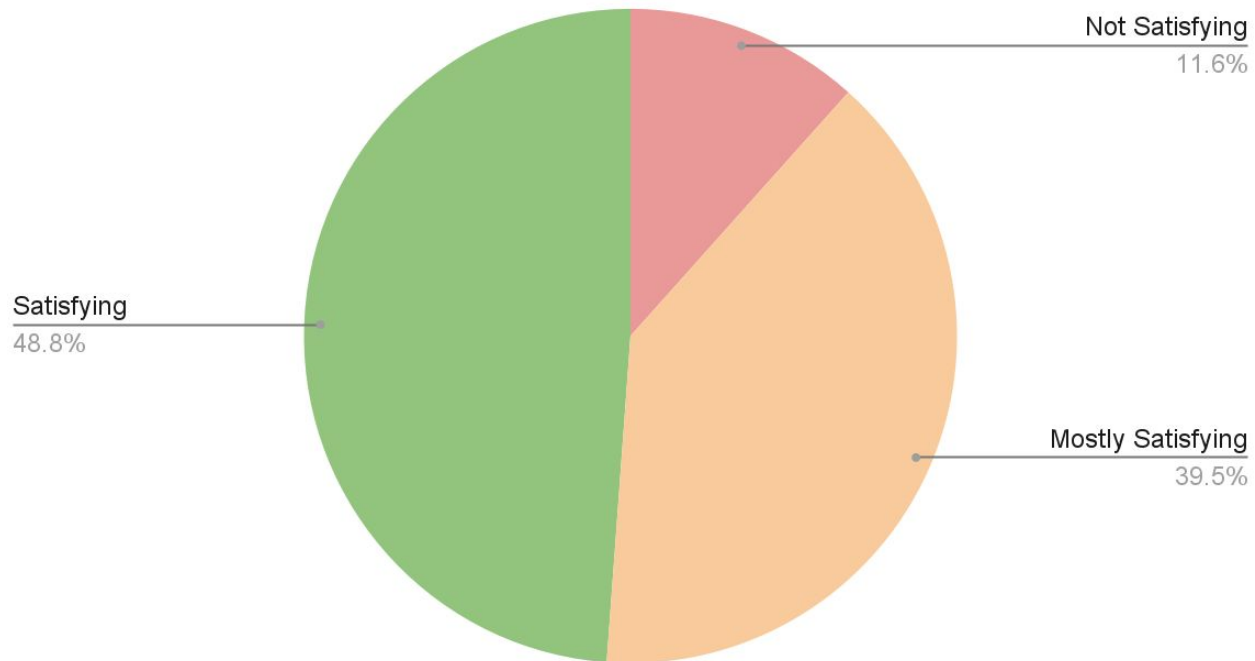
All observations and walkthroughs are recorded in Standards for Success. Deciding to include this data was easy, because it was already there.



THE DATA

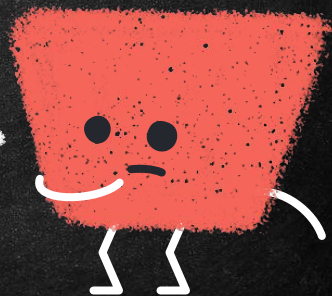


How did I rate my days?

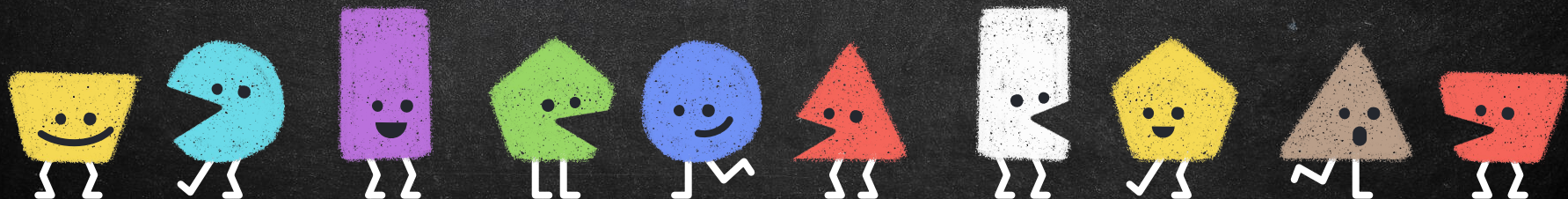
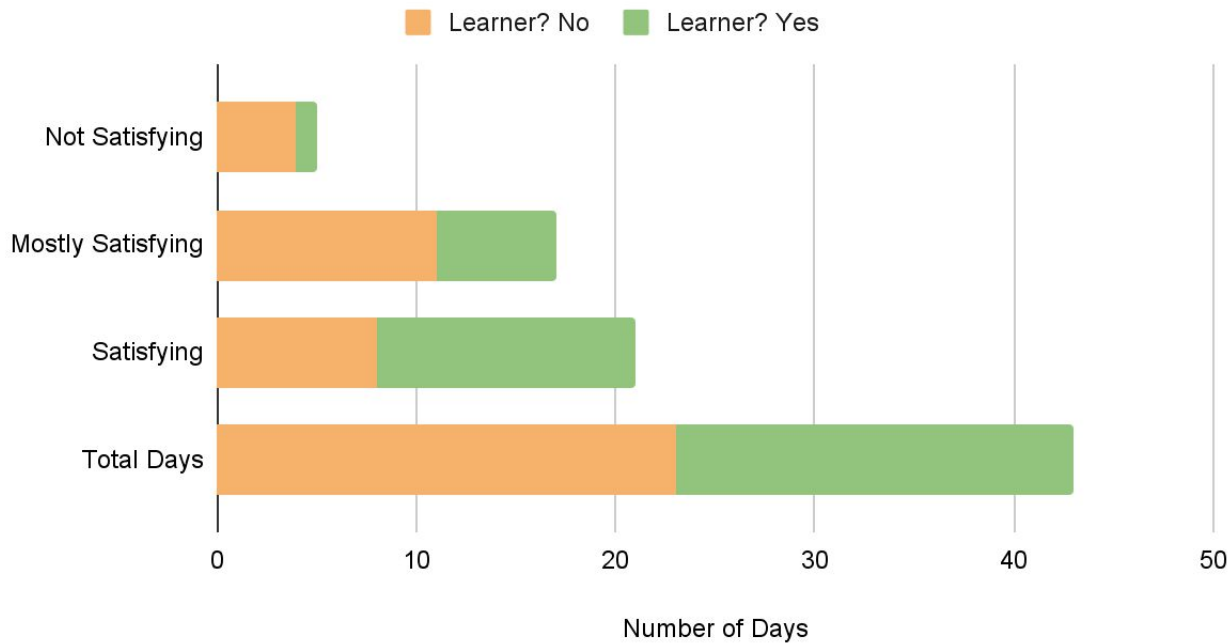


HOW DID I RATE MY DAYS? HOW OFTEN DID I ENGAGE AS A LEARNER?

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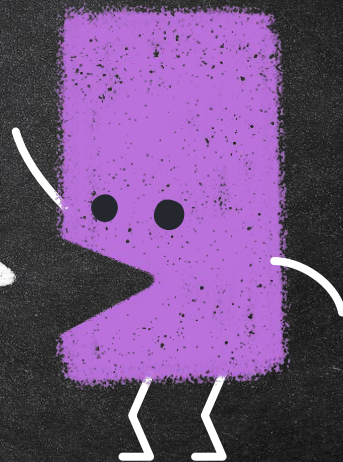


Engaging as a Learner Compared to Reported Satisfactions



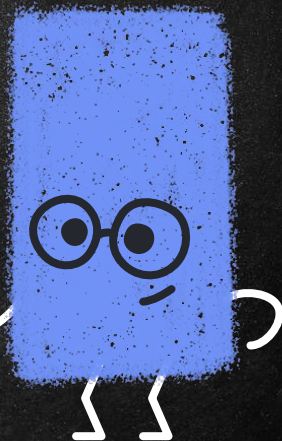


*My calendar review of
scheduled opportunities to
engage as a learner
AGREED with my daily
answer to that question
83% of the time.*

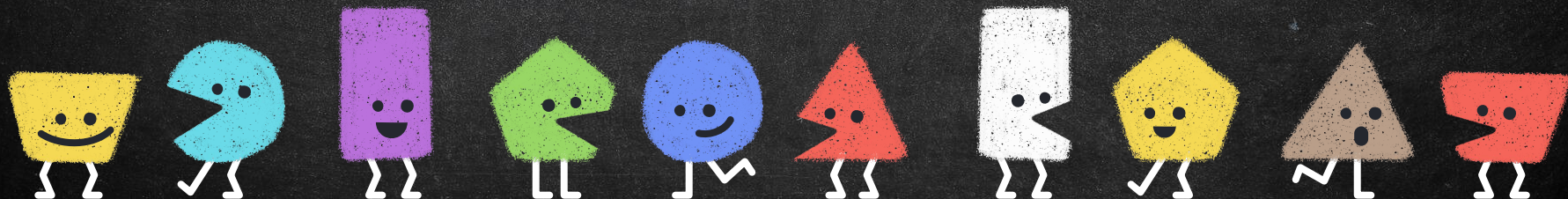


HOW DOES CLASS VISIT DATA COMPARE TO REPORTED SATISFACTION?

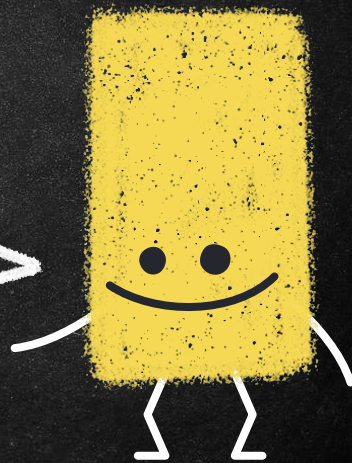
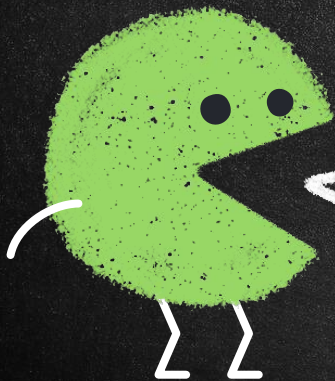
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Class Visits Per Day Compared to Reported Satisfaction

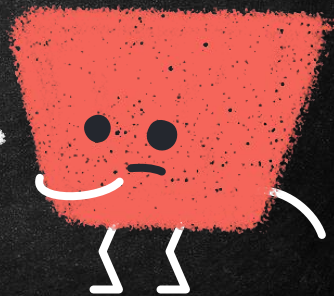


MY DISCOVERIES



BEING A LEARNER IS CONNECTED TO MY SATISFACTION.

Feeling satisfied does have a correlation to engaging as a learner. 62% of satisfying days included engaging as a learner (compared to 20% of not satisfying and 35% of mostly satisfying.)



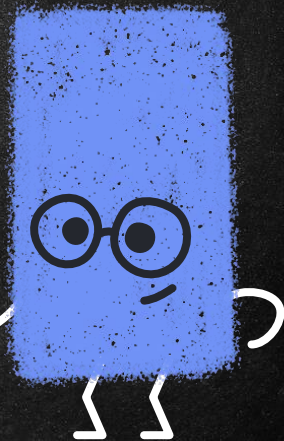
CLASSROOM VISITS PLAY A PART IN OVERALL SATISFACTION.

But not as much as I thought... When I reviewed my calendar, several of my zero classroom visit days had time off-campus being a learner (like at IPLI or another conference.)




CONSIDERING MY OWN SATISFACTION MATTERS.

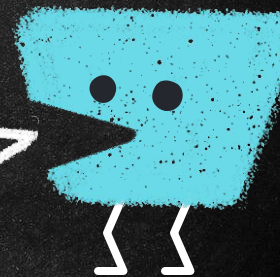
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TWO NEXT STEPS:



Prioritizing engaging as a learner and visiting classrooms will help my own satisfaction. I think these appeal to me because they include thinking, but also time structure and connection (through classroom feedback.)



Remember my own satisfaction is a worthy goal. While it's not the only goal I have at school, meeting my own needs helps keep me out of distress behaviors that are ineffective, like micromanaging or losing confidence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

DeMatthews, D. E., Reyes, P., Carrola, P., Edwards, W., & James, L. (2021). Novice principal burnout: Exploring secondary trauma, working conditions, and coping strategies in an urban district. Education Research Center, University of Texas at Austin. Retrieved from www.texaserc.utexas.edu

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