



T.I.M.E. for excellence

Teacher leadership **I**nstructional improvements **M**entoring through mastery experience and modeling **E**mpowerment

Developing Collective Teacher Efficacy in a Professional Development School How to get T.I.M.E. on your side!



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Description of the project



- This research describes three years of collaboration between a Professional Development School (PDS) and its partnership University which developed a project that focused on the development and training of new and pre-service teachers.
 - Summer institute that included site embedded professional development with the opportunity to practice and observe instructional strategies authentic setting, a summer school lab setting taught by master teachers.
 - Academic year focus to support learning involved reflection and refining of instructional practice continued throughout the school year with Lesson Study and Professional Conversations.



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Goals of the project



- **The goal of the project was to develop common research based teaching practices among all educators, experienced, novice and pre-service teachers that would impact student learning.**
- **Shared vision, mission and values with an intense focus on instructional practice by collaborative teams, coupled with a culture of inquiry and teacher research fostered by a PDS partnership with the University fueled the questions that began the “visioning”.**
- **The specific goals for the Institute were to focus on: increasing pedagogical content knowledge, increasing ability to observe and assess students, building stronger collegial networks, connecting daily practice to long-term goals, increasing motivation and teacher-efficacy. The Institute had many of the critical features of effective professional development practices defined by Darling Hammond and McLaughlin (1995).**



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Visioning



- What if the teachers, new, developing and expert, started on the first day with the common language and common practices that supported high student achievement?
- What if the culture of reflection was visible as teachers modeled, coached, and mentored each other?
- What if we could buy some time for teachers to engage collaboratively in this enhancement professional practice?



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RESEARCH QUESTIONS



1. What did extended contracts for teachers afford in terms of enhancing their professional practice?
2. What were the outcomes of the mentoring process when a collective group of teachers worked together to mentor novice and pre-service teachers? How did it transform teachers at different levels?



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Research on Collective Teacher Efficacy



- Collective teacher efficacy, *the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students*, is based on Bandura's (1993) social cognitive theory.
 - Collective efficacy is strongly related to student achievement in schools. The link occurs because a strong sense of group capability establishes expectations (cultural norms) for success that encourages organizational members to work resiliently toward desired ends (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).
 - Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy (2000) identified two elements important to the development of collective teaching efficacy: teachers' involvement in the analysis of the teaching task and the assessment of teaching competence (peer observations).





- Teachers need time to understand new concepts, learn new skills, develop new attitudes, research, discuss, reflect, assess, try new approaches and integrate them into their practice; and time to plan their own professional development (Cambone, 1995; Corcoran, 1995).
- Donahoe (1993) suggests that such set-aside "collective staff time" is particularly important when significant school improvement plans are underway.



METHODS

Westlawn Elementary

A Cluster II Lab School

Teacher Leaders

Experienced teachers designing opportunities for teachers, so best practices are standard practices

Teacher Learners

Teachers refining their craft before the school year begins

Student Achievement

Accelerated student learning, assessment informing instruction, resulting in engaged, motivated learners

The summer institute and lab school took place in the first three weeks of August. For the summer institute 36 teachers were on an extended 208-day contract (16 were new and pre-service teachers and 20 were summer lab school teachers) and 2 teachers were on 218-day contracts.

School demongraphics



- **Title I School of 620 students**
- **Westlawn students represent 20 countries of origin and 10 different primary languages**
- **2008 Ethnicity – Hispanic 51.88% Asian (Vietnamese) 24.88% White 14.89% Other 5.89% Black 2.45**
- **2008 Subgroups Poverty 55.16% Limited English Prof. 51.88% ESOL 41.57% Special Education 16.20%**



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Methods



- “ A key goal of learning is fluent and flexible transfer—successfully using one’s knowledge and skill on worthy tasks and important, realistic situations” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2006).
- For the three weeks in the summer, teacher leaders provided **training in best practice strategies** in areas such as reading and writing workshop, mathematics and differentiation for diverse learners. In addition, teacher learners were given opportunities to **observe and reflect** on those teaching practices in action in a summer lab classroom.
 - Academic year focus to support learning involved reflection and refining of instructional practice continued throughout the school year with Lesson Study and Professional Conversations.



What do we want Students to Learn?

1. Development of Common Intervention Strategies
2. Development of Skills Scaffolding
3. Developing Enrichment Strategies

Instruction:

Team informed decisions of what to teach, how to teach it, and in what sequence to teach it

1. Common Syllabus
2. Common Scope & Sequence
3. Common Essential Knowledge

What are we going to do if they do not learn?

Interventions:

How will all students be brought up to the Team Proficiency Standard(s)?

Assessment:

Team agreed upon Common Assessment and Team Proficiency Standard(s)

1. Analyzing Performance
2. Developing "Inter-Rater Reliability" around Common Rubric

Data Analysis:

Did the students learn: Did they reach the Team Proficiency Standard?

1. Common Assessment Plan for the Year (Formative & Summative)
2. Proficiency Standards
3. Common Rubrics

What does the data reveal?



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DATA SOURCES & ANALYSIS



- The qualitative data included teachers', administrators' and researcher's memos during the institute while planning, teaching, observing and debriefing, in addition to, teacher interviews and team meeting notes.
- These qualitative data were examined and categorized along dimensions of teachers' collective efficacy and professional growth.



Results and conclusions



- What did extended contracts (TIME) for teachers allow in terms of enhancing their professional practice?

4 major themes :T.I.M.E. for excellence:

T-teacher leadership,

I- instructional improvements,

M-mentoring through mastery experiences & modeling,

E-empowerment.



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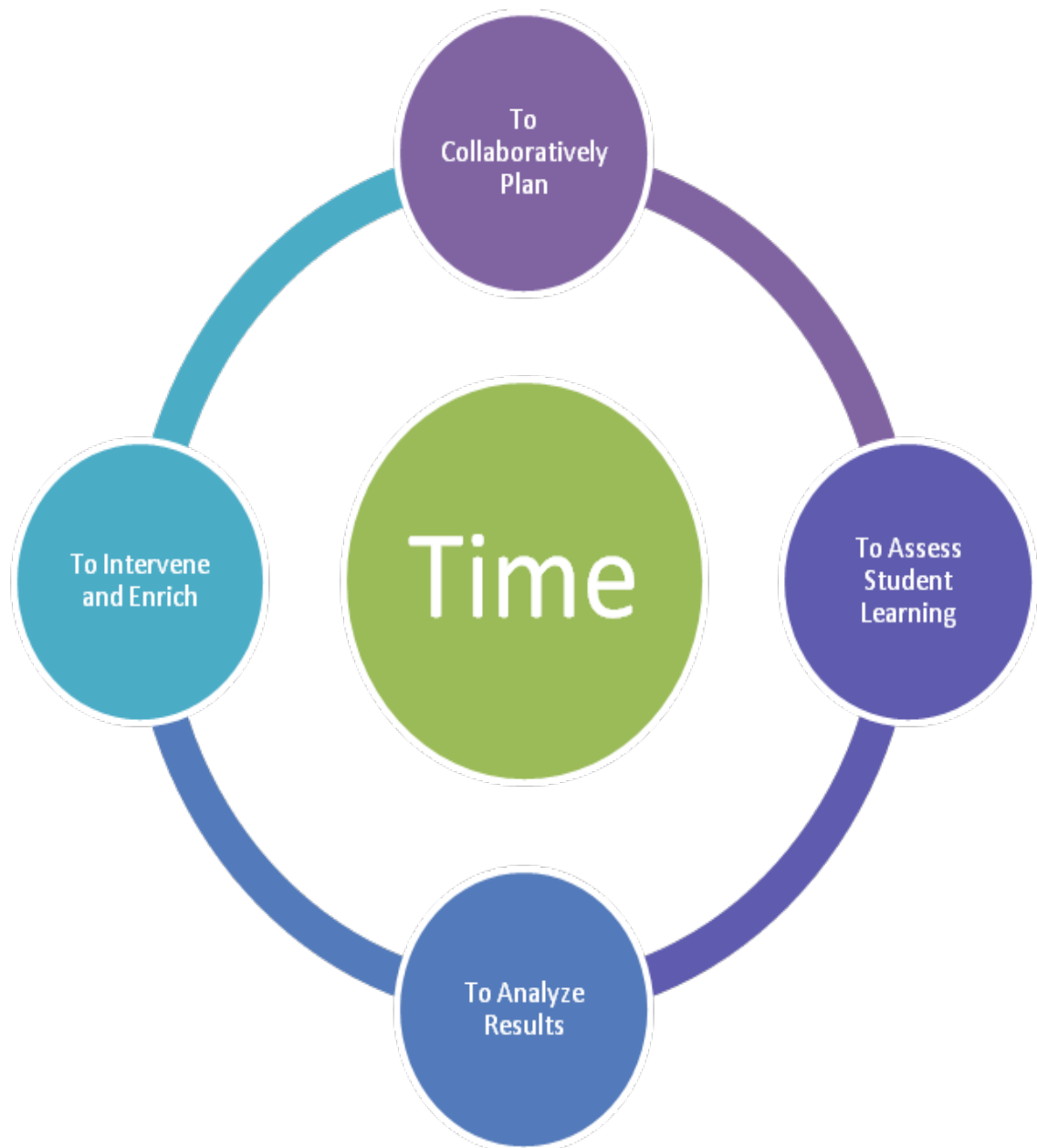
Empowerment



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“When I began my teaching career, I viewed my job as being completely focused on the students in my classroom. Now I feel like about 50% of my work is focused on the specific students in my classroom. The other 50% is on improving my own skills, and those of my colleagues in our professional learning community.”

Jennifer Corcoran, teacher
Westlawn Elementary



1. *Teacher-leadership*



The Teacher Leadership Project was

- experiential, engaging teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, and observation collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge/research among educators;
- connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students, examinations of subject matter and teaching methods
- sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem solving around specific problems of practice;

The teacher leaders' knowledge of the school culture, community, students, and family allowed them to prescribe the appropriate instructional strategies that had proven to be effective in targeting the special population of students they served.



2. *Instructional improvement*



Teacher learners reported to be more prepared to teach using the targeted instructional strategies after the summer institute.

- ✦ They gained strategies to encourage students in problem solving, reasoning, justifying and communicating their mathematical understanding.
- ✦ They adopted literacy practices of the school including guided reading, Literature circle, writing with conferences and much more.
- ✦ Teachers reported the best part as seeing and hearing the actual practice in the classroom.

“Now I have more than just the theory but I saw it in practice with real children. I experienced it in action!”



3. Mentoring through mastery experiences and modeling



The mentoring approach allowed for teachers to

- consult on effective instructional practices;
- observe colleagues and have professional conversations;
- engage in professional activities which deepened critical questioning, reflection and allowed the refinement of their craft;
- develop collaborative mutual learning relationships capitalizing on teachers' strengths; and
- identify the teacher experts in the school and seek them out during the instructional year.



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4. *Empowerment*



- Shifting the leadership paradigm from a hierarchical structure to one of distributed leadership builds the belief that “everyone has the right, responsibility and capability to work as a leader” (Lambert, 2003, p.43).
- The Institute provided opportunities for many teachers to learn and practice leadership skills inviting everyone into leadership roles and actions.
- By empowering teachers to lead other teachers, there grew a sense of collective efficacy among teachers. Together they believed that the teachers in this school had the skills needed to produce meaningful student learning.



EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY



- We began this project thinking that teacher leaders would provide a network of support and resources for our teacher learners. The relationship building that occurred across grade levels and amongst participating staff members fostered a sense of collective efficacy and collaboration at a level unimaginable.
- Through this we noticed an unanticipated outcome which was how quickly teacher learners evolved into teacher leaders necessitating a reconceptualization in the project for teacher leadership for all.
- These relationships have deepened as the year has progressed and have infused the culture of the school. They have moved beyond the participants and impacted all staff members as the school became a network of hubs and nodes of communication (Reeves, 2006).



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EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY



- A hallmark of these professional relationships are the “on-the run” conversations that occur hourly throughout the school: teachers passing in the hallway stop to discuss professional practice, teachers in the lunch room reflect on a lesson taught, or teachers in the copy room confer to analyze individual student achievement.
- This collaborative structure and continuous professional learning has created the school’s sense of shared leadership and ownership of the school’s success focused on students’ achievement. Looking forward, we are committed to furthering this collaborative culture and enhancement of professional practice while growing the leadership capacity at our school.



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