Exploring Approaches to Instructional Improvement through Collaborative Inquiry
Our Goals Today

• Learn about three approaches to instructional improvement using practice-based inquiry cycles
• Work collaboratively in a community of practice to experience each approach
• Preview collaborative protocols to bring back to your work in designing teacher-centered professional development to improve instruction and achievement
What is Inquiry?

Inquiry for Equity

- Define the Problem
- Determine the cause(s)
- Identify Solutions
- Action Plan
- Evaluate and Reassess

3
Why Collaboration?

• Create strong professional learning communities to build teacher capacity to share and adopt effective practices across the entire school

• Alignment of practice supports a school culture of engagement and achievement

• Asset-based and Action-oriented
  – Begin with current practice
  – Share practical tools and research-based content
  – Support integration into practice
Connections: Who’s in the room?

- How do you use inquiry in your work?
- What do you hope to get out of this session?
Center for Collaborative Education: Teacher Leadership Network (TLN) & Quality Performance Assessment (QPA)
Center for Collaborative Education – Our Vision

• Equity and data are embedded in all conversations and practices,

• Teaching and learning are purposeful, challenging, and have value beyond school,

• Assessment demonstrates the competence of students in multiple ways, and

• Collaborative practices improve teaching and learning.
To elevate the role and impact of teachers examining their own practice collaboratively by:

– Increasing access to embedded, differentiated PD

– Sharing expertise, validating practices and tools, and problem solving challenges

– Addressing the opportunity gap of underprepared teachers of ELLs

– Empowering and building the capacity of teacher leaders to be change agents in preventing the achievement gap by sharing their work with other teachers
Inquiry/Action Research

Collaborative

– Get support in classroom between sessions
– Measure effectiveness
– Bring in student voice
– Share findings with others!
Teacher leaders provide access to the curriculum through individualized, differentiated and meaningful instruction that prepares students for college and career.
• Delivering Teacher leaders provide access to the curriculum through individualized, differentiated and meaningful instruction that prepares students for college and career.
• Teacher leaders develop a balanced, accessible assessment system and adjust day-to-day teaching based on assessment data.
Teacher leaders model inquiry by demonstrating efficacy and growth through consistent reflection, goal-setting and proactive professional learning.
What is a Quality Performance Assessment?

• A Quality Performance Assessment is a complex task resulting in the creation of an original product or solution that:
  • Shows what a student knows (content)
  • Shows what a student is able to do (skills)
  • Requires application and transfer
Elements of a Performance Assessment with Technical Quality

• Is open-ended
• Requires application and transfer (Will require a multi-step process)
• Uses rubrics – Clear criteria
• Aligns to Learning Targets (standards)
• Results in original products, performances, or solutions.
Alignment …

… begins at the learning target (i.e. the competency or standard), and runs all the way through the student work...
Validity and Reliability

Validity
An assessment measures what it intends to assess.

Reliability
An assessment delivers consistent results.
QPA Framework for Technical Quality

**Design**: Plan Aligned Assessments

**Analyze**: Valid tasks, Student Work Analysis, & Calibration

**Align**: College and Career Ready Learning Expectations & Competencies
Impact on Teacher Practice and Student Learning

"Our work of creating common assessments and rubrics and scoring them across classrooms has created a culture of inquiry and a collaborative atmosphere. Four years ago classroom doors were closed and there was no collaboration...Now I believe 100% of the teachers [work in a professional learning community].

This is a result of our process of learning about the Common Core, unpacking standards, writing lesson plans and tasks, sharing those plans, giving each other feedback, creating common rubrics, and collectively examining student work."

Priti Johari, Redesign Administrator Chelsea High School, MA from Teacher Learning through Assessment: How Student-Performance Assessments Can Support Teacher Learning, Linda Darling-Hammond and Beverly Falk September 2013
BUILDING
TEACHER PEER EXCELLENCE GROUPS
IN YOUR SCHOOL

Xiu Cravens, Vanderbilt University
Why TPEG?

- The TPEG Learning Cycle was adapted for the U.S. educational context from more than two decades of research on teacher collaboration and more recently the Shanghai Teaching Study Group Model.

- *The Shanghai Model* is one of the most powerful “teacher activities” that influences student achievement and helps explain how Shanghai schools outperform all other systems on international assessments (PISA 2009 and 2012).
Three non-negotiables for building a professional knowledge base:

1. The practice of teaching is made *public* by peer observations, lesson planning, and feedback;

2. The products of collective work on improving classroom teaching are *accessible and sharable* with other teachers;

3. There is a mechanism for *validation of improvement*. 
“Teaching Study Groups” in Shanghai are communities of practice formed by grade and by subject.

Anchored around peer observations and feedback, these are the self-examining, self-propelling, and self-improving organisms within each school for effective instruction.

Similar models are widely practiced in China and Japan with some variations.
Teacher Peer Excellence Group (TPEG™) Learning Cycle

Public
(Deprivatized Practice)

Lesson Planning

Lesson Refinement

Teacher Peer Excellence Group (TPEG™) Learning Cycle

Observation

Feedback

Validation for Improvement

Storable & Shareable

24
TPEG Phase I (2013-2014 funded by TDoE, 18 schools)

Making teaching practice public.
- This goal resonated with teachers across all schools;
- Peer observations and feedback were quickly and willingly implemented (even after initial hesitation).

Making knowledge sharable and storable.
- Scheduling and securing coverage were the biggest challenges but many creative resolutions emerged;
- Schools struggled with storing knowledge in ways that are widely accessible and would prove usable in the future, but district support stepped in.

Mechanism for validation and improvement
- Most challenging. Requires multiple trials and data-driven decision making. With more TPEG cycles, teachers started to identify evidence of improved teaching practice.
TPEG Phase II (2014-2015, funded by the Gates Foundation, 2 districts, 15 schools, 6 from first year)

- Continued development of school and district culture and expertise to support TPEG;
- Deepened understanding of necessary enabling conditions;
- Refined tools and resource kit for TPEG
  - observation protocols
  - feedback guides
  - examples of timetables to conduct TPEG meetings
- Integrate TPEG into ongoing PD as a formative assessment tool
Experiencing Each Model
Let’s Model the TPEG process

1. As a group, discuss:
   1) Would the TPEG model benefit teaching and learning in your school? Why or why not?
   2) How would you share the TPEG model with teachers at your school?

2. Have a volunteer to “present” the TPEG information in a mock teacher meeting;

3. Provide feedback to the presenter;

4. Discuss as a group how the presentation could be revised.
The TPEG Challenges

- Building trust
- Ironing out scheduling/logistics issues
- Growing more comfortable with being observed or observing others
- Making more effective use of lesson planning meetings
- Enhancing rigor or depth of lessons
- Providing constructive feedback
- Finding or creating resources for pedagogical focus
- Finding or creating resources for content focus
- More effectively storing and sharing refined lesson plans
Pre-Assessing and Preparing
Planning and Delivering
Assessing and Re-evaluating
Reflecting and Collaborating
Student Profile Analysis

- Think – Pair – Share in Collaborative Teams
- Process
  - Student Profile Analysis (Q 1-3)
  - Identify Performance Definition
  - Create a Language Objective Can Do connected to the Common Core
Quality Task Design: Task Validation

**Purpose:** To ensure our internal assessments have technical quality.

*When we share our assessments with our colleagues we are more likely to uncover our blind spots and assumptions.*

**Areas of Review for Technical Quality**

1. **Alignment (content & rigor)**
2. Clarity and Focus
3. **Student Engagement**
4. Criteria and Levels
5. Fairness
6. Adheres to Principles of Universal Design
7. (Student Work Analysis)
Analyzing Performance Tasks

• Four tasks
  – Map your world (Gr. 2 social studies)
  – Whirligigs (Gr. 4 science)
  – Typhoid Mary (Gr. 7-8 ELA/social studies)
  – Wildfire (HS math – algebra 2)

• Start with analysis questions A, B, or C depending on table assignment

• Be prepared to share out your analysis with evidence and the questions raised
Bringing it back

• What is one action you hope to take back in your work?
Additional information about the TPEG process can be found at:
www.vanderbilt-tpeg.org
Digging in More Deeply: TLN

• **Teachers Know Best- Teachers’ View on Professional Development**- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

• **SRI Resource and Protocol Book**

• **Improved Student Learning Through Teacher Inquiry**- Ottow and Holmes, CCE.org

• **Learning from Consistently High Performing and Improving Schools for English Language Learners in Boston Public Schools**, Tung et al, 2011
Digging in More Deeply: QPA

• Quality Performance Assessment: A guide for schools and districts (The QPA Guide & Tools)
  – Performance assessment planning template (QPA Tool 8)
  – Cognitive Rigor Matrix (QPA Tools 5 & 6)
  – QPA Assessment Validation (Tool 1 & 3)
  – Calibration Protocol (QPA Tool 4)

• Video:
  – Quality Performance Assessment Overview Video
  – Assessing Angles (Grade 4 task by Monroe NH Teacher)
Thank You!
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