ACE ACADEMIES

Enacting Cycles of Improvement: Engineering Excellence

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Who's In the Room?

Turn & Talk

- Have you ever been part of an initiative for improvement that faded or failed?
- Have you ever experienced a sense of initiative overload?
- When change initiatives have stayed the course - what was different about them? What enabled success?

Improving Teaching & Learning

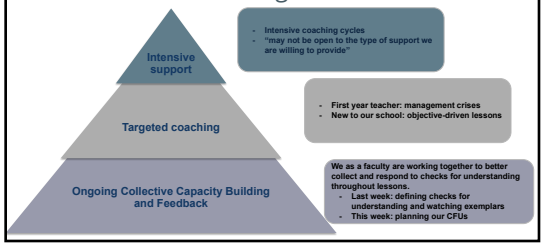
- Shape the conditions for all to learn on a cont… (DuFour & Fullan, 2013)
- Engage in interactions … over instruction and create conditions fo… collaboration (Grissom and co…)
- Foster professional capital of teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012)
- Focus on collaborative cultures and capacity building (DuFour & Fullan, 2013; Leithwood & Louis, 2012)

WE HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE WORK TOGETHER

Focus for Improvement in Practice

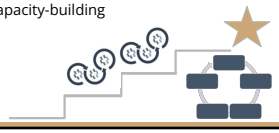
Traditional Paradigm	A New Way
Set Expectation for Each Teacher	Build Shared Rationale as a Collective
(Maybe have a PD or faculty meeting about it)	Build Capacity in Increments
Monitor Compliance	Collectively Commit and Monitor
Express Frustration *"They KNOW it's the expectation."*	Celebrate wins and diagnose next steps *"We know where to go next."*
Nothing changes for students.	**Student learning improves.**

MTSS for Adult Learning



Cycles for Continuous Growth
(A New Way Forward)

- **The What**
  - Your north star (instructional framework, vision, annual goals)
  - Adult learning plan progression
- **The How**
  - Incremental cycles of capacity-building



To maintain focus, leaders must attain "piercing clarity" regarding their selected priorities and their absolute primacy.
(Collins, 2005, p. 17)

Quote on initative fatigue

Decomposing Practice: Adult Learning Progressions

How does adult learning gradually and intentionally build collective capacity toward our goal?

Focus for Improvement in Practice: Teachers elicit and respond to student thinking through lessons.

Decomposing Practice

Decomposition of practice entails identifying essential elements of practice for the purposes of teaching and learning in professional education (Grossman et al., 2009)

Efforts to decompose practice assume that practice is complex, contextual, and responsive while also involving some more predictable, learnable aspects (Lampert & Graziani, 2009).

Decompositions of practice can inform decisions about how to articulate expectations for practice, unpack examples of practice so that learners "see" what matters, provide feedback as learners engage in practice, and assess effectiveness of learning experiences (Grossman, 2018; McDonald et al., 2013; Reisman et al., 2018)

Decomposing Practice Example

Teachers elicit and respond to student thinking through lessons.

- Planning general, open-ended rigorous questions
- Using repetition, scaffolded prompts, and processing time when posing questions
- Allowing productive think time
- Ensuring full participation in the thinking/production of responses
- Utilizing strategies to maximize voice in sharing of responses.
- Circulating and noticing student production.
- Paying close attention to what students say, without unnecessary interruptions and focusing on ideas rather than academic language.
- Capturing important information for future instruction.
- Noticing specific features of the student's thinking: common patterns, strengths, strategies, novel ideas, areas of particular interest or engagement, weaknesses, and errors.
- Allowing students to communicate in their preferred mode (e.g. drawing, writing, speaking, etc)
- Developing responsive questions and probes based on knowledge of students and students' ideas
- Identifying elements of the student's thinking that he or she has said little about, and probing further
- Identifying particularly interesting or confusing (to the teacher) aspects of the student's thinking and developing corresponding questions or prompts

Collaborative At-Bat

- As a group, brainstorm the component pieces of explicit instruction.

What do teachers need to know and do in order to deliver impactful explicit instruction?

Explicit Instruction

- Establish the purpose and relevance of the strategy, skill, content, and/or task.
  - Explain the authentic context in which the knowledge and skills are used.
  - Connect to prior knowledge and students' lived experiences.
- Models how the skill, strategy or task is completed.
  - Selection of content (problem/text)
  - Accurate representation of content (accuracy, disciplinary vocabulary)
  - Think aloud (metacognition) to give windows into expert's thinking and decision-making
  - Highlights likely misconceptions or errors
- Use strategies to engage students during the model (notecatchers for example)

Processing Pause

- Think of one practice you would love for your faculty to get better at together.
- Briefly brainstorm some of the key components of that practice.

What do teachers need to know and do in order to _____?

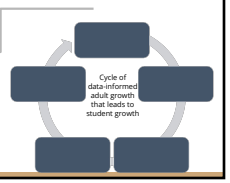
Cycles for Continuous Growth
(A New Way Forward)

Incremental Steps

Establish purpose & relevance

Modeling

Student engagement

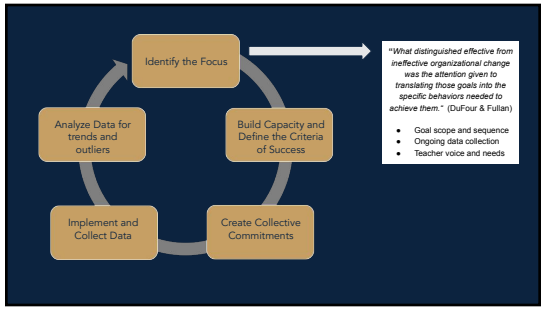


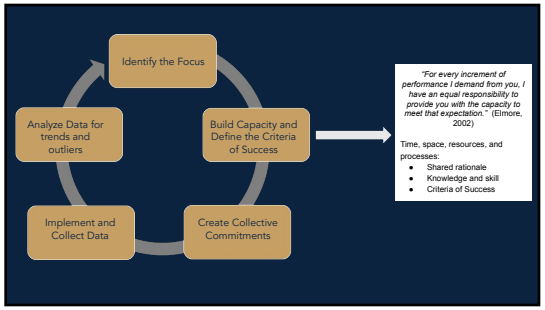
"Learning together is the work."

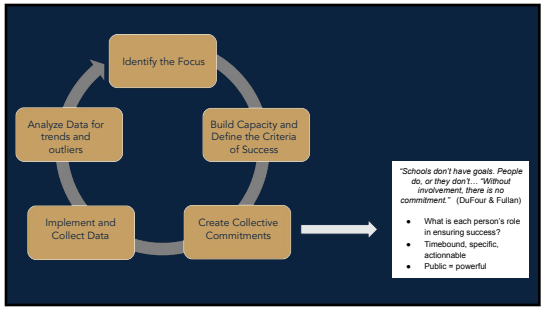
Michael Fullan

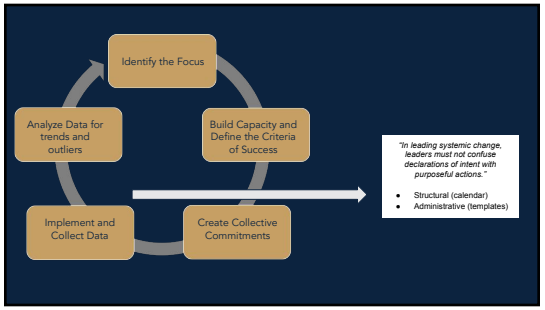
This collaborative cycle is not a program but rather a ***sustained approach*** to develop the ***collective capacity*** of educators to meet the needs of all students in an ever-changing society.

It not only supports ongoing adult formation, but it does so in a manner that ***intentionally invites teacher voice and engagement*** into the process.






Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
"Schools don't have goals. People do, or they don't… "Without involvement, there is no commitment." (DuFour & Fullan)
What is each person's role in ensuring success?
Timebound, specific, actionnable
Public = powerful


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
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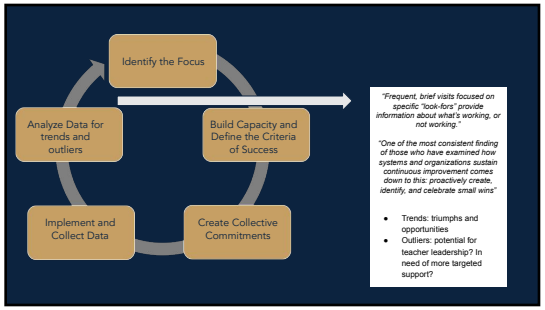
"In leading systemic change, leaders must not confuse declarations of intent with purposeful actions."
Structural (calendar)
Administrative (templates)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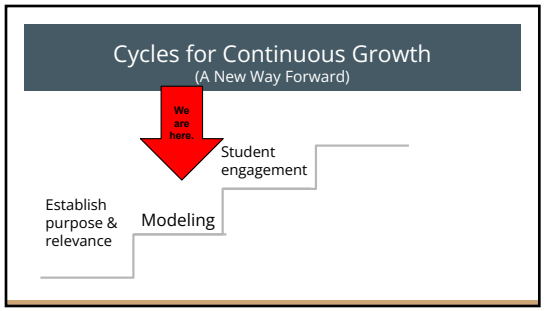
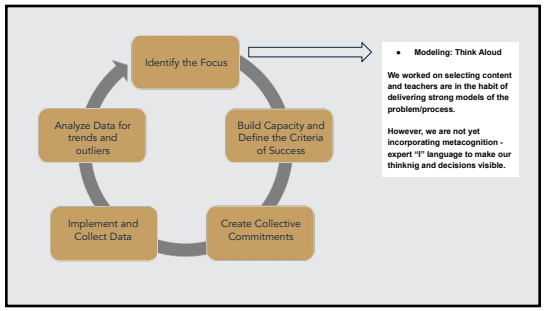
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
"Frequent, brief visits focused on specific "look-fors" provide information about what's working, or not working."
"One of the most consistent finding of those who have examined how systems and organizations sustain continuous improvement comes down to this: proactively create, identify, and celebrate small wins"
Trends: triumphs and opportunities
Outliers: potential for teacher leadership? In need of more targeted support?


Cycles for Continuous Growth
(A New Way Forward)
We are here.
Student engagement
Establish purpose & relevance
Modeling


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
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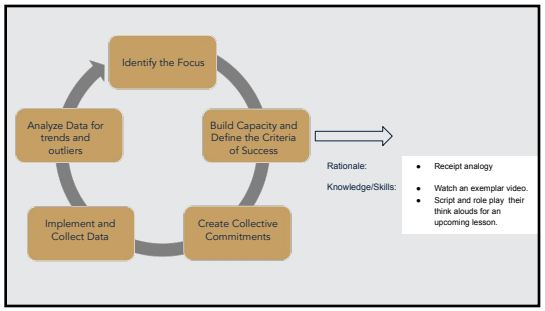
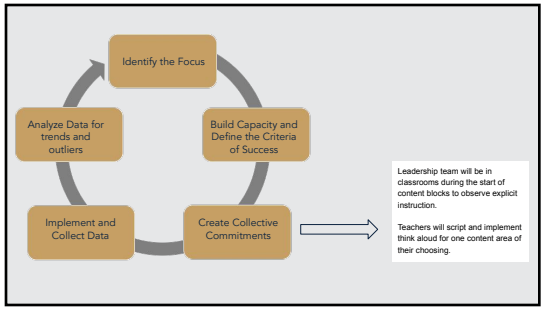
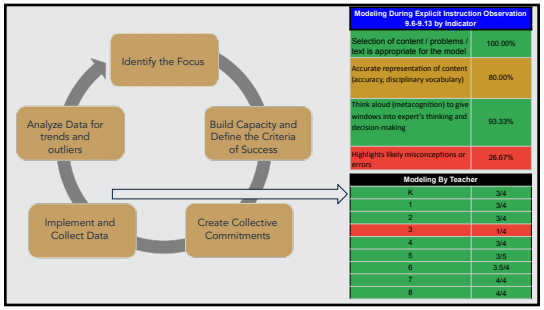
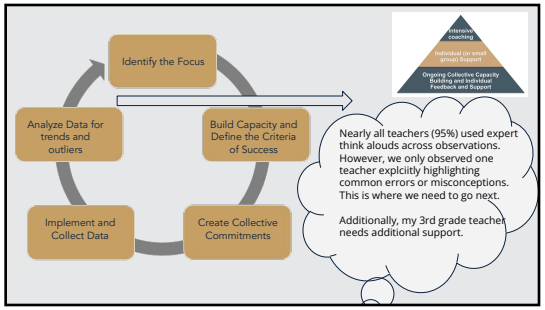
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
Modeling: Think Aloud
We worked on selecting content and teachers are in the habit of delivering strong models of the problem/process.
However, we are not yet incorporating metacognition - expert "I" language to make our thinknig and decisions visible.


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
Rationale:
Knowledge/Skills:
Receipt analogy
Watch an exemplar video.
Script and role play their think alouds for an upcoming lesson.


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
Leadership team will be in classrooms during the start of content blocks to observe explicit instruction.
Teachers will script and implement think aloud for one content area of their choosing.


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
Modeling During Explicit Instruction Observation 5.6-8.13 by Indicator
Selection of content / problems / text is appropriate for the model 100.00%
Accurate representation of content (accuracy, disciplinary vocabulary) 80.00%
Think aloud (metacognition) to give windows into expert's thinking and decision-making 93.33%
Highlights likely misconceptions or errors 26.67%
Modeling By Teacher
K 3/4
1 3/4
2 3/4
3 1/4
4 3/4
5 3/5
6 3.5/4
7 4/4
8 4/4


Identify the Focus
Build Capacity and Define the Criteria of Success
Create Collective Commitments
Implement and Collect Data
Analyze Data for trends and outliers
Intensive coaching
Individual (or small group) Support
Ongoing Collective Capacity Building and Individual Feedback and Support
Nearly all teachers (95%) used expert think alouds across observations. However, we only observed one teacher explcilty highlighting common errors or misconceptions. This is where we need to go next.
Additionally, my 3rd grade teacher needs additional support.

Processing Pause

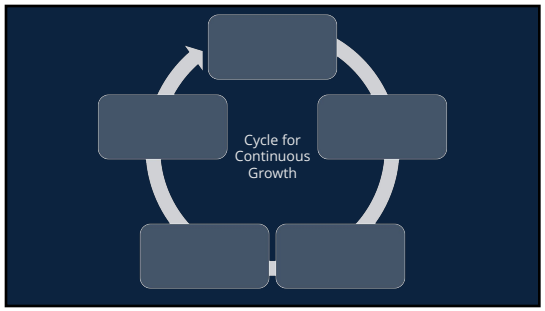
- What about the cycle as a whole, or which particular pieces of the cycle, resonate with you? Excite you?
- What about the cycle as a whole, or which particular pieces of the cycle, are you unsure about?
- Which aspects of the cycle do you already do in your practice? How might connecting those to other aspects within the cycle amplify their impact?

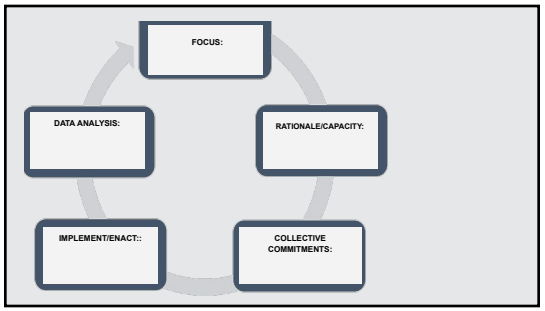
Positive Cycology

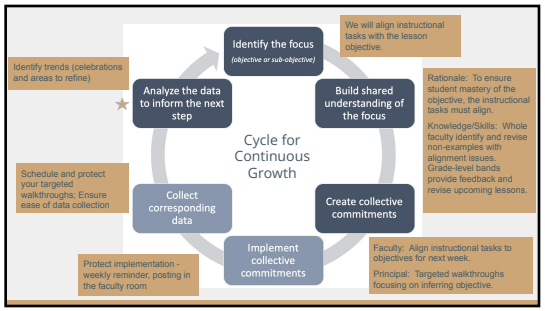
- This process is intentionally, and unavoidably, iterative. Just G-O-GO!
- Start safe.
- Find a cycling partner.
- Be specific when it comes to commitments - What will we do? What will we look for?
- Celebrate inch pebbles, don't just keep plowing ahead to the next milestone.

Take the cycle for a spin!

Plan Your 1st Cycle


Cycle for
Continuous
Growth


FOCUS:
DATA ANALYSIS:
RATIONALE/CAPACITY:
IMPLEMENT/ENACT::
COLLECTIVE
COMMITMENTS:


We will align instructional tasks with the lesson objective.
Identify the focus
(objective or sub-objective)
Identify trends (celebrations and areas to refine)
Analyze the data to inform the next step
Build shared understanding of the focus
Rationale: To ensure student mastery of the objective, the instructional tasks must align.
Knowledge/Skills: Whole faculty identify and revise non-examples with alignment issues. Grade-level bands provide feedback and revise upcoming lessons.
Cycle for
Continuous
Growth
Schedule and protect your targeted walkthroughs; Ensure ease of data collection
Collect corresponding data
Create collective commitments
Implement collective commitments
Faculty: Align instructional tasks to objectives for next week.
Principal: Targeted walkthroughs focusing on inferring objective.
Protect implementation - weekly reminder, posting in the faculty room

Resources for Capacity Building/CoS

Literacy
- Michigan Literacy Essentials
- Balanced Literacy Site
- Gabriel, Rachel (2013). Reading's Non-Negotiables
- Allington, R. Gabriel, R. (2012). Every child, every day
- Taylor, B. (2011). Catching schools: An action guide to schoolwide reading improvement.

Math
- NCTM Principles, Standards, and Expectations
- University of Michigan's Teaching Works Library Math Practices
- Stein et al.(2009) Implementing standards-based mathematics instruction
- Williams et al. (2019). The mathematics lesson-planning handbook.

Non-content specific Pedagogy
- NDAA coaching guide and Instructional Framework
- University of Michigan's Teaching Works Library (high-leverage practices)

Sample Tools for Data Collection

Present What is the evidence?	Criteria of Success	Not Evident/Observed
	Lesson Plan/Daily Schedule includes independent reading every day.	
	Student choice is evident.	
	Teacher has a system for taking notes about independent reading conferences and student progress.	
	Planned mini-lesson on reading strategy prior to independent reading time ¼ days	
	Mini-lesson includes explicit teaching of reading strategies and behaviors, with think-alouds.	
	During independent reading, teacher circulates while students are engaged in reading.	
	Teacher conferences with students about their independent reading with evidence of: research, compliment, coaching, link/planning.	
	There is a clear closure and synthesis at the end of independent reading.	

Threshold: 85% of teachers implementing 90% of CoS most of the time

Sample Tools for Data Collection

	3	4	5
Expectations are decomposed into step-by-step moves	Yes	Yes	Yes
Expectations are communicated orally (each time) and visually (at the initial teach)	No visual	Yes, both	Yes, both
Teacher is present - scanning and circulating to monitor meeting of expectations	At desk	Yes	In hall
Teacher praises students by name with specific language of the expectations.	Praise w/o naming	No	Praise w/o naming
Teacher uses least-invasive redirection to address students not meeting expectations.	N/A	Yes	No - raised voice

ACE ACADEMIES

THANK YOU!

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