Student Agency in Learning (SAIL)
Professional Learning Design Principles

Continuous Improvement Cycles

Continuous improvement rests on three primary characteristics: it is an ongoing process that takes place over time, it is woven into the fabric of daily work, and it addresses specific problems of practice which, if improved, would improve the outcomes of the entire system (Park et al., 2013). The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycle represents four phases of a continuous improvement cycle. When taken together, these four phases support ongoing cycles of learning, implementing, and reflecting on changes in practice. Having multiple opportunities to learn, practice, apply, and get feedback is essential to transform practice.

Collaborative Inquiry Process

In collaborative inquiry, peers provide targeted, specific feedback based on the presenting teacher's Learning Goals and focus questions. Collaborative inquiry rests on a shared responsibility for improving student outcomes and requires the use of shared expertise and experience in order to improve learning practices. Dialogue protocols deepen collaborative inquiry by offering a license for listening deeply and creating new dialogue norms that slow the pace, create time for reflection, open the door for challenge, and allow all voices in the room to be heard and honored.

Video Observations

The use of videos in collaborative inquiry support teachers to gain a clear picture of current reality, which creates a baseline for setting goals and measuring growth. Video is one of the easiest ways to see instruction as it is happening, and provides new information about how students are learning. The use of video is shown to accelerate the collaborative inquiry process to become more student-focused and goal-driven. The use of video-based collaborative inquiry is relatively new, though anecdotal evidence indicates that it supports teachers to deepen reflective practice, challenge the status quo, evaluate progress towards goals, and monitor improvement over time.

Teacher Agency

One characteristic of effective professional learning is that the teacher learning experience mirror the student learning experience (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). When learning formative assessment, teachers benefit from establishing an adult learning culture in which they are safe to take risks, identifying their current learning status, selecting appropriate next steps in their learning, reflecting on their progress with peers, and using that evidence to take next steps in learning. The conditions for developing student agency are the same as those for developing adult agency.

Learning from Students

The better teachers know their students, the more likely it is that they can teach them effectively in a way that they will learn. This involves understanding students as learners and as individuals. It also involves understanding how students experience learning and how students are responding to new classroom practices. Creating a partnership with a few students is one way for teachers to better understand how their new practices are improving student outcomes.

Works Cited

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Park, S., Hironaka, S., Carver, P., & Nordstrum, L. (2013). *Continuous improvement in education*. Stanford, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Retrieved from http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/sites/default/files/carnegie-foundation_continuousimprovement_2013.05.pdf