Supporting School Improvement: Strategies for School Leaders

Dr. Patrice Pujol | October 31, 2019
Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• NIET: Who We Are
• Overview of the Levers for School Improvement
  • Instructional Excellence
  • Collaborative Learning
  • Reflective Culture of Continuous Improvement
  • Collaborative Leadership
• Results
NIET: Who We Are
Our Mission and Vision

Our Mission
Building educator excellence to give all students the opportunity for success

Our Vision
Our vision is that every student in America is taught by an excellent teacher and supported by effective leaders every year. We believe intentional, sustained, and high-quality investments in educators directly result in success for all students and are essential to eliminating equity gaps. As a result, NIET is committed to raising achievement levels for all students by focusing on the most powerful lever for change – teachers and the leadership that supports them.
Who We Are

We believe the quality of a district or a school cannot exceed the quality of its educators.

- 501(c)3, not-for-profit organization focused on improving educator effectiveness in schools, particularly high-need schools
- Recognized leader in educator effectiveness reform, support, training, and research, focused on improving educational outcomes for all students
- Provider of intensive site-based coaching and support for high-need schools
- 250,000 educators and 2.5 million students have been impacted by NIET’s work
- Innovative power of NIET is evidenced through the development of over 30,000 teacher leaders
- Significantly expanding the pipeline of effective educators
Four Levers of School Improvement
“Research on high-performing schools indicates that schools which develop cultures of collaboration and professional inquiry have success in improving student learning. Teachers possess capabilities and knowledge that are critically needed to strengthen school reform and improvement. In order to unleash these strengths, they need recognized responsibilities, authority, time to collaborate, and support from school administrators to assume leadership roles.”

(Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2008).
Think about **successful schools**, schools that show **academic improvement** every year? What are some of the **characteristics** these schools might share?
Advancing Educator Excellence

Coaching and Learning Cycle

- Instructional Excellence
- Collaborative Learning
- Reflective Culture
- Collective Leadership
- Results

Strengths-Based Needs Assessment
Support Plan Aligned to School Goals
INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE: High Expectations for Instruction Require Strong Support
Create a culture of rigorous instruction and develop teacher leaders to conduct effective observations and give actionable feedback, to coach, model, and provide follow-up in the classroom.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: Teachers Must Lead Their Development
Establish or enhance professional learning communities using research-based strategies and train teacher leaders to serve as instructional coaches and lead job-embedded professional learning.

REFLECTIVE CULTURE: Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement
Support principals and school leaders through coaching in leadership best practices, develop peer coaching and mentoring, and establish a common language around effective instruction.

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP: Effective Leadership Is Essential
Train principals to lead effective school leadership teams that analyze data, monitor school goals and drive school-wide improvement strategies.
In 4 Years:
+ 7 A/B scores
- 3 C/D scores
0 F scores

District Grade

Results
Results

Louisiana Department of Education
- 98% Economically disadvantaged school

St. John the Baptist School District
- Most challenging school

Fifth Ward Elementary EOY Performance Data

- ELA
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Overall All SPS

2017-2018 vs 2018-2019
Deeper Dive
Into Each Lever
Lever 1
Instructional Excellence
Instructional Excellence

Designing & Planning Instruction
- Instructional Plans
- Student Work
- Assessment

Responsibilities
- Staff Development
- Instructional Supervision
- School Responsibilities Reflecting on Teaching

Learning Environment
- Managing Student Behavior
- Expectations Environment
- Respectful Culture

Instruction
- Standards & Objectives
- Motivating Students
- Presenting Instructional Content
- Lesson Structure & Pacing
- Activities & Materials
- Questioning
- Academic Feedback
- Grouping Students
- Teacher Content Knowledge
- Teacher Knowledge of Students
- Thinking
- Problem Solving
Instructional Excellence

Tools for tracking student progress towards the standards
Support for Teachers

- Engage in follow-up and coaching in classrooms around rigorous instruction.
  - Teacher leaders provide classroom support and coaching, such as:
    - observation/feedback
    - model teaching
    - demonstration lessons
    - team teaching
    - engage in student-centered coaching around critical elements of the lesson
“Teacher leadership is all about having someone to support you who is doing the work with you. When things start to get rough, you can go to that teacher leader for support.”

—Corrie Callahan, Master Teacher, Abraham Lincoln Elementary School, Perry Township
When it comes to creating a culture of rigorous instruction and supporting teachers, what would you consider:

- An area of strength?
- An opportunity for growth?
- What are your next steps as a leader?
Lever 2
Collaborative Learning
How do we transfer what happens in PLC’s to everyday classroom practice?
Set Expectations

- Set a clear vision and expectations for engagement of all teachers in weekly PLCs
  - Create a sense of urgency and strong expectations for engagement in weekly PLCs
  - Develop the “why” around PLCs
  - Invest principals, teacher leaders, and teachers in the purpose of the process
  - Mobilize and equip district leaders to support and coach the PLC process in schools
Goal Setting for PLCs

- Set clear, measurable goals for PLCs (yearly and cycle) and track progress toward attainment
  - Goals should be set in terms of student achievement or student growth
  - Goals should align with district and school student achievement goals as well as with teacher-student learning targets
  - PLC goals should be tracked by individual PLCs
  - Progress toward goals for all PLCs should be analyzed by school’s instructional leadership team to determine next steps and focus areas for PLCs
Sample Aligned Goals

- **PLC Cycle II Goal:**
  - By the end of the cycle, all students will increase 1 to 10 points incrementally in their ELA growth targets. This growth is a result of teachers deconstructing targeted ELA standards and applying to lesson development and assessments as measured by analysis of student work samples and observation data pertaining to Standards & Objectives, Activities & Materials, and Instructional Plans indicators.

- **Yearly PLC Goal:**
  - By the end of the year, each student will meet or surpass his or her ELA growth target of 1-10 points based on 2018-2019 LEAP data. This progress is a result of setting appropriate student growth targets and teachers planning for instruction and assessment aligned to the rigor of the standards as measured by benchmark assessments, LEAP data, and analysis of student work samples and observation data pertaining to Standards & Objectives, Activities & Materials, and Instructional Plans indicators.
Empower teacher leaders with clearly defined roles to plan and lead PLCs using a research-based protocol.

- Lead PLCs and provide coaching and follow-up support in classrooms.
- Use a research-based protocol to guide the work of PLCs and track impact on student learning.
- Champion and guide all school improvement efforts.
- Exhibit and model in classrooms high levels of instructional expertise.
**Identify** problem or need
- Evidence of need (using pre-test) is clear, specific, and measurable in student outcomes
- Addresses student content learning with links to teacher strategies and the rubric

**Obtain** new teacher learning aligned to student need and formatted for classroom application
- Use credible sources
- Proven application showing student growth

**Develop** new teacher learning in cluster with support in the classroom
- Develop through demonstration, modeling, practice, team teaching and peer coaching with subsequent analysis of student work

**Apply** new teacher learning to the classroom
- Evidenced through observation, peer coaching, and self reflection applied to student work as a formative assessment

**Evaluate** the impact on student performance
- Evidence includes student assessment (post-test) aligned with data analysis and the new teaching strategies

**STEPS for Effective Learning™**
Student-Centered Coaching

- The coach partners with teachers to design learning based on particular objective(s) for student mastery.
- The focus is on using data and student work to analyze progress and collaborate to make informed decisions about instruction that is differentiated and needs-based.
- The coach is perceived as a partner who is there to move students toward mastery of the standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>The coach partners with teachers to design learning that is based on a specific objective for student learning.</th>
<th>The coach moves towards implementing a program or a specific set of instructional practices.</th>
<th>The coach provides support and resources to teachers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>The focus is on using data and student work to analyze progress and collaborate to make informed decisions about instruction that is differentiated and needs-based.</td>
<td>The focus is on what the teacher is, or is not, doing and addressing it through coaching.</td>
<td>The focus is on providing support for teachers in a way that doesn’t challenge or threaten them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Data</td>
<td>Formative assessment data and student work are used to determine how to design instruction. Summative assessment data is used to assess progress toward mastery.</td>
<td>Summative assessment data is used to hold teachers accountable, rather than as a tool for instructional decision making.</td>
<td>Data is rarely used in relationship-driven coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Textbooks, technology, and curricular programs are viewed as tools to moving student learning to the next level.</td>
<td>The use of textbooks, technology and curricular programs are the primary objective of the coaching.</td>
<td>Sharing access and information to textbooks, technology, and curricular programs is the primary focus of the coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the Coach</td>
<td>The coach is viewed as a partner who is there to move students towards mastery of the standards.</td>
<td>The coach is viewed as a person who is there to hold teachers accountable for a certain set of instructional practices.</td>
<td>The coach is viewed as a friendly source of support that provides resources when needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Relationships</td>
<td>Trusting, respectful, and collegial relationships are a necessary component for all forms of coaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NIET NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
Collaborative Learning: Teachers Must Lead Their Development

When it comes to establishing or enhancing learning communities using research-based strategies, what would you consider...

An area of strength?
An opportunity for growth?
What are your next steps as a leader?
Lever 3
Reflective Culture
Reflective Culture

- Create structures and time for teachers and leaders:
  - to reflect on their practice
  - to do reciprocal coaching
  - to observe one another’s practice
  - to analyze student outcomes with transparency and support one another for improvement.
## PURPOSE of Learning Walks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To collect data, looking for evidence of the implementation of effective practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To involve faculty in normalizing the learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To examine classroom practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To observe student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To determine next steps in supporting teacher learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build greater instructional capacity across classrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not a complete list*
Transparent Tracking of Student Outcomes

- Analyze student work in PLCs using a specific protocol, and track individual student progress toward mastery of the standards.
  - Track student progress towards mastery of specific, critical standards.
  - Determine academic needs of individual students that teachers will collaborate on.
- Analyze efficacy of the strategies teachers are implementing and make adjustments as needed.
- Determine next steps on the continuum of learning for teachers and students.
Analysis of Student Work

- Determine a common assessment/assignment
- Set criteria for success that all teachers understand
- Do grade rounds to assure common application of criteria
- Each teacher bring samples of student work that are above the standard, meeting the standard, below the standard
- Team of teachers collaboratively analyze and determine next steps for each group of students based on what they are seeing in the student work
Reflective Culture: Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement

When it comes to principals and teacher leaders developing peer coaching and mentoring opportunities and establishing a common language and practice around effective instruction, what would you consider...

An area of strength?

An opportunity for growth?

What are your next steps as a leader?
Lever 4
Collective Leadership
Collective Leadership

- Principal and teacher leaders form instructional leadership team
  - Set student achievement goals and metrics for success.
  - Support and guide improvement efforts.
  - Monitor teacher and student data to gauge progress.
  - Plan PLC work based on progress and teacher and student needs.
  - Plan for follow up support and coaching in the classroom.
## Collective Leadership

### STEPS for Effective Learning in Leadership Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the need</td>
<td>Obtain new leadership learning aligned to need</td>
<td>Develop new learning at leadership team meeting</td>
<td>Apply new learning to the area of need</td>
<td>Evaluate the impact on student performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Evidence of need (using data)** is clear, specific, high quality and measurable and addresses student content learning with links to teacher strategies and the rubric in student outcomes.
- **Study data, collect facts, determine possible solutions.**
- **Plan for implementation.**
- **Evidenced through PLC work, observations, and peer coaching.**
- **Evidence includes student assessment data with corresponding work samples.**
- **Using credible research-based sources – proven applications showing student growth.**
- **Development through demonstration, modeling, practice, and peer coaching with subsequent analysis of student work.**
- **Applied to student learning and students’ demonstration of mastery.**
## Collective Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader as Presenter:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leader as Presenter:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Expertise as Presenter:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leader demonstrates expertise when presenting new learning as evidenced by his or her ability to:</td>
<td>The leader demonstrates adequate knowledge in presenting new learning as evidenced by his or her ability to:</td>
<td>The leader does not demonstrate knowledge about new learning being presented as evidenced by his or her inability to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- explain the material</td>
<td>- explain the material</td>
<td>- explain the material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- provide relevant examples</td>
<td>- provide relevant examples</td>
<td>- provide relevant examples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- clearly identify and explain the critical attributes</td>
<td>- identify the critical attributes</td>
<td>- identify the critical attributes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- redirect teacher questions when necessary</td>
<td>- redirect teacher questions when necessary</td>
<td>- redirect teacher questions when necessary</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ask higher order questions</td>
<td>- ask higher order questions</td>
<td>- ask higher order questions</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When it comes to principals leading effective school leadership teams that analyze data, monitor school goals and drive school-wide improvement strategies, what would you consider...

- An area of strength?
- An opportunity for growth?
- What are your next steps as a leader?
Collaborative Insights

In groups of three or four, share your reflections focusing on next steps. Add any next steps you garner from your discussions that you would like to include in your planning.

Be prepared to share with the entire group any insights you gain.
Many districts working with NIET outpaced their peers in growth, according to Stanford’s Center for Education Policy Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>SCHOOL DISTRICT</th>
<th>GROWTH AFTER 5 YEARS</th>
<th>NATIONAL PERCENTILE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Gadsden Elementary School District #32</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Osborn School District #8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>DeSoto Parish School System</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Ascension Public Schools</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Avondale Elementary District</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stanford University, Center for Education Policy Analysis, 2017.
New and Continuing NIET-Supported Schools Outperform Comparison Schools

Percentage of Schools Achieving One Year or More of Growth

Control Schools: 77%
NIET-supported - New: 79%
NIET-supported - Continuing: 88%

Source: NIET Research and Evaluation Department, 2017. Calculated with data provided from SAS®.
NIET is Helping to Narrow the Achievement Gap in High-Poverty Schools

Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Satisfactory Standard

Slaton Junior High

Source: Training Teachers to Be Effective on Day One, Fall 2017.
Third-party analysis shows NIET schools outperform comparison schools

Source: Mann, D., Leutscher, T., Reardon, R. M. (2013). Findings from a Two-Year Examination of Teacher Engagement in TAP Schools Across Louisiana, Interactive Inc.
NIET-Supported Schools Retain More Teachers

Source: NIET Research and Evaluation Department, 2014.
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