NETWORK READY, SYSTEMS READY
Moving IOWA Forward Hand in Hand!

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Superintendent Network Facilitators
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Iowa Superintendent Network Director
Our goal today is to build our leadership capacity and learn how Superintendents and Network facilitators can work together to support our shared vision of increasing learning for all students by using the Instructional Rounds process.
PELP Model: The Instructional Core and Beyond
Network Ready…

Establishing strong connections through networking opportunities to:

- Build superintendent leadership capacity
- Build system level capacity across our districts
- Impact student achievement
Having the structures and practices in place that allow for district systems and subsystems to:

- work together effectively for a common purpose.
You’re observing and talking about the instructional core more
2013 Iowa Superintendents’ Network Participant Survey (n=60)
You’re more able to identify next steps
2013 Iowa Superintendents’ Network Participant Survey (n=60)

Before IR: My ability to ID next steps to improve student learning

- 3% great deal of ability
- 29% moderate ability
- 26% some ability
- 4% no ability

After IR: My ability to ID next steps to improve student learning

- 14% great deal of ability
- 40% moderate ability
- 4% some ability
- 4% no ability
You’re more comfortable admitting you need help

2013 Iowa Superintendents’ Network Participant Survey (n=60)

Before IR: Comfort admitting to other network members when network members when I didn't know something and needed help
- Very comfortable: 10
- Comfortable: 27
- Uncomfortable: 20
- Very uncomfortable: 3

After IR: Comfort admitting to other network members when network members when I didn't know something and needed help
- Very comfortable: 32
- Comfortable: 26
- Uncomfortable: 1
- Very uncomfortable: 0

Legend:
- Green: Very comfortable
- Brown: Comfortable
- Yellow: Uncomfortable
- Red: Very uncomfortable
You’re more confident
2013 Iowa Superintendents’ Network Participant Survey (n=60)

Before IR: Confidence talking to principals and talking to principals and coaches about my classroom observations

After IR: Confidence talking to principals and talking to principals and coaches about my classroom observations

- 14% A great deal of confidence
- 37% A moderate level of confidence
- 8% Little confidence
- 0% No confidence
I. Fluency in practice and process
- positive personal experience
- familiarity, fluency with practice and process
- repetition of findings, solutions
- disappointing impact

II. Connecting rounds to improvement strategies
- push for greater specificity, focus; harder questions
- surfacing issues of knowledge, skill gaps
- uncertainty over norms of collegiality, accountability

III. Building a self-organizing learning environment/network
- lateral accountability
- sustained learning agenda
- focus on development and context
- push against boundaries of existing practice
- from compliance to self-regulation
Building our leadership capacity:

Q: How do we connect our Rounds learning and lead with the bigger picture in mind?
“It is the discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static snapshots” (Senge, 2006, p. 68).
A system is any group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent parts that form a complex and unified whole that has a specific purpose. The key thing to remember is that all the parts are interrelated and interdependent in some way. Without such interdependencies, we have just a collection of parts, not a system.

System Basics:

- A system has a purpose.
- The parts combine in a particular way to carry out its purpose.
- Systems serve specific purposes within larger systems.
- Systems seek stability.
- Systems have feedback.

Source: The Tip of the Iceberg
David Hutchens, Pegasus Communications
System Practice…

Activity: System or Collection?
1. Kitchen
2. Data base of customer names
3. Tools in a toolbox
4. Football team
5. Toaster
6. Bowl of fruit
7. Marriage
Developing our System

- **Common Agreements** about our “purpose” (the WHAT and WHY of our work)
- **Common Agreements** about “process” (clarity for HOW we do our work)
- **Common Understanding** about “the impact of our learning” (the HOW WELL we do matters)
- **Common “Professional Development”** that is ongoing, job-embedded and collaborative to make us stronger as a superintendent network.
Think-Pair-Share

- What squares with your thinking?
- What interesting points did you see?
- What questions are still rolling around in your head?
When we return:

Liz City Video Conference
Deepening the Process: POP
Intentional Implementation: TOA
Next Level of Work:
Accountable Communities
A Problem of Practice identifies a root cause; it is not a surface problem. An authentic POP represents the behaviors, structures, beliefs, etc. that fundamentally block the system from achieving the desired outcome/result.

Must determine:

- Is it an authentic problem or a symptom of a larger problem?
- Is the POP within our circle of influence?
- Does the POP require a minor adjustment of current practice to be resolved?
A good problem statement…

“A problem well put is half solved.”

John Dewey

- Initially identifies a learning issue or achievement gap for students; also identifies problems of teaching practice, and leadership practice that bear on the student learning issues.
- Frames the challenge as a question
- Avoids blame or pre-conceived solutions
- Considers root causes
Root Causes that bear impact on the Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root Cause</th>
<th>Consider…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Causes</td>
<td>Working relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Causes</td>
<td>Training, coaching, learning across system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Causes</td>
<td>Time, materials, budgets, people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Causes</td>
<td>Alignment of roles, communication process/loops, supervision/accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Causes</td>
<td>Values, habits, traditions, norms</td>
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</tbody>
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Example progression of a (District) Problem of Practice:

**Draft One:**

*Kindergarten students come to school with widely different levels of reading readiness.*

**Draft Two:**

*How to ensure that all Kindergarten students will be reading at or above grade level by the end of Kindergarten?*

**Draft Three:**

*How to ensure that Kindergarten students who enter school speaking a primary language other than English will be reading at or above grade level by the end of Kindergarten?*

**Draft Four:**

*How will the school district fully support all Kindergarten teachers to know and use instructional practices in literacy that ensure Kindergarten students who enter school speaking a primary language other than English will be reading at or above grade level by the end of Kindergarten?*

Washington State Leadership Academy
How will the school district fully support all Kindergarten teachers to know and use instructional practices in literacy that ensure Kindergarten students who enter school speaking a primary language other than English will be reading at or above grade level by the end of Kindergarten?
Theories of Action:

When we develop TOAs we are:

- Identifying a causal chain related to our POP: The actions and conditions that need to be true to address the POP.

- Richard Elmore
Theories of Action

- Intentionally connect the plan to the problem, giving rationale for the strategies.
- Typically written as “If-then” statements.
- Is informed by best practice, experience, rationale, belief systems.
- *Theory of Action* is reviewed and revised on a regular, ongoing basis.
Background:
The Iowa Core is measured by the Iowa Assessments. This assessment data reveal a large number of students, particularly those in the subgroup areas, are not scoring at proficient levels in reading and math on the annual state exam.

POP Question:
- How can we improve learning for all students in reading and math as measured by the Iowa Core Assessments?
Sample (Statewide) Theory of Action

- If the Iowa Core State Assessments are aligned to the Iowa Core State Standards and,
- If the instructional materials are aligned to the Iowa Core State Standards and,
- If teachers and staff have ongoing professional development in the use of these instructional materials and,
- If high quality, agreed-upon instructional practices are used in all classrooms and,
- If these practices are supported by leadership actions through a system-wide approach,
- Then learning will improve in reading and math for all students in the state of Iowa as measured by the Iowa Assessments.
Linking our work

We can guide and improve the performance of our system by *intentionally linking* our Instructional Rounds work to provide common language, understanding and focus:

- Embedding our POP /TOA work into Action Steps in our existing School or District Improvement Plans
Next Level of Work?

- Developing Accountable Communities
- Continuum of Community Function
- Terms and definitions
- Applications?
Continuum of Community Function

Adult Oriented, Regressive Interactions
- Toxic
- Laissez-Faire
- Congenial

Student Oriented, Progressive Interactions
- Collaborative
- Accountable

Skillful Leader II, Platt et al. (2008).
Application to our Learning

- Move into Network groups and recap the five professional community types
- Determine where your feel your Network is currently functioning on the Continuum
- Develop a plan of how you can “plus” this information within your Network
- Create Network agreements for how to become an Accountable Community

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To confront conditions that undermine learning, groups must have conviction, competence, and control in order to push the group toward becoming an accountable community.
**Conviction:** Holding and consistently acting on a set of beliefs or stances that move the school or institution closer to its mission of making sure children learn and achieve at high levels.

**Competence:** Having and using a repertoire of skills and knowledge about effective collaboration and adult interaction; having and using problem-solving skills to address student learning needs.

**Control:** Adequate structures, processes, and resources to support groups charged with improving student achievement and carrying out the mission of the school/district.
Putting it all together…

Our goal today is to build our leadership capacity and learn how Superintendents and Network facilitators can work together to support our shared vision of increasing learning for all students. Instructional Rounds and Accountable Communities will help us accomplish our goals.
Closing thoughts

- The advent of the K-12 Common Core standards across our country has only hastened the need for quality leadership at the district level. No longer able to survive as collections of parts, effective district leadership must weave a more highly aligned system connected by the goal improving student achievement.

In this new era, district leaders must intentionally shape and guide the work needing to be done in terms of improving learning for all students.