Using Teacher-Driven Observation to Improve Professional Development and Student Achievement

NAESP Annual Conference
July 11, 2014
Nashville, TN
Professional Development

Improving Instruction to Increase Student Learning
Reflection on a Quote

- Choose one quote on the handout that resonates with you and write a one sentence reflection explaining why. (2 min)
- Form a triad with others around you and share your reflection. (4 min)
In practice, the primary method of instructional improvement—professional development—falls short of deeply impacting what teachers do in the classroom.

Teachers are passive recipients.

The transfer from training to classroom presents a challenge.

There are few opportunities to practice and refine new strategies.
Today’s Focus

- **What?** Teacher-Driven Observation (TDO)
- **Why?** It provides teachers with a process for taking charge of their learning through peer-collected classroom data.
Today’s Agenda

Objective:
• Examine how Teacher-Driven Observation can provide a process for effective professional development to improve teaching and learning.

- 3:15 – Introduction
- 3:30 – Teacher-Driven Observation Fishbowl
- 4:10 – Logistics and Essential Skills of TDO
- 4:25 – Implementation Support
- 4:40 – Q&A, Closing
Teacher-Driven Observation: Fishbowl
Improving Professional Development

As you watch Teacher-Driven Observation, reflect on how the process...

gives teachers a process for leading their learning?

puts professional learning in the classroom context?

creates collaborative opportunities to practice and refine strategies?
Focus Meeting

- Observed teacher provides logistical information for both observation and post-observation debriefing (1 min)
  - Observers ask clarifying questions (2 min)

**Focus Question:** As I release responsibility to students, how are the questions I ask of students contributing to or hindering their abilities to independently solve problems?

- Observed teacher provides context for lesson and shares the focus question (3 min)
  - Observers ask clarifying questions (2 min)

- Observed teacher assigns observation techniques to observers (1 min)
  - Observers ask clarifying questions (1 min)
Observation Video
Debriefing Protocol

- **Observers** discuss the teaching and learning observed.
  - In descriptive statements: What did you see/hear? (3 min)
  - What do you wonder/make of it? (3 min)

- **Observed teacher** speaks about how the data from the observation relate to the focus question. (2 min)
  - How do the data answer my focus question?
  - Have the data informed other areas of my instruction and if so, how?

- **Observers and observed teacher** discuss the next steps: (3 min)
  - Observed teacher: How will the data collected inform my instruction? What will I change?
  - Observers: What have I learned from this experience that I can apply to my own instruction?
What is one element of Teacher-Driven Observation that could enhance professional development in your school or classroom?

Individually reflect and record (1 min)
Share with a partner (3 min)
Improving Professional Development

How does this peer observation model (Teacher-Driven Observation)...

- give teachers a process for leading their learning?
- put professional learning in the classroom context?
- create collaborative opportunities to practice and refine strategies?
Teacher-Driven Observation: The Logistics
Logistics—Who?

- 2-3 observers
- Make intentional invitations:
  - Teachers with similar students vs. different students
  - New vs. veteran teacher
  - Teacher within vs. outside content area
  - Teachers of lower vs. higher grade level
- Entry points:
  - Individual, team, whole school
Logistics—How?

**Time**
- Common planning time
- Before and after school
- Lunch

**Personnel**
- Administrators
- Educational support staff
- Substitute teachers

**Funding**
- Title I
- PD funds
- School improvement plan funds
- Implementation funds
- Parent and community groups
Logistics—How long?

Figure 4.1
New Insights in a Classroom Visit

Kim Marshall, *Rethinking Teacher Supervision*
Teacher-Driven Observation: The Skills
## Observation Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Who directs the process?</th>
<th>The primary learning value is for...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify best practices</td>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe model classroom</td>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate teacher effectiveness</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect data to inform and improve individual instruction</td>
<td>Observer teacher</td>
<td>Observer teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus question guides the collection of classroom data during the observation.

In what area(s) would you like to know more about the relationship between your teaching and student learning in your classroom?
Essential Skills: Identifying a Focus

An effective focus question...

- Focuses on an area in which you want to improve
- Examines the relationship between teaching and student learning
- Requires the collection of classroom data
- Answers a question you cannot answer on your own

How can I more effectively use reading workshop as an opportunity for students to interact with text?

Which type of instructions best promote on-task cooperative group work?

To what extent am I scaffolding the higher-level thinking questions I ask my students?
## Essential Skills: Collecting Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Collection</th>
<th>Examples of Data Collected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripting</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Teacher instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Teacher questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student responses, categorized by:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student responds when called upon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student initiates a comment or question related to lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student initiates an unrelated comment or question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counting</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Teacher questions, categorized according to Bloom’s taxonomy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Teacher instructional time</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Student work time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tracking</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Teacher movements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Teacher eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essential Skills: Staying Descriptive

Pool of Data

Select Data Based on Beliefs

Add Meanings Based on Beliefs

Make Interpretations

Draw Conclusions

Start at the level of the data!

Beliefs, Experiences Assumptions

Ladder of Inference concept developed by Chris Argyris
Staying Descriptive: Let’s Practice
Essential Skills: Staying Descriptive

Conversations are more productive when we start with descriptive evidence!

- What’s the result of each comment?

“The students were bored in that classroom.”

“The teacher asked students to focus on one task for the 60-minute class period.”
Essential Skills: Utilizing Protocols

Protocols guide the effective use of time to ensure we identify next steps.

Focus Meeting Protocol
- **Observed teacher** provides logistical information for both observation and post-observation debriefing (1 min)
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Teacher-Driven Observation: Supporting Implementation
Not a Stand-Alone “Program”

How can TDO help us connect multiple change initiatives?

- Develop competence with **new state standards**
- Identify areas of instructional improvement required by **new teacher evaluation instruments**
- Deepen collaboration within **professional learning communities** by looking at student data, and refining implementation of evidence-based instructional strategies
- Ensure alignment of classroom practice with priorities delineated in the **school improvement plan**
Anticipating Obstacles

Whole room brainstorm: Considering the Teacher-Driven Observation process and the essential skills required, what obstacles could impede effective implementation?

TDO Logistics:
• Focus meeting
• Observation
• Post-Observation Debriefing

TDO Essential skills:
• Identifying a Focus
• Data Collection
• Staying Descriptive
• Utilizing Protocols
Potential obstacles:

What can you do—in your particular role—to help avoid and/or address the obstacles noted?
Teacher-Driven Observation: Questions?
Mindset Reflection

“I used to think..., but now I think...”
Thank you!

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