

Elk Grove Associate Feedback  
School: Herman Leimbach ES  
Associate: Robin Noble

**Visit 1: 10/25/2016**

**What was accomplished?**

I was able to build some strong rapport with the principal and the leadership team. I was also able to get an overall understanding of where the school is on the PLC journey. Although the school had some overall increases (4-6%) on the state assessment in ELA, they dropped in Math grades 4-6. I think it became apparent to Abelardo that without focused essential standards and CFAs, it will be difficult to see consistent increase in state assessments. The PLC overview with principal and Leadership team allowed this group to come to some common understandings about strong PLC implementation and the importance of the guiding coalition in this process. The purpose and need for teacher teams to come to common agreements about essential standards and how this leads to focused instruction and CFAs I believe was the most important accomplishment

**What are the next steps?**

During the next two visits we will be focusing on identifying essential standards, unpacking these standards to address key learning targets and developing rigorous CFAs. There is a sense of urgency established during this visit and we hope to quickly move toward data collection protocols, intervention/extension and SMART goals that are focused and monitored. Abelardo also requested that I focus on setting up team meeting protocols to ensure teams have the tools necessary to collaborate using data and smart goals. Abelardo also asked if I could take the whole staff through the PLC overview during my next visit. I will try to do this Monday afternoon when I arrive in Elk Grove before my actual visit on Tuesday.

**What homework was assigned?**

Teachers were asked to look at the state standards for informational text independently, and then come together as grade level teams to build consensus for 2-3 essential standards. This is in preparation to begin the process of unpacking these standards and identifying learning targets during my next visit (just 2 weeks away this time)

## **Visit 2: 11/8/2016**

### **What was accomplished?**

The principal, Abelardo Cordova, and I met in the morning and had planned to review scheduling, interventions and school culture. Abelardo had already gained access to a block schedule being used at one of his colleague's school. We discussed the benefits of having a common intervention block that could bring "all hands on deck" to target specific student needs and alleviate the need to pull students out of core instruction to engage in a disconnected intervention program. Currently, students in need of intervention and students identified as SPED students are frequently pulled out of core instruction to receive intervention services. We also talked about evidence of a school culture that demonstrates a strong belief that all students can learn at high levels, and focused particularly on the achievement gaps reflect in data for african american student in the school. During the afternoon I worked with the principal and leadership team on the clarifying the purpose and definition of collaborative teams, protocols for effective team meetings and the purpose and development of team norms to guide their work in teams. We also shared out the work of establishing essential standards, unpacking and identifying learning targets. We also touched on creating CFAs and the types of questions utilized to ensure viable for validity and reliability

### **What are the next steps?**

Abelardo is going to do his next staff meeting on explaining the purpose and process of the norm building process to support the team leaders in completing this process with their colleagues. Teachers were asked to solidify their team meeting protocols to include a time bound focused agenda, identified roles of facilitator, recorder and time keeper, and after establishing norms, beginning and ending the meeting reading these norms. During my next visit, Abelardo and I will dig into the school culture issues he is feeling and teachers will focus on the development of effective CFAs and protocols for looking at student work as a team that moves them toward collective responsibility and timely interventions/extensions for students.

### **What homework was assigned?**

Teachers: establish solid team protocols; identify learning targets that reveal the underlying skills and rigor needed to reach proficiency in their identified essential standards Principal: Support the development of team protocols and norms and hold teams accountable for these protocols; review and create an action plan for revising schedules to accommodate an intervention protocol that does not pull students from core instruction; audit the intervention programs that are currently being utilized for targeted, results-backed impact on student learning and progress toward grade level standards

**Visit 3: 12/06/2016****What was accomplished?**

My meeting with the kinder teachers revealed that they actually all have formative assessments developed that they utilize around the essential standards, they are just not common and they are not collectively sharing data and best practice. They Teachers realized that they actually do formative assessments they just don't do them commonly. Need to decide on them and do them commonly and share data collectively. 1st and 2nd grade realized that their long term SMART goal does not allow for short cycle tracking and celebration. They realized the need to set up short cycle smart goals for one to two week cycles and celebrate and track progress with the students. 3rd and 4th grade had some realizations about word problems based on their benchmark assessment and brainstormed together how to deconstruct the problems students were having and create CFAs to try and clarify and secure learning targets toward successful work problem solving by their students. 5th and 6th grade similarly identified mult. and dividing numbers with decimals as an area of concern. They also identified strategies to address decomposing numbers and will identify CFAs to determine if strategies are working for their students.

**What are the next steps?**

Abelardo and I will go over data collection documents that can be utilized in team meetings to guide data discussions and actions for reteaching. We will analyze their master schedule to determine reteaching/workshop blocks that will allow teachers to differentiate and minimize/eliminate the need for students to be pulled out of their classrooms for intervention/remediation during core instruction. We will also review a the PLC timeline for implementation of key practices to determine goals for the last months of this school year that will ensure a solid PLC foundation to build on for next year.

**What homework was assigned?**

Kinder will identify at least 3-4 assessments that they can give commonly and discuss results together to identify reteaching needs and intervention. 1st and 2nd grade are going to identify smart goals that students and teacher can track for a 1 to 2 week cycle and introduce student data notebooks to facilitate tracking and celebrations. 3rd and 4th grade are going to work collaboratively to come up with progressive assessments to determine what kids are missing in word problems. They are also going to come up with some common strategies for teaching – reteaching 5th and 6th grade will focus on place value. There plan is to do a 5 min mini-lesson each day that focuses on deconstructing numbers. They plan to use a pre and post assessment to see if their identified strategies worked to clarify this concept for their students.

**Visit 4: 1/10/2017****What was accomplished?**

I think it was helpful to see how the school principal and teacher leaders embrace new initiatives in their school. I was able to visit classrooms and get a feel for the academic levels of students in the classrooms, watch teachers take on new practices, and watch them negotiate when and how implementation should occur and what the expectations are developed for school wide initiatives. I also saw how Abelardo (the principal) supports the initiatives in his school. He sits through all the PD, is actively engaged, and helps establish expectations that ensure teachers take on the practices the school has decided to implement. It is evident that his teachers respect him and that he carries a deep commitment to increase student learning in his school.

At the end of the day, Abelardo and I had time to debrief and talk about goals for our work together as we move into the last half of the school year. We went through the PLC Products, Tasks and Timelines document to review where we are, what we have accomplished, and what we would like to solidify by the end of the year. I also asked him to read the first chapter of Tim Kanold's book, The Five Disciplines of PLC Leaders in preparation for my next visit and a discussion about establishing Vision/Mission/Values for the school as we move forward.

**What are the next steps?**

- Work with Abelardo to develop a plan about scheduling a time to create and establish Vision/Mission/Values/Goals for the school as we move forward.
- Follow up with grade level teams on their assignments from my last visit
- introduce proficiency map and unit planning protocols
- Revisit CFAs and ensure understanding

**What homework was assigned?**

- Abelardo read the first chapter of Tim Kanold's book, The Five Disciplines of PLC Leaders
- Abelardo visit each grade level team meeting before my next visit to see if teams are consistently using team meeting protocols
- Ensure teachers are prepared to discuss and show evidence of previous assignments and show examples of their essential standards unpacked and learning targets identified

**Visit 5: 2/7/2017****What was accomplished?**

I was scheduled so that I had time to meet with each grade level team for approximately 30 - 40 min throughout the day. Our goal was to look at current formative assessments, sort them by high/med/low, then generate a conversation about critical questions number 3 and 4 regarding what we do when students don't/do learn the standard or target we are teaching. I began by introducing the concept of tight/loose in a Professional Learning Community focusing on the tight of "when kids don't learn we have a guaranteed way to intervene, no exceptions". Then, through identifying students who were high/med/low, I prompted teachers to identify what they currently do when students don't learn, first in the classroom, then school wide. Finally, I asked them to brainstorm a list of ideas for the "perfect" scenario for reteach/intervention/enrichment time for their students. Many creative ideas were generated and teachers began to see the need for a designated classroom time and school wide time for reteaching and continued intervention that did not pull students out of core instruction which can create further gaps in student learning.

At the end of the day, I met with Abelardo and his instructional coaches to go over the concepts and ideas they had pulled from reading the first chapter of The Five Disciplines of a PLC Leader by Tim Kanold. They resonated with the need, as a school leader, to identify your own vision and what you value for school improvement in the PLC setting and use this as a driver to articulate the school vision/values consistently, continuously and with much clarity as you speak with and collaborate with teachers and make decision about what is tight and loose in your school.

**What are the next steps?**

Grade level teachers are going to continue the work of identifying essential standards from the ELA strands of the state standards. The 2nd grade team has completed this work with the instructional coaches and Abelardo has scheduled out the rest of the teams to do this same work.

Utilizing their work with essentials, I would like to introduce proficiency mapping during my next visit so teachers can get an idea when each standard is expected to be mastered during the year and be reading to begin unit planning for next year.

Other homework is listed below.

**What homework was assigned?**

Teachers were asked to continue to tease out the specifics of an ideal school wide response to intervention.

Abelardo along with school leadership were asked to evaluate their master schedule and identify a way to scaffold pull out/push in interventions throughout the day so that students who need resources outside the classroom are serviced during the classroom small group "workshop" time frame when all students are working in small groups and receiving differentiated instruction.

The instructional coaches are going to focus on training teachers on how to set up a small group "workshop" time successfully in their classrooms. This is mostly for the upper grade teachers who seem a little more intimidated with a time of small group work when students must work independently. The focus is on setting up procedures and protocols so that students know the expectations and can facilitate a rotation of small group intervention/enrichment each day. They feel that Wonders has a very strong protocol for the workshop format and will most likely use this as their resource

Abelardo and leadership team are going to journal about what their ideal school would look like, sound like, feel like in 5 years and be prepared to talk about this in during our next visit.

**What was  
accomplished?**

**Visit 6: 3/7/2017**

After conferencing with Abelardo before my visit, we decided to focus on visiting classrooms to observe their "workshop" time. This was the focus of my last visit and he wanted me to have the opportunity to see what teachers had accomplished. I visited his kinder team and 4th grade team. The kinder team was familiar with working a small group workshop model and were very proficient in the protocols and procedures. The 4th grade team was not as comfortable but had decided to try a "walk to learn" model we had discussed during my last visit. I was impressed with their willingness to step out and try something unfamiliar. My observation was that students were responding well to the change. There were three classroom and student were grouped in high/med/low groupings based on the Wonder's curriculum and assessment resources.

I spent the afternoon working with members of the guiding coalition, Abelardo, his two instructional coaches, and his interventionist. This is a very strong team and all are very knowledgeable about best practices and the value of the PLC processes in the school. We did mission/vision work utilizing their individual journal entries about what they would Like Leimbach Elementary to look like, sound like and feel like in 5 years. From these entries we compiled a list of attributes and then goal statements about what the actions of the adult in the building we need to be to ensure these vision statement would come to fruition.

**What are the next steps?**

- Grade level teams are continuing to work with the instructional coaches to identify essential standards and learning targets in preparation for a school wide vertical alignment conversation. They are also using this work to do unit planning for the first unit in Wonders for next year
- Teachers will turn in documents identifying their current school day schedules and Abelardo and leadership team will begin building out a school wide master schedule that ensures and scaffolds workshop time in the schedule so that pull-outs can be minimized or eliminated and reteaching/enrichment time is guaranteed.
- I will work with grade level teams during my next visit to take them through the same mission/vision process I went through with Abelardo and his coaches during this visit.

**What homework was assigned?**

- Gather teacher schedules to prepare for building a master schedule for next year to accommodate workshop time
- Have teachers and staff respond to vision prompt and journal their responses in preparation for our work during my next visit
- Have teachers find one quote from research that support the need for members of a school or organization to identify their vision for the future.

**What was accomplished?**

**Visit 7: 4/4/2017**

I met with the school leadership team in the morning for a couple of hours. It was nice to have extended time with them. Our objectives were to identify and celebrate what they have accomplished so far this year with PLCs at Work, clarify the path ahead, differentiate between structural and cultural change, and then work to identify individual and collective vision, values, and goals which will take them into next year with a clear and specific focus. They will take this work to the whole staff at the next staff meeting to facilitate more input from the whole staff and solidify the values and goals.

In the afternoon the instructional coaches walked me through the work that is being accomplished with essential standard identification and unit planning. Again, the instructional coaches have been significant resources and support for teachers as they go through this work. I also clarified the process of vertical articulation of the essential standards in preparation for my next visit, and also showed samples of school wide master schedules that support relearning/enrichment blocks during the school day that minimize or eliminate students being pulled out of class during core instruction

**What are the next steps?**

For my last visit, we should have a completed school wide document identifying an alignment of essential standards, a completed unit plan for the first unit of ELA for next year with essential standards and common formative assessments identified for each grade level, a set of values and collective commitments for implementing PLC protocols to start next year, and a school wide master schedule for reteaching/enrichment times.

Celebrate all the magnificent work done by the staff and leadership at Leimbach Elementary this year! They have come a long way with PLCs and have embraced the work even with a lot of other things on their plates. I'm very proud of them!

**What homework was assigned?**

Abelardo will:

- Collect current schedules from grade level teams to help build out a new master schedule

- Take whole staff through visioning workshop and finalize values and goals for next year

**What was accomplished?**

**Visit 8: 5/2/2017**

I met with paired grade level teams throughout the day (1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and K-1 teams). We reviewed the Three Big Ideas and the Four Critical Questions and discussed how they will continue to focus their work next year. We also reviewed their essential standards at each grade level and build out a school wide chart. We practiced identifying gaps and redundancies and talked about how the vertical articulation process would go school wide to finalize their ess. standard document. Finally, we brainstormed all the accomplishments of this year and celebrated their successes. The teachers were very proud of their essential standard work and commented on how it had focused their planning for next year. They also felt like their ability to collaborate and appreciate this time had increased. We also talked about their master schedule, the workshop time for reteaching and enrichment, and the focus of their PLC meetings next year.

**What are the next steps?**

- Abelardo is going to finalize the master schedule that ensures students are not pulled out during core instruction.
- The staff will participate in the school wide vertical articulation process and finalize their school wide essential standards
- The whole school staff will participate in visioning their school, identifying their values, and listing their personal and collective goals and commitments for starting next year.
- Teacher teams will continue to finalize their unit planning documents for next year.

**What homework was assigned?**

N/A