

***Plan Now:
What Effective Principals Do
in the Spring to Make Next Year Successful***

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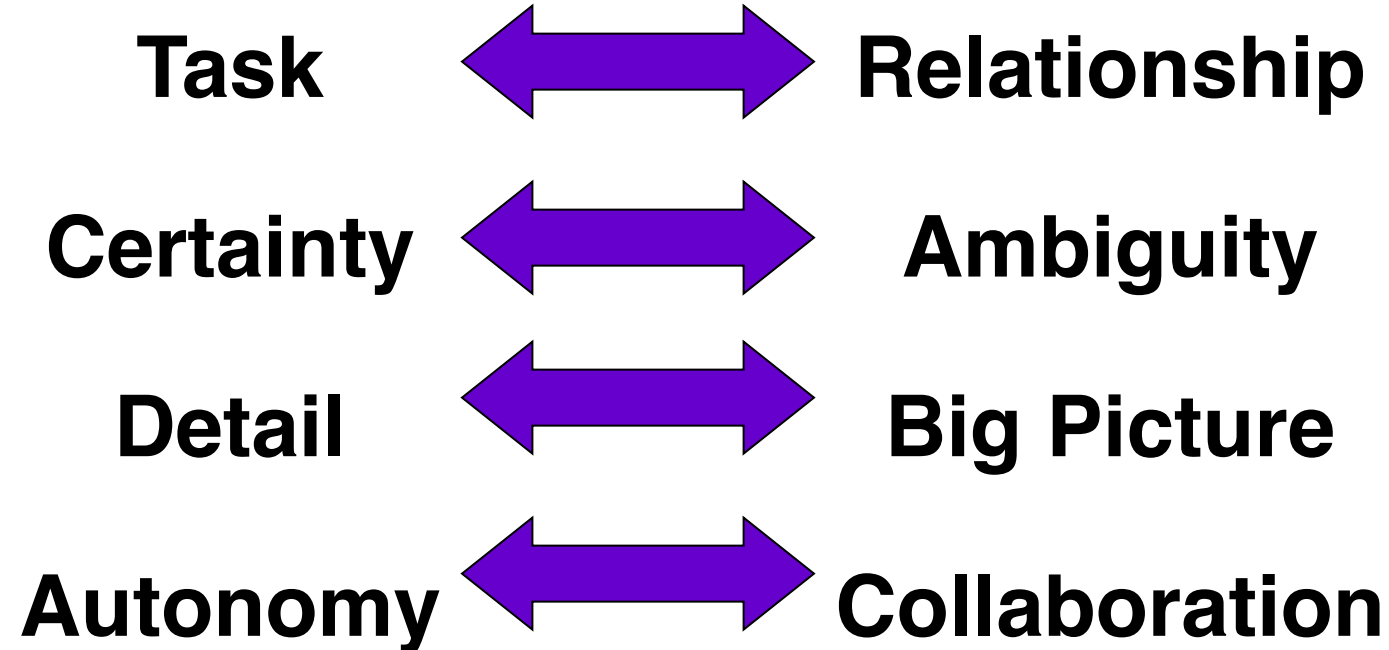
Objectives for Today

- Describe leadership behaviors principals exhibit in the spring that maximize positive outcomes the following school year.
- Consider generational and experience differences throughout the planning process.
- Identify realistic outcomes for this spring in at least two areas that will result in improved outcomes for the 2026-2027 school year.



There are predictable dynamics in groups.

Principle: Predictable tensions arise for group members and group leaders.



What are our goals?

- Start Day 1 (or as near as possible) of 2026-2027 with a targeted plan to positively impact specific student learning outcomes. There is clarity in school goals, aligned to the state report card, to measure our success.
- Retain and build capacity in all staff (certified, support and leadership).
- Reinforce school culture focused on creating a positive learning environment for students and staff that is embedded in a collaborative school.



Accountability

- Hierarchical (Done to)
- Focuses on the problem
- Critical
- Fails to meet the standard
- Short-term
- Out of my control

OR

Capacity Building

- Collaborative (Done with)
- Focuses on improvement
- Affirming
- Acknowledges progress toward the standard
- Long-term
- Led by me



12 Generational Sticking Points

1. **Communication:** What is the best way to interact with my co-workers
2. **Decision-making:** How do we decide what to do?
3. **Dress Code:** How casually can I dress?
4. **Feedback:** How often and in what ways do I want input?
5. **Fun:** How much fun at work is allowed?
6. **Knowledge Transfer:** How do we pass on critical information to each other?



12 Generational Sticking Points

(Continued)

7. **Loyalty:** When is it okay to move on?
8. **Meetings:** What should happen in our meetings?
9. **Policies:** Are policies rules or guidelines?
10. **Respect:** How do I get others to respect me?
11. **Training:** How do I learn best?
12. **Work Ethic:** How many hours are required, and when must I work them?

From *Sticking Points* by Hayden Shaw



7 Spring Leadership Behaviors for Impact

1. Conduct Temperature Check
2. Link Individual Teacher Evaluation to Next Year
3. Develop Professional Development Plan Based on Data (Focused Teacher Reflection)
4. Carry Out Selected Program Evaluation
5. Maximize Yearend Faculty Meetings
6. Update Data Rosters
7. Establish School Goals (to the degree possible)



1. Conduct Temperature Check

1. Ask reflective questions
 - On a scale of 1-10, where would you rank _____ for this school year? Why?
 - What questions or concerns do you have about next school year?
 - What are you looking forward to next year with the (e.g. new curriculum, grade level assignment, schedule, etc.)?
 - Hiring Process: If we have an opening on your team, department, etc. would you like to be involved in the reviewing of the applications and/or interview process?
2. Process and categorize the feedback
3. Share findings with staff before leaving for the summer
4. Include tentative recommendations on how to address the findings *OR* embed in a staff meeting, opportunities on how to address the feedback
5. Refer to the findings and recommendations frequently and most importantly at the first staff gathering of the year



2. *Link Teacher Evaluation to Next Year*

- Teacher evaluation is a **collaborative endeavor** between the teacher and the evaluator *focused on recognizing excellent teaching, learning and professional practice*, while supporting efforts to become even more effective in the profession.
- For 98%-99% of our teachers, this is about **professional dialogue** that clearly supports their efforts in the classroom, working with colleagues and parents. Following the evaluation, teachers should feel affirmed in most if not all their professional practices and have one area, *often initiated by them*, where there is a genuine desire to improve (progress principle). The evaluator should focus on ways he/she can be supportive in the improvement effort.
- The teacher evaluation process—from classroom walk throughs to the summative evaluation to informal conversations about teaching, should be affirming, *provide helpful and specific feedback* that leaves the teacher feeling supported in our **professional partnership** to do what is best for our students.

2. *Link Teacher Evaluation to Next Year*

- Embedded in the teacher evaluation process is the essential element of ***understanding***—not just the expectations from the evaluator which should be clearly aligned to the rubric, but just as importantly, understanding how to fully support and affirm the teacher—from the teacher’s perspective. (What area is the teacher trying to make progress in?)
- There should never be any surprises, particularly the kind that could be viewed as negative in the summative evaluation. Any concerns, whether shared verbally or in writing, should have been *shared previously in a prompt, clear manner* with the teacher at the time the evaluator became aware of the concern.
- In the 1%-2% of the cases when the evaluation can impact current and future employment decisions, it should be direct, clear and aligned with past communication between the evaluator and the teacher. This should be as honoring of the teacher as possible.

A few of more things about Teacher Evaluation:

- Have you embedded descriptors of the teacher evaluation rubric in your faculty meetings to provide clarity on performance and what you will look for as the evaluator?
- Were you purposeful in gathering feedback after last year's evaluation cycle? If so, what did it tell you?
- Is it too late to gather general feedback from teacher leaders for this year?
- How might you gather anonymous feedback following the evaluation cycle this year to make it more effective next year?
- How will you share the feedback with the staff once collected and what will the adjustments look like next year?



Teacher Evaluation: Highly Effective

- **Greater consistency** —not just great once or twice a week—this is professional behavior not a professional episode
- Greater variety of **effective strategies**
- Expanded **formative assessment** that drives student learning—think specificity to the student
- Consider more artifacts: What does the **quality of student work** look like? Have you asked to review different examples of differentiation? Have you asked teachers to explain showing the work students have completed? Remember—Show, Don't Tell. (Data)
- Goal writing: What level of thinking is reflected in the entire goal writing process?

In the school corporation I lead:

1. A Highly Effective rating is directly linked to (measurable) student learning outcomes.
2. A teacher cannot be rated as Highly Effective if he/she sees more than 10% of students decrease in performance.
3. A teacher cannot be rated as Highly Effective if he/she does not move at least 10% of the students from failing to passing.
4. Student artifacts of learning are an important part of the overall evaluation process.
5. Either by the evaluator, or for teachers rated as Highly Effective, a measurable improvement goal that positively impacts student learning is established and monitored.



Some considerations

- Constantly **reinforce the teacher evaluation** rubric is how we define good teaching in our schools—not the preference of a principal or superintendent.
- **Embed in each Leadership/Principal meeting** conversation/professional activities focused on the evaluation rubric.
- Simplify the classroom walkthrough data gathering tool (think lesson design). **Utilize the data gathered** to select what part of the teacher evaluation rubric to focus on with principals—and then teachers.
- Gather feedback from teachers about what part of the teacher evaluation rubric needs greater clarification. Focus on that during faculty meetings. Consider **allowing teachers to assist in defining it**. Share with leaders in other schools at the next principals meeting.
- **Good teaching is not an episode**, but consistent behavior but remember we all have bad days. Don't argue about a classroom visit, have a do over.
- **Show don't tell** when it comes to what needs to be included in an evaluation—whether with Highly Effective teachers or those who urgently need to improve.



Time Savers in Evaluation:

- Utilize district/corporation planning for consistency. It lessens the workload, minimizes comparisons between schools and the common approach maximizes options.
- Carry district/corporation planning into faculty meetings when possible. Focus on process and clarity in the rubric—aligned with student learning and CWT data when possible.
- Share success stories—what teachers have learned, classroom practices changed, student learning increases, collaboration highlighted, etc. Build momentum for more capacity building.
- Utilize self-assessment on the rubric to focus on categories where there is not agreement.
- Don't dig in when not necessary; resolve differences with follow-up classroom visit and review of classroom artifacts.
- Ask more questions. (Planning in advance helps.)



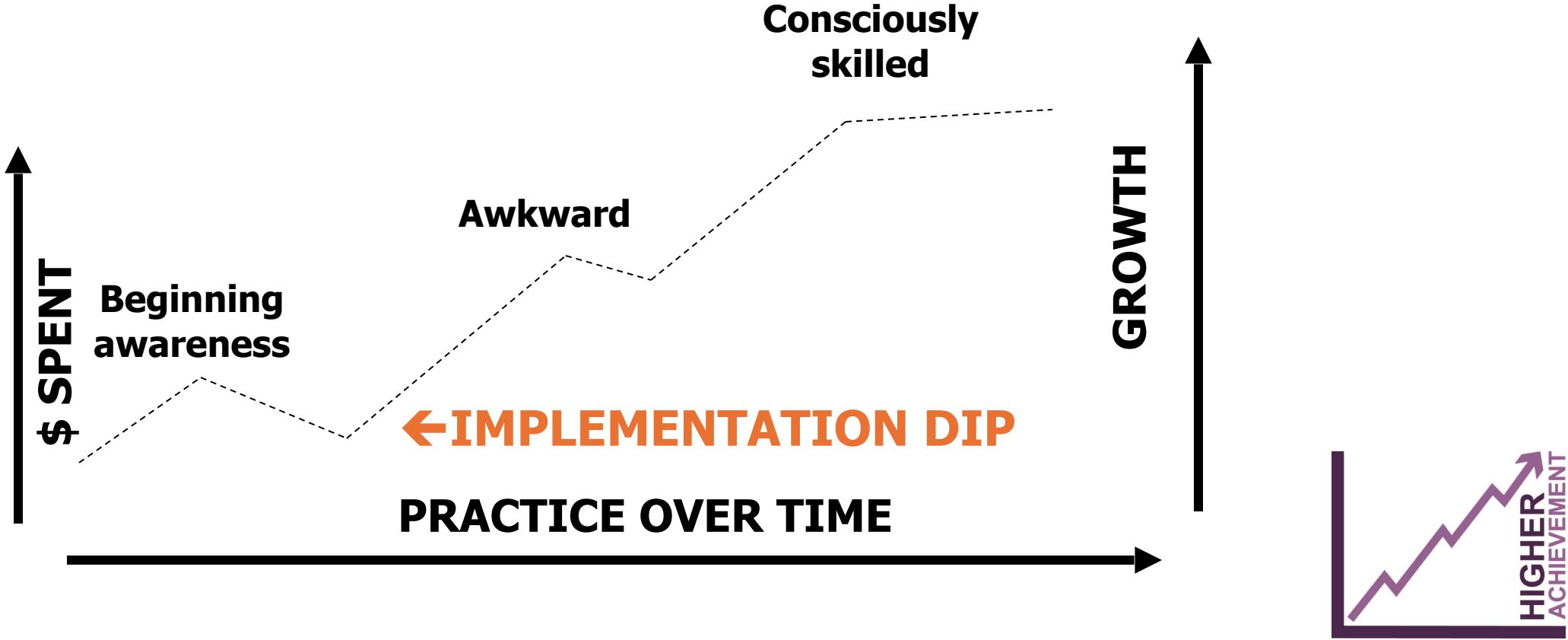
3. Develop Professional Development Plan Based on Data (Focused Teacher Reflection)

1. Aligned to the school goal impacting student achievement
2. Avoid open ended “needs assessment” of professional development activities
3. Applicable to teachers and staff; don’t force a square peg into a round hole
4. Success measured in how it impacts teacher behavior related to improving student learning outcomes in the goal areas
5. Highlight specific successes while using care in how information is shared
6. Align, Align, Align—All professional development to the student learning goals (If it becomes necessary to diverge from the focus be sure to note it.)

*Don’t give people responsibility without training.



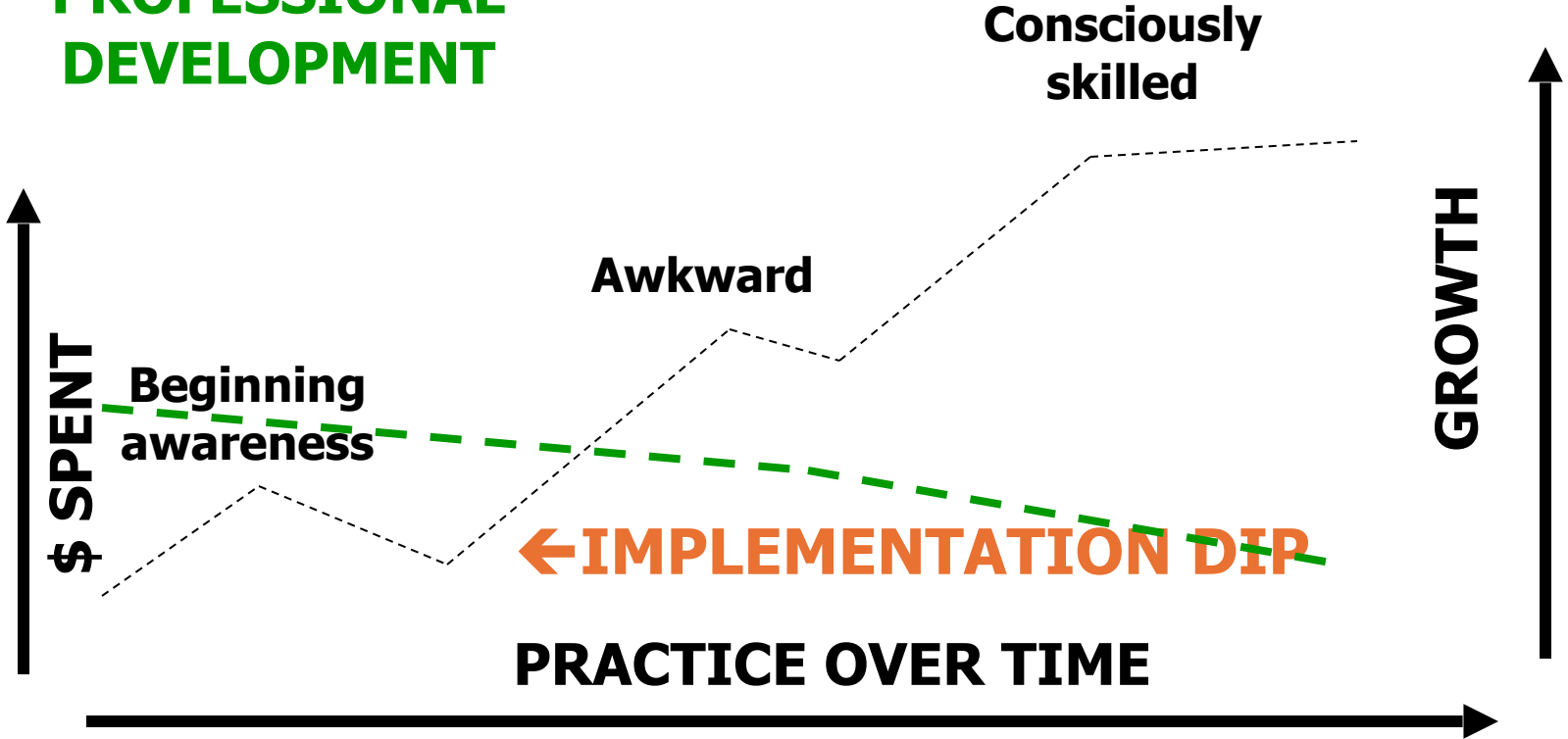
Model for Spending During Professional Development Process



Source: Michael Fullan

Model for Spending During Professional Development Process

SPENDING ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Source: Michael Fullan

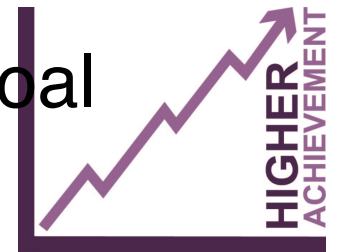
4. Carry Out Selected Program Evaluation

1. Use data to support ongoing programming: It is equally important to determine ***what is working*** and ***what is not working***
2. Don't eliminate any program without conclusive data
 - Before elimination, what have we done to address concerns (e.g. the implementation dip)
 - Is the data we are reviewing a deficit in the programming or implementation (e.g. Have we had ongoing professional development?)
 - Have we gathered feedback about the concerns and strategically addressed it?
 - Would outcomes increase with a longer learning horizon?
3. Don't add a program unless it specifically addresses a deficit in student learning and determining what it replaces; be sure to subtract before adding



5. Maximize Yearend Faculty Meetings

1. Temperature check findings and tentative plans on how to address those; possibly address some of those questions/concerns. Acknowledge, generally those who will serve on interview committee or other work in the summer
2. Time to review class lists (grouping of students), curriculum tensions with time in vertical groups to address
3. Calendar of events—faculty meetings, parent conferences, convocations, field trips, professional development with topics aligned to school goals
4. Celebrations: Goal Achievement; Couple this with the goal development for next year.



6. Update Data Rosters

1. Review for inclusion of new assessments; consider upcoming gains or losses of data points in the coming school year
2. Utilize assessment schedule and prompt availability of results into commitment dates for rosters to be in the hands of staff; this can assist in the development of a calendar of events/ expected intervention adjustments
3. Consider including indicators of predictability
4. Study current class/course composition as it relates to realistic school goals for the coming year
5. Establish tentative remediation groups based on current roster; review for potential exclusions and verify with current teachers
6. Ponder inclusion of grades along side testing results



“When teams experience success and attribute that success to causes within their control, collective efficacy increases and teams come to expect that effective performance can be repeated.”

Collective Efficacy by Jenni Donoho



Collective efficacy was three times more likely to contribute to student achievement than any other influences on student learning. (Hatti, 2016)



7. *Establish School Goals*

1. Utilize the State Report Card for focus
2. Recognize and embed strengths and areas for improvement in each cohort group
3. Maintain commitment that yielded successes this year; recognize those in the program evaluation
4. Ensure student groupings (e.g. tentative class lists) lead to most effective instructional model and is possible with expected schedule and staffing
5. Examine data points that allow reasonable predictability in student performance to develop clear benchmark performance expectations.



The Evolution of Goals

- No goal
- No specific goals
- Specific goal with no measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal.
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal but not effectively communicated.
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal, well communicated but everyone does not know/understand his/her role in achieving the goal.



The Evolution of Goals (Continued)

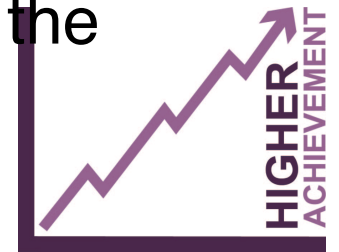
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal, well communicated but everyone does not know/understand his/her role in achieving the goal.
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal are well communicated, everyone understands his/her role in achieving the goal, yet checkpoints are not reviewed as planned.
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal are well communicated, everyone understands his/her role in achieving the goal, checkpoints are reviewed as planned, current practices are not reviewed, adjusted if necessary or celebrated.



The Evolution of Goals (Continued)

- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal are well communicated, everyone understands his/her role in achieving the goal, checkpoints are reviewed as planned, current practices are not reviewed, adjusted if necessary or celebrated.
- Specific goal with measurable checkpoints toward the achievement of the goal are well communicated, everyone understands his/her role in achieving the goal, checkpoints, along with current practices are reviewed as planned, adjustments are made if necessary—and well communicated; midpoint celebrations take place to build momentum toward the final outcome. *

*Upon achievement of the goal, a rigorous review takes place while the outcome is fresh in everyone's mind and what is learned serves as the foundation for the following year's goal.



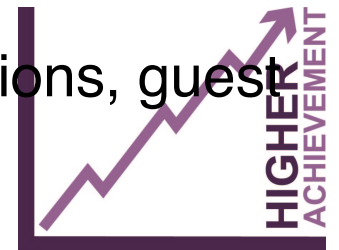
What we've learned

1. Be careful not to exit students from intervention too soon.
2. There are some great predictors and some not so much—know the difference
3. Be sure you know what you are predicting and it matters: Be specific in the problem you are identifying—everyone should know what the problem is, how we are trying to fix it and the progress we are making. This must be reviewed on a regular basis.
4. Don't rule out common sense and generalities but supporting data is important
5. There is a thing as too many or too much assessment
6. Common assessments increase dialogue about what is important to teach, but more importantly defines the level of quality of student performance.
7. Formative assessments done correctly are the most important tool for increasing student learning and teacher effectiveness.
8. Integrate goal setting into PLC—regular checkpoints toward the goal
9. Can't argue with the data—correlation is a powerful thing.

***Place a good person in a
bad system and the system
will win every time.***

3 Hurdles to Gains In Student Learning

1. Lack of goals and/or goal clarity.
2. Overwhelming number of programs to address the concern
 - No program evaluation based on data
 - Sacred cows or “I feel it is effective”
3. Unaware or unresponsive to practices detrimental to successful goal attainment
 - Intervention pullout during core instruction
 - Whittling away of instructional time by starting late, leaving early, excessive time in self-directed learning
 - Incongruent instructional materials, intervention practices
 - “Important” interruptions to instruction for announcements, convocations, guest speakers, “culture building events”



The Power of Psychological Safety

	Low Standards	High Standards
High Psychological Safety	Comfort Zone	Learning & High Performance Zone
Low Psychological Safety	Apathy Zone	Anxiety Zone

From: *The Fearless Organization* by Amy Edmondson



Summary

- In one sentence, share a new idea you had today.
- In one sentence, share an idea or practice currently in place that was reinforced.
- In one sentence, share one thing from today that made you most uncomfortable and/or disagreed with.
- In one sentence, what one change can you make that will provide the greatest leverage to increase student and/or adult learning.
- What is one question you have?