Competency-Based Learning Series:

Instructional Strategies, Community Engagement & Action Planning

Seminar #4

June 2017
Welcome

Great Schools Partnership partners:
Ted Hall, Senior Associate
Angela Hardy, Director of Coaching
Craig Kesselheim, Senior Associate

Colorado Education Initiative partners:
Christina Jean
Paul Beck
Jon Blumenfeld
Welcome

Opening Activity
Find someone you haven’t really talked with at length at these seminars.
Have a brief conversation

- What are you excited about for the summer?
- How did the school year end for you?
- What are you hoping to gain from these next two days?
A quick trip of where we have been...
We Believe

• In equitable, personalized, rigorous learning for all students leading to readiness for college, careers, and citizenship

• That schools must simultaneously attend to policy, practice, and community engagement

• School improvement is context-based, not one-size fits all
Keeping my students, their histories, their dreams and their potential at the center of everything.
Event

Colorado Seminar Series 2016-2017

Jun 27

6/27/17, 9:00am - 6/28/17, 3:00pm
Denver, Colorado

Times listed indicate Mountain Time zone.

Competency-Based Learning: A Systemic Approach is a seminar series focused on supporting districts in Colorado to implement competency-based learning. Here, you can find all the meeting materials, our webinar archive, and essential guiding documents and resources to support your work.

Presenters

Craig Kesselheim, Senior Associate
Ted Hall, Senior Associate
Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland, Maine working nationally with schools, districts and state agencies, providing coaching, and developing tools.
• Team members will be ready to **lead the implementation** of competency-based learning.

• The district teams will be prepared to **design and plan** professional development regarding competency-based learning within the 2016/17 school year.

• We will broaden the **network of support** across the state of Colorado to enact a vision and implement a system of learning that supports personalization through competency-based learning and multiple and flexible pathways.
I will be able to identify the instructional strategies and supporting research that is best represented in a competency-based learning system.
Seminar 4

Outcomes

I will understand the rationale behind and essential components of the unit design framework.
I will use several tools and resources to support the planning and reflection process.
Seminar 4

Outcomes

I will explore the importance of community engagement in school change.
# Day One: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

| **Morning Session** | **Opening Activity**  
|                    | Building a Collegial Culture  
|                    | Elements of Effective Instruction |
| **Afternoon Session** | **Unit Design (breakouts by grade spans)**  
|                    | **Choice Sessions:**  
|                    | • Using the Self-Assessment Aligned with Elements of Effective Instruction  
|                    | • Consultancies on Community Engagement  
|                    | • Understanding the Importance of Student Perception Data  
|                    | Team Meetings to Share Learning  
|                    | **Wrap Up and Prepare for Day Two** |
### Day Two:  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Morning Session**
- Welcome, Review of Reflections
- Agenda Overview
- Team Planning
- Tuning and Feedback
- Closing Activity
Review Norms for our Work Together
Norms for the Year

Respect time
Monitor your air time
Listen well
Respect differences
Support a “culture of possibilities”
Attend to your personal needs
Maintain confidentiality when needed
Foster good humor
Some Assumptions

• We model and support your practice; you lead
• We provide Action Planning Time: you choose and enact your strategies
• We provide resources in a user-friendly site; you access these when you need them.
• We will provide structure for maximum engagement; you will take advantage of that structure.
Supporting a Collegial Culture
Outcomes

To consider the critical components of a professional community
Outcomes

To reflect on your professional community’s strengths and areas for growth
Where are we now?
In my school, collegial conversations are:

• **supported by structures** (such as meeting schedules, groupings, etc.); and

• **run by skilled facilitators** who feel equipped to handle challenges that arise
In my school, collegial conversations are:

• **collaborative, authentic communities** of practice where teachers generate their own agendas; and

• **share real dilemmas** and challenges from their work.
In my school, teachers perceive collegial conversations as:

• an integral part of professional development work; and

• a valued use of their time.
Professional Learning Communities or Groups (PLCs or PLGs)
GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES
2ND EDITION

An Internationally Benchmarked
Self-Assessment Tool
for Secondary Learning
## 3.3 Shared Leadership

### Step 1 >> Read the Performance Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initiating</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Performing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The school’s governance structure and decision-making process have not been clearly articulated or publicly shared, and participation in major school decisions remains closed to most stakeholders. Most decisions are top-down and made with little input from the staff despite some attempts to broaden participation in governance. The school has not institutionalized processes that encourage and support aspiring teacher-leaders, and school-supported professional development does not explicitly address leadership-building skills. School priorities have not been clearly articulated or communicated, which has created confusion about staff responsibilities and led to a general reticence about taking risks or trying new approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The school has developed a shared governance structure, but roles, operational specifics, and accountability procedures remain somewhat vague and undefined. Teachers and other staff members have a greater understanding of the rationale for and intention of decisions made by the principal, and efforts to improve communication and transparency are fostering greater trust and confidence in the administrative team. Leadership roles are routinely offered to the staff, but decision-making authority is limited and leadership responsibilities fall within narrowly defined parameters. Teachers do not feel entirely comfortable questioning administrative decisions, suggesting alternative approaches, or incorporating new strategies into their classroom practice. The principal operates under the belief that he or she needs to be involved in every school decision, which results in delays when it comes to implementing and advancing new initiatives.</td>
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<td>The school has established a leadership committee consisting of representatives from multiple stakeholder groups (administrators, teachers, students, and parents). Additionally, a consistent leadership team—made up of skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated faculty—plays a major role shaping the school’s strategic plan and academic goals, advocating for the concerns of staff and students, and improving communication and understanding between the administration and faculty. All teachers are held to high expectations and have the decision-making autonomy they collectively need to address and remain responsive to student needs. The school culture is collaborative, respectful, and collegial, and the staff members take pride in conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner during interactions with students, parents, colleagues, and the public. The faculty is involved in critical instructional decisions, including the selection of instructional resources, the design of professional development, and the creation of the school’s action plan. Administrators and other school leaders listen to and honor all voices in the school community, especially voices that have traditionally been marginalized or underrepresented.</td>
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### Step 4 >> Score Your School

Place an X on the scale below to indicate your school’s performance in this dimension.

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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOT ADDRESSED</td>
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### 3.3 SHARED LEADERSHIP

#### STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

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<td><strong>The school’s governance structure and decision-making process have not been clearly articulated or publicly shared, and participation in major school decisions remains closed to most stakeholders. Most decisions are top-down and made with little input from the staff despite some attempts to broaden participation in governance decisions. The school has not institutionalized processes that encourage and support aspiring teacher-leaders, and school-supported professional development does not explicitly address leadership-building skills. School priorities have not been clearly articulated or communicated, which has created confusion about staff responsibilities and led to a general reticence about taking risks or trying new approaches.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The school has developed a shared governance structure, but roles, operational specifics, and accountability procedures remain somewhat vague and undefined. Teachers and other staff members have a greater understanding of the rationale for and intention of decisions made by the administrative team, and greater trust and confidence in the administrative team’s decision-making. The school has institutionalized processes that encourage and support aspiring teacher-leaders, and school-supported professional development now explicitly addresses leadership-building skills. School priorities have been clearly articulated and communicated, which has reduced confusion about staff responsibilities and increased willingness to take risks and try new approaches.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The school has established a leadership committee consisting of representatives from multiple stakeholder groups (administrators, teachers, students, and parents). Additionally, a consistent leadership team—made up of skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated faculty—plays a key role in developing the school’s strategic plan and priorities. Leadership roles are routinely offered to the staff, and decision-making authority is distributed among staff and students, and improving communication and transparency are fostering greater trust and confidence in the administrative team. Leadership responsibilities are clearly defined and leadership responsibilities fall within narrowly defined, specific, and achievable parameters. School leaders are proactive in suggesting alternative approaches, or incorporating new strategies, methods, and classroom practices. The principal and other school leaders can take on the role of being curious and need to be involved in every school decision, which results in delays when it comes to implementing and advancing new initiatives.</strong></td>
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The faculty is involved in critical instructional decisions, including the selection of instructional resources, the design of professional development, and the creation of the school’s action plan.

Administrators and other school leaders listen to and honor all voices in the school community, especially voices that have traditionally been marginalized or underrepresented.
1.8 LEARNING COMMUNITIES

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING
Teaching practice is largely individualistic and uninformed by current research, collegial feedback, formative assessments, or student data. Classroom doors are generally closed and faculty members rarely observe one another teaching or have focused discussions about specific instructional strategies or student needs. The administrative team is largely focused on managerial responsibilities, and only limited time is devoted to investigating proven best practices, analyzing student-performance trends, and participating in professional learning. School policies do not explicitly support ongoing professional learning, and teacher schedules and workloads do not provide time for collaborative work and study. Some tensions among the faculty may go unresolved for long periods of time.

3 DEVELOPING
Teacher interactions indicate that there is a growing sense of trust, appreciation, and mutual respect for one another’s contributions to the school community. Several teachers have been trained to facilitate professional sharing among teachers, and a significant percentage of the teaching faculty meets every month to discuss student work and instructional strategies. The leadership team has taken steps to stay informed about current research, analyze student data, distribute best-practice literature to the faculty, and support the ongoing professional learning of every teacher. Time for collaborative preparation and planning is provided to teachers during the school day, but this time is often unstructured, loosely facilitated, or unproductive in terms of improving classroom instruction across the school. It is not always clear to teachers how the various initiatives and professional development opportunities connect to each other or how the school’s professional learning groups support these efforts.

5 PERFORMING
School leaders work to foster an environment in which faculty interactions are characterized by the kind of collegiality, trust, and respect that result from strong personal relationships, professionalism, and mutual appreciation. Teachers regularly share their own work and observe one another’s practice, providing constructive feedback that is based on a shared understanding of effective teaching, learning goals, and student needs. The faculty has developed a “shared language” for discussing instruction, assessment, and other critical elements of teaching and learning. All teachers are involved in consistent, group-based professional conversations that are well established, organized, skillfully facilitated, and goal-driven. These conversations and all other professional development opportunities are clearly aligned with the school’s coherent and comprehensive action plan. Group agendas and conversations focus on addressing the specific tasks and strategies of student-centered, inquiry-based teaching and assessment. Faculty meetings are characterized by enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and a sense of collective responsibility for improving student learning and outcomes for all students. Throughout the school, teacher expertise is recognized and teachers have the autonomy to create original learning experiences for their students within a set of common learning expectations. Professional learning groups are used to foster an environment where teachers are encouraged to try new approaches and errors are regarded as learning opportunities.

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL
Place an X on the scale below to indicate your school’s performance in this dimension.

1 NOT ADDRESSED 2 INITIATING 3 DEVELOPING 4 PERFORMING
## 1.8 LEARNING COMMUNITIES

### 1.8.1 Teaching + Learning

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<td>Teaching practice is largely individualistic and uninformed by collaborative approaches, formative assessments, or student data. Classroom doors are generally closed and faculty members rarely observe one another teaching. Focused discussions about specific instructional strategies or student needs do not occur. The administrative team is focused on managerial responsibilities and only limited time is devoted to investigating proven best practices, analyzing student-performance trends, and participating in professional learning. School policies do not explicitly support ongoing professional learning, and teacher schedules and workloads do not provide time for collaborative work and study. Some tensions among the faculty may go unresolved for long periods of time.</td>
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### 1.8.3 Developing

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### 1.8.5 Performing

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### 1.8.4 Step 2 >> Read the Performance Descriptions

All teachers are involved in consistent, group-based professional conversations that are well established, organized, skillfully facilitated, and goal-driven.

Faculty meetings are characterized by enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and a sense of collective responsibility for improving student learning and outcomes for all students.
Essential Ingredients

Purpose

Time

Facilitation

Norms

Agendas

Protocols
Professional Growth: Purpose
What we do in Professional Learning Communities

- Learn from examining data
- Learn from student work
- Learn from teacher work
- Learn from texts
To answer the key questions:

- Learn from examining data
- Learn from student work
- Learn from teacher work
- Learn from texts

What is my impact on student learning?
To answer the key questions:

- Learn from examining data
- Learn from student work
- Learn from teacher work
- Learn from texts

What can I do to increase my impact?
Purpose:
Instructional Focus

It is focused on the teaching + learning of specific academic content and skills
Purpose: Cohesion

It is connected to + aligned with other school initiatives
Purpose: Relationships

It builds strong working relationships among teachers
Professional Growth:

Time

It is intensive and ongoing work so enough time has to be set aside to make this work.
3 Professional Growth: Facilitation

Groups need trained facilitators that have ongoing support in working with their PLGs.
How effective are your school/district PLCs?

Do your PLCs have a clear purpose, the necessary time, and trained facilitators?
4 Professional Growth: Norms

Why Establish Norms?

- School culture
- Individual styles
- Individual vs. group needs
Why Establish Norms?

Getting past “nice” and passive resistance; the work should be hard at times if it’s the right stuff.
The development of agendas will benefit from activities that build trust in the group by doing the work together and understanding how group members best learn.
COMPASS POINTS

North
Acting — “Let’s do it”; likes to act, try things, plunge in

West
Paying attention to detail — likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting

East
Speculating — likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting

South
Caring — likes to know that everyone’s feelings have been taken into consideration and that their voices have been heard before acting
1. What are the strengths of your style? (4 adjectives)
2. What are the limitations of your style? (4 adjectives)
3. What style do you find most difficult to work with and why?
4. What do people from the other directions or styles need to know about you so you can work together effectively?
How might you build further understanding about the members of your learning community to support a collegial culture?
PERSONALITIES

INTROVERTS +

EXTROVERTS
The Power of Introverts

Susan Cain
The Power of Introverts

Susan Cain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQH2U-kmBdY
We have learned that using protocols in our PLGs have greatly increased the benefits derived from this work.
How do protocols help the learning community?

- Safe space
- Shared air time
- Time for independent thinking, listening, and contributing
- Flexibility
- Efficiency
Where can I find useful protocols?
Where can I find useful protocols?

School Reform Initiative (SRI) has many, many tested protocols that you can use in your work.

schoolreforminitiative.org
Which of the “essential ingredients” are well developed in your school?

Which need some attention?

What are some steps you can take to improve the professional community in your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Ingredients</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<td>Protocols</td>
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Break
Personalized Learning

Elements of Effective Instruction
What Creates Powerful Teaching and Learning?
“Student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.”

edglossary.org/student-engagement/
Learning Environment
Clear, Shared Outcomes
Varied Content, Materials, and Methods of Instruction
Complex Thinking and Transfer
Practice and Feedback
Learning Environment

WE BELIEVE

the learning environment is a shared domain between students, teachers, and other partners in learning.

Excerpt shared: 3:45 - 4:32
Learning Environment

WE BELIEVE

the learning environment is a space that fosters risk-taking for students and teachers.
Learning Environment

WE BELIEVE

positive and meaningful relationships are the foundation of a productive learning culture
“Becoming the Math Teacher You Want to Be”

1. Review key traits of the learning environment
2. Read the text
3. Discuss in small groups
   What traits were evident?
   How are these traits reflected in your school?
Complex Thinking and Transfer
Complex Thinking and Transfer

WE BELIEVE
every student is capable of complex thought
Complex Thinking and Transfer

www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-higher-order-thinking-skills
Complex Thinking and Transfer

WE BELIEVE

higher order thinking promotes student engagement
Complex Thinking and Transfer

WE BELIEVE

learning that promotes transfer of knowledge and skills prepares students for the future

Excerpt shared: 12:44 - 13:13
Varied Content, Materials, and Methods of Instruction
Varied Content, Materials, and Methods of Instruction

WE BELIEVE

different entry points, options for exploration and end products are critical for student engagement and success.
Varied Content, Materials, and Methods of Instruction

WE BELIEVE

learners must see themselves represented in the materials and connect to the content in authentic ways.
“If the curriculum we use to teach our children does not connect in positive ways to the culture young people bring to school, it is doomed to failure.”

- Lisa Delpit
Varied Content, Materials, and Methods of Instruction

Planning for Professional Learning + Shifts in Practice
What Do YOU Believe?
LUNCH
Unit Design by Grade Span:

Grades K-4
Grades 5-8
Grades 9-12
Choice Sessions:

Community Engagement Consultancies

OR

Self-Assessment With Elements of Effective Instruction

OR

Importance of Student Perception Data
Team Meetings to Share Your Learning and Prepare for Tomorrow’s Team Planning Time
Feedback from Today

Please complete the survey
QUESTIONS?
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**Morning Session**

- Welcome, Review of Reflections
- Agenda Overview
- Team Planning
- Feedback from Colleagues
- Closing Activity
Review of Reflections
Norms from November and January

- Respect time
- Monitor your air time
- Listen well
- Respect differences
- Support a “culture of possibilities”
- Attend to your personal needs
- Maintain confidentiality when needed
- Foster good humor
Team Time Outline
Team Time Structure

Team Time from now until 9:50
Feedback on the Planning 9:50-10:15
Back to Teams to Process from 10:15-10:30
Plan for Celebration from 10:30-11:00
Celebration from 11:00-11:45
Closing, final survey from 11:45-12:00
Team Time Suggestions

Review and revisit **Team Norms**

Decide what you want to achieve and how

Access resources as needed

Think about how to use us as resources

Commit your plan to chart paper
Giving Feedback to Your Colleagues
Visual Tuning of Your Plan

Identify a Framing Question

Represent Your Plan:
A Highlighted Portion or a Table with Next Steps

Name Your Assets/Resources:
What will contribute to the success of this plan/these next steps?

Share Your Barrier(s):
What might be problematic?
## Visual Tuning of Your Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm Feedback</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Suggestions + Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Visual Tuning of Your Plan

15 min

- Read each plan
- Provide at least one comment per plan
- Consider the framing question as you think about your feedback

10 min

Reconvene as a team to review feedback
Planning for Celebration

No more than 4 minutes

Doesn’t have to involve every member

Talk in the past tense

Choose your future date

Be creative and have fun!

Follow our last norm—foster good humor

Be ready to go at 11:00
Closing Activity
ENDING THE EXPERIENCE WITH ONE FINAL SURVEY!
Thank You