

The Instructional Partners Pilot: Key Components and Expectations, January 2013

Expectations for IP's

- Commitment to partnership principles
- Commitment to continuous learning, including openness to change
- Participation in all IP p.d.
- Completion of written weekly reflections
- Development of collaborative relationship with principal
- Focus on adult learners, i.e., teachers (not assigned students)
- Maintenance of non-evaluative relationship with teachers
- Development and/or enhancement of teams
- Use of the coaching cycle
- Work across all grade-levels and content areas
- Identification and development of teacher leaders (i.e. distribution of leadership)
- Identification and brokering of resources (including AMSTI, ARI)
- Commitment to IP Community and Ning

District Commitment

- Key district contact is a decision-maker, gains deep understanding of the partnership process, is a learner, and actively participates in KLN and IP meetings in which district contacts are invited
- Protects commitments and time of IP and IP schools
- Provides financial support (books, travel, additional p.d.)
- Works with IP project managers to differentiate support according to district needs and context

School Commitment: The Learning Hub: A Partnership School

- Embraces the 10 Partnership Principles (see next page)
- Embraces and nurtures PLC/Communities of Practice
- Principal and IP are committed to co-learning
- Willing to learn with and from other IP schools and partners
- Open and Transparent culture?(Instructional Rounds)

Principal Commitment

- Commitment to partnership principles
- Commitment to continuous learning, including openness to change
- Participation in all IP professional development to which principals are invited, including KLN meetings
- Development of collaborative relationship with IP
- Commitment to instructional leadership, not just building management
- Development and/or enhancement of teams
- Identification and development of teacher leaders (i.e. distribution of leadership)
- Commitment to IP Community and Ning

Key Components of Instructional Partners Pilot

1. Partnerships at all levels: Classroom, School, District, State
2. Laser-like focus on student achievement
3. Use of best instructional practices
4. Common focus, including a school-wide vision of effective teaching and learning
5. Committed and effective instructional leadership
6. Data-based decision-making
7. Professional learning
8. Instructional coaching
9. Safe, distributive, collaborative culture
10. Lateral support from colleagues via Ning, Twitter, and other networking

Partnership at all Levels

Schools and districts involved in the Instructional Partner pilot embrace the partnership approach. Jim Knight calls the partnership approach a “simple idea: treat others the way you would like to be treated.” Using a simple question: “If someone was talking with you about your work, how would you like them to relate to you?” Knight suggests that most people would like to be treated with respect, as an “equal,” and someone who asked your opinion, listened to you, afforded choices and “demonstrated that they expected to learn from you.” The partnership principle is embodied by seven principles: (1) equality, (2) choice, (3) voice, (4) reflection, (5) dialogue, (6) praxis, (7) reciprocity.

Laser-like focus on student achievement

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot know that the ultimate measure of their success is the academic success of their students. The principal, instructional partner and faculty members work together to develop a precise and measurable vision of effective teaching and learning, and collectively they hold each other accountable for the consistent use of effective teaching and learning strategies, as defined in their vision, so that all students succeed.

Best Instructional Practices

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot embrace best instructional practices. Teachers work together to learn more about effective practice, they collaborate to perfect the use of effecting teaching, and they measure the impact on their students and make adjustments as necessary.

Common Focus

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot focus intently on a few areas that will positively impact teaching and learning. Schools use a collaborative process to develop a one-page Instructional Target with clear, precise “look fors” to reinforce the focus on student learning.

Committed and Effective Leadership

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot understand the importance of effective instructional leadership and make leadership development and support a major priority. Principals meet regularly –preferably daily– with the Instructional Partner to ensure that teachers receive the support and help needed and to identify and distribute leadership among effective teachers in the school.

Data-based Decision Making

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot make decisions based on data, not opinions. Student achievement data and other important data are central to planning, professional development and program improvements. Data are easily accessible and transmitted in easy-to-understand formats. “Individual and teams of teachers analyze student work and other classroom data sources to make ongoing improvements to instruction.”

Job-Embedded Professional Learning

Ongoing job-embedded professional learning is evident in schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot. Adult learning is a priority and the principal, instructional partner and others work to develop and facilitate just-in-time formal and informal support needed to ensure effective instruction in every classroom.

Instructional Coaching

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot embrace instructional coaching where the IP partners with teachers to provide “intensive, focused support for professional learning,” with “precise instructions, modeling, and positive, motivating, and honest feedback” that ensures effective teaching in every classroom.

Safe, Distributive, Collaborative Culture

Schools and districts in the Instructional Partners Pilot establish or strengthen a collaborative culture where all adults learn together, improve together, and celebrate together. Teachers work in an open, transparent, data-driven and safe culture. The faculty displays a sense of collective responsibility, and relies on each other to develop and improve teaching. It is possible to have respectful AND honest conversations and dialogue about challenges and improvement strategies.

Lateral support from colleagues via Ning, Twitter, and other networking

One hallmark of the IP community is the cross-school and –district community of practice that has emerged. A key driver and support for this community are electronic networking opportunities via Ning and Twitter. IPs assume responsibility for communicating with their peers when they have questions or requests for resources or advice AND when they have successes to share. The emergence and continual development of a strong IP community result from the commitment of each individual IP to her peers through active participation in these networking opportunities.