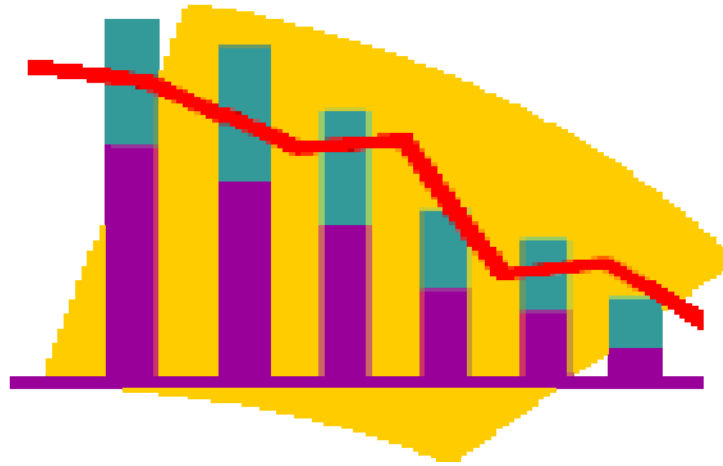


RE-THINKING HOW SCHOOLS IMPROVE

**A Brief Introduction to the
Classroom-Focused Improvement Process
CFIP**



“Every organization is perfectly designed to get the results it achieves.”

--W. Edwards Deming

Is your school “designed” to the specifications of the old or the new paradigm?

Data- and knowledge-driven schools and school districts use data for two major *but different* purposes:

- Accountability (to prove)
- Instructional decision making (to improve)



Data answer different questions.

For accountability (data to prove)

SUMMATIVE:

- “How many students passed?”
- “Who passed and who didn’t?”

For improvement (data to improve)

FORMATIVE:

- “What do the students know?”
- “What do the students not know and what are we going to do about it?”

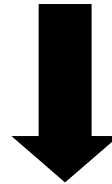
Sources of Student Achievement Data

- **External assessment data**
- **Benchmark or course-wide assessment data**
- **Individual teacher assessment data**

--Supovitz and Klein (2003)

The Hierarchy of Data for Accountability Purposes

External (State & National) Assessments



System Benchmark Assessments



Common School or Course Assessments



**Classroom Assessments
of Student Work**

The Hierarchy of Data for Instructional Decision Making

**Classroom Assessments
of Student Work**



Common School or Course Assessments



System Benchmark Assessments



External (State & National Assessments)

What does it take to “improve” a school?

“School improvement is most surely and thoroughly achieved when teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice . . . adequate to the complexities of teaching, [and] capable of distinguishing one practice and its virtue from another.”

--Judith Warren Little

“Teachers as Colleagues,” in V. Richardson-Koehler (Ed.). (1998). *Educators Handbook*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Critical Teacher Behaviors in a Strong Professional Learning Community

- 1. Reflective dialogue**
- 2. De-privatization of practice**
- 3. Collective focus on student learning**
- 4. Collaboration**
- 5. Shared norms and values**

--Kruse, Louis, and Bryk, 1994

It is becoming increasingly clear that schools improve because student performance improves; and student performance improves because teachers *at the classroom level*:

- Carefully assess student learning**
- Examine the results of their assessments**
- Implement needed enrichments and interventions for students**
- Consider the implications of assessment results for their future teaching**
- Adjust their practice accordingly**

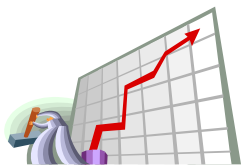
The Classroom-Focused Improvement Process:

- **Uses real-time, current data**
- **Is specific to each course or grade level**
- **Incorporates collaborative teaching teams and individual teachers**
- **Addresses individual students' needs**
- **Brings together data from several assessment sources**
- **Results in instructional improvements that can be integrated into daily lesson plans (“job embedded”)**

(continued on next slide)

The Classroom-Focused Improvement Process (cont.):

- **Provides for in-class enrichments and interventions that can be re-directed frequently if they are not working**
- **Helps teachers perceive the data analysis process as a worthwhile use of their time**
- **Values the input of teachers as *the most important instructional decision makers***



The Six Easy CFIP Steps

1. Be sure everyone understands the data being analyzed.
2. Pose a question or two that the data can answer.
3. Look for class-wide patterns in the data.
4. Act on the class patterns, including re-teaching, if needed.
5. Address individual students' needs for enrichment and intervention that remain after re-teaching.
6. Decide on and implement at least one way that instruction will be improved in the next unit.

CFIP Step 1: Understand the data source.

Build ASSESSMENT LITERACY with questions like these:

- **What assessment is being described in this data report? What were the characteristics (the “quarks”) of the assessment?**
- **Who participated in the assessment? Who did not? Why?**
- **Why was the assessment given? When?**
- **What do the terms in the data report mean?**

CFIP Step 2: Identify the questions that can be answered by the data.

- **All data analyses should be designed to answer a question.**
- **Unless there is an important question to answer, there is no need for a data analysis.**

CFIP Step 3: Look for class-wide patterns in a single data source.

- **What do you see over and over again in the data?**
- **What are the strengths of the class? What knowledge and skills do the students have?**
- **What are their weaknesses of the class? What knowledge and skills do the students lack?**

CFIP Step 4: Act on the class-wide patterns.

- **What instructional factors might have contributed to the class-wide patterns?**
- **What will we do to address patterns of class needs?**
- **How and when will we reassess to determine student progress and the effectiveness of our instruction?**

Six Easy CFIP Steps



CFIP is an ongoing circular—not linear—process.

The first CFIP dialogue might only get this far:

- 1. Make sure everyone understands the data being considered.*
- 2. Identify a question or two that the data can answer.*
- 3. Look for class-wide patterns in the data.*
- 4. Decide what to do about the class patterns.*

In many situations, the CFIP dialogue will then be put on hold until any needed re-teaching occurs.

CFIP Step 5: Drill down to individual students. Identify needed differentiations.

- **Which students need enrichments and interventions?**
- **On what should enrichments and interventions focus?**
- **How will we deliver interventions so that students do not lose future direct instruction?**
- **How will we assess the effectiveness of the interventions and enrichments?**

CFIP Step 5: Drill down to individual students. Identify needed differentiations.

- **Which students need enrichments and interventions?**
- **On what should enrichments and interventions focus?**
- **How will we deliver interventions so that students do not lose future direct instruction?**
- **How will we assess the effectiveness of the interventions and enrichments?**

CFIP Step 6: Reflect on the reasons for student performance. Identify and implement instructional changes in the next unit.

How will we change instruction in our next unit?
Content focus . . . Pacing . . . Teaching methods . . .
Assignments

CFIP Step 6: Determine how we will measure the effects of our new instructional strategy.

- **How will we measure the success of our new instructional strategy?**
- **When will we review the data again to determine the success of the enrichments and interventions?**
- **What do the data *not* tell us? What questions about student achievement do we still need to answer?**
- **How will we attempt to answer these questions?**
- **How well did the CFIP session go? How could we make our next meeting more effective?**

**Strive for “*deep implementation*”
of the strategies and interventions
your data analysis leads you to.**

What Does “Deep Implementation” of Data Analysis Look Like?

- *There is a limit on number of initiatives a school undertakes at a time. (Reeves says six is max. I think six is too many.)*
- *90% of the appropriate faculty is participating.*
- *There is widespread understanding of reasons for the data analysis process, even if there is not complete “buy-in.”*
- *The data analysis process is discussed regularly at staff meetings.*

What Does “Deep Implementation” of Data Analysis Look Like?

- *The data analysis process is written into the school plan.*
- *There is ongoing coaching provided.*
- *“Adult” data are collected to monitor implementation of the data analysis process on a regular basis.*
- *There is continuous reflection on and improvement of the data analysis process.*

Pre-conditions for successful implementation of the Classroom-Focused Improvement Process (CFIP)

- **Cohesive and collaborative team which shares common subject matter and common assessments**
- **Common planning time for the team at a minimum of one hour twice weekly, of which one hour is devoted exclusively to CFIP**
- **Principal who is a strong instructional leader and who is comfortable with concept of shared leadership**
- **Norms to guide the team's process of collaborative data analysis**
- **Autonomy for the team to adjust teaching practices and interventions based on data from assessments of their students' learning**
- **Use of short-cycle, common assessments by the team**
- **Ongoing professional development to enhance the team's capacity to continually adjust teaching practice in response to student data**

Caveats about CFIP



- It is a paradigm shift from the traditional lesson planning format.
- It is not easy, especially at first.
- Teams should follow the steps faithfully until they become second nature.
- Teams should expect mistakes and imprecision in the data.
- The results are worth the effort.

✓ **“CFIP transforms a school.”**

- *Mike Markoe, Washington County Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education*

THANK YOU
*for your engagement
in this “refresher”
on the CFIP process!*