Division Leadership Support Team (DLST)  
Technical Assistance for Focus Schools  
Day 2  

Student Engagement Observation Protocol  

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Learning Intentions  

• Review and apply elements of effective formative feedback  
• Describe how to give feedback about classroom observations.  
• Identify supportive language and processes for providing feedback.  
• Conduct a simulated classroom collaborative observation about student engagement and engage in a feedback conference.
GUIDELINES FOR GIVING FEEDBACK ABOUT CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS*

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1. **Base your feedback on observable evidence.**
   Collect data during observations and share these with the teacher. Avoid sharing our perceptions, justifications or conclusions. By analyzing the data together—you help the teacher draw conclusions.
   
   **Opinion:** Students were unclear about what to do.
   **Evidence:** When students were told to begin working, two left the classroom with passes; six walked around and chatted; five hands were raised; three approached the teacher with questions; ten got out papers and began working.

2. **Reinforce evidence of effective practices.**
   As much as possible, share specific evidence of success before sharing evidence of problems—as long as the evidence is sincere. By reinforcing effective practices, rather than giving advice, the teacher knows what skills she/he has that can be expanded or built upon.
   
   **Advice giving:** You should be more positive with the students.
   **Positive reinforcement:** After you smiled and told J that his response was well thought out, he raised his hand enthusiastically to answer the rest of the questions posed. Your comments help create a positive learning environment in your class.

3. **Be specific rather than general.**
   Avoid labeling what was observed with general terms or educational jargon that may be interpreted differently. Rather describe what the student and the teacher were actually doing.
   
   **General:** You were teaching a phonics lesson.
   **Specific:** Students were listing words they knew that began with the letter /b/.
   
   **General:** Students were practicing grammar.
   **Specific:** Students were identifying and circling nouns in a list of sentences.

4. **Describe rather than evaluate.**
   By avoiding evaluative language, positive or negative, the feedback will be more useful. If it’s negative, it is less likely the teacher will react defensively. Avoiding evaluative language also encourages the teacher to evaluate her/his own effectiveness based on your observations.
   
   **Evaluative:** What a great lesson!
   **Descriptive:** You connected the theme of this book to students’ personal lives during the transition then facilitated their small group discussions, helping them clarify their thinking with probing questions such as, ‘How do you know...?’ Their summaries Weak transition.
   
   **Descriptive:** 10 minutes were provided for the transition. Most students answered the question in their journal in about 3 minutes. They spent the remainder of the time chatting or sitting.

5. **Note the impact of the teacher’s behavior on the students.**
   Help the teacher see connections between his/her actions and the students’ behavior or learning. This helps a teacher build an internal locus of control and their sense of efficacy. It also discourages blaming the students for what isn’t working well.
   
   **Evaluative:** You need to develop a stronger presence.
   **Descriptive:** When you stand at the front of the classroom and establish eye contact with the students, they focus on you as the teacher.

6. **Attend to the teacher’s stated needs or area of focus.**
   Feedback can be more meaningful when the teacher has stated an area in which he/she wishes to improve. Build continuity by tying your observations to the teacher’s goals, previous observations or other data. Assisting a teacher with his/her areas of focus helps reinforce reflective practices and builds trust.

   You’ve told me about your focus on establishing consistent routines. I observed that within two minutes of entering the classroom, students had checked the transition and were busy working quietly in their journals.
**SUPPORTIVE LANGUAGE FOR PROVIDING FEEDBACK**

| **Mediational Questions** | • What is the impact of…on students?  
|                           | • What criteria do you use to…?  
|                           | • How do you decide…?(come to a conclusion)  
|                           | • What happens when you…?  
|                           | • What do you think would happen if…?  
|                           | • What would it look like if…?  
|                           | • What might you see happening in your classroom if…?  
|                           | • How is…different from (like)…?  
|                           | • What’s another way you might…?  |

| **Paraphrasing** | • So…  
|                  | • Let me make sure I understand…  
|                  | • In other words…it sounds like…  
|                  | • What I’m hearing then…  
|                  | • From what I hear you say…  
|                  | • I’m hearing many things…  |

| **Clarifying** | • Could you tell me more about…  
|                | • Tell me what you mean by…  
|                | • Let me see if I understand…  
|                | • I’d be interested in hearing more about…  
|                | • It’d help me understand if you’d give me an example of…  
|                | • Tell me how that idea is like (different from)…  
|                | • To what extent…?  |

| **Interpretation** | • What you are describing could mean…  
|                   | • Could it be that what you’re saying is…  
|                   | • Is it possible that…  |

| **Instructional** | • Would you like more information; to review some options; some resources…  
|                   | • A couple of things to keep in mind are…  
|                   | • Research seems to indicate…  
|                   | • Sometimes it is helpful if…  |

| **Summarizing** | • You have stated that your goal is…  
|                | • Let’s review the key points in our discussion…  
|                | • Tell me you next steps…  
|                | • So this is your homework…  |

| **Other Considerations** | • Use an approachable voice  
|                          | • Communicate acceptance, empathy  
|                          | • Use open-ended questions  
|                          | • Use plural forms (goals, possibilities)  
|                          | • Use present tense (How do you…? Instead of What did you…? OR How did you…?)  
|                          | • Reflect positive presuppositions  
|                          |   ✓ Presumes prior and ongoing thought  
|                          |   ✓ Nobility of purpose  
|                          |   ✓ Positive intentionality  
|                          | • Incorporate inquiries framed with tentativeness  
|                          |   ✓ I’m curious about…  
|                          |   ✓ Would you tell me more about…  
|                          |   ✓ I’m not sure I understand…  
|                          |   ✓ I wonder what you mean by…  |

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**CONFERENCING PROTOCOL**

- Ask teacher to summarize his/her impressions of the time he/she was observed and share evidence to support those impressions.
- Analyze the observation evidence together (share data collected)
- Synthesize evidence and learnings, draw conclusions, set next steps.
- Reflect on the coaching process, propose refinements.

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### CONFERENCE PLANNING TEMPLATE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher __________________________</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade/Class ______________________</td>
<td>Lesson ________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What did you observe? To what do you want to draw attention?**

**What questions might you pose? What instructional coaching might you provide?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Practices Observed (Use Data):</th>
<th>Area of Growth (Use Data):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>

**Outcomes for conference:**

**Circumstances to consider:**

**Questions to pose/instructional coaching to provide:**

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### Viewing and Identifying Examples of Feedback Suggestions Presented in John Hattie’s *Know Thy Impact* Article

**Directions:** Work with your learning partner. Review and discuss the article read on day one, *Know Thy Impact*, by John Hattie. Prepare to view a video clip of a mentor providing feedback to the 8th grade language teacher you observed. Identify write down specific examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Observed Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How to Make Feedback More Effective</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarify the Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that TEACHERS Understand the Feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek Feedback from TEACHERS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Three Levels of Feedback</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Feedback</td>
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<td>Process Feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation Feedback</td>
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Goal Setting for Observing and Giving Feedback to Teachers on Student Engagement

Name________________________ Position____________________________
School____________________  District_____________________________

When it comes to observing and giving feedback about student engagement to teachers:

My greatest area of strength is…

The area in which I need to most improve is…

One specific goal I have for improving…

How I envision this goal will help my students, teachers, and/or school community…

Concrete support I need…