



IT WORKED!

Novice Teachers Versus Veteran Teachers

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The setting is a second-grade team consisting of 4 teachers within an elementary environment. There were 2 novice teachers and 2 veteran teachers. The novice teachers were very coachable and were excited about the invitation into the coaching cycle, while the veteran teachers felt that they did not need instructional coaching for math. The administrator primarily wanted me to work with the novice teachers by modeling and observation, but I knew that the novice teachers were meeting with the veteran teachers during common planning and during PLC. I made a decision to work with all teachers from the team.

I did provide more support to the first-year teachers as requested by the administrator and the results showed in a positive way after reviewing test results. The veteran teachers were reluctant to change and used traditional mathematics instruction and did not use small group instruction to differentiate as often as the novice teachers. I needed to come with a way for teachers on the team to reflect on their practices without putting teachers on the spot or feeling defensive about their student scores. I decided to use data as a tool to inform teachers of their practices. I began by just focusing on individual students from all classes rather than individual teachers from the second-grade team.

I used data from the grade as a whole. I focused on individual students and their growth from the first assessment to the second assessment. All second-grade students from my school were ranked by the highest amount of growth. The entire grade level was mixed in the data, rather than having data separated by individual teachers. As a collaborative team, we analyzed test data from interims and specifically looked at the growth over time of each student. Teachers highlighted students from the grade level that had significant growth that resulted in double digit and triple digit growth. The focus was about student achievement based on the amount of growth. While analyzing the data, many of the teachers began to see a pattern, and began to ask questions concerning instruction that contributed to the success of several students.

The outcome was that the novice teachers felt more confident about their teaching abilities, and were surprised how well their students had progressed over the last few months. The novice teachers attributed the student success to the implementation of strategies that I shared with them while they were in the coaching cycle. The veteran teachers wanted to learn more about specific strategies that the novice teachers used that contributed to higher levels of achievement. The novice teachers shared with the veteran teachers about best practices that they implemented. Shortly, after the meeting, the veteran teachers requested that I include them within the next coaching cycle. It was effective because our team was able to focus on the work of the students and we were able to discuss specific strategies that were used during the math block to raise student achievement.

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