



IT WORKED!

A Tool for Effective Collaborative Planning

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Collaborative planning is a focus in our district this year. Teachers are required to have collaborative planning with their grade level team, focused on mathematics, two times a month during the teacher's hour long planning block. When teachers first began collaborative planning they talked about activities to use in the classroom and what worksheet they would put in front of students. The teachers were focused on writing something in their planbook. We wanted to shift collaborative planning to focus on talking about what mathematics they wanted the students to learn, talk about how they would make sure students have learned the mathematics, or about what questions they would ask to guide students to the understanding of mathematics they need. We wanted teachers to talk about what the students already know or what they will do with the math they are learning. In this process we created a collaborative planning tool.

I had the opportunity to work with two math resource teachers at a school who run the collaborative planning meetings with their grade level teams on a biweekly basis. We used a collaborative planning tool that our district created to help guide the discussion. We were able to look at the collaborative planning tool and decided that there are 4 major areas that could be a focus of a particular collaborative planning session:

- 1 – Building a community
- 2 – Unpacking a standard
- 3 – Creating formative assessments
- 4 – Reflecting on the data

After understanding that a 50 minute collaborative planning session cannot effectively address all 4 of these areas I was able to work with the two resource teachers to plan upcoming collaborative planning sessions with a specific and appropriate focus.

The resource teachers spent a month working with teachers, running collaborative planning meetings, taking notes, and eliciting feedback from their administrators. We next sat down together and reflected on the effectiveness of the collaborative planning sessions. We used a rubric that has been created by our district to honestly rate the effectiveness of their collaborative planning sessions over the past month. The resource teachers then identified a goal that focused on moving in one area. This gave me a specific goal to work towards while supporting them in their collaborative planning. It also allowed the resource teachers to show growth and focus their agendas for their collaborative planning sessions. When I attend collaborative planning meetings at this school I am able to focus my feedback towards their goal. We have a plan to meet and reevaluate their collaborative planning meetings to see if they have made growth in the identified area as well as set new goals as needed.

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