Indicator Explanation

DOMAIN	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Talent	Set clear performance expectations	2C.1 The school leaders develop and implement schedules to reflect effective use of teacher time, including time for teacher collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.

Explanation. Recent studies have indicated that protecting and maximizing teacher time is one indicator of effective schools. However, time that has been protected must also be utilized efficiently giving priority to teacher planning time, both individually and collectively, and for reflection on lessons and outcomes of student learning.

Questions. How is the current school schedule arranged? How much time is allowed for individual class preparation? How much time is allowed for teams of teachers to meet and discuss lesson planning, outcomes from assessments (including formative assessments)? Is there a formal team or PLC structure set up in the school?

Most would not argue that teaching has become more complicated recently than in previous history. While each decade has its challenges, recent events have created an atmosphere of constant change. Teacher have access to more information than ever before and feel they have less time to review and process that information. Teachers need time "to process and integrate new information from professional development, review student data from multiple sources for decision making, and provide timely, constructive feedback for students on their learning" (para 4, Merritt, 2016).

An international review of education studies created the following list of what "good schools" look like:
- They establish a consistency in teaching and learning across the entire school.
- They create a culture that supports professional discourse.
- They encourage lesson observation and sharing practices.
- They monitor and evaluate their own practice. (Ko, Sammons, & Bakkum, 2013)

Teachers in Wisconsin, when asked about the conditions which would have the most impact on their teaching, they listed "planning time as their top choice, above more money or fewer disruptive students" (Wood Communications Group, 2014, as cited in Merritt, 2016). It is the role of the principal to structure the schedule in such a way as to allow time for instructional planning in teams or PLCs while also monitoring their effective use of that time.

Teachers can also assume roles as leaders in their building as they meet and decide how best to work together to maximize their time. Lesson sharing, deciding on common rules and norms for their classrooms, sharing what worked and didn't work in their classrooms as they delivered lessons, and creating common assessments are just a few of the ways that the team can "worker smarter, not harder." Johnson (2019) writes

in her book, Where Teachers Thrive, "The schools where teachers thrive are actually schools that are very well managed by principals who protect teachers from interruptions and unrealistic demands….Teachers play a role in working together to devise strategies for better using the time that's available" (Johnson as cited in para 5, Anderson, 2019).

Principals must protect teachers' time by evaluating all that is expected and required of teachers during the school day, eliminate those tasks that take time away from instruction and instructional planning with colleauges. The principal can also make teachers' time a priority in how the master schedule is built

References

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