

Final Reflective Narrative Outline

Key Learning's from the Course

Key Messages & Big Ideas

Reasons Why

School leaders are leaders of professional learning, not just disciplinarians.	School leaders are not just disciplinarians anymore; they play an important role as leaders of learning for their entire school community, which includes teachers, students and parents. They develop professional learning opportunities for their staff, they have open lines of communication with parents, they provide teachers with solid and trustworthy leadership and they themselves are life-long learners. School leaders will always have to deal with disciplinary issues, but that is not their main focus. They are to lead by example and model the importance of learning throughout one's life.
No matter what the topic of a professional learning session is, the main goal should always be to improve student learning.	Educational leaders must remember that any professional learning opportunity that is provided to their teachers must be aligned with a common purpose and a goal focused on student learning. By providing opportunities for structured, reflective, and meaningful conversations for teachers, instructional ability, collegiality and student learning will improve.
In order to develop teachers throughout the different stages in their learning careers, an effective leader must possess Glickman's prerequisites of knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills.	Glickman's prerequisites provide learning leaders with the background knowledge, confidence and skills that are required to develop teachers throughout their careers. By possessing these traits a leader will always be knowledgeable about specific learning techniques to help their teachers, they will be able to alter their style to suit each teacher's level of development and they will be able to effectively plan and facilitate meetings and other professional learning sessions. These three prerequisites set true leaders apart from others because they provide the skills necessary to have the greatest impact on various learners throughout their careers.
Trust is essential to build collaboration	The article, <i>Trust is the On-ramp to Building</i>

<p>between colleagues and meaningful school improvement.</p>	<p><i>Collaboration and Collegiality</i>, discusses the importance of trust and the effect it can have on a professional learning community. It states that a school can provide all the professional learning it wants to, but if its teachers do not trust their leaders, the professional learning will not be effective. Trust as stated in the article, is the “connective tissue that binds individuals together to advance the education and welfare of students.” Trust needs to be developed between educational leaders and their staff because it supports the overall goal of improving student learning and it fosters a positive and professional learning community.</p>
<p>Effective instructional leaders plan teacher learning accordingly, depending on the stages of group development.</p>	<p>An instructional leader has to know the potential of his or her group, assess which developmental phase it is in and plan accordingly, not using high-risk activities with groups who are not ready for them. Depending on the phase the group is in (forming, storming, norming, or performing) an instructional leader must assess where their group is, so they can develop professional learning opportunities that best fit that particular group. If a group is in a forming phase with new teachers, you need to create a purpose, a direction and build personal trust. While in the storming phase, the leader needs to listen to feelings and create norms. Understanding group development is essential for instructional leaders because it allows them to develop and search for resources that will best address the group’s particular needs.</p>

Shifts in Thinking, Beliefs or Values

Shifts

Reasons Why

<p>I used to think that I could not lead a professional learning session for my colleagues, but now I know I can.</p>	<p>While taking the survey assessing our roles as an instructional leader, one of my main weaknesses was I did not have the confidence or the resources to provide a well-rounded professional learning session. This has changed because of all the various strategies, protocols and online resources we were provided with in EAD 824. Another huge help was creating a year-long plan for teachers learning from scratch. This helped</p>
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	build my confidence and now I am prepared to take the proper steps and implement some type of professional learning experience for my colleagues based on their needs and the students.
I used to believe that feedback was just a way to critique one another, but now I believe that feedback is a very powerful tool for teacher learning.	Before this course all the feedback I used to say included, way to go, nice job and that was awesome. During our teacher walk-throughs, I saw the true power that actionable feedback had on teacher learning when it is done correctly. I was able to address behaviors and provide specific examples for the teacher to reflect upon. Feedback can both be encouraging and constructive, but it must address the situation, the behavior, and the impact of the behavior, for it to be meaningful
I used to believe that students' opinions mattered somewhat in regards to feedback on particular lessons, but now I believe that when used properly, students' voices are true tools for teacher learning.	After reading about the learning design, Accessing Student Voices, from <i>the Powerful Design</i> book, my beliefs about students' voices has changed. When used properly with student focus groups and meaningful questions, students provide great insight into their own learning and ways to improve upon it. If the overall goal of professional learning is to improve our student's learning, than why not go directly to the source.

Application of One of Glickman's Tasks

Glickman's Task Application

The task area of instructional leadership that has had a significant impact on my overall thinking in this course is group development. This has had a major impact on me because currently at my school I see the huge need for it. I see all three divisions, lower, middle, and upper, functioning separately and barely keeping their heads above water. I see us recreating the wheel for many aspects of our curriculum over and over again. And I see frustration building between different divisions simply because they can't relate to one another. So to help build a more cohesive and collaborative professional learning community, I want to implement some strategies next year from the *Teacher Teams* book. I want to implement the strategies that focus on building a growth-oriented culture, sharing knowledge and skills, and building resilience. I believe that performing some of these strategies together in one group, and in specific divisions, will make our school community a more collaborative and effective one for our students.

New Questions

New Questions to Ponder or Address (soon or someday)

How can I foster more leadership skills in my athletes?

How can I bring about the idea of the importance of collective planning times and time for teacher collaboration to my school?

How can I incorporate the learning design of journaling more into my PE classroom?

Summary

Summary of Learning

In EAD 824 this semester, I learned what it truly means to be a leader of teacher's learning. Through the various group work, class chats, individual exercises and in-depth assignments, I was able to build my knowledge base and become more confident in my abilities as a leader. I enjoyed each and every assignment that was given because it correlated directly with my current teaching. Day after day I could make direct connections between the course material and what I was experiencing currently at my school. Leading teacher learning is a responsibility as an educational and instructional leader and it cannot be taken lightly. When one is given the role of leading teacher's learning, they must take it seriously and provide their teachers with professional learning experiences that are meaningful and have a direct impact on increasing and improving their student's learning. Before EAD 824, I had experience being a teacher leader and fostering a more positive learning community, but after EAD 824, I am much more confident in my skills and I am ready to take that next step of developing professional learning opportunities for my colleagues.