

Instructional leadership is fostering growth in teachers through learning, modeling, support, collaboration, and follow through. It is required to increase the effectiveness of teachers' impacts on students in the classroom. Being an instructional leader takes on the form of lead teacher, mentor, peer, and confidant. The continuously growing relationship built between leaders and teachers is imperative for growth to conspire and inspire for maximum student success.

Instructional leadership requires leaders to know and understand best practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, student development, and supervision to support an increase in students' successes and achievements. Leaders provide feedback both formally and informally throughout the school year through a variety of different methods. Informal supervision may include walkthroughs, collection of data, and communication between students, staff, teachers, and instructional leaders. Walkthroughs are able to provide glimpses of teachers, staff, and students in action. Data collection may include attendance, coursework, participation, and culture and climate surveys. Communication may be the easiest to obtain, through both informal and formal discussions, emails, surveys, and feedback sessions. Formal supervision includes pre and post conferences, evaluations, teacher improvement plans, as well as data from test scores and benchmarks. These methods of supervision provide instructional leaders the ability to collaborate with and support teachers, which ultimately leads to greater student achievement.

Instructional leaders must create and maintain a collaborative culture for learning with their teachers and staff. In order to achieve this, effective leaders need to be conscience of time, ensuring to keep as many commitments as possible, being as transparent as possible, and

recognizing teachers and staff. In order to improve student achievement, it is necessary to collaborate with teachers in their learning.

Effective leaders must hold themselves accountable in order to improve student achievement. Instructional leaders need to be able to understand data, set realistic goals, create and collaborate on methods of improvement, as well as continuing to check for development. Successful leaders identify and implement individualized professional growth plans. These plans based off observations, consist of collecting data during instructional time, digesting the data, and collaborating on it with the teacher. It is important to lead the teacher to identify their areas of growth and then offer potential solutions. It is vital to identify one to two high impact strategies, provide time for the teacher to implement them, and then follow up within four to six weeks, or sooner if needed to see how the teacher is doing and if s/he would appreciate any further supports.

Instructional leaders should create targeted professional development opportunities for teachers in order to increase teacher retention and performance, ultimately increasing student achievement. Fostering growth in teachers through professional learning communities, co-planning, afterschool, and superintendent's conference days. Encompassing multiple methods, of interactive, action research plans, book studies, as well as collaborative coaching and learning (CCL). CCL provides teachers the opportunity to observe other teachers using specific classroom management strategies, student choice, personalized learning, assistive technologies, as well as implementing the Individualized Education Program for students with disabilities. CCL allows teachers to teach each other, co-plan, and implement cross-curricular opportunities all with the goal of increasing student achievement.

Student achievement directly relates to teacher retention and performance. Instructional leaders must be able to observe, collaborate, and be accountable to both themselves and teachers in order to increase student achievement.

In my experience, I have led professional development teaching teachers how to implement an Individualized Education Program into their classrooms, creating a support culture. In terms of assessment, I fight every day to ensure students with disabilities are getting their correct services, whether I am in a Committee on Special Education meeting or fixing the master schedule. As a Special Education Teacher, I am in many different classrooms and offer instructional feedback to those when needed.