ENGAGING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC WORK

Facilitator Guide for a 10 Session Professional Development Series

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June 2020

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Engaging High School Students in Academic Work

The first step in leading students to learn the academic content for which both students and teachers are held accountable is to ENGAGE them in the learning process.

This is a real challenge, particularly for adolescents who have not experienced academic success in the past. Many students come to us already disengaged from school. They may have had life experiences that have interfered with attendance or academic effort. They may not have experienced instruction that met their needs in prior schools.

This series is designed to engage teachers in collaborative learning and reflection about the process of engaging students in the rigorous academic work required in high school. It focuses teachers' attention on what motivates students and how they can create classroom environments and learning experiences that will draw students into the learning process so that they will exert the effort required to be successful learners. The series involves interactive teacher experiences and practical tools organized around these themes:

- Building Relationships that Motivate Students

- Motivating Students for Academic Work

- Assessment Strategies that Motivate Students (Parts 1 and 2)

- Building a Community of Learners: Strategies for Effective Cooperative Learning and Small Group Work

- Connecting the Work to Students' Future Work Lives: Creating Assignments with Student Products for Real Audiences

- Reflecting on Assessment Strategies

- Engaging Students in Critical Reading Skills in the Content Areas

- Using Project-Based Learning to Deepen Learning and Engagement

- Reflecting on Student Work, Student Progress, and Next Steps for Continuous Improvement

This Facilitator Guide is designed to be used with the PowerPoint slides and other resources housed on the website http://engage.every1graduates.org.

Session 1: What Motivates Students to Do Academic Work?
The Importance of Belonging and Relationships

Objectives

The goal of this session is to stimulate teacher thinking and collaborative discussion about what motivates students to exert effort on academic tasks and how they can regularly do the types of things in their classrooms that activate student motivation. In the session teachers reflect on their own motivation for their work and the similarities (and differences) in what motivates their students. The session sets forth an overarching framework of key components of motivation, and then narrows to focus on the importance of belonging and relationships for students' academic motivation.

Guiding Questions

- How do we motivate students to engage in rigorous academic work?
- How can we adapt our classroom instructional practices to tap into students' intrinsic motivation?
- How can we do this as a collaborative community?

Introduced somewhat later in the session:

- How do we build the kind of classroom community that creates a sense of belonging that will motivate students to engage in rigorous academic work?
- What are the challenges in ensuring a sense of belonging, and how can we address those challenges?

At a Glance

- Optional – Passion Profiles icebreaker
- Intro – Guiding Questions about motivating students
- Venn Diagram Brainstorming exercise about motivation
- Gallery Walk and Discussion
- Presentation of Motivation Components (from ABCs to BRACE)
- Focus on Belonging – Student quotes about relationships with teachers
- Vision of Belonging -- Video clip about the power of the circle
- Small Group Discussion of video
- Time to explore ideas/resources for relationship building
- Teacher self-reflection

Facilitator Notes

First session can begin with optional "Passion Profiles" icebreaker activity (see separate guide and materials).

In addition to reviewing the procedure in preparation for facilitating the PD session, reviewing the short background material on components of motivation (need for autonomy, belonging, competence, relevance, interest) is useful for presenting to teachers. Previewing video on use of circles to create sense of belonging is also a good idea.

Materials

Poster-size Venn Diagram charts (produced from PDF included in materials packet)

Markers in various colors

Handout 1.1 (First Day Activity – Math)

Handout 1.2 (First Day Activity – English)

Handout 1.3 (First Day Activity – History)

Handout 1.4 (First Day Activity – Science)

Handout 1.5 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Additional Resources for Teachers

Power of Personal Relationships article
Power of the Circle article

Additional Resources for Facilitator

Background resources on motivation
        The ABCs of Motivation
        What Teachers Can Do to Boost Student Motivation

Live polling instructions

Procedure

Set-up: Teachers should sit at tables in groups of about 4.

Icebreaker (10 - 15 minutes; see Passion Profiles Facilitator Guide)

Introduction

Facilitator makes the connection between our passion and motivation and introduces the goal of the series: how do we motivate students to do academic work. Facilitator introduces guiding questions for the series (above and Slide 2).

Teacher Brainstorming Venn Diagram Activity (7 minutes)

In groups of about 4, have teachers use the provided Venn diagram chart paper to discuss the things that motivate teachers to do their work, the things that motivate students to do their work, and the intersection between them.
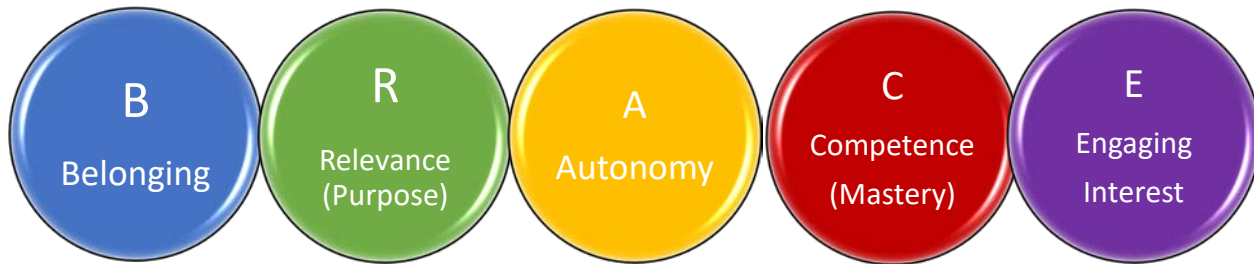
Gallery Walk and Debrief (8 minutes)

Teachers do a gallery walk to see what other groups have produced.

Large group sharing about the common themes they have noticed.

Summary of Motivation Elements and Focus on Belonging (10 minutes)

Facilitator uses graphic to summarize research about human motivation into 5 components (Slide 8):

See "The ABCs of Motivation" article (https://www.jstor.org/stable/30189907) and Education Week article/video (https://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/student-motivation-videos/what-teachers-can-do-to-boost-student.html) for background in summarizing key components of motivation.

Facilitator focuses group attention on the B (Belonging – Slides 9-11) and discusses students' hunger for relationships with quotes from article.

Facilitator then uses the video link (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdKhcQrLD1w) to cast a vision of belonging in the high school classroom.

Small Group Discussion Time (15 minutes)

Teachers move into small groups with other members of their department to discuss the questions on Handout and Slide 13.

Facilitator interjects midway to alert teachers to the resources provided for first-day activities, as well as articles about building relationships. Teachers have time to peruse these activities and articles and discuss with the group.

Individual Teacher Reflection Time (3-5 minutes)

Facilitator summarizes session briefly and asks teachers to spend a few minutes individually reflecting on questions on Handout and Slide 15.

Provide participants with a few minutes to process and reflect and begin to craft their individual plan for how they will build community in their own classroom – starting with some activities in the very first week of school.

Passion Profiles Icebreaker

Objectives

Teachers will reflect on their own passions and reasons for choosing teaching as a profession, and will connect deeply with colleagues who share those passions.

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

8 poster-sized sheets

Markers

Handout PP.1 (Passion Profile description sheet; one for each teacher)

Handout PP.2 (Passion Profile discussion protocol; one for each teacher)

Procedure

Set-up: Place 8 poster-size sheets around the room, each labeled with one of the 8 passions from the protocol. Teachers should sit at tables in groups of 4.

This icebreaker builds on "Passion Profiles" from the National School Reform Faculty.[1] Eight larger poster sheets throughout the room have the text paragraph that illustrates each teacher Passion Profile (see Passion Profile document in supplementary files): The Child, The Curriculum, Content Knowledge, Teaching Strategies and Techniques, The Relationship between Beliefs and Professional Practice, The Intersection Between Your Personal and Professional Identities, Advocating Equity and Social Justice, and Context Matters. Teachers receive a copy of the Passion Profiles sheet (with all 8 described) and a protocol sheet with directions for the icebreaker activity. The sheet instructs teachers to select which of the 8 passions is closest to their own, and to stand by its poster in the room. The group of teachers at each poster will discuss their passion and school experiences together using the questions on the protocol sheet. The group agrees together on one sentence or phrase to write on the strip of paper provided to summarize their thoughts. A spokesperson from each group shares the group phrase/sentence with the entire group.

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[1] Passion Profiles was adapted from Gene Thompson-Grove's, "Student Profiles," by Pedro R. Bermudez, Belkis Cabrera, and Linda Emm. See https://nsrfharmony.org/protocols/.

Session 2: Motivated by Mastery

Objectives

The goal of this session is to stimulate teacher thinking and collaborative discussion about how they can focus students on mastery goals.

Guiding Questions

- How do we focus students on mastery goals?

- How can we help students track their progress?

- How can we celebrate success?

At a Glance

- Review of series goals and session goals

- Difference between mastery orientation and performance and social orientations

- Failure is not always a good motivator

- Linking mastery goals to content standards through visual roadmaps

- Discussion of Learning Targets Roadmap

- Teacher reflection on next steps

Materials

Paper and writing utensils

Markers/poster materials

Handout 2.1 (Algebra 1 Roadmap)

Handout 2.2 (Bill of Rights Learning Targets)

Handout 2.3 (Blank Unit Plan Template)

Handout 2.4 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Additional Teacher Resources

- Link for Goal Setting and Student Achievement article

- Fires in the Mind Mastery Template

- It Starts with a Spark

Procedure

Introduction (5 minutes)

Facilitator reviews the guiding questions for this professional development session as well as the components of motivation (BRACE) (Slides 2-3). Emphasize that this session is focused on mastery, and participants will

explore ways to help students focus on mastery goals, track their progress, and celebrate success. Facilitator explains contrast between mastery goals and performance goals, and how these also contrast with students' social goals (Slide 4).

Facilitator emphasizes that FAILURE is not a motivating experience in school (Slides 5-6).

Strategies for Linking Mastery Goals to Content Standards

Introduce challenges (Slide 7).

Give examples of visual unit organizers "Roadmaps" (Slides 10-11) and poster of these.

Introduce the Learning Targets Roadmap (Slide 13, teachers have a handout copy).

Analysis Challenge (20 minutes)

Have teachers:

- Get in groups of 4 to 6 with at least one other colleague from their department.
- Spend a couple of minutes looking over the Bill of Rights Unit "Learning Targets Roadmap" tool (adapted from a similar example in Myron Dueck, *Grading Smarter Not Harder*).
- Discuss the following questions as a group:
    o What do you think about how this tool communicates learning targets to students? Helps them track their progress? What strengths and weaknesses do you see with it?
    o Have you ever tried anything similar? How did it work?
    o How do you think something like this could be adapted to your subject matter?

Provide 5 minutes for groups to share their best ideas with the whole group.

Reflection & Next Steps (5-10 minutes)

Teachers have opportunity to peruse resources and reflect individually using Session 2 Teacher Reflection Questions handout. Mention the availability of the additional resources for teachers listed in the Materials section, which are posted on the professional development series website.

Session 3: Assessment Strategies that Motivate Students, Part 1

Introduction to Professional Development Sessions on Grading and Assessment

These sessions address how grades motivate or fail to motivate students to exert effort for learning. They build on what we know from prior research:

- One of the most important predictors of being off-track to college-ready high school graduation is course failure in 9th grade.
- Ninth grade course failure rates are extremely high, particularly in urban areas.
- Course failure is closely related to attendance problems, but also occurs for students who do attend regularly.
- Course failure can be exacerbated by missing assignments that receive the grade of 0 on a 100 point scale.
- District- or administrator-mandated policies to reduce the failure rate have led to widespread alienation among teachers, and even to legislation forbidding such policies in Texas.
- Even when districts have policies about report card grading, teachers are largely left on their own to determine grading policies that lead to the report card grade.
- Many teachers do not understand the statistical properties of the 100 point scale and how zeros for missing assignments can lead to a failing grade on the 100 point scale (when grading on an A to F scale could lead to a passing grade).
- While there has been a sizable increase in credit recovery opportunities, these are not always effective and entail added costs to schools and districts.

The goal of these professional development sessions is to provide the opportunity for teachers to participate in guided collaborative discussion with their colleagues about issues related to grading and assessment. The sessions are aimed at changing teacher beliefs and practices so that their grading provides opportunity for recovery and success. Key principles on the agenda for discussion include:

- Whether failure on minimal requirements for successful transition into living wage employment (e.g., courses required for high school graduation) should be viewed in the same way as failure on more optional goals (making the team, getting into an elite college, etc.)
- Whether failing grades are effective in motivating students to keep exerting effort to learn
- Whether opportunities to recover from early failure might be more appropriate within the context of a particular course rather than through credit recovery after course failure.
- How zeros for missing assignments or misbehavior can negatively influence an average grade
- How different ways of grading can lead to different final course grade results
- Whether students should be required to complete missing assignments rather than simply be given a failing grade for them
- What impact opportunities to complete missing assignments and/or revise assignments for higher grades have on student learning of responsibility and postsecondary readiness

Our orientation is that teachers should not be coerced by administrators to adopt particular grading practices, but rather that teachers should be required as part of their professional practice to discuss the issues collaboratively with colleagues and consider the arguments of those who advocate more recovery opportunities in the grading process. We believe that honest consideration of these issues by teachers will lead to shifts in beliefs and practices that will help to reduce the failure rate.

Resources that have influenced the development of this session include:

Myron Dueck, Grading Smarter, Not Harder: Assessment Strategies that Motivate Kids and Help Them Learn. ASCD.

Thomas Guskey, The Case Against Percentage Grades. *Resilience and Learning*, September 2013 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept13/vol71/num01/The-Case-Against-Percentage-Grades.aspx

Thomas Hoerr, Good Failures. *Educational Leadership*, September 2013 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept13/vol71/num01/Good-Failures.aspx

Mac Iver, M.A. (2016). When minimum grading policies backfire: Who decides whether to let students fail? In M. Gottfried & G. Conchas (Eds.), *When school policies backfire* (pp. 69-84). Harvard Education Press.

Doug Reeves, Preventing 1000 Failures. *Educational Leadership*, November 2006 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov06/vol64/num03/Preventing-1,000-Failures.aspx; http://mymassp.com/files/u1/ac07/Reeves-leadershipandlearning.pdf

Doug Reeves, The Case Against the Zero. *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 2004. http://www.ccresa.org/Files/Uploads/252/The_Case_Against_Zero.pdf

Doug Reeves, Taking the Grading Conversation Public. *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov11/vol69/num03/Taking-the-Grading-Conversation-Public.aspx

Objectives

The goal of this session is to stimulate teacher thinking and collaborative discussion about grading and how it influences student motivation and student performance.

Guiding Questions

- What are our goals for giving grades?
- How do grades influence future student performance?
- Are our assessment strategies "killing motivation"?

At a Glance

- Introduction – session goals
- Optional poll – goals for giving grades
- Review of motivation framework
- Grading policy exercise
- Meaningful grading readings – modified jigsaw
- Large group discussion
- Large group debate activity
- Teacher reflection time

Facilitator Notes

This session may evoke strong reactions from teachers who have deeply held convictions about grading. The goal is to help teachers to think through their positions and see the implications of certain philosophies and practices. The mix of activities (reading and reflection, discussion and debate) is aimed at keeping the group engaged and willing to consider other views than their own.

Materials

Handout 3.1 (Grading Scenario)

Handout 3.2 (Text Pieces for Modified Jigsaw)

Handout 3.3 (Grading Scale)

Handout 3.4 (Instructions for Agree-Disagree Activity)

Handout 3.5 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Procedure

Set-up: Teachers should sit at tables in groups of 4 to facilitate quick movement to first activity.

Introduction (3 minutes)

Facilitator introduces guiding questions (above and Slide 2).

Grading Policy Scenario Activity (7 minutes)

Introduce the scenario and ask teachers to individually calculate a final grade for the hypothetical student, using the information sheet provided. Then have teachers share with their table partners and discuss any differences in grading decisions noticed.

Large Group Debrief (5 minutes)

Facilitator takes a quick poll to see distribution of final grades. As a large group, facilitator leads teachers in discussion of: 1) what they noticed about grading differences; 2) how they determined what grade to assign; and 3) what accounts for the differences in grades across teachers.

Modified Jigsaw (10 minutes)

Discussion of Assessment Issues (10 minutes)

Facilitator discusses impact of grading scales, particularly noting the difference in the role of 0 in the 100 point scale and the 0 to 4 point scale.

Facilitator also notes the issues regarding whether improvement over time should be factored into final grades, and how missing or late assignments are handled.

AGREE/DISAGREE (Modified Debate) Activity (20 minutes)

Facilitator explains directions for the Agree-Disagree Activity (Slide 12).

Facilitator posts first statement for teachers to "vote" on with their feet (Slide 13). After teachers are in position, volunteers from each side defend their position. Teachers are able to switch sides if they are convinced by the argument.

This continues with the other three statements (Slides 14, 15, & 16).

Individual Teacher Reflection Time (3-5 minutes)

Facilitator summarizes session briefly and asks teacher to spend a few minutes individually reflecting on questions on Handout and Slide 19.

Session 4: Assessment Strategies that Motivate Students, Part 2

Introduction to Professional Development Sessions on Grading and Assessment

These sessions address how grades motivate or fail to motivate students to exert effort for learning. They build on what we know from prior research:
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- Course failure is closely related to attendance problems, but also occurs for students who do attend regularly.
- Course failure can be exacerbated by missing assignments that receive the grade of 0 on a 100 point scale.
- District- or administrator-mandated policies to reduce the failure rate have led to widespread alienation among teachers, and even to legislation forbidding such policies in Texas.
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- Many teachers do not understand the statistical properties of the 100 point scale and how zeros for missing assignments can lead to a failing grade on the 100 point scale (when grading on an A to F scale could lead to a passing grade).
- While there has been a sizable increase in credit recovery opportunities, these are not always effective and entail added costs to schools and districts.

The goal of these professional development sessions is to provide the opportunity for teachers to participate in guided collaborative discussion with their colleagues about issues related to grading and assessment. The sessions are aimed at changing teacher beliefs and practices so that their grading provides opportunity for recovery and success. Key principles on the agenda for discussion include:
- Whether failure on minimal requirements for successful transition into living wage employment (e.g., courses required for high school graduation) should be viewed in the same way as failure on more optional goals (making the team, getting into an elite college, etc.)
- Whether failing grades are effective in motivating students to keep exerting effort to learn
- Whether opportunities to recover from early failure might be more appropriate within the context of a particular course rather than through credit recovery after course failure.
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Doug Reeves, Preventing 1000 Failures. *Educational Leadership*, November 2006 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov06/vol64/num03/Preventing-1,000-Failures.aspx; http://mymassp.com/files/u1/ac07/Reeves-leadershipandlearning.pdf

Doug Reeves, The Case Against the Zero. *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 2004. http://www.ccresa.org/Files/Uploads/252/The_Case_Against_Zero.pdf

Doug Reeves, Taking the Grading Conversation Public. *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov11/vol69/num03/Taking-the-Grading-Conversation-Public.aspx

Objectives

The goal of this session is to promote teacher reflection about grading practices that provide opportunities to recover from failure.

Guiding Question

How can grading systems help motivate students to exert the effort needed to grow in mastery of course learning objectives?

At a Glance

- Introduction
- Table Discussion of "Retesting" Excerpt
- Four Corners Activity – My Own High School Experience
- Considering How We Provide Opportunities to Recover from Failure
- Teacher Reflection Time

Facilitator Notes

This session asks teachers to consider an idea that many of them will disagree with – providing "retesting" opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of course material that they have not previously mastered. There may be passive or even active resistance to the activities during the session. If teachers resist reading the short excerpts, you may have to remind teachers that this experience may help them understand their

students' reactions to their own classroom experiences. Some teachers may rebel against the "silent discussion" and you may need to be flexible about allowing traditional discussion. You may need a back-up plan for large group discussion about why teachers do not want to engage in activities and/or discuss alternative grading ideas.

Materials

Handout 4.1 ("Retesting" excerpt from *Grading Smarter, Not Harder*)

Handout 4.2 (Four A's Text Protocol)

Handout 4.3 (Silent Discussion Directions)

Handout 4.4 (Diamond's Story and Table Questions)

Handout 4.5 (Table Discussion Questions for use if excluding Diamond's Story component)

Handout 4.6 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Procedure

Set-up: Teachers should sit at tables in groups of 4 to facilitate quick movement to first activity.

Introduction (5 minutes)

Facilitator introduces guiding question (above) and the three critical questions students should be able to answer during any learning phase: Where am I going? Where am I now? How can I close the gap? Facilitator reviews how the "Learning Target Roadmap" from Session 2 helps students answer "Where am I going?" and notes the importance of formative assessment to help students understand "Where am I now?" To answer the question about closing the gap, facilitator introduces an activity to promote discussion of the concept of "Retesting."

Table Discussion of "Retesting" (15-20 minutes)

Facilitator directs teachers in groups of 3-4 to read individually the "Retesting" excerpt from *Grading Smarter, Not Harder* and review the 4 A's Discussion Protocol to structure their thinking as they read.

- What Assumptions does the author of the text hold?

- What do you Agree with in the text?

- What do you want to Argue with in the text?

- What parts of the text do you want to Aspire to?

Facilitator points out that teachers can use the 4 A's Protocol in their own classroom discussions with students as well.

Once teachers are close to finishing reading, facilitator explains that they will engage in a "silent discussion" to experience an activity they can try out in their own classrooms. Facilitator calls attention to the "Instructions for Silent Discussion" handout and emphasizes that teachers can start their own writing with any of the 4 A's. Use chime or similar timer to alert teachers to pass their writing and comment on what they receive in turn. Continue until the text makes a complete round of the table's participants (and continue a couple of more

times if desired). Allow enough time for teachers to debrief the experience for several minutes. Conduct a quick group poll on "retesting."

Four Corners Activity – My Own High School Experience (5 minutes)

This is a short "break" type activity to get people moving and chatting briefly. Direct teachers to move to pre-numbered corners of the room as shown on Slide 13. Once they have done this, they can regroup at tables (in different groups if desired) and discuss questions on Slide 15.

Considering How We Provide Opportunities to Recover from Failure (15 minutes)

Facilitator introduces questions on Slide 16 and directs teachers to read the short excerpt "Diamond's Story" and discuss the questions on the handout with their table group. (Depending on time constraints, there is another version of the discussion handout that does not require reading of the Diamond's Story text.)

As time allows, provide for large group debriefing of conclusions from table discussions.

Individual Teacher Reflection Time (3-5 minutes)

Facilitator summarizes session briefly and asks teacher to spend a few minutes individually reflecting on questions on Teacher Reflection Questions.

Session 5: Using Small Group Learning To Engage Students

Objectives

The goal of this session is to stimulate teacher thinking and collaborative discussion about having students work cooperatively together on assignments and projects in small groups. Teachers experience a small group learning experience for themselves that they can in turn adapt and implement in their classrooms.

Guiding Questions

- What are the benefits and potential challenges of small group learning?
- What are the key elements to making small group learning successful and how can we ensure they are present in our lessons?
- How can we adapt strategies to the specific content and students in our classrooms?

At a Glance

- Introduction – Benefits of Small Group Learning
- Six Hats/Glasses Collaborative Activity and Debrief

Facilitator Notes

This session delves into a topic that many teachers may have had a lot of professional development about as well as both positive and negative experiences of trying to execute properly. Encourage teachers to share ideas, strategies and thoughts on how to make these types of learning successful. If teachers are negative about the idea, then focus their attention to the benefits. Often small learning activities as well as projects require more "up front" time – for teachers to properly plan and prepare, but usually have less-draining executions and follow-up than traditional whole-class instruction.

Additional slides and materials are included at the end of PowerPoint that can be substituted or added as desired.

Materials

If possible: Hats or sunglasses in the following colors (a set for each group of teachers) – white, red, yellow, green, purple, blue

Sunglasses available at amazon.com: https://www.amazon.com/Edge-I-Wear-Sunglasses-certified-Lead-5402RA-SET-8/dp/B00HCNZJGS/

Handout 5.1 (Six Hat Thinking Directions)

Handout 5.2 (Article for discussion)

Handout 5.3 (Resources for Managing Collaborative Small Group Activities)

Handout 5.4 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Handout 5.5 (Graphing How Students Spend Their Time in My Classes) – *optional*

Procedure

Set-up: Teachers should sit at tables in groups of 4 to facilitate quick movement to first activity.

Introduction (3 minutes)

Facilitator briefly summarizes benefits of small group learning (Slides 3-4).

Group Learning Activity (20-25 minutes)

Facilitator explains the 6 glasses (hat) thinking activity, going over with all participants the role of each of the 6 colored glasses or hats. Then, participants will receive Handout 5.1 and 5.2, and complete the small group activity outlined in Handout 5.1 using the sample article from Handout 5.2 [free feel to substitute a different article].

Group Learning Debrief (5-10 minutes)

Discuss with participants the benefits and potential challenges of this activity. A big benefit is the fact that it is a low floor-high ceiling activity, where every student can feel successful. For example, even a student challenged by the terms or facts in the article can have an emotional reaction to the idea presented in the article (red glasses) or have something to wonder about (blue glasses). A potential challenge is being able to get six students to work collectively or how this can apply to different content areas – encourage teachers (or provide some ideas of your own) to think about how to adapt and customize the activity to fit their content and students. Ensure you have time for the teachers to collectively consider how to apply this work to their own teaching.

Addressing Challenges of Small Group Learning Through Careful Planning and Preparation

Facilitator refers to take-home handout on managing collaborative small group activities and explains that s/he will briefly highlight some important principles for increasing the odds of success in using small group learning.

Slide 13 emphasizes the need for planning how small group activities address the learning targets for students

Slide 14 emphasizes the need to consider structural dimensions of small group learning (see slide)

Slide 15 gives suggestions for getting students ready for collaborative learning

Slide 16 give suggestions for beginning more simply when new to implementing small group learning and increasing complexity over time

Slide 17 discusses the important teacher roles during small group learning

Slide 18 reminds teachers of small group activities they have experienced in prior sessions of the series that they can use as models in their own classrooms

Slide 19 mentions other available small group activities to try out

Slide 20 (optional) – a drawing to give away the colored glasses used in the activity

Individual Teacher Reflection Time (5 minutes)

Facilitator summarizes session briefly and asks teachers to spend a few minutes individually reflecting on questions on Handout 5.4.

Session 6: Connecting the Work to Students' Future Work Lives

Objectives

The goal of this session is to stimulate teacher thinking and collaborative discussion about how to craft meaningful projects that mirror real-world tasks. Teachers will discuss a novel approach to giving students "real-world assignments," learn a framework to help students approach a real-life task (the 4 Ds of Problem Solving), and discuss how to use these ideas in their own teaching.

Guiding Question

- How can we create experiences for students that are relevant, engaging and more like the real world?

At a Glance

In this session teachers begin by reading an excerpt from Ted McCain's *Teaching for Tomorrow* about presenting students with real-world problems and engaging in a silent discussion about the issues raised. They discuss ways to give students authentic tasks as assignments. The session then guides the participants through a process for how one would support students in unpacking an authentic task using the four Ds of problem-solving (Define, Design, Do and Debrief) from Ted McCain's *Teaching for Tomorrow*. We highly recommend reading Ted McCain's *Teaching for Tomorrow* before conducting this session.

Facilitator Notes

There are two versions of the PowerPoint presentation for this session – one that has examples that will resonate more with English/Social Studies teachers and one that is more aimed at Science/Technology teachers. This session presents a major shift in teaching praxis that many teachers find startling or difficult. Normally, teachers present content to students and then assign a project that deepens and assesses their learning. In this plan, students are assigned the project first, and work out a plan to complete that project – including what content they must learn in order to finish the project successfully. It is important to emphasize to teachers the importance of this flip: It is not just that a project mirrors a real-world task, but that, like in the work environment, students are presented with a task and must problem-solve how to complete it. This creates a powerful motivation for students, because students themselves have determined or discovered that they need to know a particular piece of content in order to complete their project, rather than learning content that the teacher tells them "they will need later."

> **PLAN TO ADAPT TIME FOR EACH SEGMENT DEPENDING ON LENGTH OF SESSION (60-90 minutes)**

Materials

Large post-it notes and pens/markers

Handout 6.1 (*Teaching for Tomorrow* excerpt)

Handout 6.2 (The Four Ds)

Handout 6.3 (Authentic Assignment Ideas)

Handout 6.4 (How Often Assignments Include Authentic Tasks)

Handout 6.5 (Four Ds Student Planning Sheets [blank])

Handout 6.6 (Four Ds Examples from *Teaching for Tomorrow*)

Handout 6.7 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Procedure

Set-up: Place poster-size sheets on each wall, labeled:

- ASSUMPTIONS
- AGREE WITH
- ARGUE WITH
- ASPIRE TO

Introduction (3 minutes)

Facilitator reminds participants of the overall goals of these professional development sessions: to prepare students for the real world and increase their motivation to complete assignments and take ownership of their learning. Review the guiding question for the session and explain that during the next portion of the session, they will engage in a silent conversation about one educator's vision for preparing students for the real world.

Silent Discussion of Excerpt from *Teaching for Tomorrow* (15 minutes)

Ask teachers to read the excerpt from Ted McCain's book, *Teaching for Tomorrow*, thinking about the 4 A's: **Assumptions** the author holds, things they **agree** with, things they want to **argue** about, and things they **aspire** to. Ask them to write comments on their post-it notes and post them on the appropriate large sheet on the wall. Ask them also to read and comment on the comments of others.

In the large group debrief, ask about themes that emerged from the conversations and whether interacting with others' opinions influenced any of their original opinions.

Then debrief on the "silent conversation" strategy as a teaching strategy for their own students (unless this has already been done sufficiently in a previous session in the series). Ask how they think it would work and what might need to be adapted or changed. Discuss how likely it is that they might use this strategy in their own classrooms.

Discussion of Authentic Assignments (5 minutes)

After reviewing the ways assignments can be authentic (problem, task, process, audience – see Slides 11 and 12), ask teachers to estimate how often they have given these types of assignments using handout sheet.

Ask for volunteers and/or give examples of types of authentic assignments (Slides 16-24).

Modeling The Four Ds (15-20 minutes)

Explain to the participants that you will walk them through the Four Ds of how to unpack the task presented to them in the same way you would do so with students in a classroom, though in an abbreviated format. Pass out Student Planning Sheets for the 4 Ds as well as the examples from the McCain book.

For each of the Four Ds, first, simply show the main question presented and have participants craft responses.

For example, the first question (for the Define stage) – "What do we need to do first to accomplish this task?" – allows participants to react and provide a variety of suggestions for how they would begin to address the task (either the website for CCFA in the Science version of PD session or the travel brochure in the Humanities

version). Then, focus participants that first we need to *define* the task presented. Explain the importance of the Define phase – students, and even participants, might immediately jump to the Design or Do phase without taking the time to properly identify what is being asked and the criteria for success. Point out how this is different from typical assignments where teachers will often hand out an assignment with the task, steps and criteria already defined.

Walk participants through the next three steps in the same way: Have them respond to the general question and then focus them to consider the next phase of the Four Ds – Design, Do and Debrief.

Underscore the importance of ensuring students spend time and thought in the Define and Design phases, which are often skipped as students begin the Do phase immediately.

Provide participants with Handout 1.2 (The Four Ds) and review the four phases once more. Ask if teachers want to share any other frameworks they have used to help students tackle complex tasks. Mention the handouts that describe additional ideas for alternative assignments.

Individual or Small Group Discussion and Share-Out on Applying Session Ideas (10-20 minutes)

Have participants reflect on the questions on slide and handout about how to apply what they have learned in their own classrooms.

Session 7: Reflecting on Tracking Progress in
Meeting Learning Goals and on Assessing Student Work

Objectives

Objective #1: Teachers explore various ways to engage students in tracking their own progress in their courses.

Objective #2: Teachers analyze their grade books and assess which students are failing and why.

Guiding Questions

- How are you monitoring/tracking student progress on learning goals and sharing it with students so they can monitor their own progress?

- How are you helping students reflect on their progress?

- What are the main reasons students are failing?

At a Glance

This session has teachers explore student progress – how they are tracking it, and ensuring their students own the process of tracking their own progress as well. In addition, the session asks teachers to take a hard look at their own practices that could be contributing to student failure.

Facilitator Notes

Note the needed set-up steps under Procedure.

This session has two large topics that could easily be divided into two separate sessions. The first topic – exploring ways to have students track their own progress – can be covered anytime, though it is best covered towards the beginning of the year so teachers have the opportunity to implement some of the strategies. (At the end or beginning of a marking period is also a good time for this professional development.) The second topic – having teachers analyze their own grade books – is best covered at the beginning of a marking period, when teachers have recently provided a formal report card on student progress to students and their families. This will be a sensitive topic and ideally is conducted after the facilitator of the sessions has established a rapport with teachers, because the facilitator will challenge teachers' practices and beliefs in this session. Teachers will often want to blame student failure on the students/families they serve and will not see how their own practices contributed to that failure (through a punitive grading system, dearth of recovery options, or lack of engagement/motivation in their lessons). It is important to build a safe space for this session so that these practices can be challenged in a non-threatening way that fosters further reflection and change by the teachers.

Materials

Handout 7.1 (Examples of Student Progress Tracking)

Handout 7.2 (Student Failure Reflection)

Additional Teacher Resource

Link to online article on Google Docs

Procedure

Set-up

This session in its current form requires teachers to have access to laptops and the internet (including their own online gradebook). Teachers need to be notified in advance to bring laptops to the session unless computer access will be otherwise provided, as through a laptop cart or holding the session in school computer lab.

If you want to use the Google Docs group discussion component of this session, it will need to be set up beforehand. Create one or more Google documents and share links with teachers (by email prior to the session, or by distributing a copy of the link for them to access during the session). You may want to create different Google documents for each department or organize in another way. To use the Google Docs component:

> Go to https://docs.google.com/
>
> Create document
>
> Share (add teacher email addresses)
>
> Or use the following to shorten the link to the document so it can easily be shared with participants: https://tinyurl.com/
> Copy the link to the created Google document; TinyURL will produce a shorter link that can be typed into internet browser if necessary during the session. These links can be typed on small cards beforehand and distributed during the session as we pre-tested.

Introduction (3 minutes)

Facilitator introduces agenda and reminds participants of its connection to the broader goal of student motivation, focusing attention on how a sense of competence breeds motivation. Further, explain how this session connects with an earlier session about the importance of goal-setting and establishing ways to track student progress. Then, have teachers read and reflect on the quote by Marzano and explain how this quote shapes the professional development session, specifically focusing on how teachers track progress. Next, connect this session to the teacher evaluation system in your district. Show teachers how this session connects to their own growth and development as a teaching professional.

Reports from the Field (7 minutes)

Divide the room into smaller groups if needed. Teachers share what they know about students checking their grades on the portal, the kind of guidance they are receiving about this, and what impact it seems to be having.

Group Discussion Using Google Docs (15 minutes)

Provide links to teachers for either one single Google document or provide separate links for each department or group as desired. Slide 7 shows participants how they can become anonymous during the Google Doc discussion if they desire. Teachers participate in discussion about the questions on Slides 8-9. After the online discussion, provide time for teachers to share out about the experience in large group.

If you would like to provide teachers with an article about using Google Docs in the classroom, there is an article link available as an Additional Teacher Resource.

Examples of Helping Students Track Their Learning Progress (10 minutes)

Discuss examples on Slides 12-15. Divide teachers into small groups to reflect on questions on Slide 16.

Reflecting on Grading and Assessment (15 minutes)

If desired and/or appropriate, edit Slides 18-19 to reflect data from your own school about failing grades after a marking period or semester.

Ask teachers to produce and pull up their grade books on student success. Provide teachers with time to complete Student Failure Reflection Handout 7.2, giving them time to calculate their failure rate and reflect on the reasons their students are failing.

Then facilitate Google Docs discussions by department (having added the appropriate links for departmental Google Docs on Slide 23). Each Google document should include the Questions to Ponder on Slide 24.

You may also want to ask teachers to consider grading practices that can result in student failure (late/missed work policies, participation grades, etc.) as well as challenge them to consider why students who refuse to complete assignments are disengaged and unmotivated (and what teachers could do to change that reality).

Individual Teacher Reflection Time (5 minutes)

Facilitator summarizes session briefly and asks teachers to spend a few minutes individually reflecting on the last two questions on the PowerPoint presentation.

Session 8: Engaging Students in Critical Reading Skills (English/Social Studies)

Objectives

Teachers will consider the importance of helping students develop the critical reading skills needed to detect fake news, and leave the session with specific lesson planning ideas for how to teach these skills to their students.

Guiding Questions

- How can we leverage students' natural interests to engage them in building one of the most critical skills in contemporary society: the ability to evaluate information from the media?

At a Glance

This session introduces the importance of teaching students the crucial critical reading skill of how to detect fake news. It gives teachers the opportunity to experience and debrief an activity they could use with their own students around the issue of how to evaluate what they read. Teachers then have the opportunity to browse various materials that could help them in planning future lessons around this issue, and to reflect on next steps.

Materials

Poster paper and markers for each table

Additional paper and pens

Handout 8ESS.1 (Evaluating a News Source - Dearborn)

Handout 8ESS.2 (Evaluating a News Source - Hillary Clinton)

Handout 8ESS.3 (Evaluating a News Source - RuPaul)

Handout 8ESS.4 (Evaluating a News Source - Sharia Law)

Handout 8ESS.5 (Evaluating a News Source - Trump Rally)

Handout 8ESS.6 (Detecting Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.7 (Lesson Plan Sites for Teaching Students About Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.8 (PBS Lesson Plan on Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.9 (Buzzfeed Article on Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.10 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Procedure

Have teachers sit at tables of 4-5 for small group discussion during the session. Organize materials so you have multiple copies of the different "Evaluating a News Source" texts, a different text for each table. (If you have more than 5 tables, some groups will have the same story unless you generate ones in addition to the examples provided.)

Introduction (7 minutes)

Facilitator sets context by introducing guiding question and sub-questions (Slides 2-3), followed by leading participants in short discussion of the Wall Street Journal headline on Slide 4 – "Most Students Don't Know When News Is Fake, Stanford Study Finds" – using questions on Slide 5. Facilitator assures group that this news is not fake (Slides 6-7).

Small Group Discussion Exercise (15-20 minutes)

Emphasize to teachers that this segment is designed to allow them to experience and debrief an activity they can use with their students in their own classrooms. With teachers in groups of 4-5, distribute different news stories to different groups (with all teachers at the same table receiving their own copy of the same story as others have at table). The five stories provided are about:

Dearborn, MI; Hillary Clinton; RuPaul; Sharia law; and a Trump rally

Teachers will play the roles of students divided into small groups to accomplish the following tasks collaboratively:

- Read the "news" story assigned to your group.
- Develop a list of questions you need to find answers to in order to evaluate whether the "news" story is reliable or not.
- List the questions in a logical order on your poster chart.
- Suggest at least one good way to find the answer to each question, and be ready to defend why it is a good approach.

Large Group Share Out of Small Group Work (10 minutes)

Teachers reflect on where students will need scaffolding if they were asked to do the same exercise (Slide 13).

Teachers discuss pros and cons of using a checklist prior to trying it on their own (Slide 14).

Individual or Small Group Time to Browse Available Resources for Helping Students Identify Fake News (15 minutes)

Facilitator challenges teachers to consider how they can fit this into their own curriculum (Slide 15). Share Common Core Standards that could be related (Slide 16). Provide copies for teachers to examine the various resources provided for developing lesson plans around identifying fake news:

List of Lesson Plan Sites with links (list with links can be on available computers/laptops in the room so teachers can easily reach the websites and browse)

Copy of PBS lesson plan on fake news

Copy of Buzzfeed article about fake news

Copy of "Ten Questions for Fake News Detection" from the News Literacy Project

Teacher Reflection (5 minutes)

Session 8: Engaging Students in Critical Reading Skills (Science)

Objectives

Teachers will consider how they can leverage high-interest science news stories to increase student motivation to engage in rigorous science learning.

Guiding Questions

- How might science news stories capture students' natural interests to engage them in learning science content, concepts and practices?

Facilitator Notes

This session requires teachers to have access to the internet, and specifically to http://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org as a source of science news articles. The session is designed around an article on lead levels in school drinking water, but with a little tweaking of the PowerPoint, a different article can be selected from the site if desired.

Materials/Procedure

Handout 8Sci.1 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

Computer and internet access are needed. Session could be set up in computer lab or in classroom at tables for small groups if all teachers have their own laptops.

Introduction (7 minutes)

Facilitator introduces guiding question and previews agenda (Slides 2-3). Set the stage for the activity with brief discussion of the problem of lead in drinking water (Slides 4-5). Introduce Science News for Students website, with teachers using computers to navigate to site. Teachers can get to the "Lead Levels in School Drinking Water" article by searching the website if computers are not pre-loaded with a direct link to the article (use "lead levels in school drinking water" in magnifying glass Search space at upper right of Science News for Students homepage).

Teachers Experience Pair Reading Exercise (15-20 minutes)

Emphasize to teachers that this segment is designed to allow them to experience and debrief an activity they can use with their students in their own classrooms. Teachers group together in pairs (with a group of 3 if necessary, or facilitator can work with teacher who has no partner). Follow directions on Slide 7 for pair reading (teachers will probably want to read silently and then summarize paragraphs in turn).

Large Group Debrief (10 minutes)

Teachers discuss questions on Slide 10 (thoughts about experience, how students might respond to it, how this type of activity might address the curriculum).

Facilitator encourages teachers to reflect on conceptual shifts in the Next Generation Science Standards (Slides 11-12).

Individual or Small Group Time to Browse Science News Website (15 minutes)

Teachers have time to explore the website (https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org) to identify news pieces that could align with upcoming curriculum and to think about what would be needed to use the news articles in their classrooms (Slide 13).

Teacher Reflection (5 minutes)

Teachers have time to reflect using questions on Slide 14 and Handout 8Sci.1.

Session 9: Using Project-Based Learning to Deepen Learning and Engagement

Objectives

Teachers explore using project-based learning as a strategy for deepening engagement and learning.

Guiding Questions

- How can we create experiences for students that are relevant, engaging and more like the real world?

At a Glance

In this session, participants experience a design challenge (Marshmallow Tower Challenge) to understand what part of that type of learning is engaging to students. Then, participants learn more about Project-Based Learning by watching a video, moving on to discuss their own experiences with and thoughts about this type of teaching. Teachers then explore resources for Project-Based Learning and begin to generate their own ideas and plans for adapting the strategy for their classroom.

Facilitator Notes

This session presents a major strategy that many teachers have heard about, perhaps even tried, but many find daunting or difficult. Teachers who have the desire, ability and curricular freedom to pursue exclusive PBL will find this session affirming their thinking of its merits. For others, it is important to emphasize the five keys of PBL – and that it can occur in projects and lessons large and small. Note that parts of this session require A/V equipment and allowing teachers access to internet resources. Encourage teachers to bring laptops, or conduct this session in a computer lab where those resources will be present.

Usage of materials from PBLWorks (such as the video we used in our pilot test and recommend) requires a free registration. Because of PBLWorks's Terms of Use, we were not able to include the actual video clip in this PowerPoint, but provide the link to it on www.pblworks.org which will become available to users after they register. It will take a bit of preparation time to set up a presentation to use that 4 minute video.

Materials

Marshmallow Tower Challenge kit (bags of 20 pieces of uncooked spaghetti, 1 yard of tape, 1 yard of string)

Handout 9.1 (Marshmallow Tower Challenge directions)

Handout 9.2 (The 5 Keys of Project-Based Learning)

Handout 9.3 (Teacher Reflection & Next Steps)

Procedure

Introduction (5 minutes)

Facilitator reminds participants of the overall goals of these professional development sessions: to increase student motivation to complete assignments and take ownership of their learning. Explain that this session will explore one strategy – Problem-Based Learning – as a path to student engagement and deeper learning. Then, instruct participants that they will engage in a design challenge project named the Marshmallow Tower Challenge.

Marshmallow Tower Challenge (20 minutes)

Divide participants into groups of four. Participants have 10 minutes to construct the tallest free-standing structure they can that can support the entire marshmallow at the top of it. Participants are free to use (or not use) any of the materials provided: 20 pieces of uncooked spaghetti, 1 yard of tape, and 1 yard of string.

After congratulating the winning team, explore how and why participants were excited and engaged in this project. What made it engaging, what made it fun? What did the participants learn from this experience, even though there was no specific, explicit instruction? Explore with participants how activities like this could be used in their own classroom – to build team among students, to explore our assumptions or as a way to introduce design thinking.

Project Based Learning Video (10 minutes)

Have participants watch the video on project based learning in this link:
https://my.pblworks.org/resource/video/it_really_actually_changed_my_life

After the video, lead a discussion with participants (as a large group or breaking it into smaller groups of 3-5) around the video. Some thought-provoking questions are provided in the PowerPoint but if they fail to prompt discussion, ask participants about the students in the video: What motivated/inspired them? What did they enjoy about project-based learning? What did educators say about how this changed their praxis?

After reflecting, review the 5 keys to PBL. Many of these keys relate to other topics and sessions previously covered by this series of professional development: sessions around assessment, making authentic learning that connects to the real world, cooperative learning and other ways to structure student collaboration, providing autonomy and choice as a way to make learning student-driven.

Exploration of Resources (15 minutes)

This segment requires access to computers and internet. Have teachers register (free) and explore the resources at https://my.pblworks.org/projects. This includes a project search tool, where teachers can explore a database of various project-based units and lessons already developed, as well as project design rubrics and planners for them to design and craft their own projects.

Reflection & Next Steps (10 minutes)

After they have had time to explore the resources, bring participants back together and review the 5 keys of PBL and the various resources provided and available. Then, provide participants with Handout 9.3 (Teacher Reflection & Next Steps) and have participants consider and craft how they can take the knowledge and resources gained and apply it to their own classroom.

EXTRA SLIDE – If you want teachers to volunteer to share from their practice during the final session, the final slide in the PowerPoint deck can be used/edited.

Session 10: Reflecting on Student Work, Student Progress, and Next Steps for Continuous Improvement

Objectives

Objective #1: Teachers review and reflect upon all the professional development they have received as part of this series.

Objective #2: Teachers consider what next steps they must take to continue improving their craft and begin to formulate a plan.

Guiding Questions

- How do we motivate students to engage in rigorous academic work?

- How can we adapt our classroom instructional practices to tap into students' intrinsic motivation?

- How can we do this as a collaborative community?

At a Glance

In this session, participants review and reflect upon all the content covered by the professional development series to date. Participants then share with each other their own instructional journeys and begin to develop a plan for how to continue to improve their craft.

Facilitator Notes

This session comes at the end of this particular professional development series, but it should feel less like an ending than an intersection where participants are reflecting and crystallizing their new understandings and charting a path forward on how to improve their teaching.

Materials

Chart paper, markers/colored pencils and other materials as needed for teachers to craft their visual display

Handout 10.1 (Reflection Exercise)

Procedure

Introduction (2 minutes)

Thank participants for their active participation in this professional development series and explain that the purpose of this sessions is to review and reflect. Explain that this is not an end, just a link, as we consider both what we have learned and how to move forward and continue to improve.

Review of Previous Sessions (8 minutes)

Briefly remind participants of the journey they undertook as part of this professional development series: the exploration of the components of motivation, as well as the broad topics that the professional development series has covered that relate to those components. Review the topics of the various sessions they participated in, reminding them of particular key points or new understandings.

Reflection Exercise (20 minutes)

Have participants work individually to craft – using chart paper, markers and other materials – a visual representation of their journey this year in teaching and what next steps they should take as they consider how to improve their teaching. Participants should be as specific as possible and focus on what they have done differently (as a result of this professional development series as well as other factors).

Reflection Share Out (20 minutes)

In groups of 4, have participants share their own journey with their group (approximately 5 minutes per participant). After sharing their visual display and what it means, other group members should be encouraged to comment, ask questions or relate experiences to their own journey.

Continuous Improvement & Next Steps (10 minutes)

Bring the participants back together as a full group and describe the process of continuous improvement. Two examples of formulating that process are provided (cycle of inquiry and plan-do-study-act) but feel free to insert a different one that your school or district uses instead. At the end of the session, harkening back to their personal reflections, have participants generate specific next steps they will take to improve their teaching and continuing to grow as educators.