Closing the <u>Achievement</u> Gap:

Improve instruction in the core, or "forget about it"

Don Davis, Superintendent Waterford Unified School District

LEA Session Webcast September 24, 2009

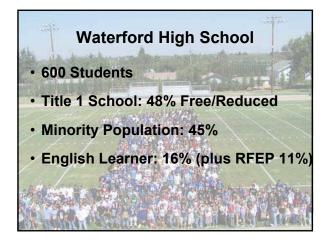
SACRAMENTO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

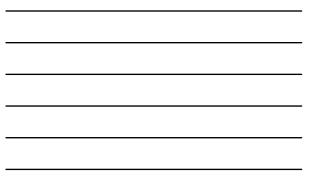


3-Part Presentation

- From 'worst to first": Waterford High School
- Shaping a collaborative culture: Practical steps
- Growing as an instructional leader







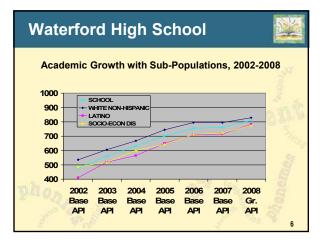
"Bottom of the Barrel"

JOAN BARNETT LEE/THE BEE

Last Updated: February 22, 2003, 05:47:59 AM PST

- Sonoma Elementary School in Modesto got two 10s, a perfect score.
- Waterford High School was at the bottom of the barrel, with a pair of 1s.

And other schools in the region were in between when the state Department of Education released two rankings Thursday that show how California's 8,801 schools stack up on a scale of 1 to 10.



Factors Contributing to Success Don Davis, Superintendent

Educational Program

College Preparatory Scheduling

•One-Year Algebra

Support Intervention Courses

•CAHSEE Prep

•Time: Block Schedule (Optimize effective use of time)

Factors Contributing to Success

Culture

•Mission / Vision / Beliefs / Pillars

Progressive

Professional Community

Instruction

Instructional Norms / Instructional
 Tours / Instructional Development

Data / Observations

- Base API 2002 (475)
- RSSDS SJCOE Visit (1st SWIPS)
- Base API 2003 (562)
- 2nd SWIPS Form
- Base API 2004 (631)

Data / Observations

- WASC Process (Faculty Proclamation "Scores rise as instruction improves")
- Instructional Norms
- Base API 2005 (702): Site Visitation Broadening the Sphere of Influence
- Base API 2006 (755): Instructional coaches

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Data / Observations Continued

- 2007 Growth API (761): "Improve collaboration, improve instruction."
- 2008 Growth API (808): Formalize Peer-to-peer observation and feedback

Critical Academic Areas of Need

- Improved Instruction
- Reading Comprehension
- Performance Gaps

During our WASC Self-Study, we cemented our commitment

Critical Academic Areas of Need

Improved Instruction

Though there has been significant improvement in student performance on state-mandated exams, all population sub-groups continue to have significant numbers of students achieving in performance bands below the "proficient" level. This is true in all academic areas. Efforts have been made to align curriculum with adopted standards, select essential standards for instructional emphasis and create benchmark exams.

To continue to see improved achievement and realize these gains over time, the consensus of the stakeholders is to improve the effective delivery of teacher-directed instruction; this instruction will utilize assessment data to drive lesson development leading to all students producing grade-level work every day.

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What Works Clearinghouse

- Turning around low-performing schools
- Four recommendations
- <u>http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practicegui</u> des/Turnaround pg 04181.pdf

Recommendation #1

Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership

- Communicating a clear purpose
- •Creating high expectations and values
- •Sharing leadership and authority
- Identifying advocates within the staff
- Building consensus

Vision

To become wholly focused on

- ✓ student learning,
- ✓ teacher-directed instruction, and
- ✓ professional collaboration,
- so that Waterford High School serves as a <u>demonstration site</u> for other educational professionals.

Beliefs

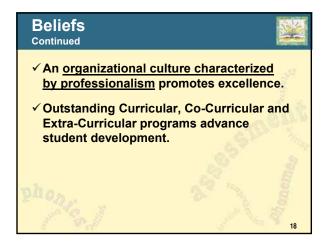
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The mission and vision are achieved by commitment to the following:

✓ High quality <u>teacher-directed instruction</u> raises student achievement.

✓ Academic content standards and assessments offer clear direction for instruction.



Pillars

Pillar 1: Pursuing Excellence

• <u>Improve instruction</u>, programs and operations <u>so that students achieve</u> countywide and statewide excellence in academics (API, AYP, and college admission), athletics, and the arts.

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Pillars Continued

Pillar 2: Personalization

• Ensure that students become wellknown by faculty and staff, and <u>commit to professional peer</u> <u>relationships</u> among teachers, administrators, and classified employees.

Pillars Continued

Pillar 3: Purpose Driven

 The mission is advanced through data-driven decisions, <u>teacher-</u> <u>directed instruction</u>, and a commitment to teaching as a personal calling.

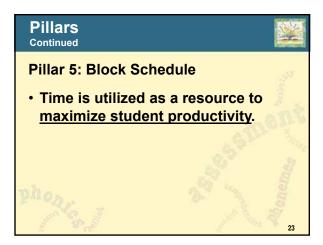
Each student graduates with choices!

Pillars Continued

Pillar 4: Standards-Based Curriculum and Instruction

•The California Content Standards are embraced when seeking and developing curriculum and when preparing well-crafted lessons.

Each student has the opportunity to learn each day!



A Professional Covenant

"The key to successful schooling is building a covenant, comprised of purposes that bonds people together around common themes and that provides them with a sense of what is important, a signal of what is of value."

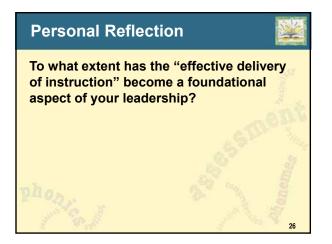
> Sergiovanni (2005) Strengthening the heartbeat: Leading and learning together in schools, p. 8

Fundamental Core Value

- The leader never compromises the core values of the organization.
- Waterford High School fundamental belief: "Student achievement rises as instruction improves."
- "Improve Instruction→Improve Achievement"
- "Improve Collaboration->Improve Instruction"

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Recommendation #2

Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction

Revere data

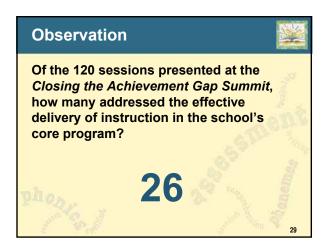
•Professional Development focused on instructional goals

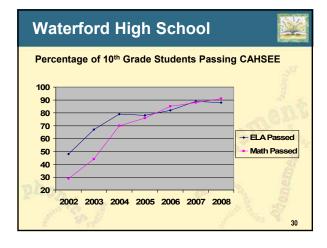
- "Gold Standard" job-embedded PD

•Relentless focus on improving teachers' skills

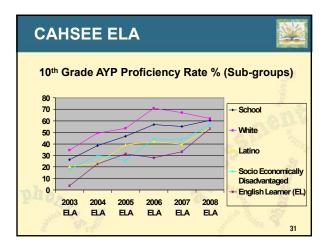


- Continually monitor instructional practice
 - Instructional tours
 - Peer observation
- Monitor student progress

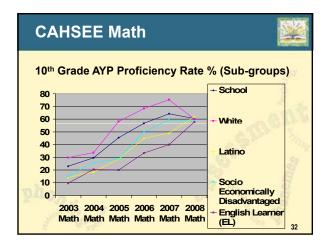




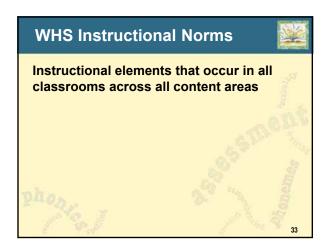












WHS Instructional Norms

- Objective
 - Students know and can articulate the purpose of the lesson; this includes the skill and concept that is being taught.

WHS Instructional Norms

- Teach FIRST then Check for Understanding
 - The practice of teaching before questioning is the norm. Moreover, teachers routinely enhance student engagement by checking for understanding, often mainly utilizing nonvolunteers. Before releasing students to begin independent work, teachers have checked for understanding and are confident that students have grasped the skill and the concept that have been presented.

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WHS Instructional Norms

Student Production

- Students are expected to produce gradelevel work every day in every class. This can be accomplished through guided practice and independent or group work.
- Alignment of Independent Practice
 - Teachers ensure that the independent work that students are expected to complete is directly aligned with the learning objective and with the delivered instruction.



- Concept Development
 Strategic instruction to promote
 - acquisition of the underlying principle or "main idea" of the learning objective

★★ Coming Soon ★★

 Meaningful Interaction

 Student collaboration on a well-defined task designed for a specific purpose

Professional Development

"Schools and School Districts [Principals, Ed. Services Directors, Teachers, and external experts] must provide highquality staff development relative to effective instructional practices identified by the research."

> Marzano et al. (2001) Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement

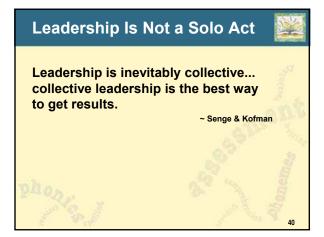
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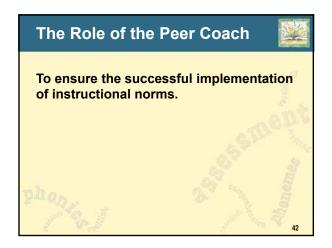
WHS Practices

Everyone goes through "Instructional Boot Camp

- Every faculty meeting is divided into
- Professional Community Time
- Professional Development
- Every teacher participates
- Instructional Tours
 Peer Observation







Peer-Coaching Assistance

- Introductory training at the start of the year for teachers new to the district
- Presentations at Staff Development sessions
- Observations with pre-observation/post
 observation discussion
- Lesson-planning Guidance
- Assistance towards Teacher-Directed Instruction Certification

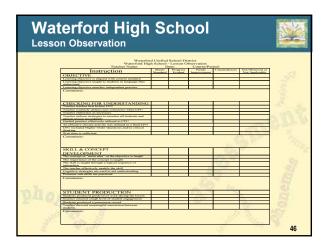
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		Waterford High School Drop-in observation Instructional Norms		
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Instructional Norm		Comm	ictifs .	
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The practice of teachi Moreover, teachers ro checking for understa	T then UNDERSTANDING g byfore questioning is the nerm. tinely enhance student engagement by ding other multiply utilizing non- dents held accountable?		-05 v.04 v.04	
STUDENT P. Stadents are expected every class. This can guided practice and in students engaged, in S	CODUCTION to produce grade level work every day in : to eccomplished through assignments, lependent or group work. Are the ere production?			
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Strategic instruction d underlying principle e Refere the students lo importance of the 'ma			200	
Student collaboration	JL INTERACTION* n a well-defined task designed for a students given opportunity to interact?	1	-27	
The state of the s		INSTRUCTIONAL LIST		Deg.
Objective TAPPLE OFU Re-teaching The above were of	Whiteboards Non-volunteers Elaboration, Explain, E Meaningful Interaction served in your class today. V	Alignment	Permanent Record 	1000
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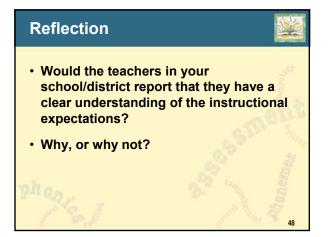
Evaluation

- Collective Bargaining Agreement (How does the language define formative observations?)
- Develop Observation Instrument that reflects the norms (not the Ca. Standards for the Teaching Profession).
- Focus pre and post observation conversation on the delivery of instruction as it relates to the norms.
- Summative evaluations: marry norms w/ CSTPs.





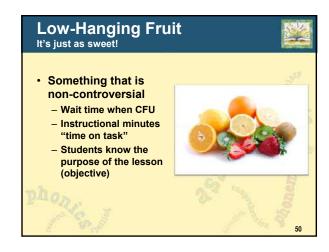
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Recommendation #3

Provide visible improvements early in the turn-around process •Student discipline

- •Effective use of time
- •Improvements to facilities
- •Low-hanging fruit



Recommendation #4

Build a committed staff

•A cohesive staff with high expectations for instruction

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•Focus on improving student performance

Strong professional relationships

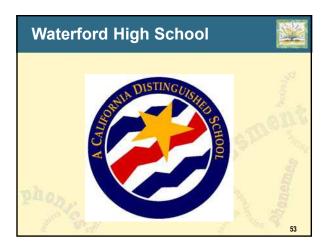
Create new positions

A Cohesive Staff

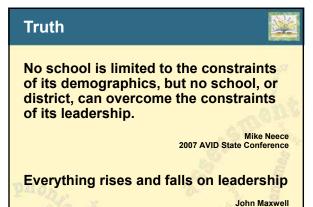
with High Expectations for Instruction

- Professional ladder for instruction
 Instructional Norms: Non-negotiable
 - Professional Certification: RSDSS
 - Developing into an Instructional Coach

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The Impact of Leaders

Principals, for better or worse, set the emotional tone of their school, and one of the most significant responsibilities of the principal is to portray a positive attitude about the ability of the staff to accomplish substantive things.

Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005)

References

Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Green, J., Maynard, R. & Redding, S. (May, 2008). Institute of educational sciences: Turning around chronically low performing schools. *IES Practice guide*. U.S. Department of Education.

- Marzano, R. (2001). Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement.
- Marzano, R, Waters, T. & McNulty, B. (2005). School leadership that works: From research to results. Alexandria, VA: ACSD.
- Sergiovanni, T. (2005). Strengthening the heartbeat: Leading and learning together in schools. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 57

Activity

- Identify 2 instructional norms that you would like to see established at your site.
- What steps or processes do you believe it will take to support the development and implementation of the norms?

Other Ideas for "Norms"

- Objective for each lesson (deconstructed from content standard)
- Daily Oral Language
- Academic Vocabulary Development
- Concept Development ("Big Idea")
- Sentence starters
- Daily warm-up problems in each lesson

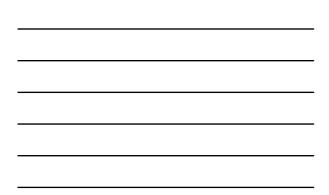
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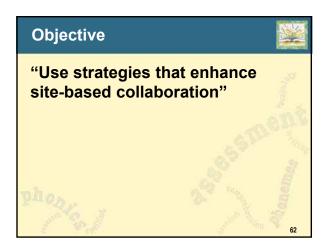
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Other Ideas for "Norms" Continued

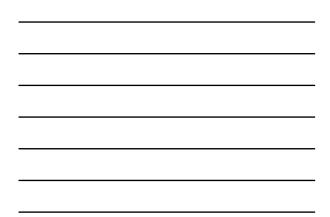
- Periodic Review occurs each day
- "Bell-to-Bell" expectations
- Congruence (matched lessons)
- Non-fiction writing
- Higher Order Questions











Collaboration

- It is likely that each of us has an understanding of, or a picture in our mind of, professional collaboration.
- With a partner, create a list of all the opportunities, or possibilities, for collaboration that exist on your campus.
- Take 5 minutes.

Opportunities

- Data review
- Department, grade-level meetings
- Staff meetings
- Peer observation, pre- and post-
- Principal advisory committee
- One-on-one conversations
- Instructional coaching model
- Instructional tours: walk-through

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Possibilities

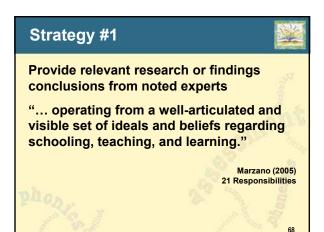
- Developing and evaluating guiding principles
 - Mission / Vision / Beliefs & Values / Goals
- Discussing educational issues and investigating best practices
 - Professional conversations

Possibilities Continued

- Establishing and refining instructional expectations
 - Teachers helping teachers find the "Value Added"
- Analyzing performance and processing data
 - Evaluating program and implementing recommendations

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Strategy #1 Continued

Strategy # 2

- Provide a brief article or excerpt for teachers to read.
- Ask them to answer guiding questions individually, and then to share their answers in a small group.

Practice

- Take 6 minutes to read the article.
- Identify 3 important points from the Schmoker article and be prepared to paraphrase them.
- How are you as a teacher or an instructional leader contributing to improving the effective delivery of instruction in your school?
- Take 10 minutes to share your responses with your group.

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Strategy # 3

Have a consistent process.

- One-half of the staff meeting minutes is devoted to "Professional Community."
- One-half is devoted to "Professional Development."

Combating Deflections

- If you don't address the school's professional culture and identity, someone else will.
- Some will use demographic data to deflect responsibility.

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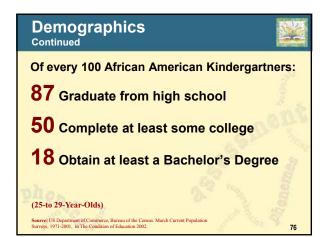
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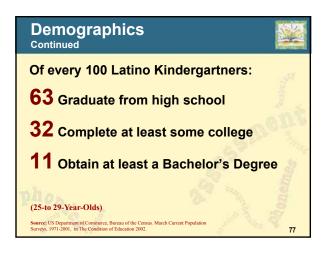
School Identity Each school in California is placed in a "demographic" category (similar schools) Is your school's identity tied to its demographic realities?

Demographics

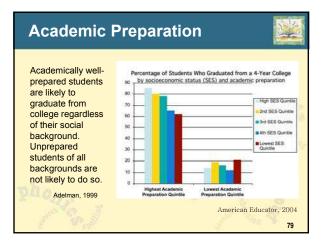
Of every 100 White Kindergartners:

- 93 Graduate from high school
- 65 Complete at least some college
- **33** Obtain at least a Bachelor's Degree



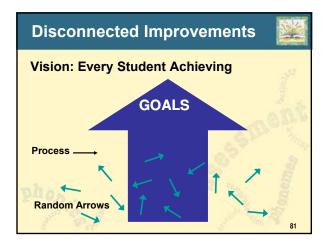


A	berratio	on or Ir	nspiratio	on	X
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	La Quinta HS	57%	91%	840	
	McGarvin MS	57%	89%	870	1. A.
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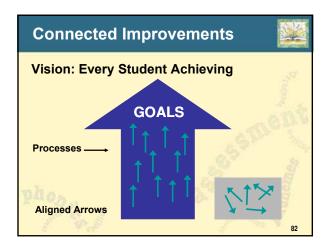




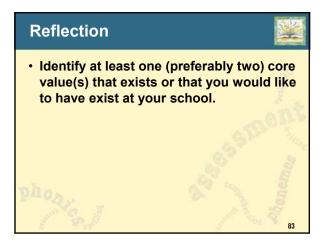
Leadership: Shaping the Culture Image: Constant of the professional culture at your school? • Where does the culture lie on the "extremely toxic to extremely healthy" continuum? Extremely Extremely Extremely Healthy











Examples of Core Values

- · All students can learn
- Students will have opportunity to learn every day
- Professional collaboration promotes instructional excellence
- State content standards and assessments provide clear direction for instruction

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• Time is a valuable resource and must be allocated to maximize learning

Shaping a Collaborative Culture

- Start with the "Big Ideas"
- What are our beliefs:
 - About education
 - About kids
 - About our school
 - About each other as professionals

Shaping a Collaborative Culture

- Collaborate on identity
 - How is our school known? Perceived?
 - What sets our school apart?

Shaping a Collaborative Culture

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- Collaborate on MISSION: What is our purpose?
- Collaborate on VISION: What do we want to become?

Process for a successful outcome

- When conducting a professional community activity have the following steps in mind:
- Define the task: "Today we are going to restate our VISION"
- Create sub-groups: Not by subject or grade level
- Set the expectation for production (KIS)

Principal's Role

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- Participate in a sub-group
- Be the keeper of the notes
- Synthesize the findings (If you don't do anything else, do this!)
- Report back

Principal's Role

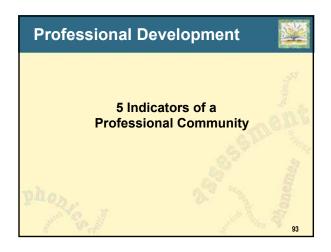
Applications

- This process can be used for:
- Defining a MISSION Statement
- Writing the Single Plan for Student Achievement SMART goals
- Analyzing school wide outcome data
- WASC recommendations and action plans

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- Creating/restructuring programs
- Establishing Instructional Norms





Indicators of PLC

Indicator #1: Data is revered

- Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of schools producing unprecedented gains in student achievement (particularly with students whose backgrounds are not conducive to such gains), is that they rely on data to identify probable successful interventions. (Hopkins & Ainskow, 1993)
- Share: In what ways do you share data?

Indicators of PLC

Indicator #2: Peer Observation

Instructional excellence is achieved when teachers take part in teacher-to-teacher review of instruction. If introduced and administered correctly, it will become a positive factor in the teaching/learning environment of the school. (Mike Schmoker, 1998)

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Indicators of PLC

- Indicator # 3: Professional Conversation about practice
- Teachers share ideas daily regarding vital issues of instruction, curriculum, testing and school operations (Habermann, 2004).
- Reflection: Briefly describe the last professional conversation you had.

Indicators of PLC

- Indicator # 4: Collaboration
- Teachers become involved in partner and team teaching and other collaborative efforts in program development, writing and research (Habermann, 2004).

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Indicators of PLC

- Indicator #5: Rooting for one another's success
- In a professional community teachers are aware one one another's challenges and share in the celebration of their students success.

Strategy #4 Relentless focus • Periodic Review: The next few slides offer examples of keeping the focus before teachers.

Reflection

"High expectations for success will be judged not only by the initial staff beliefs and behaviors, but also by the organization's response when some students do not learn."

Larry Lezotte (1991)

We accept high levels of learning for all students as the fundamental purpose of our school and, therefore, are willing to examine all practices in light of their effect on learning.

Reflection Continued

Share with your group your initial thoughts regarding the two statements you just read. 1)"High expectations" in the first passage seems to be attributed to the professional behavior of faculty and its response to student achievement. How do you view your contribution to the organization's (Waterford High

School faculty) actions when students do not learn? 2)How would you respond to the second statement? Do you agree that as a faculty we are willing to examine the practices that have an effect on student learning? What do you consider to be "practices that effect student learning?"

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Reflection

Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they are focusing on the right things they may end up being powerfully wrong.

Michael Fullan

We make progress when we move from a language of complaint to a language of commitment, from a language of "they" to a language of "we," from focusing on what we can't stand to focusing on what we stand for.

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Reflection

- Taking these two statements together, what characteristics should we be guarding against as we advance our professional culture, and what are some attributes that we should be striving for?
- And what, in your opinion, is the current status of the professional culture of School?

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Reflection Continued

Implementing Higher Order Thinking activities (i.e. questions, essays, student interactions) can improve student learning. Teachers report, however, that is is difficult to infuse higher order questions "on the fly" and therefore H.O.T. activities need to be planned ahead of time.

•Respond to the above statement.

•How have you implemented higher order thinking activities into lessons?

Strategy # 5

Principal's Role

- "Prime the Pump"
- Participate in a sub-group
- · Be the keeper of the notes
- Synthesize the findings (If you don't do anything else, do this!)
- Report back

Final Activity

Choose one of the topics below and discuss with your group. We'll pause for 5 minutes.

•Discuss some topics for professional dialogue that could occur at your site.

•Discuss how you would structure staff meetings to include time for professional community.

•Report to the whole group one topic for professional dialogue, how it would be conducted, and the product that would be produced.

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Learning by Doing

Capacity building...is not just workshops and professional development for all. It is the daily habit of working together, and you can't learn this from a workshop or course. You need to learn it by doing it and having mechanisms for getting better at it on purpose.

Michael Fullan

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