**Using Collective Inquiry to Solve a Problem of Practice**

Purpose: to ensure capacity is built at a school site to identify a problem of practice and implement strategies to solve it.

A Problem of Practice comes out of the instructional rounds literature and is an area that a school identifies is a “problem” within the tight alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment, intervention and professional learning. A Problem of Practice is observable, actionable and connects to continuous school improvement.

**Recommended Action Steps to Identify and Solve a Problem of Practice for Continuous School Improvement:**

**Step 1:** The site administration meets with their School Learning Team, or Guiding Coalition. During this meeting, multiple data points are analyzed and discussion occurs to identify core area(s) or root causes for the data.

**Step 2:** The School Learning Team identifies 1 core area/root cause that, if solved, would have the highest leverage impact on student achievement. The School Learning Team loops out this information with their collaborative teams to ensure the Problem of Practice is on target.

**Step 3:** The School Learning Team charts out possible strategies which may include people, time, resources, organization, and supports that will help solve the Problem of Practice. The School Learning Team loops out this information with their collaborative teams to ensure all ideas are collected and a sense of urgency and focus is schoolwide-vertically and horizontally.

**Step 4:** The School Learning Team chooses those strategies to implement and an action plan of implementation is developed and implemented. Part of this action plan should include data points that will be utilized to analyze impact of the strategies. The School Learning Team is tasked with supporting and monitoring the implementation of the action plan.

**Step 5:** Once the data points are collected after a time of implementation, the School Learning Team analyzes the data and asks if the strategies are having a positive impact on the data. Does the school continue with these strategies? Are new strategies needed? Is a revision needed, a tweak? Does the data still identify the same Problem of Practice? Does the data showcase a different Problem of Practice? Are there celebrations in the data to show the school is on the right track?

**Step 6:** Repeat the above steps to solve the Problem of Practice.

**Some examples of a Problem of Practice:**

* A highly flooded intervention pyramid
* Primary students are not grade level ready for the state assessed grade levels
* A lack of purposeful planning for rigor, pacing, and mastery
* A shift from instruction for only gifted and general education to all students can achieve