

INQUIRY GROUPS

Lincoln High School/The Lincoln Center's
Approach to Teacher Collaboration and
Professional Capital July, 2012





one building—two schools



The Lincoln Center

*Extended-day, College Prep
Academy*

n = 425 Students
n = 22 Teachers



**LINCOLN
HIGH SCHOOL
TACOMA**

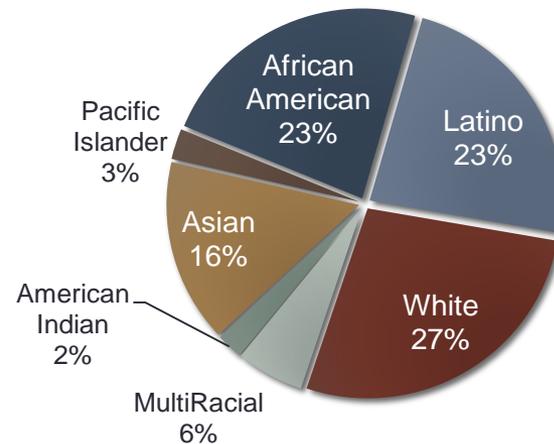
n = 1057 Students
n = 57 Teachers

Lincoln High School/The Lincoln Center



Student Demographics

n = 1482 Students Total



Free or Reduced Lunch	73.2%
Special Education	16.6%



“teaching causes learning”

A 21st Century Culture of Work and Thinking

A 21st Century Culture of Work and Thinking

“If we want to elevate teacher quality in our country, we need to stop treating teachers like Industrial-era workers and start treating them like professionals.”

Deborah Kenney, A Teacher Quality Manifesto, The Wall Street Journal, 09.22.10

A 21st Century Culture of Work and Thinking

“Culture—how people feel at work, how they are treated, and the values exhibited by their colleagues—determines the caliber of people who are attracted to an organization.”

Deborah Kenney, A Teacher Quality Manifesto, The Wall Street Journal, 09.22.10

A 21st Century Culture of Work and Thinking: *Social Capital*

“When a teacher needs information or advice about how to do her job more effectively, she goes to other teachers. She turns far less frequently to the experts and is even less likely to talk to her principal.

A 21st Century Culture of Work and Thinking: *Social Capital*

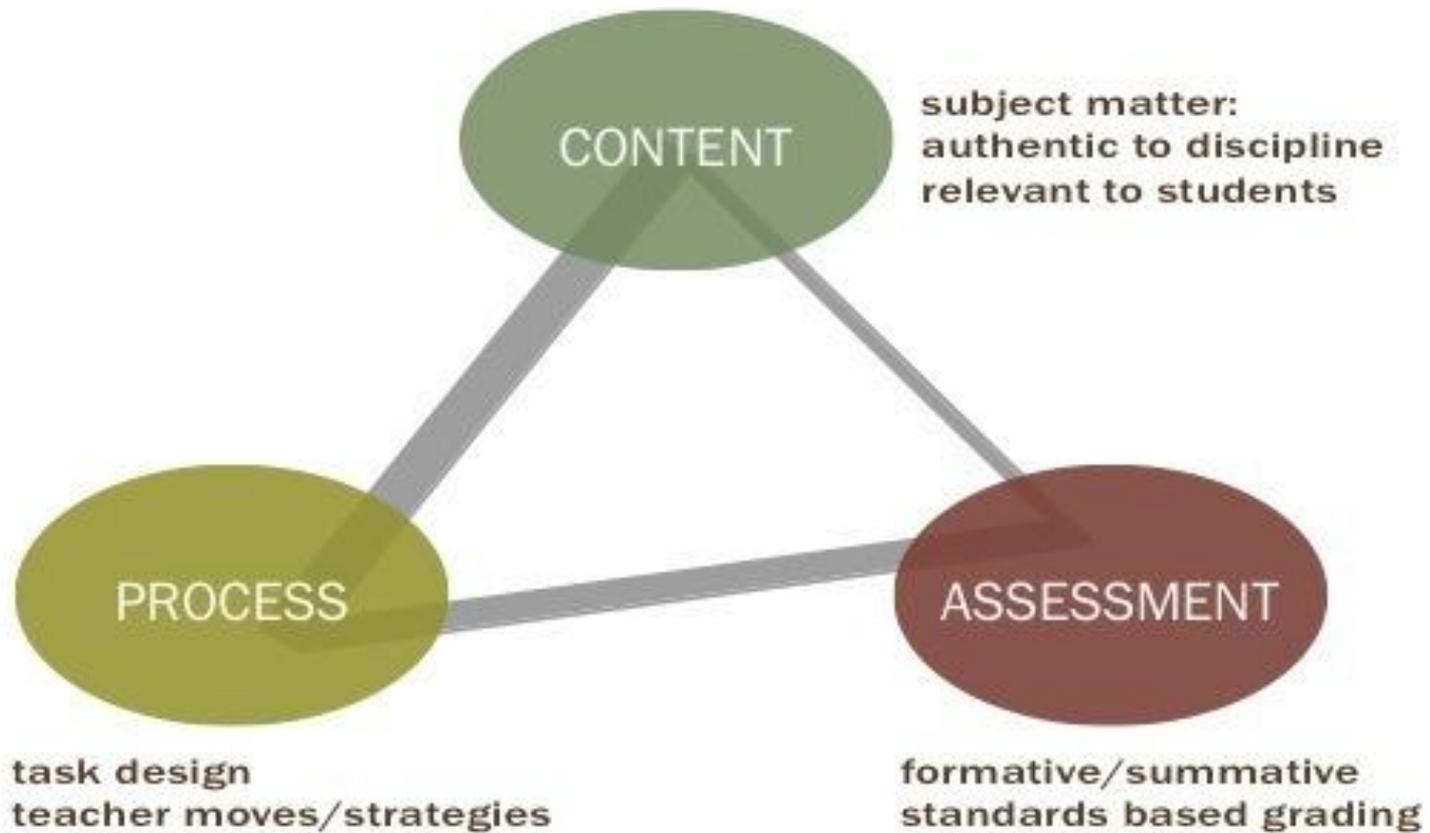
“Further, when the relationships among teachers in a school are characterized by high trust and frequent interaction—that is, when social capital is strong—student achievement soars”

Q: How to implement professional learning that honors social capital and the immediate classroom needs of teachers and supports increased student learning?

starting point: ownership in the process

- Creation of the ***Professional Development Leadership Team (PDLT)*** – a group of Lincoln teachers that give advice on matters of professional learning in the building.
- The PDLT is “empowered to lead an inclusive effort to develop a shared vision for professional learning and planning, and to design and implement professional learning time that is focused on increasing faculty collaboration, designing high-impact curricula, incorporating research-based instructional strategies, and developing personalized interventions.”

the framework



— *the Lincoln Instructional Focus* —

inquiry groups

The Importance of Inquiry

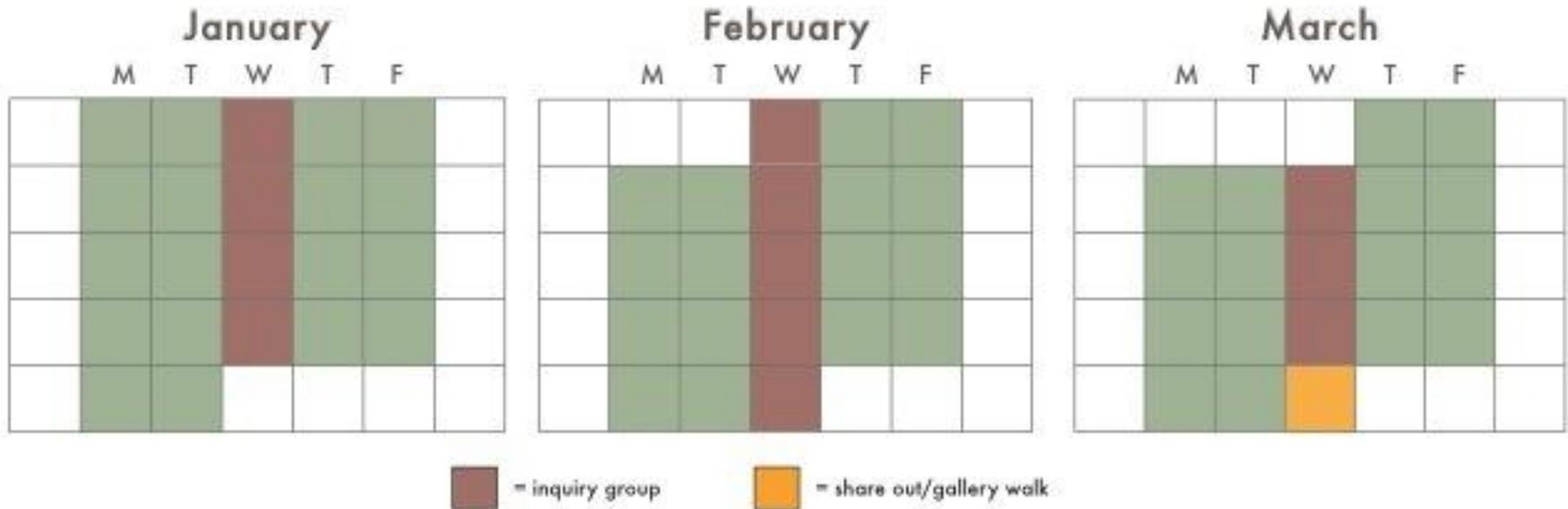
“Inquiring professionals seek out change by reflecting on their practice. They do this by engaging in a cyclical process of posing questions or “wonderings,” collecting data to gain insights into their wonderings, analyzing the data along with reading relevant literature, taking action to make changes in practice based on new understandings developed during inquiry, and sharing findings with others”

The Importance of Inquiry, Continued

“Teacher inquiry differs from traditional professional development for teachers, which has typically focused on the knowledge of an outside “expert” being shared with a group of teachers. This traditional model of professional growth, usually delivered as a part of traditional staff development, may appear an efficient method of disseminating information but often does not result in real and meaningful change in the classroom.”

consistent weekly sessions

1st Hour Every Wednesday Morning:



— *The Quarterly Schedule* —

consistent weekly sessions

Typical schedule for inquiry group activities



The collaborative cycle of inquiry over 10-12 weeks: **Investigation** (reading, research/theory); **Application** (trying ideas out in the classroom); **Reflection with Colleagues** (debrief, analysis of student work artifacts); **Share Out**: make the learning public for colleagues.

Setting Up Groups

- Teachers from PDLT introduce the process
- Inquiry Questions generated by whole faculty
- Inquiry Questions emailed to faculty in advance
- Inquiry Questions posted around a big room (gym, etc.)
- Teachers pick groups – stand by questions

Teacher-Generated Inquiry Questions

- What does an effective rubric look like and how does it support my students in engaging in the work in my classroom? —assessment.
- Why AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination)? Why is AVID effective and what do AVID strategies look like in my classroom? —process/classroom strategies.
- How do I support a culture of thinking and risk-taking in the classroom? —process/classroom strategies.
- The Common Core is coming.. So What? —assessment.
- Work smarter, not harder: How do we handle the paper shuffle of grading efficiently and effectively? (How do our grading practices make us better teachers?) —assessment.

Meeting Sessions



Meeting Sessions



student study hall



sharing out



teacher artifacts



RISK TAKING

CENTRAL IDEAS

TEACHERS:

- Identify risks we want students to take
- Understand what we want our students to do
- Know what the risks look like/sound like

IMPLEMENTED IN THE CLASSROOM

TEACHERS:

- Formative vs Summative assignments
- Assignments to encourage risks (without negatively impacting student grades)
- Could look different for different students
- Activities to encourage students to step out of their comfort zone
- Take risks in teaching (lesson planning)
- Safe classroom environment
- PERSISTENCE!

STUDENTS:

- Move away from "comfort zone"
- Know what it takes to take a risk or what is involved in risk-taking
- Be open and willing to change, grow or adapt

STUDENTS:

- Interactive notebooks
- Asking questions
- Questioning answers
- Being faster what they're looking at
- Building a strong foundation for learning to take risks
- Engage in each class, consistently
- PERSISTENCE!

Looking for Evidence of Impact

Applying a Criteria - From *Harnessing Teacher Knowledge*

Evidence of Impact: Teacher Engagement and Leadership

- Increased teacher participation in collaborative professional planning time
- Number of facilitators trained; number of teachers assuming leadership roles in the school
- Increased receptivity to and support for professional learning groups, school-improvement strategies, and new curricular ideas among the faculty (survey data)

Evidence of Impact: School Culture

- Increased collaboration, work sharing, professional motivation, job satisfaction, enthusiasm for teaching (survey data)
- Increased interdisciplinary work and team teaching
- Increases in peer observation of classrooms, instructional modeling, mentoring, and site visits.

Our Learning So Far....

- Professional/relational trust is critical
- “Letting go” of control of aspects of professional development is key
- Developing Human and Social Capital is a messy process that involves teachers—and leaders—taking risks
- In a process as complicated and human as education it is essential to acknowledge that mistakes are part of the process of learning



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