

College of Alberta School Superintendents
Leading for Learning 2019

*“Instructional Leadership: Job
One for School Administrators!”*

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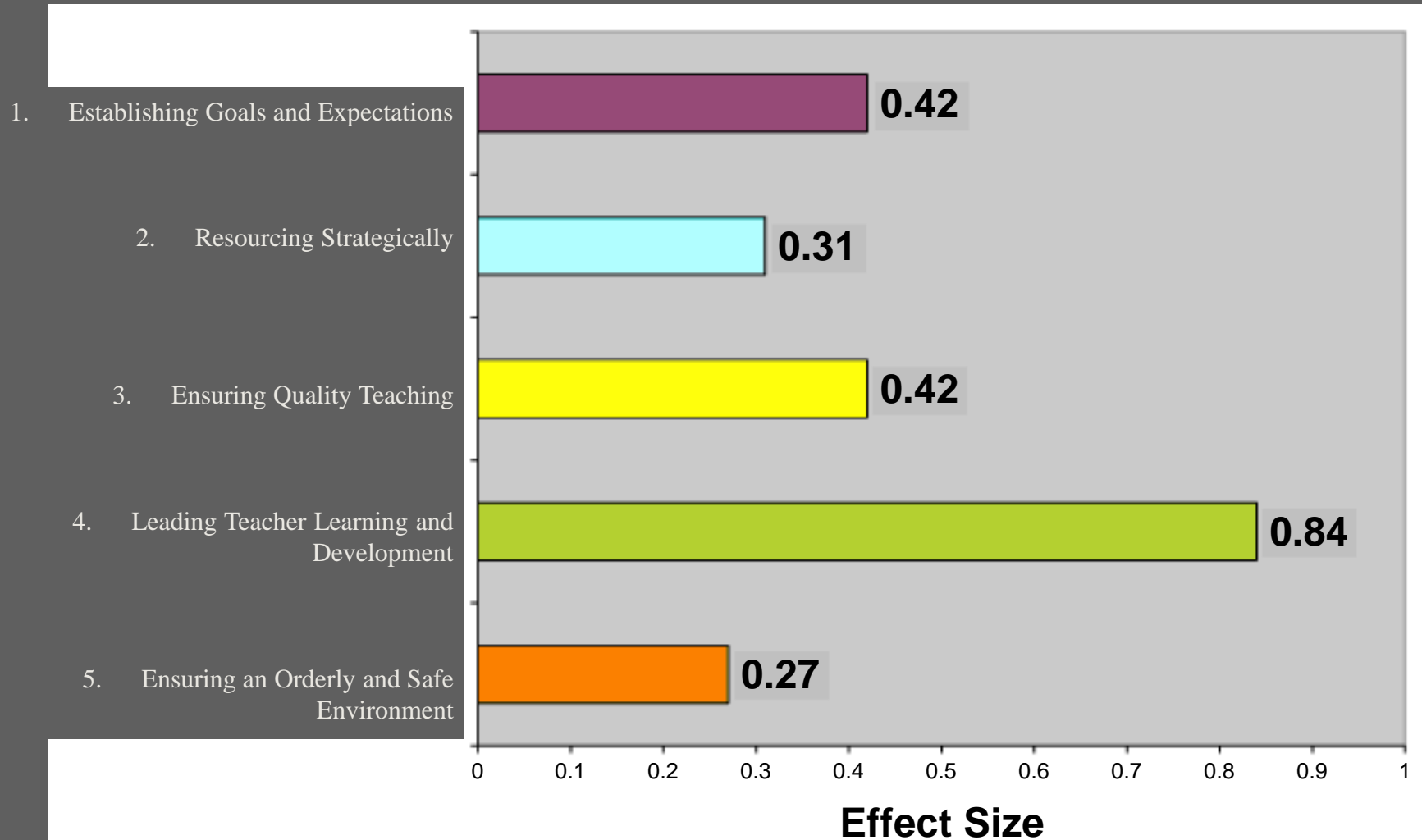
Outcomes: Cause you to think deeply and reflect...

- ⇒ Clear connection between visionary leadership and instructional leadership and their importance.
- ⇒ Overview of change processes.
- ⇒ Introduction to processes to focus on improving teaching in collaboration with teachers.
- ⇒ Practical examination of school culture and strategies to improve it.

New: Leadership Quality Standard - “New” competencies are white. 2012 standards are red/green. Traditional role is green. What does that say about the changing role? Is there an order?

1. **Fostering Effective Relationships**
2. **Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning**
3. **Embodying Visionary Leadership**
4. **Leading a Learning Community**
5. **Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit**
6. **Providing Instructional Leadership**
7. **Developing Leadership Capacity**
8. **Managing School Operations and Resources**
9. **Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context**

Five Dimensions of Student-Centred Leadership – Viviane Robinson (2014)



Three Aspects to Your Role as Leader

- ⇒ Maintaining Business as Usual
- ⇒ Dealing With Crisis and Surprises
- ⇒ Pursuing priority goals – this is the improvement aspect of your role...the one that affects learning both teacher and student.

Caution...

- ⇒ It's not leadership vs. management, it leadership AND management.
- ⇒ For your stakeholders:
 - Leadership with management is a dream.
 - Leadership without management is a nightmare.

Balance

- ⇒ Successful leaders in business - 70/20/10
- ⇒ When we say Instructional Leadership is Job #1, we mean it's the most important, not that it will ALWAYS take the most time...
- ⇒ Why? Because IL makes the biggest difference for student learning!
- ⇒ You need to put IL into your schedule first! If you must, trade time – do not cancel...
 - Think about the message...

Personal Reflection: “Gut inventory”

- ⇒ Many school jurisdictions (will) use this tool... quick overview...
 - Goal 2 – non negotiable...it is the reason for most dismissals... (now it is goal #1!)
- ⇒ From your gut – for your eyes only, complete 1-9 checklist. (5 minutes)
- ⇒ You will be required to revisit it “for real”.
 - Also for real: check your Toolkit...

Visionary Leadership – the why

- Outstanding principals rally the school community (staff, parents, students, etc) around ambitious visions of high performance (i.e. What does a high-performing school look like?)

- ⇒ Visionary thinking provides purpose, meaning, direction, coherence, parameters, targets, possibilities, inspiration, and hope.
- ⇒ You should be able to wear your vision, like glasses, to filter decisions...
 - Is the “hat policy” really worth a 2 hour debate?
- ⇒ “Visionary leadership” is much more than including a couple of goals in your Annual Education Plan!

Remember...

- ⇒ MLK – “I have a dream.” - not a strategic plan.”
- ⇒ The goal is not to be perfect; the goal is to get better... - Sinak

Instructional Leadership – the how.

- ⇒ Seeing and/or building the details in the context of the big picture; hands-on “trench work”.
- ⇒ Making sense of the details!
- ⇒ Living the vision! Requires implementation.
- ⇒ Helping others “connect the dots”.
- ⇒ Think junior high dance... Balcony and dance floor.

Both day-to-day leadership practice and instructional practice must be consistent with the vision

⇒ China...

⇒ Fullan – the “I get it mistake”.

⇒ Strategy: Repeat to remember... Remember to repeat;

Caution – a theme today...

- ⇒ You want simple concepts that inspire complex behaviors, not complex concepts that result in simple behaviors...
- ⇒ Commitment is a complex behavior; compliance is a simple behavior.
- ⇒ Fullan (2016) – simplicity...

Reality

- ⇒ Initiative fatigue is a symptom of a lack of vision. People don't see the big picture....and the connections.
- ⇒ Metaphor – getting healthier.
- ⇒ People won't passionately commit to “Implementing UDL or exemplary assessment”; they will to “Improving learning for ALL.”
- ⇒ Knowing is NOT doing...but it is prerequisite.
- ⇒ Your “doing” processes need to be strong: (collaboration, coaching, learning sprints, etc.) both why and how.

Reality...

- ⇒ High-performing schools are not a “fluke” or random occurrence.
- ⇒ They are the result of a deliberate process that begins with visionary, “big-picture” thinking and leadership.
- ⇒ Equivalent to an architect’s blueprint

Plus – Engaged, Outstanding Instructional Leadership.

- ⇒ You need both the blueprint and the craftsman
- ⇒ Outstanding schools with poor leadership rarely exist.
- ⇒ Neither do chronically under-performing school with outstanding leadership.

Effect of Leadership and Teaching... (Reading) (Marzano, 2008)

Teacher	School	District	Student
P50	P50	P50	P50
P84	P50	P50	P63
P98	P50	P50	P74
P50	P84	P84	P59
P50	P98	P98	P67

Effect of Leadership and Teaching - Math (Marzano, 2008)

Teacher	School	District	Student
P50	P50	P50	P50
P84	P50	P50	P67 (+4)
P98	P50	P50	P76 (+6)
P50	P84	P84	P61 (+2)
P50	P98	P98	P71 (+4)

Conclusion:

- ⇒ There is a **cause-effect relationship between exemplary/expert teaching and excellence in learning**
- ⇒ Robinson (2014), Hattie, etc.
- ⇒ Check your gut. Do you have mediocre teachers who consistently achieve better results than your superstars?

- ⇒ It is difficult to become an exemplary teacher unless one knows what exemplary teaching looks like – i.e. **we become what we aspire towards.**
- ⇒ We must go beyond TQS (minimum standard) and develop a “shared vision of exemplary/expert teaching” in our schools and school systems.
 - Acknowledged in the new standard.

Defining Quality Teaching

- ⇒ Opinion: much disservice has been done to teaching by templates (eg. Madeline Hunter, etc.) that attempt to deconstruct and simplify something that is extremely complex....a one best way approach...the “model” lesson.
- ⇒ We should be focusing on improving teaching...not producing accountability mechanisms and templates.
- ⇒ Simple concepts = complex behaviors.

Fullan (2017)

- ⇒ The leader does not have to be your best pedagogue; he/she, however, **MUST** be and **ENGAGED** pedagogue.
- ⇒ In fact, it may be desirable that they are not your best pedagogue: promotes humility and curiosity.
 - Just another learner.
 - Allows people to be vulnerable...

Marzano: The Art and Science of Teaching.

“On the Spot” - Student Engagement

Teacher/Student Relationships

Adherence to Rules and Procedures

ROUTINES SEGMENTS

Learning Goals and Feedback
Rules and Procedures

CONTENT
SPECIFIC SEGMENTS

Interacting with
New
Knowledge

Practicing and
Deepening

Generating
Testing
Hypotheses

High Expectations

Jim Knight – Instructional Coaching

Table 1.2: Knight's Big Four

Behavior	"Teachers need to create a safe, productive learning community for all students. Coaches can help by guiding teachers to articulate and teach expectations, effectively correct behavior, increase the effectiveness of praise statements, and increase students' opportunities to respond."
Content knowledge	"Teachers need to have a deep understanding of the content they are teaching. . . . Coaches must . . . help teachers translate . . . standards into lesson plans. Coaches can use planning and teaching practices . . . to help teachers unpack standards; plan courses, units, and lessons; and prioritize what content to teach."
Direct instruction	"Instruction is improved when teachers (a) provide an advance organizer; (b) model the thinking involved in whatever processes are being learned; (c) ask a variety of high-level questions; and (d) ensure that students are experiencing engaging, meaningful activities. . . . Many . . . have identified powerful instructional practices that coaches might also share with teachers so that they are better prepared to ensure that students master the content."
Formative assessment	"Teachers . . . need to know whether their students are learning the content and reasoning being taught and whether each student's skills or disposition is being affected by instruction. . . . Coaches can help their teachers form learning teams to become assessment literate."

Source: Knight, 2007, p. 23.

Here's the point.

- ⇒ There are lots of models. You need to pick one that solid and you need to be explicit.
- ⇒ You can't be the only one that understands the model. It's the "I get it" mistake. (Fullan)

⇒ Viviane Robinson: Student Centered Leadership
(2014)

**Quality teaching
maximises the time
that learners are engaged with
and successful
in the learning of important outcomes.**

1. Establishing
Goals
and Expectations

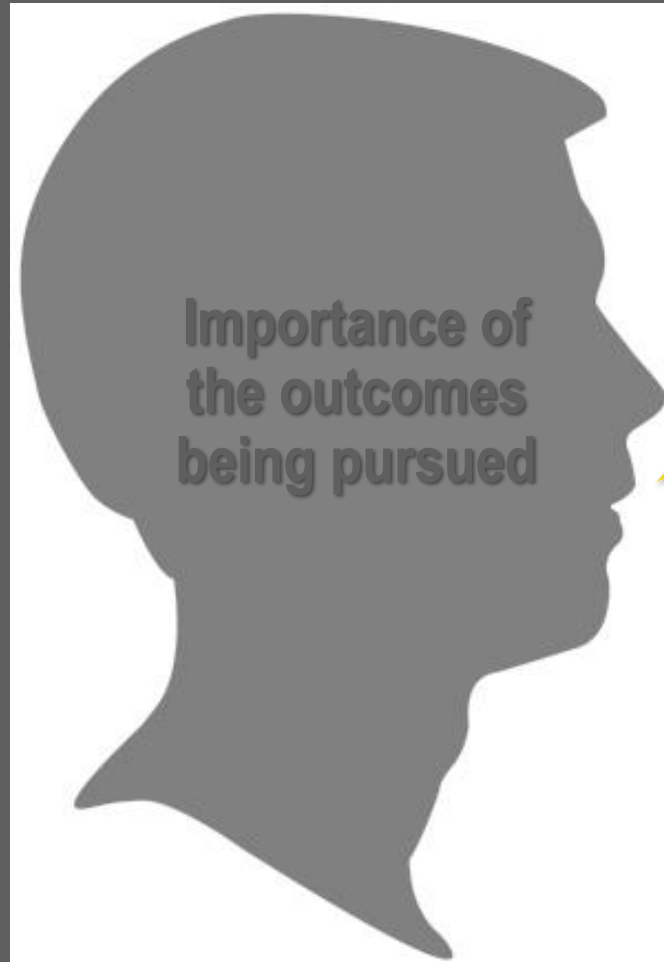
2. Resourcing
Strategically

3. Ensuring
Quality Teaching

4. Leading Teacher
Learning
and Development

5. Ensuring an
Orderly and Safe
Environment

Leaders' Inquiry about the Quality of Teaching



What are the intended learning outcomes for this lesson/unit of work?

Why are they important for these students at this time?

1. Establishing
Goals
and Expectations

2. Resourcing
Strategically

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Leaders' Inquiry about the Quality of Teaching



*How are these
resources/activities/
assessments aligned to
the intended student
outcomes?*

Leaders' Inquiry about the Quality of Teaching

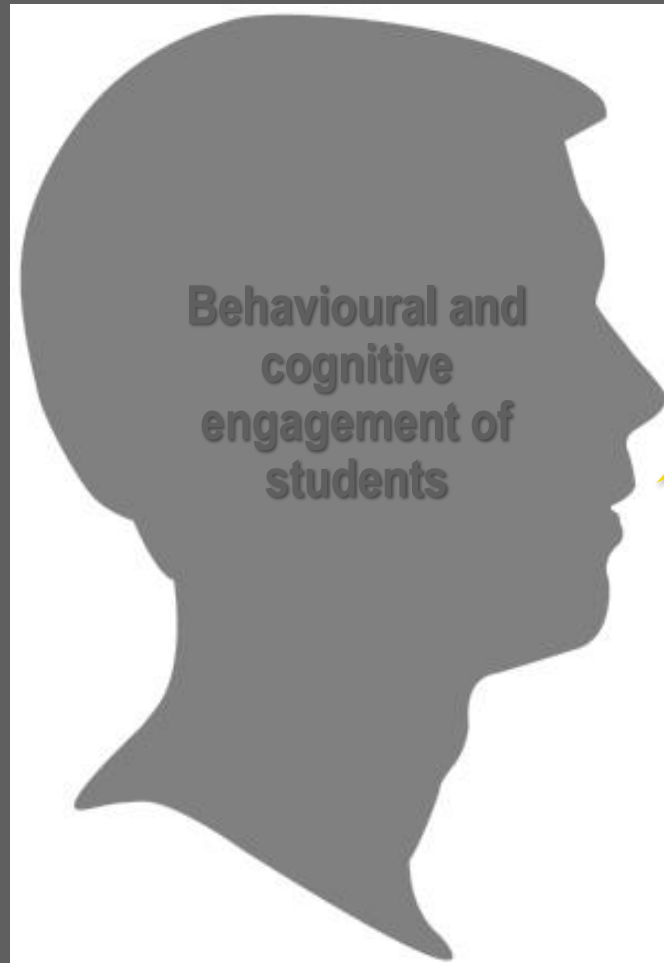
1. Establishing Goals and Expectations

2. Resourcing Strategically

3. Ensuring Quality Teaching

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How well were the students focused on the big ideas in the lesson?

1. Establishing
Goals
and Expectations

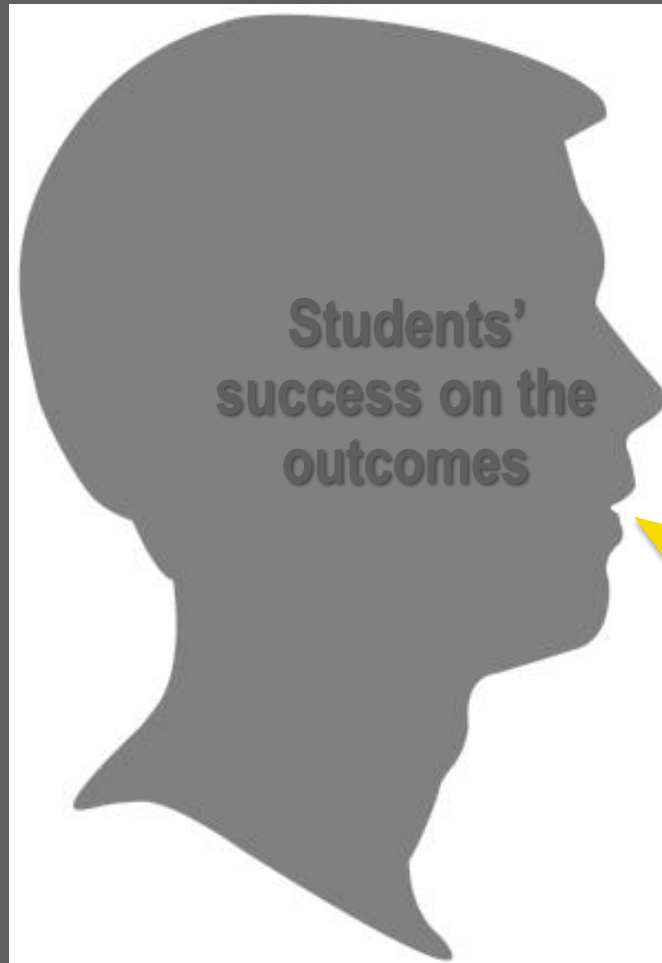
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Leaders' Inquiry about the Quality of Teaching



What do you know about how the students understood the big ideas?

What are the remaining misunderstandings of particular students? How will you address them?

Here's the point.

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So why is this so tough???

⇒ Theme: Concepts are easy – the work is hard...

Consider: small increments in teacher effectiveness can have a positive effect on student achievement.

- If every teacher had a 2%ile points improvement x 10 years...
- = 8%ile average in student achievement over 10 years. (Marzano)

It's equivalent to...

- ⇒ getting better at one or two EFFECTIVE instructional practices....
- ⇒ Improving some unit design...or
- ⇒ Improving assessment...or
- ⇒ Seeking more engagement...

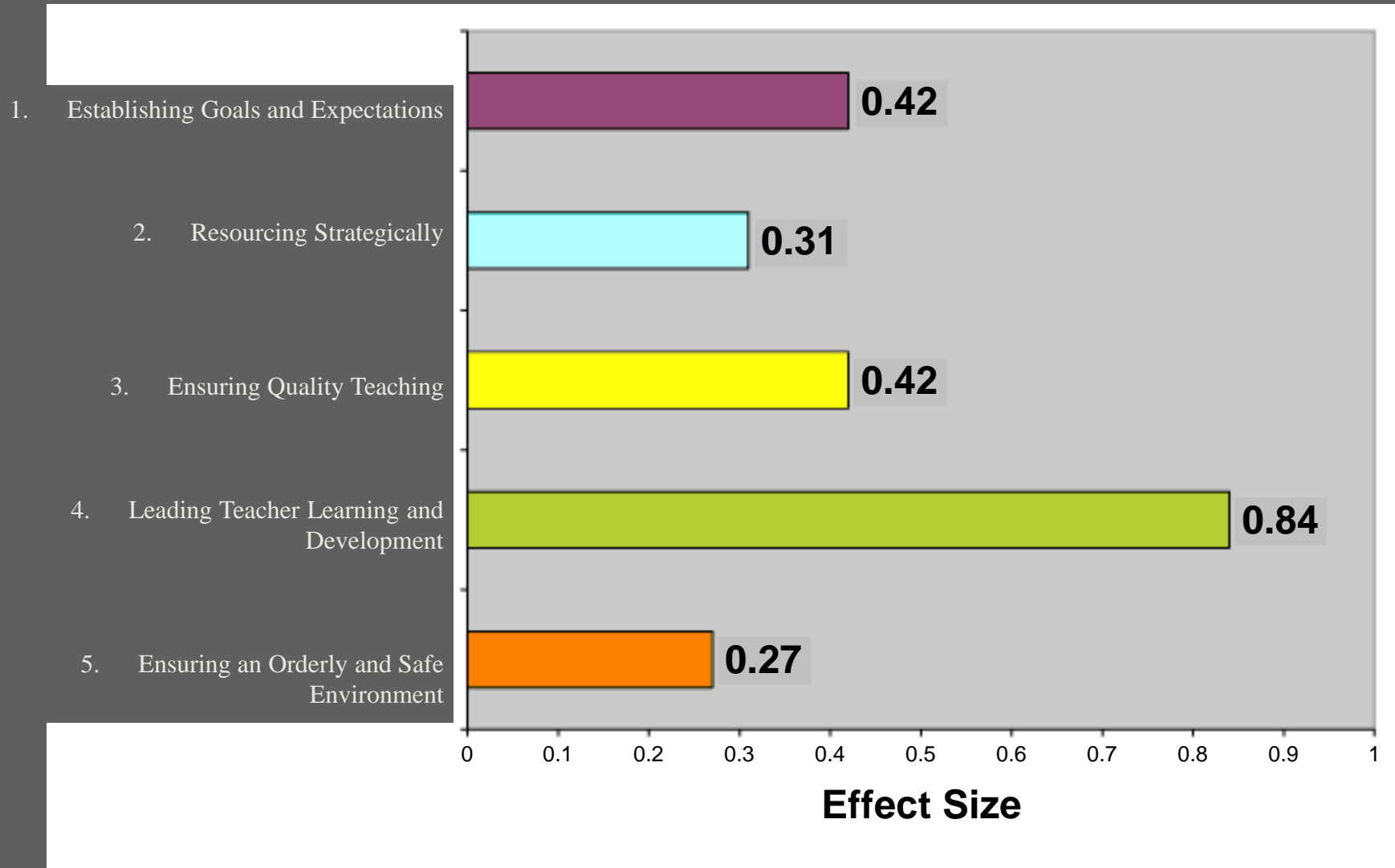
Is this not the purpose of individual PD and TPGP? Is this reasonable?

- Keep it “real” and manageable!!!!
- People get overwhelmed when they think EVERYTHING needs to change IMMEDIATELY... and defensive that EVERYTHING they have done is WRONG!

Breakspear (2016):

- ⇒ 80% of implementation is learning; 20% is policy.
- ⇒ Implications?

Review: Five Dimensions of Student-Centred Leadership – Viviane Robinson





**Collaboration around teaching:
Never Underestimate Your
Teachers – Robyn Jackson**

Philosophy:

- ⇒ Teacher growth is facilitated through conversation not by template
- ⇒ Every teacher can be a master teacher with the right kind of support...
- ⇒ It changes the way you deal with teachers and wouldn't you rather error on the side of support as opposed to neglect.
- ⇒ It's also good modeling about believing that every kid can and must learn.

Why Coaching? (Hattie, 2012, p.64)

Component of Training	Understanding	Skill	Application
Theory	85%	15%	5-10%
Demonstration	85%	18%	5-10%
Practice/Feedback	85%	80%	10-15%
Coaching	90%	90%	80-90%

Biggest issue...

Two things affect student learning the most?

“Our problem is not that we don’t know what to do,
our problem is to get our teachers to do it.”
(Jackson)

Q: So why aren’t they doing it?

A: They either “can’t (skill) or won’t (will)

Conversations

- ⇒ Not done by outline...they are done by relationship....
 - The leader needs to be interested and teachers need know you are interested and interesting...
- ⇒ Does this contradict Viviane? Robert?
- ⇒ Purpose...ensuring quality teaching, leading teacher learning...
- ⇒ Think about how (or if) the placemat fits...

Will and Skill

- ⇒ Will – teachers motivation to do what is best for students, the school community and the profession
- ⇒ Skill – teacher capacity and ability to implement effective instruction – contains both subject (content) and pedagogical knowledge.
 - Content knowledge need not be permanent.
- ⇒ Context can determine both will and skill...Del teaching grade 8 health or kindergarten

Four Types of Teachers - handout

- ⇒ It is fluid....it can change with personal circumstances, assignment, etc.
 - Not permanent prisons...your will and skill are fluid.
- ⇒ You could start the day....
- ⇒ Wherever teachers are, they are...avoid judgment...you have to support accordingly.
 - If a teacher thinks he is high skill and you don't agree, so what?
 - This is simply about you knowing where they are...to support.
 - “Differentiated Feedback” – modeling....

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High Will/High Skill Master Teachers

- ⇒ The teacher everyone wants....
- ⇒ Working hard, kids are achieving, volunteer often
- ⇒ Caution: these teachers are often neglected and the feedback that they get is often not effective. They don't get frustrated with teaching; they get frustrated with inequities in working conditions...
- ⇒ If you take them for granted:
 - Leave the classroom and become admin.
 - ...or if they stay, they become low will/high skill
- ⇒ Don't get enough reflection...aren't looking for a "fix"...engage in the choices, not advice...

High Will/Low Skill

- ⇒ Want to be good, but they are just struggling.
- ⇒ New teachers – classroom management issues or planning, or... working their tails off but not making a difference for kids.
 - Substitute hard work for skill
- ⇒ Issue: if they don't get support, they become low will/low skill....or leave the profession.
- ⇒ They want to be reflective, but they don't know how....they want/need you to tell them what to do...you need to model reflection....

Low Will/Low Skill

- ⇒ Unwilling and unable, not good and don't APPEAR to care.
- ⇒ Often admin tries to "hide" them...difficult to improve; don't know where to start and nothing seems to work. Can't build on success.
- ⇒ Reflection – they don't want to reflect....they want you to go away....and are trying to figure out how to do so...
- ⇒ Best way to help them reflect is work on something specific and start short...and be persistent... "Think about it and I'll get back to you." Sometimes it also better before the observation as opposed to after...

Low Will/High Skill

- ⇒ Teachers who have the ability, but often use it for “evil” ...cause cultural issues. Often fundamentalists who stand in the way of the reform issues.
- ⇒ Problem: they can't be “evaluated out”and they are making a difference for kids, just not the difference that they could make.
- ⇒ Good news is that they likely used to be high will/high skill...and could be again.
- ⇒ Consider: The most toxic teacher in your building could actually be your most effective teacher in your building if properly handled...hmmm....
- Strategy – is to flip the script....help me think this through...getting a way in...enlist their “help” ...

Communication is key. The 3 C's

Think about purpose...

- ⇒ Coaching – Offering **support** and providing **resources**.
 - You have said and I have observed that the students were not focused on the big ideas. Here's what I have seen work with others. Here's what I am going to do to help you. Which of these ideas seem worth a try for you?
 - Severe cases: (Stop/Start – what is the root cause?)
- ⇒ Consulting – **Affirm, question, and/or give input** into plan of action. The plan of action **MUST** remain theirs.
 - Tell me your plan.... about ensuring that all students understand the big ideas...
- ⇒ Collaborating - helping make **connections** to facilitate **clarify** and **reflect**.
 - Robinson's inquiry questions are designed to be collaborative
- ⇒ Key skills – a.) questioning - so you get clarity... b.) silence – he who does the talking grows the dendrites.

Let's look at staff culture.

⇒ Fullan: “Culture always wins...”

⇒ Lezotte: “Culture eats structure for breakfast.”

“Drop Your Tools” Firefighters: People choose death over change!

- ⇒ Level One – people persist when they are given no reasons to change. (Why)
- ⇒ Level Two – people persist when they don't trust the people in charge. (Who)
- ⇒ Level Three – people keep their tools in frightening situations because the alternative is even more frightening. (What)
- ⇒ Level Four – people persist because change may mean admitting failure....(not always just stubborn) (What, Why, Who)
 - Often feel demeaned. That means I have been doing it wrong all of these years.

Getting Beyond the Wall

Five fundamental touchstones for leaders:

Maintain clear focus

Keep both long and short view; Persevere

Repeat clear, consistent messages

Communication during implementation is far more important than communication prior to implementation. – Fullan (2009)

“In the middle of the storm, all eyes turn to the leader.”

Embrace resistance

Counterintuitive response; Understand voice of resistance

Don't expect a lot of compliments early in the process...if you are doing something meaningful, it's supposed to be hard.

Respect those who resist

Listen with interest; Tell the truth.

Is the issue really the issue?

Relax - Stay calm and stay engaged; Know their intentions (TRUST)

Join with the resistance

Begin together – importance of mission, vision and beliefs...

Change the game – smaller chunks, more victories.

Consider strategies, PROCESSES and STRUCTURES that incorporate most (or all) of the touchstones!

Irony

- ⇒ Whitaker - Make your decisions based on what your best people think. Why?
- ⇒ Reality – decisions are often based on placating the loudest opponents.

10 Observables of a Collaborative Culture – (Hewson 2017)

- ⇒ Leadership is distributed
- ⇒ Administration support the work of teachers
- ⇒ Administration know what is happening in classrooms
- ⇒ Teachers empowerment: discussions revolve around “what can we do to support students?”, seeing their role as the primary factor when addressing student success. Teachers are driving the change they want to see for students!

10 Con't

- ⇒ Teachers speak a common vocabulary – staff speak a common language of instruction and response.
- ⇒ Professional development is aimed at teams
- ⇒ Staff eager to share celebrations and struggles: vulnerability shows TRUST.
- ⇒ Looking for potential next steps, not silver bullets: Is the discussion “descriptive” or “deflective”?

10 con't

- ⇒ Risk-taking is evident
- ⇒ Focus on students and learning – perhaps most importantly, it is clear (through the language used and directions proposed) that the focus is on students and learning. These buildings do not exist for the comfort of the adults

Always remember:

- * Think about what your best workers and customers would want.
- * Make sure the outstanding people know they're outstanding. Don't treat everyone the same, as that's very discouraging to high achievers.
- * You're not expected to fix the bad people, but you are expected to control them.
- * If you don't make the difference between right and wrong very clear, your best people start to lose confidence. They will ask why they're trying so hard, when other people get away with doing substandard work but are never reprimanded.
- * Give your good workers the gift of confidence by showing them you are a strong leader who will protect them from crummy peers and reward their efforts.

**Todd
Whitaker:
What Great
Principals
Do
Differently.**

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