The Learning-Focused Schools Model

- Learning-Focused Schools Model is:
  - A School Reform Model designed to assist systems, schools and teachers in using exemplary practices to increase learning and achievement.
  - A Planning Model that provides frameworks and tools for organizing, planning, assessing and designing instruction.
Why Learning-Focused?

- Based on practices proven successful in highly impacted exemplary schools where 90% of ALL students are performing at or above grade level.
Learning-Focused Paradigm:

**WHETHER** students learn something well is more important than **WHEN** they learn it.

Typical School Paradigm:

**WHEN** students learn something is more important than **WHETHER** they learn it well.
Exemplary Practices in High Achievement, High Accountability Districts and Schools

**Organization**
- Multiple Options for Acceleration
- Vertical AND Grade Level Teams
- Large Blocks of Time
- Literacy & Math Blocks

**Assessment**
- Focus = Assessment for Learning
  - Continuous Formative Assessment
  - Benchmark Assessments That Direct Instruction
  - Continuous Use of Rubrics

**Instruction**
- K-12 Reading Comprehension
- K-12 Writing in Content
- Advance Organizers, Scaffolding, Preview
- Differentiated Cognitive Strategies
- Schools With Instructional Coaches

**Curriculum**
- Prioritized Curriculum
- K-12 Benchmarks/Maps
- Student Learning Maps w/ Key Vocabulary

**Planning**
- Priority, Time Allocated
- Data & Results Driven
- Team-Based Planning & Individual
  - Linked to Staff Development

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Levels of Learning

I. Acquisition

- Essential Question
- Linking Prior Knowledge
- Constructing Meaning
- Scaffolding / Preview
- Collaborative Pairs
- Distributed Practice
- Distributed Summarizing
- Graphic Organizers

II. Extending & Refining

- Cause/Effect
- Compare/Contrast
- Classify
- Construct Support
- Analyze Perspectives
- Justification
- Induction
- Deduction
- Error Analysis
- Evaluation
- Abstracting
- Example To Idea
- Idea To Example

III. Authentic, Meaningful Use and Mastery

- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Investigation
- Invention
- Experimental Inquiry

(Adapted From Marzano: ASCD, 1992)
Why Learning-Focused?

- Aligned with current educational research

(This stuff works!)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank of Effectiveness</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
<th>Percentile Gain in Learning With Application</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Extending Thinking</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(compare/contrast; cause/effect; classifying; analogies/metaphors, error analysis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vocabulary In Context</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Advance Organizers</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Representations</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEARNING-FOCUSED SCHOOLS

How do I think about, plan, and deliver instruction so that students can learn it faster and keep it longer?

Acceleration/Previewing
How can I use previewing to accelerate student learning?
- Student Learning maps
- Vocabulary

Acquisition Lessons
How do I plan an acquisition lesson?
- Essential Questions
- Activating Prior Knowledge and Motivational Launch
- Teaching Strategies
  - Collaborative Pairs
  - Distributed Guided Practice
  - Graphic Organizers
  - Mnemonic Devices
- Summarizing

Extending Thinking Lessons
How do I plan for the extending/refining level of learning?
- Essential Questions
- Mini Lesson
- Thinking Skills Activities
  - Compare/Contrast
  - Classifying
  - Constructing Support
  - Analyzing Perspectives
  - Induction
  - Deduction
  - Error Analysis
  - Abstracting
  - Sharing
  - Reviewing for Mastery

Planning Learning Units
How do I “put it all together” to plan a unit?
- Unit Design
- Prioritizing curriculum
- Authentic Assessment
- Rubrics
Learning Units

A topic or theme with a few lessons clustered around it.

Acquisition Lessons

Culminating Activity
* Meaningful Authentic Use
* Performance or Product

Test (If Applicable)

Launch Activities for Unit
* Student Learning Map
* Key Vocabulary
* Activating Prior Knowledge

Extending Thinking Activities
* Thinking Skills
* Writing

Note the unit is built on the Three Levels of Learning
What is Learning-Focused?

- Framework for thinking about, planning, and delivering instruction using exemplary practices with a focus on learning

- Goals:
  - Continuous Improvement
  - Consistent and Pervasive
Keys To Successful Exemplary Practice

- Adapt, Don’t Adopt
  - Thoughtful Implementation
  - Focus On Quality … Not Just Doing It

- Consistent and Pervasive
  - All the Time
  - Everybody

- Accountability
  - Focused (School has only 1-3 Areas Per Year)
  - Data-Based
  - Quality … Quality … Quality
Student Learning Maps for a unit are posted and guide student learning.
Student Learning Maps serve as graphic organizers for learning with major topics, essential questions and vocabulary posted for the unit.
The Essential Question is the focus of each lesson. Students should be able to answer the LEQ at the end of the lesson.
Student work may be displayed on the Student Learning Map.
Students use the Learning Map throughout the unit.
Vocabulary Research

- Vocabulary is best learned if taught with direct instruction as a preview and then re-taught in the context of the lesson.

- Vocabulary is critical to student learning but not as an isolated word list to look up definitions and write sentences.
Teaching **key** vocabulary during the unit is essential. Posting the vocabulary on the Map provides a visual for students during the unit.
Non-verbal representations increase student achievement.
Previewing vocabulary helps students who are below grade level.
Students are responsible for answering the LEQ. The teacher must monitor while students work in pairs to answer the question. Monitoring their discussions allows the teacher to assess the learning.
Thinking Maps (graphic organizers) are chosen to correlate with the learning.
Thinking Maps help students organize their learning in writing as well as in all subject areas.
Think-Pair-Share is very important to learning. The teacher monitors the conversations.
Responding to reading in writing is an effective practice to improve comprehension.
Guided reading is part of the daily routine in kindergarten through grade 4. Literature circles are used also.
Students apply the reading comprehension strategy they are focusing on from the unit in all subject areas.
Monitoring student progress with formative assessments such as Running Records is critical.
Student engagement is very important while the teacher works with a student.
Students are taught to be independent learners through activities such as distributed practice..
Providing students with a wide array of books for independent reading is very important.
Shared reading is a part of Balanced Literacy and is a critical part of daily instruction. Students must be able to see and follow the text.
Teacher modeling is critical.
Students need time to be involved in distributed practice.
Pair/Share: Students talk to each other often as a way of summarizing throughout the lesson.
Distributed Practice:
Students use text to complete the graphic organizer at frequent intervals throughout the lesson.
Student Journal Contains:
- Learning map, charts, list of books read,
- writing, Thinking Maps
The teacher activates the lesson by reviewing previous learning
Charts are displayed so the teacher can model the thinking process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonfiction Convention</th>
<th>Purpose/example</th>
<th>How does it help me as a reader?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cutaway</strong></td>
<td>Shows what the inside of an object looks like.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pig's Sharks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comparison</strong></td>
<td>Compares the size and shape of unknown objects to known things (familiar)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pig's Sharks</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Label</strong></td>
<td>Tells readers the names of objects</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pig's Sharks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Close Up</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graphs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Photographs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Captions</strong></td>
<td>Gives the reader important info about a photo or illustration.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pig's Sharks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diagram</strong></td>
<td>Shows the names of parts of an object and how an object works.</td>
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<td>Pig's Sharks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Glossary</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Index</strong></td>
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</table>
Students record information as the teacher models.
Students record their own thinking. “How does this literacy element help me as a reader and writer?”
Key to Implementing Exemplary Practices Review:

- Adapt, Don’t Adopt
- Focus on Quality
- Consistent and Pervasive: Everybody, All the Time
- Accountability: Focused and Data-Based
References


- Max Thompson
  www.LearningFocused.com