Coaching Journal

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**Coaching Session 1: October 3, 2016**

**Strategies:**

The first session was a one-to-one conversation between Mr. Smith and myself. Coaches might enroll teachers through large-group, small-group, or one-to-one presentations or conversations (Knight, 2007). The Instructional Technology Coordinator sent out and email to principals to offer my coaching services to the teachers. Mr. Morris, the principal at the ninth grade academy, ask me to work with Mr. Smith, a new math teacher. During our conversation, I took the time to explain the opportunities, clarify the partnership perspective and start the scheduling process (Knight, 2007).

At this initial meeting, I discussed my role and explain the purpose of the coaching. This first meeting was an opportunity for me to get to know Mr. Smith and demonstrate a disposition of concern for him as a new teacher. We discussed his background in technology and what technology he has tried and want to try. We decided to focus the coaching on implementing Illuminate. Illuminate is a web-based assessment system our school district recently purchased and that I have received training. Mr. Smith completed the needs assessments after I arrived and brought it to his attention that he had not completed them.

**Skill and Affective Change**

 Mr. Smith was chosen for the coaching session, he did not volunteer. He had a positive attitude about the coaching session, even though he seems to have no clue to why he was chosen.

**Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

 One of the challenges for me, was the fact that I teach kindergarten and he teaches ninth grade math which means we can only meet afterschool. I did not pretend to know the content well, but I did share teaching strategies with him. Another challenge is his lack of teaching experience and knowledge of pedagogy. Mr. Smith has technology background and feels very comfortable with technology. For many years, I have been chosen by my administrators to attend technology training and redelivery to the teachers at the school. I am also the go to person on campus when technology issues arise. I discussed the next steps with Mr. Smith for the next coaching session.

**Coaching Session 2: October 10, 2016**

**Strategies**

 I am following the instructional/peer coaching approach outlined by Knight (2007), by doing a needs assessment, setting goals, creating assessments, self-reflecting and giving feedback. At this next session, I met with Mr. Smith at the end of his last class. I had the opportunity to see him interact with the students. When the students left, we began the session. I planned to show Mr. Smith the program and how to create assessments using Illuminate. I planned to use the I do, we do, you do strategy. I modeled creating assessments using the quick mode method. We created another assessment together. Mr. Smith technology knowledge gave him the confidence needed to use Illuminate. We decided ways the program will be beneficial for him and the students. The partnership approach pieces that were most beneficial to us during this session were that we each had a voice and we were able to have meaningful dialogue (Knight, 2007). I provided specific feedback and discussed the next steps before the third session. Mr. Smith was to create and administer an assessment for us to review.

**Skill and Affective Changes**

 I could tell that Mr. Smith had some knowledge of Illuminate. He had been using assessments created by the academic coach and his co-teacher. At the start of the session, Mr. Smith seems excited to learn how to create his own assessments. Modeling how to create assessments using the quick mode, was a simple and quick lesson. Mr. Smith demonstrated willingness to use the program to guide instruction to improve learning and teaching.

**Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

One of the main challenges of this session was being able to find and link standards for the assessment. In creating the assessment, we discovered that a lot of the standards were not available. We decided to use the standards that were available. Mr. Smith had a very positive attitude about creating and using the assessments.

**Coaching Session 3: October 19, 2016**

**Strategies**

 The next steps were for Mr. Smith to create an assessment in Illuminate. When I arrived for the next session, Mr. Smith had not done anything we discussed previously. I was hoping the partnership approach would be successful. In a partnership, everyone benefits from the success, learning, or experiences of others – all members are rewarded by what one individual contributes (Knight, 2007). I gained knowledge about the content and how to locate the standards using the state website and Illuminate. I wanted him to make some application of the skill and knowledge he attained from the previous session. Mr. Smith created an assessment using the quick mode at the start of the session. After he finished the assessment, I modeled how to create a hybrid assessment. Hybrid assessments are any assessments that have been previously created as a PDF, Doc, or Presentation. I also observed that Mr. Smith had not administered the assessment created from the last session.

**Skill and Affective Change**

 Mr. Smith seemed to understand the steps for creating the assessments but did not take the initiative to create any assessment. I am not seeing any changes in his practices of using Illuminate. I think Mr. Smith is overwhelmed with being a new teacher and doesn’t really see how using Illuminate could benefit him and his students. We discussed ways the program could benefit him and the students. I decided using the data from the assessments to differentiate instruction to better meet the needs of all students. I also, mentioned how having the students actively engaged in their learning could decrease discipline and improve his classroom management. Mr. Smith was able to locate the standards now after we went through the steps during the last session. I was impressed with his ability to find and use the standards.

**Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

 I had to change my attitude about Mr. Smith’s lack of change. I wanted to stop the coaching session at this point. I felt like I was just wasting my time and his. After discussing the next steps for our final session, I started reflecting on how I could better help him and what other coaching tips I could share that are research based. I wanted to continue using the partnership approach so I didn’t discuss his progress with his principal. Mr. Smith was supposed to create an assessment using the hybrid approach and administered it to the students.

**Coaching Session 4: October 24, 2016**

**Strategies**

 I continue using the I do, you do, we do strategy. I modeled how Mr. Smith could use Illuminate to create interactive assessment by linking videos from YouTube or by creating his own videos using Screencast-o-matic. We created a demo screencast on equivalent fractions. Mr. Smith tried creating an assessment before the session, but had so technical issues with retrieving the saved assessment. We reviewed the step for retrieving assessments and duplicating the assessments to make changing and reassess the students. We discussed the next steps for him and I extended my help and coaching if and when he needs it.

**Skill and Affective Changes**

 Mr. Smith seem to get it by the last session. I only wished he could have administered at least one assessment before we completed the coaching sessions. I feel like his co-teacher’s negativity may have rubbed off on him. She expressed her concerns about the students lack of motivation and concerns for behavioral problems. When she was present in the room, we could not communicate without her constantly blurting in. Mr. Smith have the skills to use technology in his class but still lacks the knowledge of how use it effectively to improve teaching and learning.

**Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

 As I reflected on the coaching session as a whole, I realized that Mr. Smith did gain some knowledge about how to use Illuminate. I worried that he would not use the program to drive instruction or to differentiate instruction. Mr. Smith could benefit from more coaching sessions on classroom management and teaching pedagogy. I plan to follow-up on his progress. I enjoyed coaching him and gaining this learning experience of working with teachers outside of my school and grade level. I see the importance in establishing equality as an instructional coach (Knight, 2007). As I continue my new career choice as a coach, I will also continue to refer back to Knight’s suggestions for coaching.

**References**

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction.*  Thousand Oak, CA: Corwin Press.