

ABSTRACT

For this Action Research project, I chose to study the effects of incorporating co-constructed norms, roles, and protocols on the staff meeting effectiveness and productivity at my small, Catholic school, and how they would help our staff de-privatize our teaching practices, with the goal being to develop a more collegial and collaborative school culture. Norms and roles such as “coming prepared to the meeting” and Timekeeper, were developed at the beginning of the school year, then added to the staff meeting agendas mid-way through the year to help remind staff members of them during meeting times. Through the use of surveys, informal interviews, and observations noted in my field journal, I was able to track the change, if any, in our staff over this year. Through this project, I found that there was and is a desire for more structure in our staff meetings; when we implemented a new element to our structure, it made our use of time during the meeting more deliberate and effective; and our staff was not yet ready to move towards de-privatization of practice. Going forward, next steps include reevaluating staff norms annually to ensure they continue to be applicable and effective, moving forward in the process of de-privatizing our teaching practice by building each other up and growing the trust we have for each other, and helping my colleagues grow as learners and becoming more equitable teachers by planning and facilitating staff-wide PD around Culturally Responsive Teaching.

RELEVANCE OF STUDY

The rationale for this project stemmed from discussions with my principal about increasing the effectiveness of our staff meeting time and the need for structure to be more collaborative and collegial. As noted above, in the fall of 2015, there was a 50% turnover of the certified teaching staff, and with all of the same teachers returning for the 2016-17 school year, it became clear that we could move past the development of congenial, friendly relationships, into more progressive, proactive, and collaborative staff relationships that discuss problems of practice and student progress. While this was a grand endeavor to envision, I believed it was completely possible, beginning with reconfiguring the staff meetings and developing co-constructed norms and roles.

FINDINGS

- Finding 1**
RQ #1
- Finding 2**
RQ #1
- Finding 3**
RQ #2

There was and is a desire among staff members for more structure in our staff meetings.

When we implemented a new element to our structure, it made a huge difference in how the meeting was run.

Our staff was not yet ready to move towards de-privatization of practice.

Increasing Collegiality and Effectiveness Among Teachers During Staff Meetings

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METHODS



Surveys

- November 2016, n=8
Analyzed the prior meeting structure before the development of norms and roles, and how effective the staff thought the norms and roles were at that time.
- March 2017, n=4
Analyzed the meeting structure once the norms and roles had been implemented and overall effectivity of them.



Informal Discussions

- Addressed 3 prompts:
1. How do you feel the norms are being utilized in the meetings?
 2. Do you feel that adding some sort of a timekeeping component would be helpful on the agenda?
 3. Do you think there are factors in the meetings that are hindering productivity and effectiveness of our work together?



Entry/Exit Slips

- *Exit Slip: January 6, 2017 (n=5):* Analyzing use of Consultancy Protocol during in-service meetings
- *Exit Slip: January 9, 2017 (n=7):* Analyzing roles in the staff meeting.
- *Entry Slip: February 13, 2017 (n=5):* Analyzing list of co-constructed norms and if they are applicable and effective.



3-2-1 Protocol

- *n=10
- Structured protocol about Barth's "Improving Relationships Within the Schoolhouse" (2006)
- *3 interesting points
- *2 questions
- *1 thing to implement into practice



Artifacts

- Staff Meeting Agendas
- Staff Meeting Notes (taken by a different person each meeting, saved to a shared drive)
- Questionnaires completed during initial creation of the norms.

LIMITATIONS

This project was faced with quite a few limitations, one of which being that the number of participants was very small, as well as our staff facing the loss of a colleague midway through the school year. We also had to deal with the demanding task of working on our Accreditation renewal over this past year, these limitations resulted in a staff that was emotionally and mentally taxed which had an impact on level of participation and engagement in tasks.

NEXT STEPS...

As a staff:

- Reevaluate the norms and roles annually to ensure they are still effective and applicable to our context.

As a teacher leader:

- Assist my principal in planning and facilitating a staff-wide professional development around Culturally Responsive Teaching.
- Help the staff begin working towards de-privatizing their teaching practice through celebrating strengths and building trust among colleagues.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study supported much of the research on the development and use of co-constructed norms and roles during staff meeting times. This study was helpful to myself and the staff in realizing that there was a need for more structure and that there is continual room for growth in how we interact as a staff. As a teacher leader, I hope to help with that growth and in the effort to de-privatize our teaching practices more.

REFERENCES

- Barth, R. (2006). Improving relationships within the schoolhouse. *Educational Leadership*, 63(6), 8-13.



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