What Can We Learn about Our Instructional Program from Examining Our SEC Instructional Practices Data?

After school teams have identified an area of low performance on their state assessments, they will want to find out more information about their instructional program in that content area. The Surveys of Enacted Curriculum provide a great deal of data about what instructional activities and practices teachers report they use in their classrooms, what they believe about teaching and learning, what professional development they have participated in and how prepared they feel they are for teaching. Examining this data may help schools answer a number of key questions including the following:

- In what activities do our teachers engage students?
- How prepared do our teachers feel they are to teach what they are responsible for teaching?
- What and how much professional development have our teachers received?
- What do our teachers believe about teaching and learning?

For this exercise, we will examine three of the ELAR instructional practices surveys.

Instructional Practices Data: Activities in ELAR

In what activities do our teachers engage students in English Language Arts classes?

Use the attached ***Activities in ELAR*** graph for this exercise. Make sure everyone knows how to read the floating bar graph before you begin to interpret and discuss the results. The ***Activities in ELAR*** graph shows the extent to which teachers at this school (Mayfield IS) reported they engaged students in specified ELAR activities (on the left hand side) compared to the extent to which all Virginia teachers who took the survey reported they engaged their students in the same activities (on the right hand side). The colored horizontal bars represent grade level bands of teachers reporting. The brown bars represent teachers of students in all grades; the white bars represent teachers of students in grades 9-12; and the yellow bars represent teachers of students in grades 5-8. The vertical black lines in the middle of the bars represent the average (mean) response of the teachers in that grade level span and the width of the bar represents plus or minus one standard deviation which means that approximately 2/3rds of the responses are shown. The widest bars show more

variability in the teacher responses, whereas the more narrow bars show that teachers reported more similarly. In the rare case that you could only see the vertical black line with no colored bar, that would mean that all teachers in the group responded with the same answer.

Now read the list of ELAR activities on the left hand side of the graph and examine the results. The questions you look to answer will often be based on your analysis of the instructional content analysis or the performance of your students on the state assessments. In this case study, we noticed a misalignment on the critical reasoning topic between what teachers taught and what state standards emphasized.

Discussion Questions

Which of these activities are most consistent with the critical reasoning fine grain topics?

In which activities do 8th grade students spend the most time? How does this relate to what we know about effective practices?

How does the school's responses differ from the state's responses?

How do the responses differ between grade level spans?

In which activities would we like to see our students be more engaged? Why?

What implication does this have for our teaching?

Instructional Practices Data: Classroom Instructional Readiness

How prepared do teachers feel they are to teach the content and students they are expected to teach?

Use the attached ***Classroom Instructional Readiness*** graph for this exercise. Make sure everyone knows how to read the floating bar graph before you begin to interpret and discuss the results. This Classroom ***Instructional Readiness*** graph shows the extent to which teachers at this school (Mayfield IS) reported they felt prepared to do the specified activities (on the left hand side) compared to the extent to which all Virginia teachers who took the survey reported they felt prepared to do the same specified activities (on the right hand side). The colored horizontal bars represent grade level bands of teachers reporting. The brown bars represent teachers of students in all grades; the white bars represent teachers of students in grades 9-12; and the yellow bars represent teachers of students in grades 5-8. The vertical black lines in the middle of the bars represent the average (mean) response of the teachers in that grade level span and the width of the bar represents plus or minus one standard deviation which means that approximately 2/3rds of the responses are shown. The widest bars show more variability in the teacher responses, whereas the more narrow bars show that teachers reported more similarly. In the rare case that you could only see the vertical black line with no colored bar, that would mean that all teachers in the group responded with the same answer.

Now read the list of teaching activities on the left hand side of the graph and examine the results. The questions you look to answer will often be based on your analysis of the instructional content analysis or the performance of your students on the state assessments. In our analysis, we have a special interest in how well prepared teachers felt they were to teach English Language Learners so you may want to focus on those questions.

Discussion Questions

Which questions relate to the teaching of ELL students? How prepared did teachers feel they were to teach ELL students?

In what areas did teachers at this school feel they were least prepared to teach?

How does the school’s responses differ from the state’s responses?

How do the responses differ between grade level spans?

What implications does this information have for professional development?

What implication does this have for our teaching?

Instructional Practices Data: Teacher Opinions and Beliefs

What do teachers believe about the students they teach and the best way to teach?

Use the attached ***Teacher Opinions and Beliefs*** graph for this exercise. Make sure everyone knows how to read the floating bar graph before you begin to interpret and discuss the results. The ***Teacher Opinions and Beliefs*** graph shows the extent to which teachers at this school (Mayfield IS) reported they agreed with a series of statements about teaching and learning (on the left hand side) compared to the extent to which all Virginia teachers who took the survey reported they agreed with the same statements (on the right hand side). The colored horizontal bars represent grade level bands of teachers reporting. The brown bars represent teachers of students in all grades; the white bars represent teachers of students in grades 9-12; and the yellow bars represent teachers of students in grades 5-8. The vertical black lines in the middle of the bars represent the average (mean) response of the teachers in that grade level span and the width of the bar represents plus or minus one standard deviation which means that approximately 2/3rds of the responses are shown. The widest bars show more variability in the teacher responses, whereas the more narrow bars show that teachers reported more similarly. In the rare case that you could only see the vertical black line with no colored bar, that would mean that all teachers in the group responded with the same answer.

Now read the list of statements on the left hand side of the graph and examine the results. The questions you look to answer will often be based on your analysis of the instructional content analysis or the performance of your students on the state assessments. In our analysis, we have a special interest in what teachers believe about teaching English Language Learners so you may want to focus on those questions.

Discussion Questions

Which questions relate to beliefs about teaching ELL students? How did teachers respond to those questions?

How do their responses compare to the state responses?

Do teachers at this school believe that there is good collaboration

between academic and ESL teachers? How does this compare to the state responses?

What implications does this information have for a school?

What implication does this have for our teaching?