SUSD Governing Board Work Study
Instructional Improvement

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First, Best Instruction

Why best, first instruction?
- The effects of best first instruction are well understood – but are not necessarily in place at highest need schools.
- Frequently, practitioners look to interventions as the solution for students that are below proficient or accelerated.
- Best first instruction *and* appropriate, aligned interventions work best to ensure students catch-up and keep-up.

What is best first instruction? (Tier 1 – <u>All kids</u>)
1. Learning target/objective is clear to all; appropriate planning is evident
2. **High engagement -** Class structured to ensure all students have opportunities to respond
                                 Student talking/"doing" predominates
3. **Deeper Learning** - Higher order questioning
4. Frequent checks for understanding
5. Positive, purposeful, safe classroom culture

Rigor

Rigor is… creating an environment in which each student is expected to learn at high levels, supported so he/she can learn at high levels, and demonstrates learning at high levels on challenging and varied assessments. (Blackburn, 2014)

Increasing Rigor: Focus on First Best Instruction, Higher Engagement, and Deeper Learning

Raise level of content

Increase complexity (close reads of texts)

Give appropriate support

Open the focus: open ended questioning (accountable talk), projects, vocab. instruction, choices

Raise expectations: Challenging Curriculum

Instruction: High Level Questioning, Differentiation and Multiple Intelligences

PLC's - Key Questions to Answer

What do we want them to know?
What knowledge, skills, and dispositions must each student acquire as a result of this course, grade level, and/or unit of instruction?

How will we know if our students have learned it?
What evidence will we gather to monitor student learning on a timely basis?

What will we do if they didn't learn it?
How will we provide students with additional time and support in a timely, directive, and systematic way when they experience difficulty in their learning?

What will we do if they already know it?
How will we enrich the learning of students who are already proficient?

SCOTTSDALE UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Components of Classroom Walkthroughs

Typical Look-fors

- Evidence of planning
- Objective being taught
- Student engagement/participation
- Level of rigor/questioning
- Checking for understanding
- Learning environment