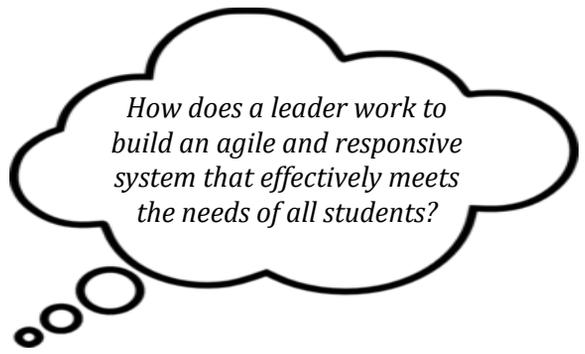


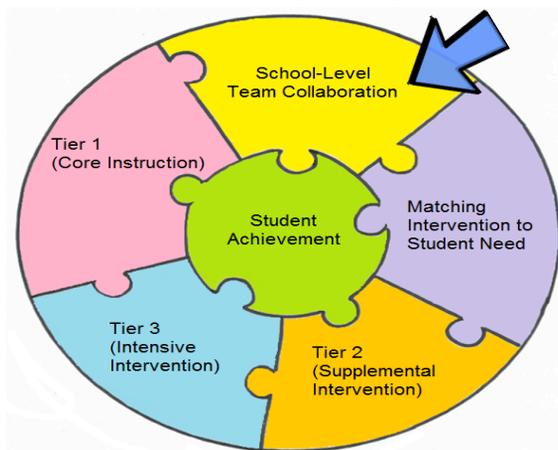
Critical Question #4

What do we do when students are not learning or are reaching mastery before expectation? (Revise)



Fundamental Practice 2. School-level teams, including classroom teachers, specialists, and administrators, collaborate to design individual instructional or intervention strategies for students.

In standards-based schools, interventions are always part of a larger school plan and are implemented as part of a rigorous, continuous teaching/learning cycle. This means that interventions are strategically designed to meet and support various levels or intensity of student needs, whether students are below or above expectation, both within and beyond the classroom. In order to provide systematic interventions in a timely manner, schools must carefully allocate time, materials, and personnel in order to respond to student learning concerns on a regular, “as-needed” basis. This is critical to ensure all students progress toward mastery and achievement gaps do not develop. Highly effective schools have teams of teachers, specialists, and administrators available to routinely collaborate and problem-solve with classroom teachers, help design differentiation strategies or classroom-level interventions, or match student needs with appropriate school-wide interventions.

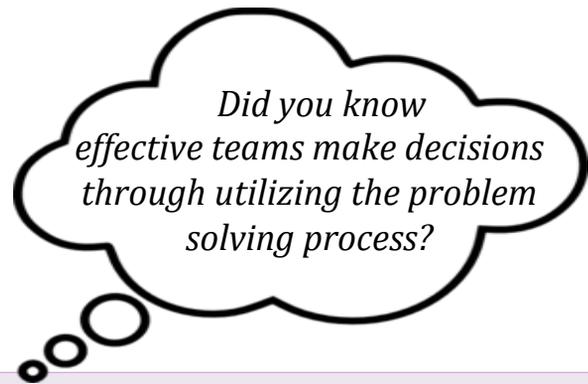


Guiding Questions:

- What collaborative structures are in place to provide support to teachers in designing or accessing interventions for students?
- How can all students access appropriate interventions as soon as they might be indicated?
- How are specialists integrated into the collaborative discussion about interventions and student needs?

Reflections:

1. As a leader, what is my role in ensuring this fundamental practice is taking place in my district and schools?
2. What are current barriers that are getting in the way of successfully implementing this fundamental practice systemically in my district and schools?
3. When I return to my district/school, I will complete the following three action steps to begin enhancing our (my and my staff’s) application of this fundamental practice:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____



LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Richard DuFour (2004) provides effective practices that school leaders and staff have incorporated into their teams' way of work that are based on three principles: *ensure students learn, build a culture of collaboration and coordination, and focus on student results*. Here he shares affirmative examples of how school leaders have incorporated effective models of cooperation among teachers and staff.

For instance, a high school staff in Illinois created a supportive learning community by ensuring *all students are kept well informed of their development* by providing a progress report every three weeks. For struggling students, this information is shared with educators, guidance counselors, faculty advisors, and parents; in order to create a plan for success and guarantee students are afforded the additional support needed through problem solving barriers to learning.

Also, an elementary leadership team in Virginia routinely provides the opportunity for groups of educators to develop collaborative communities during their workday throughout the year. During this time, *they review data, standards and curriculum within groups to discuss students' mastery levels, and develop common formative assessments to continually monitor progress on a consistent basis*. Once assessed, they continue conversations through problem solving to remove obstacles and determine the next steps in the learning process.

Additionally, leadership at an intermediate school in Texas credits their transformation from one of the lowest performing schools to one of the highest to a continuous focus on student results. *Teams of educators work together to review standards, outcomes, and assessments throughout the year. They share results and investigate effective instructional practices to incorporate through problem solving and focus on barriers to learning in order to increase achievement.*
To view article in its entirety: <http://bit.ly/21fAvsW>

5 Keys to Effective Teacher Learning Teams:

(<http://bit.ly/1VE2OBH>)

1. Job-alike teams
2. Published protocols to guide learning
3. Trained peer facilitators
4. Dedication to improve instruction and learning
5. Perseverance for progress

In *Strong Teams, Strong Schools* (2013), Dennis Sparks shares there are many benefits to effective collaborative team structures such as building relationships, increasing teaching and learning, and enhancing leadership within a school. (<http://bit.ly/21fAvsW>)