IDENTIFYING A PROBLEM OF PRACTICE TOOL

Directions: Use the following space to record your idea for a problem of practice to guide the work of your team. After recording an initial idea, review each of the questions below to determine whether your initial idea meets the criteria for an effective problem of practice, then compare notes with your colleagues to develop a consensus. After refining the process, use the space at the end of this template to record your team's final problem of practice.

IDEA FOR PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Questions to Review Problem of Practice

QUESTIONS	MY RESPONSE	GROUP NOTES
Does this problem focus on the interaction among students, the teachers, and course content?		
Is this problem directly observable in the classroom?		
Is this problem within the school or district's control?		
Can this problem be improved in real time?		
Does this problem align with our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and theory of action?		
If acted on, would this problem make a significant difference for student learning?		
Does this problem reflect an area of challenge identified through a Cycle of Inquiry?		

FINAL PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

THEORY OF ACTION TOOL

Directions: Use the following space to record an initial theory of action that describes how your work can contribute to addressing the problem of practice, phrased as an if-then statement. Ensure that your theory of action meets all the criteria outlined in the Theory of Action Checklist below and discuss your theory with team members to receive feedback and additional input. After each cycle of instructional rounds, revisit your theory of action to determine what revisions or refinements you can make based on the evidence you collected through instructional rounds.

INITIAL THEORY OF ACTION

If I…

Then…

Theory of Action Checklist

- ☐ The theory of action begins by explaining how your actions cause positive results in the classroom.
- ☐ The theory is empirically falsifiable; you can disprove all or part of the theory based on evidence of what occurs as a result of your actions.
- ☐ The theory prompts you to further revise the causal relationships you initially identified as you learn more about the effects of your actions.

REVISED THEORY OF ACTION

If I…

Then…

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Directions: After developing a problem of practice and before conducting observations, use the following space to record focus questions aligned to the problem of practice and agreed on by members of your observation team. Use the space provided to record evidence related to each focus question that you collect during the observation. Do not record observations unrelated to the focus questions. Repeat the process for each classroom observed.

Focus Questions

FOCUS QUESTION	EVIDENCE

OBSERVATION AND DEBRIEFING TOOL

Directions: Review the evidence collected during the observation, including your responses to focus questions, and respond to each debrief question below for each classroom observed. Then, use your notes to complete the quadrant tool on the following page to summarize your observations across classrooms. After responding individually, share your responses with the other members of your team to reach consensus.

Observation Questions

QUESTIONS	MY NOTES
What did you see during the observation?	
What patterns do you see in the data?	
How might you group the data?	
If you were a student in this class/school, and you did everything the teacher told you to do, what would you know and be able to do?	
What is the next level of work to improve outcomes with respect to our problem of practice	

Quadrant Tool

PATTERNS	CONTRASTS/OUTLIERS
EVIDENCE IDENTIFIED IN MORE THAN HALF OF CLASSROOMS OBSERVED	**EVIDENCE IDENTIFIED IN FEWER THAN HALF OF CLASSROOMS OBSERVED**
PREDICTIONS	**QUESTIONS**
PREDICTIONS ABOUT WHAT STUDENTS WHO DID EVERYTHING EXPECTED OF THEM WOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO AFTER INSTRUCTION	**QUESTIONS ABOUT OBSERVATIONS TO INFORM REFLECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEXT STEPS**

Adapted from: *Improving Teaching and Learning Through Instructional Rounds* (Harvard Education Letter, 2009), *Creating a Cycle of Continuous Improvement Through Instructional Rounds* (International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 2015), *Cycle of Inquiry* (National School Reform Faculty), *Learning from Instructional Rounds* (Educational Leadership, 2011), *A Closer Look at ABPC's Statewide Instructional Rounds Program* (Alabama Best Practices Center, 2016), *The Ripple Effect of Instructional Rounds* (Alabama Best Practices Center, 2018). *Theories of Action* (Instructional Rounds in Education, 2009).