

# Diagnosing our Team's *Culture of Instructional Inquiry*

*Cycles of Inquiry* is an instructionally focused school improvement process that engages teachers in substantive, school-wide improvement efforts. A *Culture of Instructional Inquiry* is an attribute of school culture and is vital to the success of the *Cycles of Inquiry* process.

## ***Step #1***

Use the guidance below to explore with your team members the current level of instructional inquiry that exists within your team. Use what you learn to identify areas of accomplished practice and areas for growth and further development.

## ***Step #2***

Using the companion document, *Guided Reflection Diagnosing Culture of Instructional Inquiry – Teacher Teams*, highlight or lasso the words or phrases that best describe your team's current performance. Select from the descriptions under the three columns labeled:

- More Robust *Culture of Inquiry*
- Developing *Culture of Inquiry*; *AND*
- Less Robust *Culture of Inquiry*.

## ***Step #3***

Share priorities for your team's development.

## ***Step #4***

Request resources or expertise that you may need from your principal and Instructional Leadership Team to support this development.

## ***For your consideration . . .***

Some schools may look across teams to identify *school-wide* priorities for development in an effort to maximize limited resources.

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## Things to Consider . . .

- Does our team have access to a wide variety of data and information involving teaching and learning?

Check all that apply.

<p><b>Student achievement data sources</b> provide information about student performance and may include summative and formative measures.</p>	<p><b>Instructional Data Sources</b> provide information about adult instructional practice and may include “observational” data or the review of “artifacts” of practice.</p>
<p>_____ <b>Student Achievement Growth AND Attainment Data</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Longitudinal Year-Over-Year Cohort Performance</b> by grade or course.</p> <p>_____ <b>“Student Group” Performance</b> How does “Student Group A” compare to “Student Group B?” How does “Student Group A” compare to the “All Student Group?”</p> <p>_____ <b>“Variance” in Growth</b> (how much, how fast) among different performance tiers such as percentiles.</p> <p>_____ <b>Summative Assessment Data</b> Standardized Tests used for school accountability “ratings” and school quality “comparisons.”</p> <p>_____ <b>Formative Assessment Data</b> Local commercially available or teacher-created interim, or benchmark assessments; written student work products, “performances” performance tasks or “project-based” tasks that provide formative information about student progress in a particular subject <i>AND</i> “inform” daily instruction (example: exit slips.)</p> <p>_____ The team evaluates assessment items or tasks to identify the <b>specific standards, content knowledge, skills, or learning strategies that are less well developed</b> among students and to unmask lingering misconceptions.</p> <p>_____ <b>Other (Please describe).</b></p>	<p><b>Observational Data Sources</b></p> <p>_____ Classroom Environment</p> <p>_____ General interactions with and between students</p> <p>_____ Instructional Practices / Strategies</p> <p><b>Artifact-Based Data Sources</b></p> <p>_____ Curricular Materials</p> <p>_____ Instructional Plans (Lesson, Unit)</p> <p>_____ Instructional Materials</p> <p><b>Qualitative Data Sources</b></p> <p>_____ 5Essentials Survey Data</p> <p>_____ Student / Care-giver interviews, focus groups, or surveys <u>specifically targeting instructional practice.</u></p> <p>_____ <b>Other (Please describe.)</b></p>

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- Does our team engage in “collaborative data use” (example: *team review* of student assessment results) to better understand the ways that prior instruction may have impacted the results?
- Do our team members accept that something in our instructional practice is contributing positively and / or negatively to the student achievement results our school produces?
- Does our team rely on “evidence” (quantitative and qualitative) rather than individual “assumptions” or “speculations” to inform decisions?
- Does our team regularly identify student learning challenges and critically consider prior instructional decisions/actions in relation to those challenges?
- Does our team approach our work as “learners” rather than “experts” with little or nothing to gain from inquiry into our practice?
- Do team members feel “psychologically safe” to express “instructional vulnerability” within our team?
- Is there a high-level of trust present within our team?
- Does our team have regular opportunities to observe one other as a form of professional learning to solicit improvement feedback and motivate critical reflection?
- Does our team consistently engage in “Making Practice Public” routines to share actual experiences / data and information from the classroom that illustrate the instructional challenges we are confronting *AND* solicit advice, guidance, support, critical feedback, or resource sharing from team members?