



A School Transformed: Learning Labs around a Power Standard

**Edgewood High
School Madison, WI
November 7, 2019
ISACS Conference**



SCAN ME

<https://tinyurl.com/TransformLL>



**We are
members of
Edgewood
High's
Instructional
Leadership
Team**

Religious Studies Dept. Chair Jim Baltus

Social Studies Teacher Jody Irland

English Dept. Chair Natalie Koblenksi

Social Studies Dept. Chair Joe La Montagne

Science Teacher Eric Pantano

Science Dept. Chair Bob Shannon

Principal Beth Steffen



The rest of our
Team in
Madison,
Wisconsin
TODAY!

HELLO!

Who are you?!

Inclusion: Sharing our voices with each other

- What is one reason you chose this session?
- What would be helpful for you to take back to your work?



Purpose: to unpack power standard development and a learning lab process in order to reflect and strengthen professional development led by teachers for the sake of deep student learning.

Learning Targets / Assessments

1. I can identify one takeaway I'd like from this session or why I came / Inclusion activity
2. I understand the process of creating and the potential of a power standard/ annotations and clarifying questions
3. I understand how to give meaningful feedback. / annotated text and discussion
4. I understand the process and value of learning labs / mock learning lab participation
5. I can share closing thoughts and feedback / completed exit slips



Full Value Contract → Working Agreements

Respect Humor Active Engagement Show Appreciation Sincerity Empathy Honesty Optimism	Presume Positive Intentions Open-Minded Trust Vision Inclusion Personal Safety
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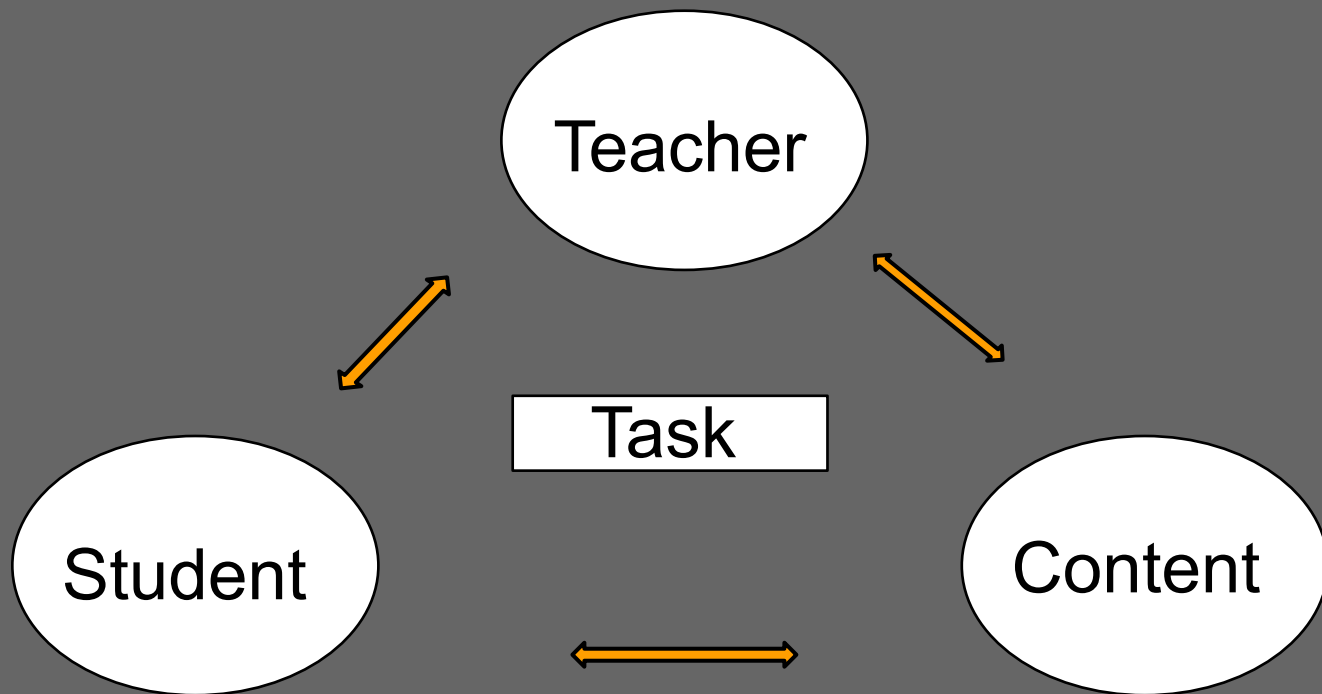
Trust and trust the process
Inclusion
Presume Positive
Intentions
Growth and Learning
Mindset
Respect
Active Engagement



Purposeful collaboration

- **We learn to do the work by doing the work**, not by telling other people to do the work, not by having done the work sometime in the past, and not by hiring experts who can act as proxies for our knowledge about how to do the work.
--Richard Elmore, Harvard University
- **Understanding by Design:** Avoid the Twin Sins of Coverage and Activities *--Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe*

Committed to a Strong Instructional Core



We are doing important work!

A School Transformed: Learning Labs around a Power Standard

A Leadership Team combated low morale from disjointed professional development (PD) by creating and implementing a school-wide power standard. Adult focus on student collaborative learning and complex problem solving ensures aligned, impactful PD. A new Learning Labs process strengthens power-standard implementation as teachers visit each other's classes in cross-disciplinary teams. Faculty feedback reveals energy, gratitude, inspiration, and momentum towards stronger student outcomes and professional growth.



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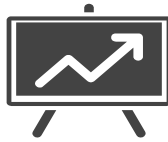


In the classroom, why do we have standards?

- Standards guarantee that widely recognized skills and information orient student learning.
- Standards ensure college and career readiness.
- What skills are taught and learned across classrooms, for students' lives? **NOT content but SKILLS!!**

Keys to a **Power** Standard!

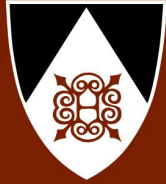
- Exciting and valuable to work on across all content areas
- Complex
- Worth repeated practice in different contexts
- Meaningful for students' lives!
- Not political correctness but **REAL** work, aligned to our commitments to provide high-quality instruction, rooted in our Dominican values.



A Power Standard Driven by Data

- Data: student panel; focus groups; ACT scores; student writing
- UW-Madison, *Educational Leadership*
- Common App Essays: **what does the world want from our grads?**
 - *Some students have a background, identity, interest or talent...*
 - *The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter...*
 - *Reflect on a time you questioned or challenged a belief or idea...*
 - *Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve...*

2018



Edgewood High School Faculty and Staff,
grounded in our mission, are committed to fostering

Justice through *Inclusion* and *Diversity*

**Our educational practices empower students
to elevate the dignity of others by:**

Engaging with people

from diverse perspectives and experiences

Collaborating with others

to analyze complex issues

Holding themselves and others accountable

through speech and actions

Dominican Truth

Education for the present generation depends on crossing cultural, religious, and intellectual borders, and discovering in the process that truth is never complete. Embracing a fuller truth, whether from knowledge that is new or newly found, is possible when inquiry is fostered in an environment that welcomes questions, and offers mutual respect for both persons and traditions. Exercising imagination and taking risks is difficult and may even be threatening.

...Seeking truth within an unfolding and living tradition flourishes when minds and hearts are free to dialogue, willing to risk certainty and give questions a fuller exploration.

<https://www.sinsinawa.org/join-us/resources/Values-SeekingTruth.pdf>

2019



THE EDGEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY,
grounded in our mission, is committed to working for

Truth, Justice, and Equity

By fostering curiosity, our educational practices will inspire us all to:

- **Collaborate** to analyze complex issues, take risks, develop imaginative solutions, and pose new questions
- **Actively Listen** to people from diverse perspectives and experiences to strengthen communication skills
- **Challenge** ourselves and others to speak and act in a manner that upholds all people's dignity

2019 | 2020
Academic Year



Turn And Talk

- Mark the **purple** Power Standard half-sheet:
 - Put a star★ next to something that is **already a focus at your school**
 - Put an exclamation point **!** next to **something that you would like to remember / add to your own standards**
- Turn to an elbow partner and discuss



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Reflective Feedback

- What exactly makes for **meaningful** feedback?
- What are **different types** of feedback?
- How can we **practice giving meaningful feedback** to our students and colleagues?



Feedback Considerations

- The content of feedback and the importance and value of the relationship matter.
- What type of feedback is actually beneficial to our students, our colleagues, and to us? Negative, conciliatory, or reflective?
- **Learning Labs create space for giving and receiving reflective feedback.**



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Learning Labs

“To promote the effective delivery of instruction, counteract a closed-door culture, and extend teacher collaboration. Learning labs are hosted by teachers who are willing to bring a dilemma or focus question to work through with a small group of colleagues.”

Diane Sweeney, Student Centered Coaching at a Secondary Level (106)

Three Steps:

1. Pre-Brief
2. Classroom-Based Observation
3. Debrief



Purpose of Learning Lab

How does this lesson promote the implementation of our Power Standard? Students will be working collaboratively in smaller groups and keeping each other accountable through the steps of the lab and in the cleanup.

Focus Question: How are the pairs functioning, how does the transition into groups go? How are the groups functioning with equal participation by all group members?



Collecting Data in a classroom visit

What is the teacher saying and doing?	What are the students saying/doing?



Noticings are descriptive.

NOT inferential or judgmental or evaluative.



Be a video camera!

- Students loved the discussion about primary colors.
- 18 out of 24 students had the page turned to the right page.
- Most students understood systems of equations.
- A student appeared confused by the demonstration.
- A student was sleeping during class.



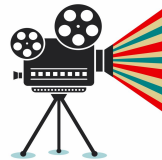


Pre-Brief

Host teachers provides a sneak peek of the lesson via purpose sheet to visiting teaching group.

Learning Lab

Visiting the classroom of our
host teacher.



**Record what you see on your
salmon T-Chart!**



Debrief

Visiting teachers share noticings connected to the focus question with the host teacher.



Think-Pair-Share:

How does the Learning Lab support a culture of feedback centered on student learning?

Diane Sweeney, Student-Centered Coaching



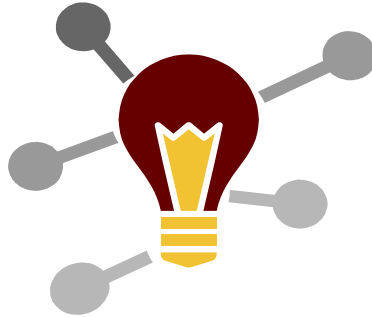
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Learning Labs Around a Power Standard

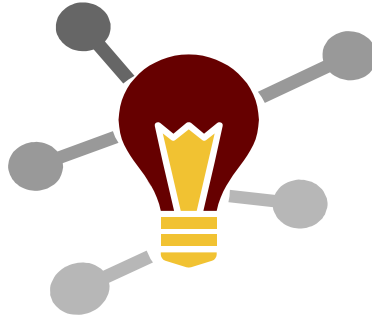
What correlations do you see?



Exit slip on gray sheet

Learning Labs Around a Power Standard

We need your feedback!!
EXIT SLIP, please!



Exit slip on gray sheet



We're part of your team too!

Additional Resources:

- [“The Teens Are Not Alright” - Educational Leadership, May 2019](#)
- [What the World Wants for our Students \(selections\) - On Wisconsin, Spring 2019](#)

Contact us!

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Principal Beth Steffen	beth.steffen@edgewoodhs.org

“Reflective Feedback”

Modified from *Coaching Conversations: Transforming Your School One Conversation at a Time* by Linda Cheliotos and Marceta Reilly (2010)

Feedback is a key contributor to motivation. The need to be valued is a potent emotional force, and positive feedback fills that need. --David Sousa, “Brain-Friendly Learning for Teachers”

Especially in education, we are always being asked to give people feedback. Teachers give students feedback about their class work. Principals give teachers feedback about their instruction and achievement results. Superintendents give principals feedback about the success results in their schools. Many of these feedback comments could be categorized as judgment statements.

- I like the way you....
- You are doing a good job at...
- I would like you to consider...
- Have you ever thought about...?

By learning to give good feedback, you become true partners with your colleagues and build their capacity to be the best educators they can be.

David Perkins (2003) says there is good news and bad news about feedback. “The good news is that feedback is essential for individual, community, and organizational effectiveness and learning. The bad news is that feedback often flops, offering no meaningful exchange of information and driving people apart” (42). He offers some food for thinking about feedback and the possibilities of new responses to long-standing habits. He suggests there are two components to feedback. One is the content of the feedback -- the message or information that you want to share. The other component is the importance and value of the relationship.

According to Perkins, there are three types of feedback.

- The first type is **negative feedback**. This is the type people often use when they have suggestions to recommend for improvement. It is given (and received) as critical feedback. It is a lay-it-on-the-line message with no sugar coating. It can be very painful because it tells people very directly what is wrong. Negative feedback is at its worst when it is sarcastic or follows judgments about a person’s core self: “Here comes Last-Minute Lucy again!” or “That was stupid!” Information given in this way can be alienating. It most often provokes defensiveness and negative attitudes. Receivers of negative feedback begin defending themselves almost immediately. Instead of listening to the desired changes, they formulate rebuttals and spend their time justifying what they are currently doing. The message is delivered, but the feedback falls on deaf ears.
- A second type of feedback is called **conciliatory feedback**. This kind of feedback is positive but vague. It avoids conflict and criticizing in order to appear supportive. It comes from the belief that negative feedback will be rejected and the relationship with the other person will be harmed. Examples include “you are such a great teacher” or “the kids were so engaged.” Conciliatory feedback is read by receivers as pleasant, encouraging, and nonthreatening. But it is not feedback at all. As Perkins says, “It is encouragement and conflict avoidance in the guise of feedback.” The speaker is choosing relationship over message in the belief that maintaining the relationship is more important than delivering the message. Over time receivers may learn that the feedback is empty and begin to read the feedback as superficial or evasive.
- The third type of feedback is called **communicative feedback**. In Perkins’s words this type of feedback clarifies the idea or behavior under consideration, communicates positive features worth preserving and builds upon them, and poses concerns and/or suggestions towards

improvement.” It may take more time than the other two types of feedback and certainly requires more thought and effort. However, communicative feedback has the most impact on those who receive it.

Perkins suggests a frame for offering communicative feedback. He suggests we offer feedback through the lens of three steps:

1. Clarifying questions for understanding
 - a. “How do you see this different from...?”
 - b. “How did your students respond to the process?”
 - c. Of your resources you used, which ones would provide the most help to move forward?”
 - d. “When you checked alignment with the state tests, what did you find as strengths or gaps?”
 - e. “What are you thinking will be a barrier for parents?”
2. Express the *value* potential specifically
 - a. The strength of the idea is...”
 - b. “I see evidence of...”
 - c. “It provides high engagement for students by...”
 - d. “This could offer value to students by...”
 - e. “The scaffolding of your design will help others understand...”
3. Offer reflective questions or possibilities:
 - a. “What are you considering in regard to...?”
 - b. “I wonder what would happen if...”
 - c. “I’m wondering if you noticed and gaps in student understanding.”
 - d. “What other considerations are you thinking about?”
 - e. “What connections have you made to...(other subjects, real world, state testing)?”

Communicative feedback is specific and builds on people’s strengths. It assumes positive intent. It changes the conversation from the speaker doing all the talking and thinking to a true dialogue between two people. For this reason we call it **reflective feedback** because it reduces potential for defensiveness and engages the other person in deep reflection and possibility thinking. When done well, the person giving the feedback speaks less than the person to whom the conversation is addressed. The purpose is to bring forward the thinking of the teacher, to help him better understand his own practices, and become able to intentionally use new practices more strategically.

Purpose: to read about Learning Labs in order to set up a Learning Lab process that supports a school's faculty and staff to reflect on teaching practices in service of students' deeper learning.

Learning Labs (Excerpted from Diane Sweeney's *Student-Centered Coaching at the Secondary Level*)

Learning Labs create a framework that allows teachers to get into each other's classroom for facilitated observations. (104)

Learning Labs -- the Process (105)

- Prebrief
- Classroom-based Observation
- Debrief

Learning Labs...promote the effective delivery of instruction, counteract a closed-door culture, and extend teacher collaboration. Learning labs are hosted by teachers who are willing to bring a dilemma or focus question to work through with a small group of colleagues. (106)

Creating a Focus Question:

Modified from page 107

- What have you been trying lately to improve student learning?
- What is a teaching technique or tool that you are using and would like feedback on?
- What questions do you have regarding your students learning?
- Fill in the blank: In what ways will my students...?

Student-Centered Learning Labs focus on student learning and instruction. Observation is framed around teaching and learning, focused on learning targets based on the teacher's expectations and the standards. (109)

Keys to Implementing Learning Lab:

1. Identify teacher leaders to host Learning Labs around school-wide, focused work.
 - a. What is your instructional priority as a school?
 - b. What data are you trying to improve?
 - c. What standards or common assessments are you prioritizing?
2. Develop skilled facilitation.
 - a. Determine whom the visitors will be and what needs to happen to free them up to visit the host teacher's class. Are the visitors on the same PLC? Teaching the same grade level? New teachers to the school who will benefit from learning with and from a reflective practitioner?
 - b. A facilitator in each Learning Lab goes over the process and supports the host to share his/her rationale, connected to school-wide work, for the Learning Targets of the lesson and the Focus question.
 - c. A T-chart (or consistently used form for note-taking) supports the visitors to collect non-judgmental, descriptive noticings.
 - d. A process to debrief whereby noticings are shared and reflective feedback is offered and a closing reflection occurs wherein all participants reflect on takeaways for their own practice
 - e. A thank you note from visitors to the host teacher
 - f. Ways to reflect within teams or within the school about what's being learned through Learning Labs to inform the school's prioritized work.



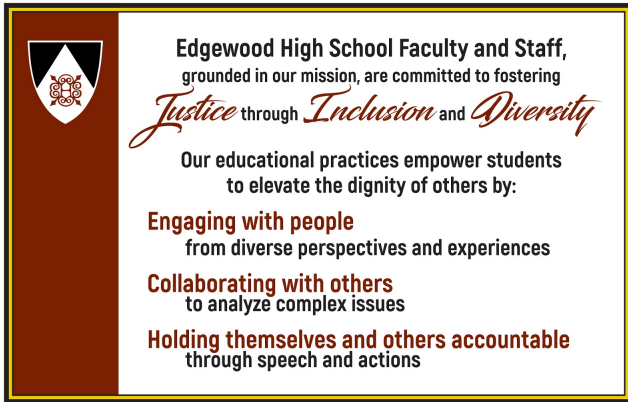
Name:

Date:

Keeping in mind Edgewood's Power Standard and Focus Question, please take notes below:

What is the teacher doing?

What are the students doing?



Learning Lab Instructional Purpose Sheet

Host: Bob Shannon

Date: 9/5/2018

Guests: Monica Ladell, Eric Pantano, Beth Steffen

Class name and mod: AP Environmental Science (APES)
Mod 4

Context of class: There are 16 students in the class. Most are juniors, but there are ~3 seniors. The students are a fairly homogeneous group of motivated students who express a desire to learn-- I often say, "Don't focus on the AP, focus on the ES." We'll be doing a serial dilution lab on the 5th.

Given Edgewood High School's Power Standard, committed to fostering Justice through Inclusion and Diversity in our instructional practices, please share the purpose, learning targets and a focus question to support your visitors to learn with and from you and your students.

Purpose: to perform a serial dilution lab in order to learn about the Tyndall effect and to understand how light reflects through substances and to connect the Tyndall effect to pollution concepts.

Learning Target 1 (What will students know and be able to do) / I can follow the process to complete the serial dilution lab.

Assessment 1 (How will you know they've achieved the learning targets?) Completed Lab and data table

Learning Target 2 (What will students know and be able to do) / I can perform the Tyndall effect test.

Assessment 2 (How will you know they've achieved the learning targets?) Recorded data

Learning Target 3 (What will students know and be able to do) / I can interpret a different solution's Tyndall effect

Assessment 3 (How will you know they've achieved the learning targets?)
Recorded data and completed analysis questions

How does this lesson promote the implementation of our Power Standard?

Students will be working collaboratively in smaller groups and keeping each other accountable through the steps of the lab and in the cleanup.

Focus Question: How are the pairs functioning, how does the transition into groups go? How are the groups functioning with equal participation by all group members?