Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

Protocol Matching Activity

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This activity is designed to help you match a protocol to a particular presenter's concerns and the work that they want to share.

There is no single right answer to any of these scenarios presented below. Arguments can be made to use different protocols for the same piece of work, depending on the presenter's particular need or concern. However, there are protocols that clearly don't fit a particular scenario. Eliminate those protocols first, then choose what might be appropriate for the work and the question(s) the presenter has.

Collaborative Assessment Conference
Consultancy
Tuning Protocol
Issaquah Protocol
ATLAS Protocol
Charrette
Describing Students' Work

To do this activity, it will be necessary to have these protocols easily accessible as well as the chart that summarizes them. Of course, dozens of other protocols exist, any one of which might (or might not) be appropriate for any of the situations below. (See, especially, The Power of Protocols by McDonald, et al., 2003.)

Steps in the Activity

1. Scan the protocols.
2. Read the scenarios and jot down your first thoughts about which protocols might be useful to the presenter and which ones clearly are not. (Writing on sticky notes may make it easier to compare notes with other participants in the next step.)
3. Move into groups of 3 or 4 and compare notes. Go through one scenario at a time, taking notes on your points of agreement and difference. Go back to the protocols the group chose and re-read them carefully.
4. Talk again about which 1 or 2 protocols might work, and how you would go about picking one. Remember, in the protocol, you don't have to look at all of the work the presnter has.
5. Note what questions you might need to ask the presenter to be sure that this is the best choice of protocol.

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Scenario 1
By March, Karla, who teaches elementary school, doesn't know what to do about Hannah, a 2nd grader whom she also had as a 1st grader. Hannah has some language-related problems, including a speech articulation difficulty. Her writing is not close to being at grade level, yet informal reading assessments suggest that she is reading above grade level. Getting Hannah to write even a few sentences is like pulling teeth. Karla has exhausted her repertoire with Hannah and wants some guidance on what to do next. She has brought several pieces of Hannah's written work and some comparative pieces from other students in the class. She is willing to work with any or all of the student work she has brought to answer her question about how to help Hannah improve her writing skills.

Scenario 2
Bruce teaches 8th grade science. He has developed an Earth science curriculum that focuses on inquiry projects, labs, and cooperative learning. This year he has in his class 3 students, all of whom have behavior problems, ranging from inappropriate interpersonal behavior to some more severe behavior disorders. These students have an aide assigned to them full-time, but she can't manage adequately unless the class is doing very structured work — teacher-led questions and answers, or silent work at their desks. When small groups are working collaboratively, or when individuals are moving around the room to work on labs or projects, these 3 students often become vocally disruptive. Bruce does not want to dismantle a curriculum that serves the rest of the class well, but he doesn't know what to do. He has brought several pieces of these students' work and also a couple of projects that small groups have done, which he thinks demonstrate the success of his curriculum.

Scenario 3
Debra is a 6th grade math teacher. She likes the state standards that focus on mathematical reasoning rather than algorithms, and agrees that by 8th grade all students should have a fluent grasp of mathematics reasoning and problem solving, just as the state standards require. Her students took their first state assessment in 4th grade and scored very poorly, and she knows from their math portfolios that most of the class didn't do much better in the 5th grade. Debra knows that she can't leave the job for the 7th and 8th grade teachers to handle. If she doesn't start now, and convince the 7th and 8th grade teachers to continue, these students won't be able to pass the 8th grade state tests. She has brought the state standards, some "up-to-standard" work samples provided by the state, several of her assignments that ask students to use mathematical reasoning and problem-solving strategies, and representative samples of student work from 2 of these assignments, which she says range from "the mediocre to the god awful."

Scenario 4
Monica is a high school Special Education teacher. She co-teaches with a 9th grade English teacher, and they recently tried an alternative assessment with their third period class where they had the students create free-form maps on *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She has 3 examples from the class that represent the level of work the teachers received. She thinks students did a decent job but wonders if most students dug deeply enough into the text. She would like to use this type of alternative assessment in the future (all the kids enjoyed it and all were actually talking about the text, including the special education students), but she needs some guidance and wants to hear others' perspectives.

Scenario 5
Paula is a middle school assistant principal in charge of curriculum and instruction. After the last school-wide writing prompt was administered, faculty representatives gathered to score the writing according to a rubric they had developed as a school. As they grouped the papers according to their scores and matched the code on the papers with the names of the students,

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they quickly noticed a disturbing trend. Students who were eligible for a free or reduced lunch program tended to score lower on the assessment. To complicate matters further, when they looked closely at just the 6th grade assessments, they saw that all of the papers that received a score of "1" or "2" were written by African-American and Hispanic students, and none of the papers that were given a "4" (the highest score) were from students who were eligible for a free or reduced lunch. She has the disaggregated data, as well as representative papers from all 3 of the grade levels.

Scenario 6
Ben, Larry, and Anita are members of an 8th grade interdisciplinary team. They are developing a curriculum that combines science, language arts, and social studies into a semester-long unit that has an environmental focus. They have a clear set of goals for each of the subjects represented, and an idea that they want to use the river that runs through the city as a project base. But they are worried that they won't be able to achieve all of the individual subject matter goals if they just study the river. They want help moving forward, because their work has begun to degenerate into the same arguments, over and over. They have brought the work on the unit they have done so far.

Scenario 7
Jamal is a high school art teacher. This is his second year as a teacher. He has a student in his class who baffles him. Mike takes each assignment and does something with it that is different from everyone else. If they are working on form, he seems to be experimenting with color. If they are doing still life, he seems to be working on abstraction (although he can do representational drawing when he wants to). He also refuses to write in the journal he asks students to keep as homework while they are working on each art project. "I don't need to write," he says. "This is an art class." He isn't sure what to make of Mike's work, since it is so different from everyone else's. He has brought a sample of his work and several comparative samples from the same assignment done by other students.

Scenario 8
Ted is a Science Educational Specialist in a large school district; he is responsible for all of the secondary schools, including the charter high school. He began his tenure by working with a majority of the secondary science teachers in innovative teaching strategies that encourage critical thinking. Teachers in 4 of the 6 schools have been using the new strategies, many with great success, but most of the teachers in the remaining 2 schools are still working in a "business as usual" mode. He would like to find a way to encourage the teachers in these 2 schools to at least try some of the strategies before he has to report on his work to the district's K-12 Science Curriculum Coordinator. Any suggestions?

Scenario 9
Ronald is a 4th grade teacher. He has a math assignment he has given for the past several years that asks students to demonstrate what they know about elementary geometry (shapes, lines, and angles) by creating advertisements for innovative products. His students from past years have loved the assignment, and he has given essentially the same assignment for the last 3 years with good success. Students have looked forward to the assignment, and have come to 4th grade knowing they would get to do it. This year, however, he was dismayed by the lack of interest and effort by students, and by the lack of creativity in the final products. Students did the work, but essentially either used his examples, or used ideas from students' work in past years, and did little else that was new. He is wondering if it is time to create a fresh, new assignment, or if he simply needs to make changes in the current assignment. He has the assignment, a pretty rudimentary rubric for assessing the work, a range of samples from this year's class, and a couple of outstanding examples from past years that he showed the class before they began.

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