Leading for Differentiation:
Growing the Teachers Who Grow the Kids

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What do
you see…

In this brief video clip that seems important in the teacher's thinking?

How is her work likely to impact the success of a broad range of learners in her classes (assuming she consistently thinks and plans this way)?

What proportion of your teachers already think and plan this way?

Is it worth the sustained effort of a building leader to help other teachers develop in this way of thinking about and planning instruction?

Movie Time….

In this Brief Clip, Look For:

How the teacher deals with different levels of knowledge and skill while still ensuring that all students deal with key understandings.

The degree to which the task is likely to seem "respectful" to students.

27:10-29:30

1. Vision First---& Always

VISI◯N

Ask yourself why this work matters...

What's your vision for differentiation?

Going out at the top of your game	Differentiation is a civil right	Look at who we teach and how they're doing
Successful elementary school Year-long principal observation Teacher options Continued emphasis on teacher professionalism & leadership	Faltering high school Principal had to take immediate action No opt out possibility, but evident attention to teacher morale We don't have a school here; we have two schools Continued emphasis on equity and excellence	Middle school with room a changing population What do we want our work to accomplish—and for whom? Analysis of student data through multiple lenses Continued emphasis on desired student outcomes & how best to achieve them

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Start with **Why . . .**
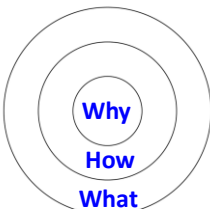
Why
How
What
THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

"There are only two ways to influence human behavior. You can manipulate it, or you can inspire it."

--Sinek, Simon (2009). *Start with Why*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin, pp. 11 & 37.

2. Understand 2nd Order Change

IF YOU WANT TO
CHANGE
YOU HAVE TO BE
WILLING
TO BE
UNCOMFORTABLE

First-order Change When a change is perceived as:	Second-order Change When a change is perceived as:
An extension of the past	A break with the past
Within existing paradigms	Outside of existing paradigms
Consistent with prevailing values and norms	Conflicted with prevailing values and norms
Implemented with existing knowledge & skills	Requiring new knowledge & skills to implement

Second order change is necessary to make a significant difference in schools.

Second order change is complex and messy.

Movement to schoolwide differentiation is second order change.

Deep Structures of Schooling

- Teacher as teller/Teacher as telling
- Student as absorber
- Curriculum as coverage • facts/information
- Kids as dependent and incapable
- Lessons as something about the subject
  - • drill • fun • loose linked with goals
- Pedagogy as bag of tricks
- Assessment as
  - • at the end • seeing who got it
  - • loosely linked to goals • objective
- Control as synonym for management
- Fair as treating everyone alike
- Grades as
  - • norms • objective • separating sheep and goats

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### Some Implications of Deep Structure Beliefs about Teaching

Belief	Implications for Environment	Implications for Curriculum	Implications for Instruction	Implications for Assessment
Teaching is Telling	Students are passive Class is teacher-centered	Fact-oriented Low emphasis on meaning-making	Emphasis on teaching vs. learning	Low-level, single right answer assessments
Learning is Giving Back	Low on collaboration & problem solving	Shallow, low-level, concrete content	Drill, skill, data orientation	No need for authentic assessment
Students are Largely Dependent	Little emphasis on community of learners	No trust of independent work, thought, ownership	Open-endedness, student choice, student not seen as viable	Perceive that students can't do authentic/perf. assessments
Management is about Control	Emphasis on compliance	Little opportunity for student sense-making	Group work, small group instruction, varied tasks too risky	Assessment of learning vs. for or as learning
Fair Means Treating Everyone Alike	Student differences largely irrelevant	Connecting content w/ individuals not necessary	Not acceptable to vary materials, pace, support, environment, etc.	One-size fits all assessments necessary

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Initial Steps: Initiation

Deeply Embedded: Institutionalization

Beginning Work: Implementation

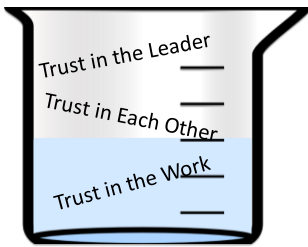Where the work feels really hard!
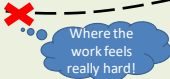
Schools and adults progress in predictable phases during long-term change. The "implementation dip" is a predictable dip in performance during early implementation.
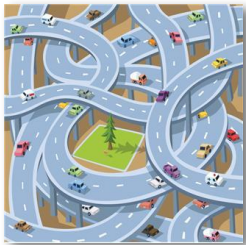
CHANGE OVER TIME:

3. Build Trust…Continually

Developing Trust: A Three-Part Solution

- Trust in the Leader
- Trust in Each Other
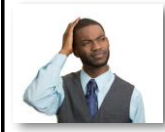- Trust in the Work

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4. Know Where You're Going

What we find in practice . . .

- There are many different interpretations of what differentiation is. Therefore:
  - It helps to define what excellence in differentiation looks like for teachers, so they have an agreed-upon set of markers that will help the school as a whole move toward quality implementation.
  - This will help people remember the "purpose" for differentiation and define their own progress.
  - Clarity about differentiation will also help people understand how that initiative "fits" with the overall school goals.


WHAT TEACHERS MUST LEARN IN ORDER TO DIFFERENTIATE EFFECTIVELY

KNOW	UNDERSTAND	DO
5 Key Elements of differentiation	Differentiation is a philosophy (more than a set of strategies)	Reflect on philosophy and practice.
Mindset	Differentiation is designed to maximize the capacity of each learner.	Create and maintain an invitational learning environment
Know-Understand-Do (KUD)	Mindset shapes teaching and learning.	Develop KUD frameworks, drawing on standards
Engagement	Teacher connection with kids opens them up to the risk of learning.	Develop formative assessments aligned with KUDs
Understanding		
Alignment	Community multiplies support for students & the teacher.	Interpret assessment results to determine students' learning needs
On-going assessment (pre-assessment, formative, summative)	On-going assessment guides quality differentiation.	Develop differentiated tasks based on assessment information in response to student readiness, interest, learning profile
Flexible Grouping	The quality of what we teach contributes to the impact of how we teach-- & vice versa.	
Respectful Tasks		
Readiness, Interest, Learning Profile	Flexible classroom routines balance group and individual needs	Work with students to understand differentiation and establish flexible **classroom routines**
Cultural Responsiveness		
Teaching Up		
Instructional strategies for differentiation		
Equity/Excellence		

Differentiation Grows Up: A Continuum of Teacher Growth

Key DI Element	Low Proficiency			High Proficiency
Learning Environment	Flat or Rigid Fixed Mindset Low Teacher-Student Connections "Unsafe" or unwelcoming for Some Students	General Awareness of, Respect for Students General Teacher-Student Connections Still Largely Fixed Mindset Some Community Building	General Teacher Emotional Support Growth Mindset Fairly Consistent General Sense of Community Most Students Seem to "Belong"	Teacher Emotional Support for all Students Class Works, Supports One Another Like a Team High Teacher-Student Connections Feels Like a Good "Home" for all Students
Curriculum	Fact, Skills Based Right-Answer Oriented Low Relevance Low Goal Clarity	Some Goal Clarity More Coherent More Focus on Understanding More Thoughtful Periodic Relevance	Consistent Goal Clarity Understanding Often Emphasized Planned for Engagement Generally Relevant for a Wide Range of Students	Understanding-Focused High Relevance High Authenticity Includes Student Voice
Assessment	Assessment OF Learning Fact & Skills Based Low Alignment Little Emphasis on Understanding	Assessment FOR Learning Some Alignment w/ KUDs & Instruction Some Emphasis on Understanding	Assessment FOR Learning General Alignment Regularly Studies Students Focused Feedback	Assessment FOR & AS Learning Students Clearly understand the Role of Assessment in Teaching & Learning Tight Alignment w/ KUDs & Instruction Authentic, Understanding-Focused Differentiated
Instruction	Teacher-Centered Mostly One-Size-Fits-All Low Alignment between KUDs & Instruction	Student Choice Better Alignment Low Prep Reactive Differentiation	Interest/Learning Profile Differentiation Prevail Generally Proactive Differentiation Generally Good Alignment Flexible Grouping Generally Used Plans DI "from the middle out"	High Alignment Proactive Differentiation Regularly Teaches Up Strong Readiness Differentiation Respectful Tasks Consistently Evident
Leadership & Management	Compliance-Focused Rule-Oriented Low Trust of Students Manages Kids	Some Flexibility Following Rules still often Trumps Student Needs Some Opportunity for Flexible Learning	Carefully Plans, Teaches Routines Teacher Explains his/her Thinking to Students Empowers Students to Assist with Routines in Varied Ways Elicits Student Input on Improving Learning	Philosophy-Guided Student-Centered Learning-Oriented Full Student-Teacher Partnership Teacher Leads Kids, Manages Routines Balances Flexibility and Predictability Students work together Effectively & Efficiently

5. Consistently Model what you Commend

> **Example isn't another way to teach, it is the only way to teach.**
>
> — Albert Einstein
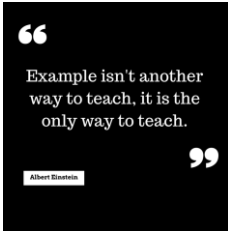
Principal : Teacher :: Teacher : Student

- Successful leaders for differentiation work with teachers in the same ways they will ask teachers to work with their students.
- That approach reflects the way people learn.
- It is also a potent demonstration of how differentiation should work.

The Common Sense of Differentiation for Teachers

Ensuring an environment that actively supports **teacher** growth in the work of learning (mindset, connections, community),

Having absolute clarity about a powerful learning destination for **teachers** (KUDs, engagement, understanding),

Persistently knowing where **teachers** are in relation to the destination all along the way (formative assessment for and as instruction),

Adjusting professional support to make sure each **teacher** arrives at the destination and, when possible, moves beyond it (addressing readiness, interest, learning profile),

Effective leadership & management of flexible time, routines, learning opportunities—balancing flexibility and predictability for **teachers**.

6. Work from Plans

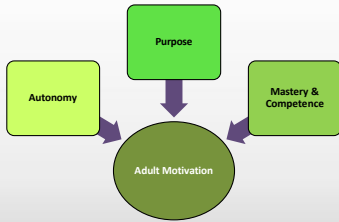|		
WHY?	Vision	• The principles, practices, and potential to propel the work • "What will we achieve if we reach our moral purpose? • WHY we are doing the work
LOOK LIKE?	Operational Vision for Differentiation	• Concrete descriptions of what will be different as a result of deeply embedded differentiation • Serves as a communication tool and the ultimate target • The WHAT of the work to achieve the moral purpose
NEXT STEPS?	Yearly Change Plans	• Short-term plans to achieve the operational vision • Establishes the "floor" for growth that year • Describes the HOW for each year in the journey

7. Provide Intelligent, Persistent Support

Motivation and Change Over Time:

Purpose

Autonomy

Mastery & Competence

Adult Motivation

--Deci and Faste, 1996; Pink, 2009

Getting Ready

Deeply Embedded

Beginning Work

Long-Term Institutionalization

| Preparation | Mechanical | Routine | Refined |

How teachers *may be* behaving in relation to the change
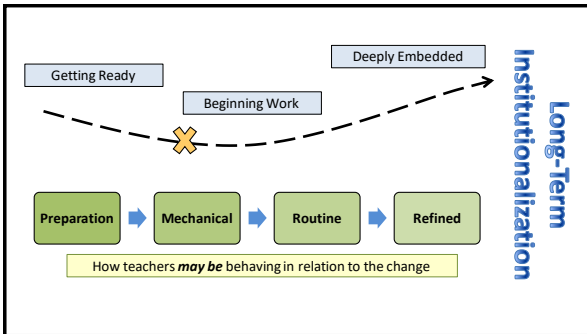
If TRAINING is your primary model:

- Training is valuable for gaining knowledge only.
- Training may be the worst method for *implementation*.
- Very few teachers will attend training on differentiation and implement *anything* they learned without additional strategic support!

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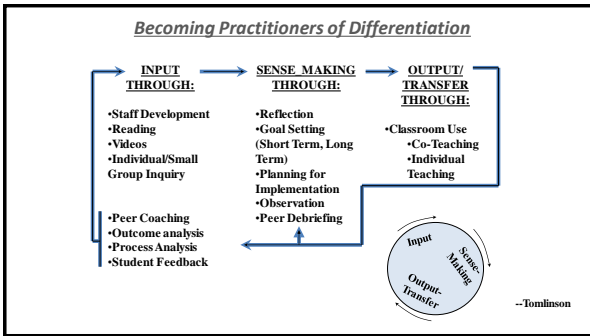| Professional Learning Element	Effects on Knowledge	Effects on Short-Term Use (%)	Effects on Long-Term Use (%)
Theory, readings, discussions, lectures, trainings	Positive	5-10%	5-10%
All + demonstrations	Positive	5-20%	5-20%
All + demonstrations + collaborative planning of units or lessons	Positive	80-90%	5-10%
All + demonstrations + planning of units + peer/collegial coaching	Positive	90%+	90%+

Becoming Practitioners of Differentiation

INPUT THROUGH:
•Staff Development
•Reading
•Videos
•Individual/Small Group Inquiry

•Peer Coaching
•Outcome analysis
•Process Analysis
•Student Feedback

SENSE MAKING THROUGH:
•Reflection
•Goal Setting (Short Term, Long Term)
•Planning for Implementation
•Observation
•Peer Debriefing

OUTPUT/ TRANSFER THROUGH:
•Classroom Use
•Co-Teaching
•Individual Teaching

Input — Sense-Making — Output-Transfer

--Tomlinson

"Those who know WHY need those who know (WHAT &) HOW."

Why / How / What

--Sinek, Simon (2009). *Start with Why*. New York:Portfolio/Penguin, pp. 140 & 37.

Three Avenues to Success

1) *Staff developer/coach*
• "From the outside"
• Teacher-auditioned
• Long-term
• In classrooms
• Distributed leadership

2) *Teacher liaison*
• "From the inside"
• Teacher-trust
• Long-term
• In classrooms
• Distributed leadership

3) *Coaches & DI Team*
• Long term
• In classrooms
• Distributed leadership

7. Assess both Individual and Schoolwide Growth

What BEHAVIORS are Changing and How?

Are Teachers:

- Doing the work at all?
- At a pretty low proficiency?
- Showing persistent experimentation?
- Enjoying routine high proficiency?

Preparing for the work? → Mechanically implementing some ideas? → Routinely implementing some ideas? → Refined, sophisticated, teaching and learning?

What is the typical experience?

"Doing differentiation" often means…

☑ A focus on **starting** the work rather than supporting it long-term;

☑ No regular communication of progress so motivation slows or stops; and

☑ One-dimensional evaluation of results in terms of **student achievement** only.
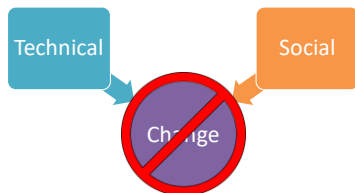
Critical to the Work:

- Looking at program progress much in the same way we hope teachers look at student progress
- Becoming proficient in both assessing progress and evaluating growth, and knowing when to use which strategy

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8. Anticipate Resistance—Don't be Afraid of it!

(Learn to hug porcupines…)

Understand Technical & Social Concerns:

Technical

Social

Change

Do We Expect Too Much Too Soon?

TRAIN

- Teaching and modeling
- Shared attempts and interactions

CONSULT

"I show you"
"We do together"

Because we feel an urgency, we often move people TOO QUICKLY from "learning about it" to "doing it independently".

"You do on your own"
"You try with a little help"

- Independent practice
- Guided support

COACH

-- Pearson and Gallagher, 1983, Wilhelm, 2001, Duke and Pearson, 2002

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9. Don't Forget the Details

details matter

A Few Stressors Leaders should Address

HELP

- Time
- Isolation
- Contradictory messages
- Too many initiatives
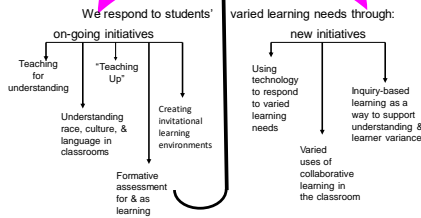- Lack of persistent follow-through

The main problem is not the absence of innovation in schools, but rather too many disconnected, episodic, fragmented, superficially adorned projects.

—The New Meaning of Educational Change - Third Edition - (p. 21) - by Michael Fullan

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Academic Responsiveness as an Umbrella for School Initiatives

Creating Academically Responsive Classrooms as an Umbrella for What We Do in our School

We respond to students' varied learning needs through:

on-going initiatives

- Teaching for understanding
- "Teaching Up"
- Understanding race, culture, & language in classrooms
- Creating invitational learning environments
- Formative assessment for & as learning

new initiatives

- Using technology to respond to varied learning needs
- Varied uses of collaborative learning in the classroom
- Inquiry-based learning as a way to support understanding & learner variance

—Tomlinson

We can take some gratification at having come a certain distance…

…but it should be a deeper satisfaction, even an exhilaration, to realize that we still have such a distance to go.

Lewis Thomas *Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony*