**Implementation of T4T Strategies**

## **Collaborative Inquiry Process and Consultancy Protocol**

## **for May 13th Community of Practice**

*The T4TLA Community of Practice* is designed to support SEA and LEA teams in learning with and from each other about the implementation and sustainability of their strategies to address needs related to leader and teacher talent in high need schools.

On May 13th, participants from the seven T4TLA states are invited to engage with their colleagues on a pressing implementation challenge, thereby gaining clearer understanding of the problem or challenge, with new ideas and insights to consider.

The Collaborative Inquiry process utilizes a Consultancy Protocol where a team (or an individual) receives coaching around a challenge identified through reflective dialogue with another team or individual. Three key ideas are important to remember when engaging in the Collaborative Inquiry process. Collaborative Inquiry:

* Honors all teams, where they are in their work, and the challenge they identify;
* Emphasizes the balance between asking questions to help people get a clearer image about their problem and challenge and offering ideas and opinions about how to meet the challenge;
* Begins with asking questions to gain a better understanding about the problem or challenge being identified; and
* Is grounded in positive intentions about helping another person or team solve a real-life problem or challenge.

## **Preparation: Identifying an implementation problem/challenge**

When thinking about what challenge you would like to pose for feedback and discussion, consider the following:

Your problem is the right problem. If it is important to you, it’s important to all participants.

* All problems you are facing and want to work through are the right problems.
* Implementation can be challenging for a number of reasons.
* Whether you are facing a restart, a new start, or are far along the path of implementation, your challenges are lessons we all can learn from.

Framing the problem for useful feedback and dialogue

* Be specific in scope to allow clear explanation.
* Focus the problem on implementation of T4TLA strategies (e.g., teacher/leader retention, teacher/leader preparation, supporting new teachers/leaders).
* Identify implications for both SEA and LEA roles or actions.
* Use some data to illustrate the nature of the challenge.
* Consider if it is persistent, ongoing, current and acute
* Should be of high impact, with implications for successful turnaround

## **Example**

**Presented Implementation Challenge:**

* *We have hired six of our teachers to serve as mentors/coaches to new teachers. These mentors are released from classroom duties and are primarily responsible to mentor and coach new teachers.*
* *Based on a recent survey, we learned that these teachers are only spending 40% of their available time working with new teachers. Our goal is that these teachers spend 80% of their time mentoring and coaching new teachers and 20% of their time designing and facilitating professional learning sessions for new teachers.*
* *When we probed a bit further, we learned that principals were pulling these teachers to do other administrative tasks.*

**Request for feedback**:

* *Given what we have described about our context, we need to get back on track and would like feedback about what you heard and about any strategies you have tried and/or would suggest to tackle this problem.*

## **Consultancy Protocol:**

1. Teams or individuals pair up with one another to serve as consultancy partners and decide which team presents first and which team will present second.
2. The team presenting the problem first describes their challenge and any concerns or questions they have while the inquiry team listens and takes notes. When the first team is finished describing their challenge, the inquiry team asks questions to ensure that they are clear about the problem or challenge. It is important that the inquiry team sticks to asking questions that further clarify the problem or challenge verses asking questions about issues the inquiry team is curious about.
3. Following the presentation of the problem or challenge, the process shifts into a dialogue among inquiry team members. At this point, the inquiry team will raise further questions and/or insights based on what the presenting team has identified as their problem of practice. During this step of the process, the presenting team takes notes but does not engage in dialogue.
4. Once the inquiry team has identified questions and insights to consider, the presenting team responds while the inquiry team listens. At this point in the process, the presenting team and inquiry team engage in cross-team dialogue about the ideas that have been placed on the table. The inquiry team may ask additional questions such as “Have you thought about” …; “Did you try…?”. It is important to remind participants that this dialogue needs to remain in service of the team who is working the challenge. It is often easy to slip into a conversation about the other team’s challenge. That conversation will come later.
5. After about 20 minutes, the presenting team reflects on the dialogue and thinks about any new insights or ideas that may further inform their challenge or task. It is important that reflection step takes place; moderators may need to stop the conversation and invite the presenting team to make any new connections explicit.
6. After the reflection step, teams switch roles and the process is repeated.

### **Session Design**

### 25 minutes for each of two rounds for each presenting team pair. Note: Teams will be paired and conduct modified consultancies virtually in Zoom breakout rooms.

### T4TLA planning team members will serve as moderators for the whole group and breakout sessions.

### Two planning team members will serve as “uber” moderators to keep time and signal when teams should leave breakout rooms and return to the main Zoom room.)

1. ***Explanation*** **3 minutes**

The presenting team provides an overview of their identified implementation challenge. The presenting team makes a specific request of the inquiry team, identifying what kind of feedback or assistance is sought.

1. ***Clarification*** **3 minutes**

Upon hearing the explanation and request for assistance, the inquiry team asks questions to clarify their understanding of the presenting team’s challenge and request.

1. ***Collaborative inquiry and discussion*** **8 minutes**

Following the clarification process, inquiry team discuss their observations, raise questions and identify insights based on the problem/challenge presented and on the request of the presentation team. Members of the presenting team listen silently and take notes.

1. ***Reflective response*** **8 minutes**

Following the collaborative inquiry discussion phase, members of the presenting team respond to the questions and comments generated through the collaborative inquiry phase.

1. ***Final thoughts* 3 minutes**

Members of Work team 1 reflect on what was most useful and what could have been more useful about the Collaborative Inquiry Process.

*Process is then repeated once more, providing the teams with an opportunity to switch roles.*

*Following both consultancies, the facilitators will convene all pairs in the “main room.”*

### **Potential Questions for the Collaborative Inquiry Dialogue**

1. What factors contribute to this challenge being your “front burner” issue?
2. What is one strategy you’ve identified or developed to address this challenge?
3. What could you learn from others? What are your primary concerns or questions regarding this challenge?
4. What resources do you have available?
5. When you think about meeting this challenge, how will you know if you are successful?
6. What will you take away from today that may help your team respond to this challenge?

**Consultancy Structure and Process: *Potential Scenarios***

**(all scenarios based on 90-minute session)**

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|  | **Intended Structure** | **Contingency 1** | **Contingency 2** |
| ***Structure*** | * All teams will participate in consultancy and be assigned to specific “break out” rooms * Moderators will be assigned to each consultancy pair to facilitate consultancy process and serve as timekeeper * Teams will be matched based on challenge/problem of practice or stage of implementation | * Two teams will volunteer to participate in consultancy in a virtual “fish bowl” format * T4TLA planning group member will facilitate process and serve as timekeeper * Participants who are not involved in the consultancy will add additional ideas and/or questions following the consultancy process | * One team will volunteer to serve as the presenting team * T4TLA planning group member will facilitate process and serve as timekeeper * All other participants on the call will respond to request for feedback of the presenting team |
| ***Process*** | * See Consultancy Protocol | * See Consultancy Protocol – *Protocol will be modified to accommodate scenario structure* | * See Consultancy Protocol – *Protocol will be modified to accommodate scenario structure.* |