

**Trotter Elementary School**

**Video Facilitation Guide**

***Guiding Question:*** *What can we learn from Trotter Elementary School about creating a culture of high academic expectations for students?*

This video illustrates how [Trotter Elementary School](https://youtu.be/WZMuCKQEDZ8) incorporated elements of Massachusetts’ four [Turnaround Practices](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/howitworks/turnaround-practices-508.pdf) as they created a culture of high academic expectations for students. As you watch the video, identify how Trotter educators organized their practices around a common focus: promoting higher order thinking among students.

**Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration *(Turnaround Practice 1)***

* **School leaders established a culture of high academic expectations.** *“We just really believed that there wasn’t any reason that children couldn’t do that work.”* (Mairead, 1:03)
* **Teachers participate in identifying and monitoring implementation of new tools**. *“...we talked about what do we need to do to take these kids to the next level? It was great, because I actually had input on deciding what curriculum we wanted to use. And it was wonderful because we got to pilot it, and we're getting better each year…”* (Georgeann, 2:13)

**Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction *(Turnaround Practice 2)***

* **Teachers and teacher teams use student data to adapt and improve instructional strategies**. “*We really consider the progress monitoring teams and the grade level team meetings as another type of professional development. You're building skills when you support people as a group in looking at student data”* (Mairead, 5:23)
* **Teachers reflect and improve their own practice.** *“And I've watched the way that I interact with students too. Not providing the answers, but pushing so that they can explain their own thinking, so that they can self-correct and learn”* (Georgeann, 8:45)

***Related Resources***

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| [Research on Effective Practices in School Turnaround](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/howitworks/turnaround-practices-508.pdf) - Learn more about the four key practices that characterize effective sustainable improvement efforts in Massachusetts schools [Sustainable Improvement Plan Guidance](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/level4/guidance.html) - Resources for districts and schools on developing an effective sustainable improvement plan, including how to use data to identify school assets, challenges, and engage in root cause analysis  |

**Detailed Reflection Questions.** The following sections of the video illustrate key points that the Trotter team identified as critical levers for their success. As you watch the video, consider pausing after viewing the indicated times, and reflecting on the following questions.

**Changing teacher perceptions**

(4:26-5:22) What did some teachers initially believe about their students? How did professional development help change perception? The principal described one particular teacher's role as uniquely important.  Why was this teacher’s reaction especially powerful?

**Lesson plan template**

(6:14-6:51) How does the lesson plan template support the school’s focus on higher order thinking? What activities in professional development built teachers capacity to write higher order questions? Why might it be important to revisit what might seem like “basic” work when implementing a new strategy?

**Peer observations**

(6:52-7:46) How did peer observation contribute to improving instruction? In what area of inquiry are peer observations focused? What specific teacher and student actions are observers seeking? What did they find in an observation session? What next steps were identified?

**Additional Reflections for Your Context**

* What strategies, insights, or specific actions from the video most resonate with you?
* What questions do you have about the video?
* What strategies or actions did you see in the video that you are already doing in your classroom, school, or district?
* What strategies or actions did you see that you could consider implementing in your classroom, school, or district?
* What are the next steps for your classroom, school or district planning?