

**Union Hill Elementary School**

**Video Facilitation Guide**

***Guiding Question:*** *What can we learn from Union Hill about collaborative and shared leadership, intentional practices for improving instruction, student specific supports, and improving climate and culture?*

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This video highlights how [Union Hill Elementary School](https://youtu.be/Ab2KK-Q21qo) incorporated elements of Massachusetts’ four [Turnaround Practices](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/howitworks/turnaround-practices-508.pdf) in their improvement efforts.  During your viewing, think about how Union Hill staff demonstrated some of the key characteristics of each of the four turnaround practices as part of their professional practices at the school.

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

**The school has created a culture of shared responsibility for the well-being and achievement of their students.** *“Everyone became aware of the fact that it was on us to make this happen and make the shift. So, we began as a team to work through these challenges.” (Maria, 4:26-4:37)*

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

**Resources, including principal observations, coaching, common planning time, and the ongoing review of student data are used for the active improvement of instruction.** *“Within the instructional leadership team, we identified experts that were willing to have other teachers come and view their writing, view lessons they had set up that worked well and produced great writing. We found teachers who were willing to go and observe. Everybody really was willing to go and observe” (Elizabeth, 5:02-5:25)*

**Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students *(Turnaround Practice 3)***

**Students are provided with instruction and interventions in direct response to their academic needs, identified through focused analysis of student skill-specific assessments.** *“At the beginning some teachers were hesitant to put up student work. But we decided that in order for them to grow, they needed to see what was expected of them and what good writing looked like. We also decided we were going to put up not-so-good writing and say, “How can we improve on this writing?’ – without identifying a person’s name. And it really held them accountable for their writing. For them to seek out from their peers and not just the teachers. How can I make this better? Will you help me make this better?’” (Elizabeth 3:44-4:21)*

**School Climate and Culture *(Turnaround Practice 4)***

**School leadership established an organized community with a shared, collegial, and collective focus and school-wide array of practices to effectively pursue the schools’ improvement efforts.** *“There has always been a sense of urgency at this school. The team that we have working here want the very best for our students and even though we are level 1 we recognize there’s still a lot of room to grow.” (Maria 6:22 – 6:34)*

**Detailed Reflection Questions.** The sections of the video below focus on key aspects of the work at Union Hill. After watching them, discuss the questions provided related to the challenges and possibilities they illustrate.

* **Theprofessional environmentis one of mutual respect, teamwork, and accountability.** (1:24-1:40,4:48-5:01) How does joint ownership and collective responsibility influence the work of sustainable school improvement efforts ? How can such a professional environment be fostered to allow for the needed risk taking behaviors of sharing student work or discussing instructional challenges so as to improve the overall expertise of staff?
* **Expectations for rigorous and consistent instructional practices (2:51-3:44, 5:42-6:15)** How has the leadership at Union Hill helped to identify a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices at the school? What mindset do staff need to have for that level or rigor to be a consistent target for learning for all students?

**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?

***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. *(Union Hill is profiled on pages 62 - 68 of this resource.)*[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 opportunities   |