

A Professional Community Engages With the Five Practices

1 Michael Steele: The five practices was really a natural fit for us in thinking about how to
2 support teachers in doing small scale work that can add up to something
3 larger over time. So part of the model is we ask them to choose 4 areas
4 over the course of the school year that they reinterested in focusing on and
5 engaging an inquiry in. so the five practices provide us with a common
6 language and some common touchstones that they can work on, both
7 individually as practices, the five plus thinking about goals and tasks, and
8 then collectively as a set. So we may have teachers that want to really
9 focus on their questioning, which aligns nicely to the monitoring portion
10 of the five practices, and we talk about assessing and advancing questions.
11 There are teachers that really want to focus on the tasks that they use to
12 gain entry into richer classroom conversation, so we can focus on the
13 tasks. But having those identifiable practices that teachers can work on in
14 their classrooms and really dig into these slices of their teaching practice
15 fits really well with our goals. So the teachers that have been involved in
16 the project who've been using the five practices have seen some really
17 important in their student achievement. First and foremost, they're seeing
18 kids who are more engaged in lessons, they're seeing lessons that are
19 moving more quickly through the curriculum at a level of depth that they
20 really haven't seen before. So they're getting away from covering kind of
21 a standard a day and kids understanding things superficially and then
22 forgetting it and having problems later on in the year, to really kids
23 retaining and engaging. They're hearing kids bring back mathematical
24 ideas that they haven't seen before. We also have a number of teachers
25 who are working, at least in part of their day, at intervention settings, so
26 supporting students who have come in struggling or are currently
27 struggling with the math. And the five practices in particular for those
28 teachers have been really, really powerful in elevating those students
29 voices and getting them to see themselves as mathematical learners and
30 doers in a way that they haven't before.