

Coaching Journal

Lilly Hanna

PL & Innovation (ITEC 7460)

Kennesaw State University

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Coaching Session 1: 10/3/2018**Strategies**

The first session I scheduled with Ms. Howard was a one-on-one meeting. Before meeting with Ms. Howard I studied the partnership approach described by Jim Knight and decided this was the approach I wanted to take while coaching Ms. Howard. I began by developing a relationship with her at the beginning of the year as I was her IOWA testing proctor. I started asking her questions and trying to get to know her and I gave her information about myself as well. She began telling me of some of her struggles and I told her about my instructional technology program and the need to coach someone. I asked her if she would like me to coach her and she was more than happy to help me out and truly wanted some assistance. Through our conversations and I tried to convey the message that we were equal partners. This is the first step in the partnership approach. "If teachers are truly equal, then their ideas must count. Equality does not mean that coaches and teachers have equal knowledge on every topic, but it does mean that the collaborating teacher's opinions are as important as the coach's, and both points of view are worth hearing" (Knight, 2007). Ms. Howard then shared with me her background with technology in the classroom was zero. At her last school they did not have computers, Ipads or SmartBoards. She was struggling to figure out how to use the tools and a little intimidated to ask her teammates. So far she use the computers for centers and only used Iread and let the students explore with Google Earth. Ms. Howard told me some of the things she would like to be able to do and asked for suggestions on Ipad use and Apps, computer center ideas and Smart Board lessons. I started her of by explaining the school wide math program that was available to all students, Mathletics. I showed her how to log in and how to assign students activities and group them to meet their individual needs and differentiate instruction. She was

very excited to be able to use this for her math center and was eager to begin testing out her new knowledge.

Skill and Affective Changes

I noticed that Ms. Howard was not lacking in skills, she seemed very computer savvy. I showed her how to use the program and she was able to go through the process with little assistance. Once I left she only had one question that she immediately email to me and I promptly responded. I was most surprised by the fact that she also tried Ipads in a center. Our meeting one time gave her the confidence to try something new. She said it was a disasters, she allowed herself to fail and feel that it was okay to fail and try again another time. She is still very intimidated to ask her teammates for help.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution

My biggest challenge is scheduling time with Ms. Howard. We are on different schedules so the best time for us to meet is before or after school and we have to work around other meetings. Our next meeting is scheduled for conference week so we will have some good uninterrupted time to talk, work and plan. I have been working on Knights second strategy for the partnership philosophy which is giving teachers choice on what they learn (2007). Ms. Howard is playing an imperative role in having choice in what she was learning

Coaching Session 2: 10/17/2018

Strategies

In this meeting with Ms. Howard I started out following the partnership approach outlined by Knight (2007), and we reflected on how things were going since our last coaching session. According to Knight, “offering teachers the freedom to consider ideas before they adopt them is central to the principal of reflection” (p. 47). Ms. Howard discussed her success with

incorporating laptops into her centers using the Mathletics program. She is confident on navigating the program and differentiating instruction within the program for the four different groups she has created. She has also attempted to implement technology through the use of Ipads. She feels this has not been as successful but she is not frustrated and enjoys feeling comfortable enough to keep trying. She then discussed how she was still intimidated by the Smartboard and not sure how to use it as a center to engage students.

After listening to her reflection we had meaningful dialogue and I focused on the strategies outlined in the International Society of Technology in Education's White paper on professional development (2011). Previously I examined the needs assessment and together we set goals and I modeled various technology uses with her. It was time to tackle on of Ms. Howard's fears, the Smartboard. I asked her if I could demonstrate a how I would introduce a new Smartboard activity to the class and she was ecstatic. When her class returned from specials I did a whole group activity using the Smartboard and let the students know that this would be one of their math centers. I demonstrated three problems filling in parts of a hundreds with only one given number. I then had several students do the activity on the board and we talked the students through the steps with the help of teacher and other students. Then we had several students demonstrate on their own. The students then went into their centers rotation and Ms. Howard and I observed students in the Smartboard center and were there if they needed assistance.

Skill and Affective Changes

It was clear Ms. Howard wanted to use the technology that was available to her she clearly overwhelmed by the various tool and not sure how to implement. When we first meet Ms. Howard expressed that she was in unfamiliar territory with all the technology and how to use it

with her students so she did not even attempt to use it. Ms. Howards comfort level increased tremendously. She carried out our plan with the laptop station and went above and beyond trying to implement Ipads failed and continued to try. All though she was intimidated and did not want to ask her teammates she was comfortable with our partnership and secure my judgement free approach. Ms. Howard is now searching for things she wants to learn and will carry out any suggestions to make. I am impressed with her willingness to try, fail, evaluate, improve and try again.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution

The main challenge of this session was not anticipating Ms. Howard to have jumped in to the use of technology with her classroom so quickly. With her eagerness to learn and implement it was difficult not to give her too much information and overwhelm her. Having our goals and objectives written down allowed us to continue on our path and have another successful session. Ms. Howard was appreciative for the modeling of the lesson. She expressed how it would save her time because she would have explained the lesson to each group individual. She like the whole group introduction and moving into observing and facilitating.

I have been pleasantly surprised by the success of this coaching experience. Ms. Howard's enthusiasm to learn and grow has greatly surpassed my expectations. I have developed a working relationship with Ms. Howard that I foresee growing in the future. Her willingness to be coached also eased my intimidation of coaching and was a great first experience for me as well. I did not anticipate such growth and that challenged me to continue to move through our goals and objectives at a faster pace than I had prepared.

Coaching Session 3: 11/07/2018

Strategies

Today I observed Ms. Howard introducing a new Smartboard lesson. While observing the lesson I focused on “The Big for” introduced by Knight (2007). While introducing the lesson the first thing I noticed was the behavior. Ms. Howard’s classroom management was under control and she was able to deliver the lesson. Next I saw that she knew the content and was able to choose a lesson that was related and relevant to the content. Then she used some of the techniques that I modeled for her to make sure all students mastered were able to master the content. Finally, I noticed Ms. Howard using formative assessments to determine if the students were mastering the content.

After the lesson Ms. Howard and I meet during her planning time to reflect on the lesson. I asked her to tell me how she felt about the delivery of the lesson. I then asked her to describe what she thought went well and how did she think she could improve. She then asked me to give her feedback by answering the same questions. It was refreshing that she truly wanted my feedback and valued my perspective. As Knight stated, “the success or failure of a coaching program hinges on the coach’s ability to communicate clearly, build relationships, and support fellow teachers” (p. 57). I believe we have created a successful partnership.

Skill and Affective Changes

Ms. Howard found an interactive lesson that she could use as a center using the Smartboard. After watching me model a lesson she felt more confident and immediately decided she was going to find an activity that was related to the content and plan to introduce the lesson to the class. With little anxiety Ms. Howard used strategies from the model lesson to introduce a new lesson to her class. Ms. Howard grew leaps and bounds with being provided with a little guidance and support.

Because Ms. Howard has advanced so quickly I thought it was appropriate to introduce her to the LoTi framework. We discussed where she was on the scale before we started and where she currently stood on the scale. After reviewing the LoTi framework she decided she would eventually like to get to incorporating lessons on a four or five level, but would like to master what she has already learned and then move on. Her concern is finding/creating relevant LoTi level four or five lessons with first graders.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution

The challenge in this meeting was observing a lesson without giving immediate instruction. There were times when Ms. Howard was delivering her lesson that I wanted to jump in and tell her something or give her a strategy. Instead I took notes and waited to debrief after the lesson. My other challenge was being confident in our partnership to give Ms. Howard honest feedback and having faith that she would not take the critique personally. Here I had to remember Knight's view on partnership principles and communication, "IC's who ground their actions in the partnership approach find it easier to send and receive messages effectively. If they believe that they are partners with others and that everyone has something to teach them, they are more inclined to be respectful and open to people with whom they interact" (p. 60).

I cannot say enough about Ms. Howard's eagerness to learn and her desire to grow. I know I will not always face such positive attitudes when coaching. This experience definitely boosted my confidence and I find myself desiring to coach another teacher, this time with less desire to learn and grow. I am excited to continue this partnership with Ms. Howard throughout the school year. She feels more confident as a new teacher and now she can take ideas to her team instead of just receiving ideas. Ms. Howard has raised the bar for herself and wants to

research the LoTi framework on her own and by the end of the year have had several level four and five technology activities completed with her students.

References

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