

Coaching Journal

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Professional Learning & Technology Innovation

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1st session- February 21, 2014

Strategies: Partnership – 75 minutes

Our first meeting involved meeting with Staci and discussing the areas that she wanted to improve on and assessing her current level of skills with technology. She stated that she wanted to increase the use of technology in her classroom with her students. She said that she feels uncomfortable using the Smartboard in front of her class so she uses it rarely. She stated that she is comfortable playing with it at home or after school and knows how to search for notebooks and allow the kids to use them but as far as using the board other than for a whiteboard, she feels inadequate.

I had her search for things and use some of the tools in Smartboard for a little bit in order to view her current level of functioning on the Smartboard. She basically could open and utilize most of the notebooks with ease. She did not know the other things you could do with notebooks and felt uncomfortable about creating her own notebooks.

Next, I asked her which forms of technology she felt most comfortable with. She said that she was most comfortable with her own personal iPad. I asked her if she had ever reserved the iPad cart to use with her students but she said she was reluctant to do so. I asked her why and she said that she feels that it would be too much for her to handle alone. I gave her examples of the lessons I did with my students and suggested she just copy the things that I did. She just gave me a look that she wasn't sure if she should tackle that.

She said she feels pretty good with the regular computer but that she always seems to have issues even with that. She said weird things always seem to happen to HER and she never knows what she did to have that happen. We also have a laptop cart readily available to our first grade team yet she does not take advantage of that either. When I asked her why, she said that her students were difficult to

manage and due to the fact that we have such large classes this year. She just didn't have the confidence in herself. She also said she feels inadequate in updating her blog. She asked if I'd help her with that as well. I agreed, I felt confident that our partnership was going to work well for this coaching activity.

Skill and Affective Changes: We've agreed that she needs to be more comfortable in front of her students with technology. She is going to have to play more the Smartboard in her free time so that it is not so foreign to her. She agreed to set a goal reserving the laptop cart sometime this spring. She is also going to look up some websites that she'd like to add to her blog. I will help her load them in addition to creating an instruction sheet that she can keep as a reference.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution: I personally think that Staci needs to realize that we are all going to have issues with technology in front of our students and it is ok. I believe that I need to boost her confidence in herself to allow her to believe in herself. She is a single mom and I know she does not get support from anyone else except her teammates. I also know she does not have a lot of extra time as she has two young elementary children who need any free time she does have. I think this is going to be a challenge for her and me with her not being able to dedicate much time to helping herself improve in this area that she knows needs improvement. She has agreed to meet with me and seems very willing and eager to make improvements but I'm just not sure how much she'll do on her own. She has to find some websites so we'll see how she does with that assignment. Go Staci!!

2nd Session – February 28, 2014- 80 minutes

Strategies: Listening and Communication

After analyzing Staci's strengths and weaknesses, we came up with a plan. I told Staci that I saw her strengths as: she had an eagerness to use more technology, she had a positive attitude about technology and how it motivates the students, and she has good basic foundation with using technology. She also agreed that I saw her areas that needed improvements to be: she needs to become more assertive with technology, she needs to take more risks with technology, she needs to involve the students with technology on a regular basis, she needs to reserve the iPad cart for an activity that she can do easily, she needs to use the laptop cart as part of our Daily 5 routine.

After discussing these items with Staci, she seemed to be more motivated. I told her the best way to address these areas that need improvement is to tackle them a little at a time but to practice them with consistency. Baby steps!!! As she gets more fluent with one, we'll slowly add another one. I plan to continue this coaching with Staci after our five sessions are over.

Skill and Affective Changes:

I let Staci choose the skill that she wanted to focus on first. She chose the Smartboard because that is what she really wants to use. She knows the lessons on the Smartboard will assist her with instruction and that will be a plus. She still seems a little reluctant but we actually practiced with me being a student and her being the teacher while the Smartboard was in use. I “accidentally” touched all the buttons that the students touch to make a mistake or to make something switch places, etc. This helped her to see that if a student does something that she doesn't know how that happened, it's ok. She can just go on or hit the back button. to see that she could handle any mistakes that the kids might make. She is ready to take this risk, I'm excited for her!

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

Staci was excited about the plan! When I laid it out there for her with a plan and timeline with goals to be reached, it really motivated her. She started believing in herself. I was as excited as she was. I teach very close to her and offered to be there for her if she ran into a problem during the day. I believe no one has ever offered to be her backup and I don't think she ever would have felt comfortable asking someone for help in the middle of the day or middle of the lesson. I'm looking forward to Monday and almost wish we had school tomorrow so that her energy would continue right into tomorrow.

3rd Session – March 7 – 70 minutes

Strategies: Implementation

I touched base with Staci several times this week. She showed me the Smartboard notebooks she was using. She agreed that it was assisting with her lesson planning and time management throughout her language arts and math segments of the day. She told me that her students were excited to be using the Smartboard now. She even had a student tell her she knew why it was called a Smartboard now because it really was smart! ☺ (Love these little ones.) Staci went in with both feet and stayed strong from what she tells me. She shared all the notebooks she did over the course of one week. She felt so successful while we met as she noticed doing one thing at a time was a good idea.

Skill and Affective Changes: Staci realized that what she was trying to do before was thinking in her head that she had to do it all and it was overwhelming to her so she wasn't able to do any of the technologies. She kind of shut down and turned away from technology. She thought that since the students were able to go to her three desktops in the back of the room and log into the other first grade teacher's blogs to do activities on websites that she was incorporating enough technology. But there was so much more at her fingertips that she could be accessing. She has the basic fundamentals and the others were just a few steps away.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution: What I noticed first of all was that Staci was excited to meet with me since she had good news to report to me. She noticed as she made herself use the Smartboard each day that she was getting stronger on her own. She didn't feel as if she was a foreigner anymore. She started practicing the Smartboard notebooks at home which made things move smoother the following day. I'm excited for the progress after the first session of implementation.

4th Session – March 14th – 80 minutes

Strategies: Modeling

As Staci was preparing for an observation, she was nervous and wanted some guidance because she wanted to use her Smartboard skills for part of her observation. I had been helping and supporting her with the Smartboard but now she wanted to do a lesson that she would be observed on. After going over her lesson with me, I modeled her lesson back for her because I noticed a few things that she left out. Once I modeled it back to her, she kept hitting herself in the head as if she couldn't figure out how she missed those few minor details. They were either things that she didn't think of or things that if she didn't take care of that she'd have issues with the students. She was thankful that I modeled it as it helped her realize the missing things that were needed on her own. She was going to have the students paint some landforms after looking at all the national parks that she inputted into a Smartboard notebook. .

Skill and Affective Changes: Staci is getting it and I'm seeing changes in her and her skills as she works with her students. She seems to feel comfortable in front of the Smartboard and with the tools. She is remembering where everything is in the gallery and is even creating her own set of contents. I believe she is having success because she is already fluent with the computer and just needed support on the Smartboard.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution: This was a great coaching session. Modeling always help you look at different things or all things to be considered

when you are in that role. It's like two heads are better than one. She faced a few obstacles when she watched me do the lesson. It helped her see from the perspective of the students everything that was going to happen and the "other" minor details about.

5th Session- March 28th – 75 minutes

Strategies: Support

Staci was making progress and wanted to continue to move forward. She had never felt so confident with technology. This boost in confidence really helped her feel good about herself. Staci was hooked on the Smartboard now and found so many good lessons on the search site. She started adding Smartboard notebooks to our staff drive. She realized she was finally adding to our team's list of notebooks for the first time. The support I am giving her through this time of building skills is important. Without a partner, Staci would have continued to lag behind.

I continued to support Staci with the iPads next. I showed her what I did with my lesson on plants. I had the kids use picwall to take pictures outside of the roots, stem, flowers, and leaves. Next they had to identify it and match up the picture with the words. Since Staci is already comfortable with the iPads, I felt this would be a perfect next step for her. She could manage the students or use a parent to assist if necessary. She said that she'd give it a try. She did admit to being nervous but I told her to just jump in and try it and if something breaks down, go with the flow. I told her these are little first graders who are not going to judge. I think that comment eased her mind a little.

Skill and Affective Changes: Staci was hesitant to schedule that iPad cart and take the students outside with the iPads. She continued to have an excuse why she couldn't do it. I wanted her to just schedule it and I wished I could go with her for more support. It seemed like she was excuses, maybe they were for real. She said she's been too busy in the classroom but I think going away from her home territory, her classroom, was making her a little nervous. I will continue to push her to do this activity with her students.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution: Staci has made amazing progress with the Smartboard. I found things on there that I had forgotten about. These are really fun! I haven't been using it as much because I have been doing higher level activities that my students are having a great time with. It took her a little time to get comfortable with the Smartboard but she is really picking it up. I have noticed the differences in myself as a coach. I had to detach myself and be honest with what I saw when I analyzed her strengths and weaknesses. That was a little hard but I made her feel comfortable when I was doing that because we are friends. I

believe she was comfortable with me even when I had to say things that she needed to improve on. I also learned firsthand how the support of a coach can motivate you to try hard and persevere like we teach our students to. Staci and I have continued to work on Friday evenings because of her desire to improve. She finally reserved the iPad cart at the end of the year. Her students were so happy and excited to have a chance to use them in class. That alone made her feel so good but deep down, she knew she had grown in the area of confidence because she found out that was all it was. She just needed the confidence to take that next step. I think that is the area she has grown the most in this whole journey. I'm so proud of her.