A District Focus on Student Learning Behaviors

This week I had the great opportunity to work with educators in Leander Independent School District (LISD) in Texas.

They held a two day professional development conference (The 19th Annual Continuous Improvement Conference).

It was a great place for me to be presenting backwards planning from student achievement to student behaviors to teacher practices, as the district has adopted a focus on Seven Student Learning Behaviors.

Introducing the conference, the board president said, “The Board and I enthusiastically support your endeavors to build the Seven Student Learning Behaviors among the students you impact every day.” The superintendent reinforced that. “By cultivating these behaviors within our students this day, you will give them the skills to be life-long learners today, tomorrow, and beyond.”

As you read through the LISD’s Seven Student Learning Behaviors consider how observable these would be in your school setting. Where they are found, what teacher actions promoted them? In schools and classrooms where they are absent, what teacher changes would be needed to initiate the student behaviors?

1. Learning Objective: Students articulate the learning objective/target and find meaning in their learning.
2. Assessment for Learning: Students assess their progress toward achieving the current learning objective/target.
3. Plan for Intervention/Challenge: Students utilize classroom processes created for intervention and/or challenge.
4. High-Yield Strategies: Students understand and use a

variety of learning strategies and tools to help them learn.
5. Student Collaboration & Learner Engagement: Students are interacting and engaged in their learning.
6. Data Analysis & Goal Setting: Students set learning goals and track their progress on an ongoing basis.
7. Assessment of Learning: Students produce evidence of their learning aligned with the learning objective/target.

My keynote to the staff reinforced that these student behaviors are aligned with the system's goals of all students (closing the gap) being college and career ready. Working with school leadership teams, principals, and instructional coaches, I identified that the same learning behaviors were critical for staff's continuous improvement. Leaders need to create a learning environment for educators that really mirrors the one desired for students.

LISD's Vision will require a continuously improving learning organization.

LISD's Vision Students will exit our system with the same passion for and joy in learning they had when they entered, having achieved high academics and built strong character, without economics determining *success.*

I appreciate the message of "empowered learner" that I find in their work. What do you think?