

Partnering with the Leading Inquiry Team to Increase Student Achievement

The purpose of this initiative is to build leadership capacity to implement improvement strategies underpinned by an inquiry cycle.

How It Works

Inquiry is a scaffolded process that guides teams of teachers and school leaders to:

- identify student learning challenges based on data
- examine instruction to understand how teaching impacts learning
- design high-leverage instructional strategies
- assess progress in student learning and teacher practice
- refine and adjust practice until student learning improves
- discover their own professional learning needs

Your work in this coaching model will guide you and your team through the **Data Wise Improvement Model** and develops the practices and habits of mind necessary for continuous improvement through three phases: Prepare, Inquire, and Act.



During the Data Wise Improvement Process, as described by authors Kathy Boudett, Elizabeth City, and Richard Murnane, teams:

- (1) initially, "**prepare**" for the work by establishing team structures and expectations, and learning principles of responsible data use
- (2) then "**inquire**" by looking for patterns in data that indicate areas for improving teaching and learning
- (3) finally "**act**" on what they learn by designing and implementing instructional improvements.

Expanding the Sphere of Success

Every school has a 'sphere of success' – a group of students with whom the school is currently successful. The challenge is to **continually expand that sphere to include all students**. Inquiry teams drill down to increasingly specific and immediate pieces of data in order to hone their understanding of challenges and increase the specificity and alignment of their response.

Getting small makes teams' work manageable in scope, improves the precision of the instructional techniques teams design to close skill gaps, and increases teacher efficacy as teams see the direct impact their teaching has on student learning and their collective capacity to expand the sphere of success.

Building Teacher Skill & Team Capacity

Collaborative inquiry is a vehicle for **distributing school leadership and building the capacity of individual teachers** and teams of teachers to understand and resolve student learning challenges. By focusing on increasing the autonomy and mastery of school team members, we can achieve sustainable and scalable school improvement.

The Role of Your Inquiry Coaches

In the 2018/2019 pilot year the Inquiry Team will collaborate with **six pilot schools from term four 2018 to the end of 2019**. Each school will be assigned to work with both Inquiry Coaches,

who will provide the school with meeting facilitation support, step by step data drill downs using individual school data, inquiry action plans and practical tools for identifying and addressing student learning challenges.

Inquiry Coaches will assist the leadership teams in these pilot schools in the development of high-functioning inquiry teams that model and lead evidence-based school improvement. Coaches set clear expectations for collaboration, create structures for adjustment to practice, provide technical support, and facilitate adult learning.

Inquiry Coaches ensure **whole-school implementation of data inquiry cycles** by supporting facilitation and planning of the inquiry cycle and assist leadership teams in planning whole school PL. Coaches will differentiate support within each school by providing coaching for their leadership teams and their PLC facilitators.