

Project Tuning Protocol

(30 minutes)

1. Introduction (1 min)

- a. Facilitator briefly introduces protocol goals, norms, and agenda.

2. Teacher(s) present the project (5 min)

- a. What is the current title?
- b. Describes the project (essential question, what will the students learn, what will students do, how long will it take?)
- c. Describes the process of the project (what kinds of support and feedback will the student receive, what are the criteria for success? How will the students exhibit & present their project?)
- d. Provide any models or work samples (if available)

3. Focus Question (1 min)

- a. Presenter poses question(s) to the participants they would like to be answered or discussed.

4. Clarifying questions (2 min)

- a. Clarifying questions have brief, factual answers.
- b. Example: "How were the groups chosen for this activity?"

5. Probing questions (3 min)

- a. Critical friends asks questions in an effort to understand better the presenters' thinking, decisions, and purposes
- b. Probing questions should *not* be advice in disguise, such as "Have you considered...?"
- c. Examples: "How did each student demonstrate their understanding by the end of the class?" or "What evidence did you gather to determine if goals of your lesson were met?"

6. Discussion (10 min)

- a. The presenter first reframes the question for the group.
- b. The presenter does not speak for this part but can take notes.
- c. It is a good idea for the presenter to physically move away from the group.
- d. Try to begin with "warm" feedback (What is good about this project?)
- e. Then move to "cool" feedback. (What could be improved?)

7. Response (5 min)

- a. Presenters respond, saying how they now view their project, having heard the group's response.
- b. It is not necessary to respond point by point to what others said.
- c. The presenter may share what struck him or her and what next steps might be taken as a result of the ideas generated by the discussion.

8. Debrief (3 min)

- a. Reflect on the *process of using the protocol*. (Was the question clear? Did we answer the essential question? Did we stick to norms? Can participants apply lessons learned to their own projects?)
- b. Resist the urge to turn the debrief back to a discussion of the dilemma.

The Six A's of Designing Projects

- **Academic Rigor**
 - How do the projects address key learning concepts, standards or help students develop habits of mind and work associated with academic and professional disciplines?
- **Authenticity**
 - How do the projects use a real world context (e.g., community and workplace problems) and address issues that matter to the students?
- **Applied Learning**
 - How do the projects engage students in solving semi-structured problems calling for competencies expected in high-performance work organizations (e.g., teamwork, problem-solving, communication, etc.)?
- **Active Exploration**
 - How do the projects extend beyond the classroom and connect to work internships, field-based investigations, and community explorations?
- **Adult Connections**
 - How do the projects connect students with adult mentors and coaches from the wider community?
- **Assessment Practices**
 - How do the projects involve students in regular exhibitions and assessments of their work in light of personal, school and real-world standards of performance?