



The new **Amplify Tablet**  
designed by Intel® Education



Learn more.



## Improve Teacher Practice, 10 Minutes at a Time

EducationWorld is pleased to present this article contributed by Steven W. Edwards, Ph.D. Nationally recognized for his innovative approach, Dr. Edwards implemented numerous groundbreaking programs to improve student performance during his 16 years as a school administrator. As President and CEO of *Edwards Educational Services, Inc.*, he has helped countless organizations tailor similar programs.

**"Time is what we want most, but what, alas! We use worst." -- William Penn**

We have all felt we do not have enough time between meetings; classroom observations; addressing student, faculty and parent needs; and the pressure of high-stakes testing to accomplish everything we want at the desired level of quality—or do we?



*My goal is to help you discover the power of the 10-Minute Meeting.*

Due to the multiple demands placed upon school leaders and teachers, they often fall prey to examining assessment data only at the macro level. Yet micro-level information gleaned from teacher-generated assessments is just as critical. Such assessments *for* learning can provide immediate feedback to teachers, allowing for real-time modifications to instruction.

So with limited time, how can we create a productive dialogue around these assessments and still have a great impact on practice? Try a 10-Minute Meeting, where a principal and teacher meet one-on-one for the sole purpose of improving practice.

During the meeting, dialogue with educators about the intent, design and intended outcomes of teacher-generated assessments (defined as tests, quizzes, projects, homework assignments, and other learning activities used to evaluate student progress), or assessments that have been secured from other sources (state, district, from specific programs, etc.). If done well, this can be accomplished in 10 minutes.

A 10-Minute Meeting ideally happens once a day between a principal and individual teachers. Here, decisions become data-driven at a personal, micro level, and real-time information relevant to each and every class provides the opportunity for re-teaching and differentiation in instruction.



These meetings also give the school leader an opportunity to evaluate teacher-created assessments. Through the inquiry process, the principal encourages the teacher to reflect on how the assessment is linked to specific standards and skills. Principal and teacher also can address higher-order thinking by determining assessments' DOK (Depth of Knowledge) or complexity level(s).

During the meeting, the teacher provides a sample of an assessment that he or she has created. The teacher also brings three samples of student work (a sample from a student who performed very well on the assessment, a

sample from a student who had some gaps, and a sample from a student who struggled with the activity).

The principal might make the following inquiries:

- Explain to me the purpose of this assessment, activity, project, or homework assignment. How does it link to our overall curriculum and standards?
- What was the intended learning outcome for the student, what are you actually assessing, and did this assessment accomplish that?
- Looking at the student product, first examine the sample from the student who was a

high performer. What made him/her a high performer? What was s/he able to demonstrate to you (be specific)?

- Looking at the medium performer, what would have made him/her a high performer? Where were this student's gaps? Did he or she understand the concepts but make simple mistakes?
- Looking at the low performer, what skills are missing? What are your plans for intervention or re-teaching for this student?

The 10-Minute Meeting should not feel like an inquisition for the teacher; rather, it should center on using the inquiry process to drive reflective practice. Both the principal and the teacher collaboratively focus on (1) developing high-quality assessments for learning that are linked to specific standards and skills and (2) ensuring that assessments engage students in higher-order thinking tasks.

"Conducting 10-Minute Meetings with my teachers allows me to be very aware of what instructional skills/curriculum my teachers are working on in their classrooms," reports Lori Howington, Principal at Fall River Elementary School in Big Sandy, West Virginia.

Together, we can analyze student work and identify areas of need for students who are struggling."

Once the 10-Minute Meeting has been mastered between the principal and individual teacher, the next step is to use the same process from teacher to teacher as well as at grade level or content meetings and vertical team meetings. When this happens, teachers have an opportunity to learn from their peers and can improve both individual and collective practice.

The micro data obtained from these meetings is immediately reflected in practice, as it allows teachers to make direct modifications to—and differentiate—their teaching methods to meet students' needs. In addition, it keeps the principal in tune with teachers' expectations for students and the quality of student products.

Ultimately, many schools have found the 10-Minute Meeting an efficient means of increasing student achievement—and that's certainly something for which we should all make time.

Education World®

Copyright © 2014 Education World