

Teacher Leadership Through Action Research

FERGUSON-FLORISSANT SCHOOL DISTRICT

2016-17

Introductions

My name is...

My role in the district is...

My favorite moment of this year so far was...

One thing I'm thinking about focusing on for my action research this semester is...

An Invitation

- Engage fully
- Be mindful of other learners
- Take care of yourself
- Be positive, open, and respectful
- Be curious

Agenda and Syllabus Review

Logistics

Review Course Meeting Dates

Clarify Stipend

Review Course Credit Options

**VISION WITHOUT
ACTION IS
MERELY A
DREAM. ACTION
WITHOUT VISION
JUST PASSES THE
TIME. VISION
WITH ACTION
CAN CHANGE THE
WORLD.**

JOEL A. BARKER

Ferguson-Florissant District Mission

Our Mission

We will empower all students to achieve their potential by cultivating a love of learning in an environment of respect, accountability and responsibility.

Why are so many of our teachers so successful?



Building teacher leadership

- Teacher leadership is the process by which **highly effective educators** take on roles at the classroom, school, district, state, or national levels in order to **advance the profession, improve educator effectiveness, and/or increase access to great teaching and learning** for all students.
- Action research is a strategy for leveraging teacher expertise and building teams that **focus on and believe in** their impact on students.

Overview of Teacher Leadership

Strategy	Purpose
Action Research	Engages teacher leaders in disciplined inquiry conducted to inform and improve practice by using the results and other research
Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	Uses rigorous standards to assess and grant national certification through involving teachers in a process of intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment and peer review
Professional Development Schools	Builds partnerships between universities and K-12 schools to focus on the preparation of new teachers, faculty professional development, inquiry directed toward improved practice, and improvement of student achievement
Professional Networks	Formal or informal communities of practice for teacher discourse, reflection, and learning which may focus on particular subject areas, teaching methods, or approaches to reform; may be face to face or virtual, local or national

What is Action Research?

- Action research is a disciplined process of inquiry conducted *by* and *for* those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the “actor” in improving and/or refining his or her actions.
 - Educational action research can be engaged in by a single teacher, by a group of colleagues who share an interest in a common problem, or by the entire faculty of a school.

What is Action Research?

ACTIVIST/ PRACTITIONER	RESEARCHER
Sees problems that need solutions	Sees connections between events & outcomes
Works collaboratively to solve problems	Uses evidence to understand the change process
Is motivated to improve situations	Is motivated to generate new ideas for change

Why Action Research?

- **Teachers and Principals:**
 - work best on problems they have identified themselves.
 - become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently.
 - help each other by working collaboratively.
 - Improve student achievement

Action research follows a seven-step process. These seven steps, which become an endless cycle for the inquiring teacher, are the following:

1. **Selecting a focus (Clarifying vision and targets)**
2. **Articulating and clarifying theories**
3. **Identifying research questions**
4. **Implementing action and collecting data**
5. **Analyzing and reflecting on data**
6. **Reporting results**
7. **Taking informed action**

Guiding School Improvement with Action Research

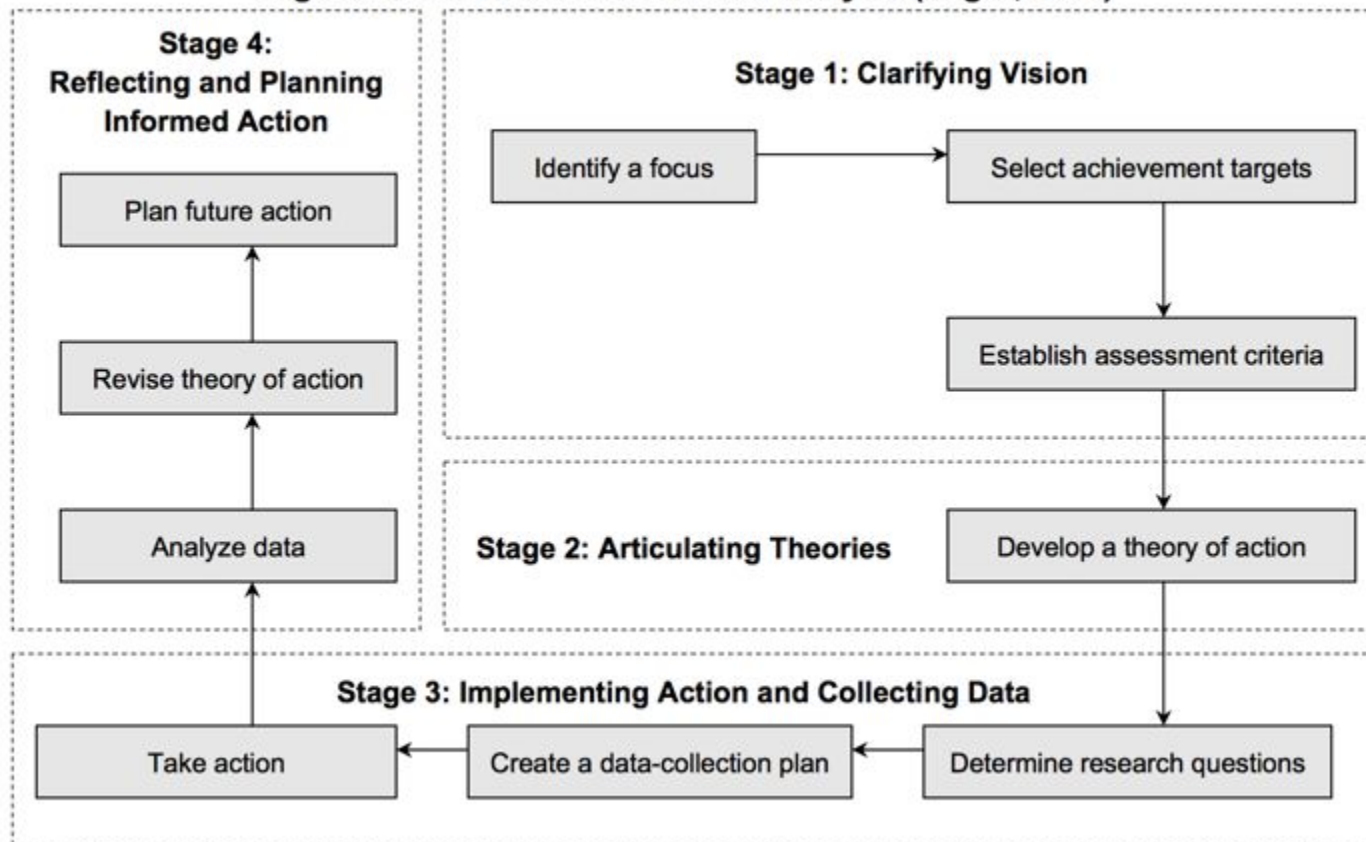
Read the article (5-7 minutes)

Find a group of 3

Follow the Protocol to discuss the article and the implications for our work together (15 minutes)

Sagor's Model

Sagor's Model: The Action Research Cycle (Sagor, 2005)



Ask Yourself....

- I would like to improve...
- I am perplexed by...
- I'm really curious about...
- I want to learn more about...
- An idea I would like to try out in my classroom is..
- Something I think would really make a difference is..
- Something my students would benefit from is..

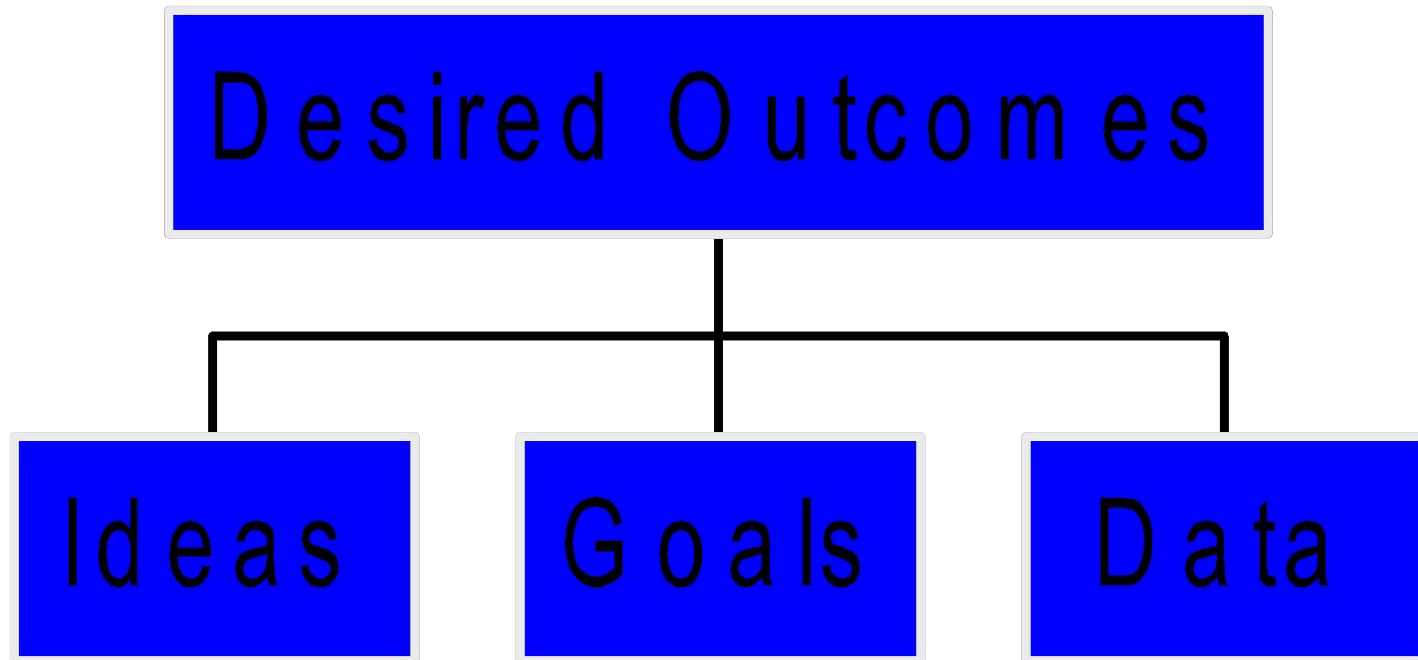
Research Topics must be:

- Researched based.
- Best practices.
- Geared to **directly** improve student achievement.

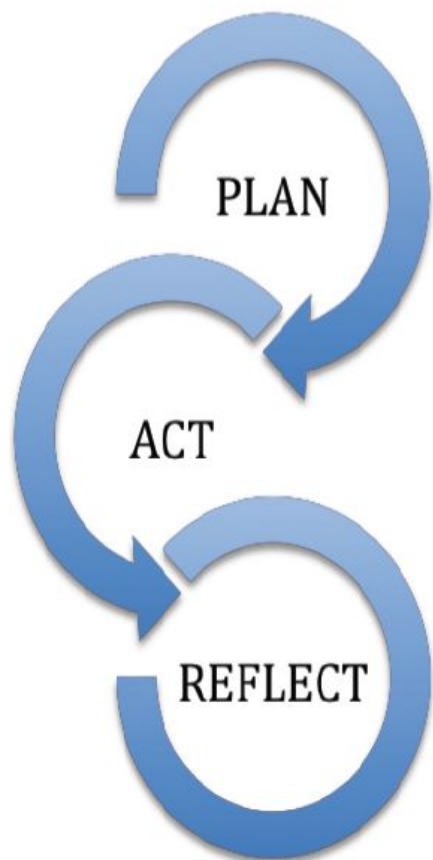
Initiating Your Own Inquiry

1. Identify two other colleagues who share your concerns and interest in the room.
2. Norm the conversation. From the outset make sure to agree on the terms of the relationship and what norms will ground your conversation.
3. Identify the issue and the WHY to design the innovation to implement and research (follow the Steps on the handout)

How do we make connections?



Steps to Exploring Practice Through Action Research



Plan

What is the practice I want to study?
Consider?

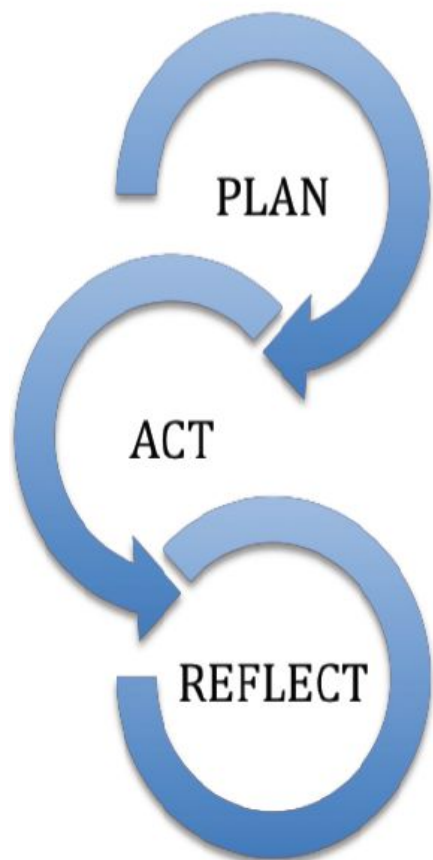
What do I want to learn about the practice?

Where did this practice come from?

What is my reasoning (student data, school culture, research, etc.) for choosing this practice?

What assumptions about teaching, learning, or leadership, and my school do I bring to this practice?

Steps to Exploring Practice Through Action Research



Act

How do we work this practice? Commit to taking an action based on this practice during the time frame of this cycle. Consider:

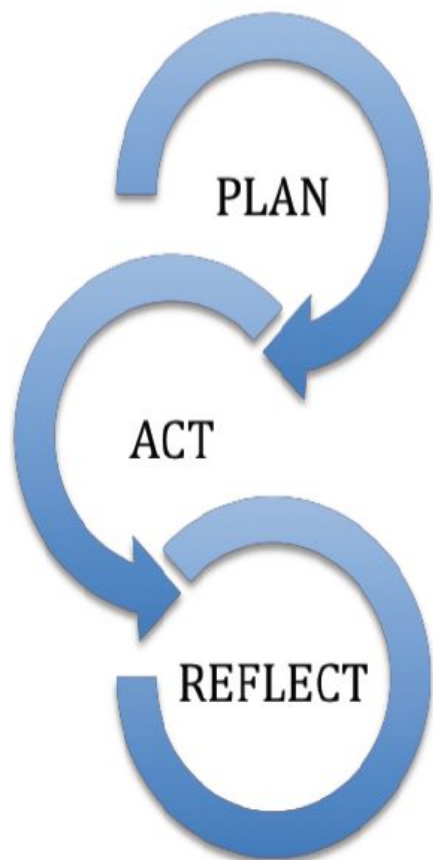
What would this practice look like in the classroom, our school, the District?

How would this practice support what we are trying to do in the classroom, school, district?

When and with whom will I use this practice? Why?

What obstacles might I encounter and how might I overcome them?

Steps to Exploring Practice Through Action Research



Reflect (before...during...after action)

How do we know if this practice works?

Consider:

What influence did this practice have on the culture of the school, my colleagues, our students? How do I know? What evidence do I have?

What did I learn? What midcourse corrections did I make? Why? What would I change?

PLAN (Selecting a Focus, Clarifying Vision and Targets)

What is the practice I want to study?

Consider:

- What do I want to learn about the practice?
- Where did this practice come from?
- What is my reasoning (student data, school culture, research, etc.) for choosing this practice?
- What assumptions about teaching, learning, or leaders, and my school do I bring to this practice?

Work to Do in the Interim

- **Clarify Vision and Articulate Theories**
 - find literature on your topic
 - visit other schools
 - meet with teams
 - gather materials
- Identify a focus
- Set Achievement Targets
- Establish Assessment Criteria
- Research Contributing Theories

Closing Reflections

What insights did you gain into your personal inquiry question?

What insights did you gain into your action research focus?

What questions do you still have?

Timeline:

- August: Select a Focus
- September: Articulate and Clarify Theories and Identify Research Questions
- October: Implement Action and Collect Data
- November: Analyze Data and Reflect on Data
- December: Report Results and Take