

SECTION 5

5:15 The GR Consultant: "Something that stuck out in your mind..."

- Bill (GR cons) Larry, one thing that helped us at one of the other schools was if something stuck out in your mind that you remember, just feed that back cause that gives the rep (AALT representative) an idea what you found interesting, which is in part the game when you present to the staff. Kind of decide what's most important representative of us, but what's most interesting that other folks might want to hear. So as you listen to the other reps, think of what was something that you heard that you remember that was most interesting.
- T I like the journal idea. (??) information that you were giving them, or I'm not sure if you said, like the information that you gave them and they're using it, right?
- T Yeah
- T So I like that a lot because come up 4th grade, and they are going to use that information.
- T That stuck out in my mind too, because it seems like a really valuable way to judge the children's work, because if you judge just a specific lesson that you did, a lot of kids would get that lesson, but is it going to transfer over into their normal everyday writing, that's where you're really going to see results or not results.
- T I like the fact that you guys ended up being at one whole table because I know that we started out that way but we're not anymore (??)
- T We're so big. It's hard, cause we're huge, but
- T And also the overhead looking at things is much better on all grade levels not just (??). And that was helpful in your development.
- T I'd like to mention the very specific strategies like the kinesthetic punctuation and the color coded editing; I think that's something that's really valuable that you can just take it and do it.
- T We like practical (?)
- Principal You like what?
- T Practical ideas.
- T Yeah.
- Principal OK, this process took about an hour, so what we want to do now take a few more minutes and try to condense your little presentation to like two minutes. And then we'll go around and will do one last time.

Section 5:16 The GR Consultant: Year-Long Achievement Data

Bill (GR cons) Let's take a look at the chart because I can just illustrate a couple of things. First of all, I heard it already, I think it was (?) who said, "Now it gets more confusing." It does, because previously, we had a space between each grade level because the end of the year results were not in there yet. Now that the end of the year results are in there, it looks like a whole string of bars and people have to focus a little bit to home in on just the beginning and middle for K or just middle and end in first grade, etc. OK?

Here is what I like you to do, we don't have a lot of time, we've got maybe 15-20 minutes at most that we can spend on this right now. But, I'd like you to take just take a look at the results for your grade level. Just pan through the ones. I'm going to give you five minutes to do that and then we'll take maybe 5 minutes just to popcorn things that you notice specific to your grade level. OK?

(Ts start looking; discussing)

Bill Now, the one thing you're looking for, you guys, first and foremost, is Is there any indications of improvement in an area that we focused on? So if you spent a good proportion of your time in your grade level meetings working on a particular thing do we see any results in that particular area?

(Ts look; discuss)

Bill Let's have a quick go around. Sandy, Blaine, anything you noticed at K?

Sandy Ummm.. yeah, I mean we were pretty we were really happy with the results. One thing we noticed was high frequency words, that's an area we can work on next year sooner. We didn't address it until kind of after mid-year when we saw what our results were mid-year, and I think that's an area next year we can aim to get higher. So ... that was one thing. And also we can tell here seeing the Santillana results for the first time, we're like wow, we can really improve in oral language, or we need to work on it, and it's not something we addressed at all during the year this is the first time seeing it, so that that's an area-- We were just talking about how the kindergarten classes really need that. We need to do more of it.

(Bill calls on 5th grade rep)

T 5th grade I think overall we've made many improvements many improvements overall. Umm... I would like to see next year work a lot on our conventions and improve it even more so. We took a little bit of a depth this time around from the beginning, middle, and end, it took a little bit of a dip, and I think we need to stay more focused on that and set structure and all that that we tied in with the conventions. Also I'd like to see, and we made an I think an outstanding improvement in our spelling. We have a lot more 5th graders spelling at the conventional level. So that's wonderful. And in the high frequency words, again a big improvement, we hit the 50% mark, but I

think as 5th graders we need to go a little higher than that, I think we need to we need to go a lot higher that. They're going into middle school, and their expectations are going to be higher, so I think that as 5th grader teachers we need to focus on spelling. And even though we got 50%, we should high at this end of the game.

Bill Good.

Section 5:17 The GR Consultant: Help in Interpreting the Data

Bill (GR cons) In the mid-year the one thing that gets my attention is that we had 10% N/As [not applicable, meaning "not scoreable"]. (Ts: oh; oh that's--). You know what I mean? (Ts: yeah) So that actually that's about 17%, and the same kind of thing happens when you look at conventions. If everybody would just turn the page, you see how it goes from 35 to 16 to 19. But you see the 10% N/A? (T: yeah) Which maybe teachers recorded an N/A for a kid who didn't make an attempt, you know what I mean? which would mean that those N/As are probably 1s [lowest score], so that may be what's going on there as well you're thinking well maybe we got some variations from just one time to the next in terms of the story we're asking them to write about.

T Spelling, there was an increase on, there was a definite increase, a great increase on conventional, so the spelling is improving although, the trend--

Bill Stafford, can you pause just one minute? Can you give me two numbers to ice that point for me?

T OK, 29% going from the mid-year to 44%.

Bill and start with the beginning

T 18

Bill Yeah. So when you can say that and then you can also ice it with "we went from 18 to 44% of our kids, who were evaluated as spelling conventionally," that just brings home the point, it it-- that's what the numbers help you do.

T and then that might have to do why the transitional is less because maybe some of those transitional went up to conventional so

Bill Absolutely, that's why you would see the number of 3s or the number of transitional, or 4s, going down because they are moving into the higher level.

T And then, we went up from, on the high frequency from 53 in the beginning to 63 on the high end. So we are making progress getting the spellers to the upper end. And then, we did well on the ELD levels. We didn't even have, I don't think we had any 5s at the beginning of the year, and yet we have like 18%, oh wait a minute, we had, yeah (confers with colleague)--

Bill you had 21 fours, 21% were fours and then by the end of the year the 13% were fives and 38% were fours (T yeah) That's nice. And 3rd grade's really important for that big jump. It's not that uncommon, 1st grade teachers, you-- for the kids that were coming in ELD level two or three you would want to them to four. If they're starting out at one, at the beginning of the year, you got them in two or three by the end of the year, you've made really strong progress. But a lot of times even through 2nd grade, the kids begin to plateau and stay at level three. Level four in terms of oral English has a lot to do with more academic oral English, so that's a nice jump.

T It was, I was-- When giving a test it was interesting cause you know when you get to the exit test (Bill: Yeah), it's much more difficult for them to pass the exit test to get into that five. That jump from four to five is a big jump.

Section 5:18 The GR Consultant: Guidelines to Present the Data

Bill The first thing is just to familiarize them with what we have here, just as I did this morning. This is the table with the numbers; this is the conversion to the percentage. And then explain to them how this bar operates. And then, I would leave it either to grade level to common planning time or to individuals to look at the grade by grade results, and I would just draw their attention to the K-5 pattern. And there are two things that I would do; one is you got a nice pattern of increases like, 3's and 4's and increases in 2s and it actually, you see it in every graph, you see that?

T But not there

T No

Bill There's a little different here (laughter); that's the one exception. And so you can clearly make the point that we seem to be making progress. Now we always know that kids are going to make progress, you know what I mean? And if teachers are really on it, kids are going to make progress, so once they see the slope of the line, then you can turn your attention to the last bar because that is the bottom line. Let's look at what we stand at the end of this year. As an example, we had 50% of our kids in communication who are at level 3 or better in other words meeting the grade level standard and a total of 82 percent that were partially meeting or better, OK? So we still have a fair amount of work to do, you guys, to get everybody performing at or close to grade level, but we're definitely getting there.

T Like when we go back to common planning [with] these results, we can give them all out at staff meeting people aren't really going to have time to mull over and think about it. So then you back to common planning. And in the meeting, is it advised to have like a summary that you can present, analyzing the results for your grade level?

Bill Well, two ways to go. If you have a common planning, you know what I mean? If you have a common planning in which you can share these results, I think one possibility is to sort of do what we did and try

to come up with a group summary: What did we find for communication, for conventions, you know what I mean? Just have a chart with a little space "what do we know?" And what's been really helpful that chart that started I think in second grade what gains do we see and to what do we attribute it? What lack of gains did we see and what do we have to do next year?

T (?)

Bill You know, plus minus and then to what do we attribute it? Drawing those attributions really important.

T Do some long term planning on your agenda is based on that?

Bill Well, it made just kick off the kinds of things that will start up in July. OK?

Section 5:19 The GR Consultant: The overall concept.

Bill Mark?

T I came right out of the common planning. I left this meeting to go to the common planning and came back to it and I told them what we were doing in here. And they were surprised because they really didn't have an overall concept of what all of these tests, the results were being done with these tests. That was the first thing, so I think maybe explaining this to them before they're given the tests, in advance earlier on in the year so that they know that there's a-- that they're going to get some type of feedback from what they're giving, directly. That was one thing and then the other thing was--

Bill Mark, can I interrupt you, just for one second, cause it's a strange contra-- situation you face, because on the one hand, if you start something like this and you explain too much (T: Right) people will just get more and more confused and it's almost like-- I don't know that they'll ever understand it until Tuesday when they see-- (Principal: Monday) Monday when everything kind of comes together they see the results and they can look at the progress over the year. It's hard, you almost gotta get down and do it (T: Right), before people-- and then-- but you got to have something like this; you have to bring it to closure.

Principal Yeah, but I think even us in here. We knew what we were doing all along, but we never dreamed that we'd see something like this, today. We all knew we were assessing beginning, middle and end and we know that Mia was getting tallies and Bill was helping us out, but I think that we were all beyond pleasantly surprised seeing this. I mean, we're all going to go out and party (laughter). So-- and we who are the AALT who are dealing with it, I can just imagine what you know the teachers (?). I think Tuesday-- Monday (laughter) I think Monday this will really drive it home for everybody.

T I wanted to piggy back on that because (?) same grade level and knowing how our people might feel at our grade level, I think that it's

very important we as AALT members or grade level chairs or whatever, we need to maybe give them an idea of what the assessment is doing for them, not so much to look at in the document, but that it is a valuable tool for you as a teacher to know where you need to go next. If you don't see the value of assessment and all it is to you is a final product, then I don't see-- I can see why you would be frustrated in having to give it (?). If we can spin it in a way, if we can get them to see that oh, you can use this to help you guide your instruction, if the focus is there, and I don't how you would say that, to get that message across, but, I am thinking if they saw that, then they wouldn't be as uptight about doing it.

Section 5:20 The GR Consultant: Why are they waiting months later?

T Well, I asked them, I said, if we gave immediate feedback for you and how your kids perform in your classroom, if there was a way to do that, like, we had talked about being able to tabulate it quickly and get it back. I said, would you find that information valuable? They said, Oh, yeah, you could do that? so it was kind of like well, I'm giving the test but I'm going something right away that I can use in my classroom to make a decision about how many kids I am going to teach differently and modify, as opposed to something that's going to be given months later that--

Bill Well, but, Mark, why they are waiting months later? I mean, why aren't they looking are their rosters, you know what I mean?

T I can't answer that question, I can't answer, I'm just saying that,

Ts (talking)

T What was that?

Bill Cause I've talked to a lot of teachers who say, you know, independent of what AALT does in tabulating school-wide, who basically do the assessment, record the results (T: Yeah) before they tally, and then they start scrutinizing (T: Right), you know, which of my kids move from 1 to 2 and 2 to 3.

T Yeah, I am not arguing, I am stating a fact

Bill But, they're probably not doing that

T It's possible

Bill Ok, fair enough, I'm just...

T One thing I noticed, was C track finished their, you know, their results earlier, so we kind of had to tabulate C track results so we could show them how they did and then B and A finished more at the same time. It was I think it was like B and C finished at the same time and then in the beginning of the year because when they are on track together, and then, at the end of the year, B and A finish at the same. But if you don't, if you don't, show them how they did like right after the results

were done, like we did show C track before they went off track and finish their year, it was helpful. Also by doing it that way throughout the year you could-- the other tracks even if though they haven't done their testing yet saw what was happening and then it kind of drove what lessons we were going to pick all along.

Bill So, what, if I am hearing you right

(they start speaking at the same time)

T The AALT chairperson did it

Bill --coming together as a grade level to look at the results (T: mm hm) probably--

T Right after they were due.

Bill --is really important for getting individuals teachers go back and look at the individual results for that class.

T Right.

Section 5:21 The GR Consultant: Too much testing going on?

Bill Are you guys picking up rumblings from the grade level that there is just too much testing going on. Or is it probably a matter of them not quite yet having the big picture yet and seeing where it all comes--

T It's managing doing the testing and managing their classrooms at the same time. (Ts: Yeah, uh-huh) It's a management thing. They're overwhelmed because-- I, I believe some of the teachers are having trouble just managing the classrooms, period, and then when they're given something else to do now of another set of things, and they get flustered and then it falls apart.

T I don't know if it's much of a management but more of a-- at first it did seem overwhelming, for a lot of the at least in the 4th grade level it seemed overwhelming for us, that there were all of these different tests and a lot of like the Santillana are very individual tests that you can't take whole groups. And that management came came right away, and Mia was really nice enough to go to a lot of the different classrooms and help us out with that so I really thank you for that because you really helped a lot of 4th grade teachers who were having problems with that. But I think that they're getting that sense that there was a lot in-- on top of teaching and doing the four domains of writing, not just, you know, summarizing and then comparing the rubrics. And it just really felt overwhelming for a while.

T 4th grade had the Stanford9, the writing component of it, and then we had performance assignments for the ELL kids (Bill: Yes, yes), and it was just like, I remember one comment, (?) what else?? It was just like a stack of tests and it was where are we supposed to teach? And I think that maybe it was that by the end of this year we kind of you know, like this year is kind of like an experimentation figuring it out,

how you are going to manage everything you need to do along with administering the test and not just focus on one thing. I think that this was like the trial, the practice and next year it's going to be a lot better. (T: Yeah, sure) And we have this for like new teachers, maybe, and show that this is why we are doing this, they will be more accepting of it and they won't you know put up the front where, you know, I don't want to do all of these tests.

T You gave us the Hazeltine writing (Bill: Yeah) guidelines things. I introduced them in common planning today, and they were like, oh, this will, ok I could it this way. So it was like having like a little bit of guidance and a map of what should be done and when and the best to go about doing it, seemed to alleviate a lot of anxiety.

Section 5:22 The GR Consultant: Display of Anchor Papers

Bill At our last AALT meeting Diane Cady was saying, you know, I wish for this writing assessment that we could see like a display of the writing across the grade levels. As it turns out we have that display, you guys, and if it's not been something that's been brought to your attention, Larry has a binder. It looks like this, OK? and for each grade level-- if your grade level hasn't seen this and then it's just one of those things. For each grade level, like grade level 2, there's a packet of papers that show what does a four look like, what does a three look like, what does a two look like what does a one look like? This maybe be completely familiar to you, but at the same time at the last meeting we realized that some people didn't know about this resource, OK?

T Anchor papers (?)

Bill Anchor papers. Example papers. The other thing is then I took papers from those and we made a display so that you can see, well, here's kindergarten, here is what a four looks like, here's the criteria for the rubric, here's what a three looks like, here's what the two looks like, here is what a one looks like. And you can actually walk across and then see the same thing for 1st grade, four, three, two, one. 2nd grade, 4, 3, 2, 1, 3rd grade, 4th grade, and 5th grade, so the people could get a sense of the continuum that's at play here. And also know that these exact examples are also contained within that binder, OK? so if you-- with your own grade level or maybe at a faculty meeting at the beginning of next year, you might want to display that in some way so people can see how that all works out. OK?

T Also when we're grading our papers, it'd be nice if we each had like a reference.

Bill That's right, that's right. One of the first things that you might do when you get into your scoring session at the beginning of next year is just take out the set of example papers and say, you guys, let's just look through some of these example papers and see if we all agree with the score that was given. It just primes the pump and gets people ready to score their own papers.

T Yeah, I know what you're talking about, displaying and teaching your children what's expected of them. This is what a three looks like, and this is what you need to do if you want a three; this is what you need to do if you want a four (Ts: various comments; right, right). Right, and show then actual examples of it, so that they know what they look like.

Bill For teachers scoring for kids to learn to write, seeing examples. Can you imagine writing anything if you never had a chance to look at an example?

Section 5:23 The GR Consultant: Importance of Follow Up

Bill OK, so I just wanted to before we got off of that I just wanted to share that that's the resource that's available. And Mia if you wouldn't mind maybe what we'll do is make sure the grade level rep has a master copy of the anchor papers for every grade.

Mia Ok.