National School Reform Faculty

Harmony Education Center

www.nsrfharmony.org

Tuning for Equity Protocol

Tuning Protocol *developed by Joseph McDonald and David Allen, with adaptation for equity focus by Mary Hastings.*

1. **Introduction** (5 minutes)
   - Facilitator briefly introduces protocol goals, guidelines, and schedule
   - Participants briefly introduce themselves (if necessary)

2. **Presentation** (15 minutes)
   The presenter has an opportunity to share the context for the student work:
   - Information about the students and/or the class — what the students tend to be like, where they are in school, where they are in the year.
     Descriptions of the students grounded in evidence the way descriptions are shared in the Collaborative Assessment Conference would be useful here. This might eliminate predisposing the participants to a particular "view" of the class or students in question.
   - Assignment or prompt that generated the student work
   - Student learning goals or standards that inform the work
     Potential clarifying questions might be, "How are all students being served with this assignment?" or "How was it 'differentiatied' for the members of this particular class?
   - Samples of student work — photocopies of work, video clips, etc. — with student names removed.
     More questions to consider: How did the presenter select the work? Was it truly random? Does it represent not only the range of learning, but also the range of diversity in the class?
   - Evaluation format — scoring rubric and/or assessment criteria, etc.
     Questions here could focus on how evaluation is handled. Are clear, high expectations stated for all, using student friendly language that guides the students to equitable outcomes?
   - Focusing question for feedback
   - Participants are silent; no questions are entertained at this time.

3. **Clarifying Questions** (5 minutes)
   - Participants have an opportunity to ask "clarifying" questions in order to get information that may have been omitted in the presentation that they feel would help them to understand the context for the student work. Clarifying questions are matters of "fact." The facilitator should be sure to limit the questions to those that are "clarifying," judging which questions more properly belong in the warm/cool feedback section.

4. **Examination of Student Work Samples** (15 minutes)
   - Participants look closely at the work, taking notes on where it seems to be in tune with the stated goals, and where there might be a problem. Participants focus particularly on the presenter's focusing question. Presenter is silent; participants do this work silently.

This protocol was originally written in the 1990s/2000s. We encourage you to purchase an NSRF membership to access newer materials and to enroll in CFG Coaches' Training to access all of the updated materials and to develop a more thorough, experiential understanding. Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community such as a Critical Friends Group® and facilitated by a skilled coach. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for new or experienced coaches, please visit the National School Reform Faculty website at www.nsrfharmony.org.

5. Pause to reflect on warm and cool feedback (2-3 minutes)

- Participants take a couple of minutes to reflect on what they would like to contribute to the feedback session.
- Presenter is silent; participants do this work silently.

6. Warm and Cool Feedback (15 minutes)

- Participants share feedback with each other while the presenter is silent. The feedback generally begins with a few minutes of warm feedback, moves on to a few minutes of cool feedback (sometimes phrased in the form of reflective questions), and then moves back and forth between warm and cool feedback. Warm feedback may include comments about how the work presented seems to meet the desired goals; cool feedback may include possible "disconnects," gaps, or problems. Often participants offer ideas or suggestions for strengthening the work presented.
- The facilitator may need to remind participants of the presenter's focusing question, which should be posted for all to see. Presenter is silent and takes notes.

7. Reflection (5 minutes)

- Presenter speaks to those comments/questions they choose while participants are silent.
- This is not a time to defend oneself, but is instead a time for the presenter to reflect aloud on those ideas or questions that seemed particularly interesting. Facilitator may intervene to focus, clarify, etc.

8. Implications for Equity

Like the Collaborative Assessment Conference, it may be valuable to discuss the implications for teaching and learning of what we've heard and discussed using the lens of equity. The reflection questions below would enrich the learning and help us "interrupt" inequities that may be raised by the Tuning. The point is not to shut the presenter down, or put them on the defensive but rather to challenge everyone involved to a higher level of awareness. Thus placing these at the end of the warm/cool feedback session both addresses the focus question and takes it beyond the presenter's work. Possible Reflection questions following the activity: (from both Nancy Mohr's draft of LASW for Equity and additions by Debbie Bambino)

- What have each of us learned about building the habit of equity through doing this protocol?
- What are our own next steps?
- Who's at the table? Who's missing?
- Why aren't those voices included?
- How can we include those whose perspectives have been silenced historically?
- How does the work we've just done serve all of our students?
- How does it serve those students who have been marginalized in the past?

9. Debrief (5 minutes)

- How well does the presenter feel the question has been answered?
- How well do we feel we answered the presenter's question?
- Facilitator-led discussion of this tuning experience.

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