



Innovare & Lee A. Tolbert Community Academy

Innovare Social Innovation Partners is an education consulting group that provides an intelligent software platform that guides education leaders through key milestones in the continuous improvement cycle.

LATCA chose to partner with Innovare Social Innovation Partners (SIP) to help enhance data literacy throughout the school, starting with the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). As a leadership team, they were interested in better goal setting practices and monitoring student progress toward goals that would lead to overall better achievement. Thus the purpose of research at LATCA was to test the conjecture that in-person and virtual staff development focused on data literacy at the leadership level would increase data literacy at the teacher level, and teachers would ultimately be able to practice the strategies and techniques Innovare SIP worked on with leadership to impact their classroom achievement levels. The lead end user was the principal, although the Innovare SIP typically worked with the entire ILT which included the principal.

Theory of Action

Inputs - Key Levers - Innovation/ Intervention
If we do the following...

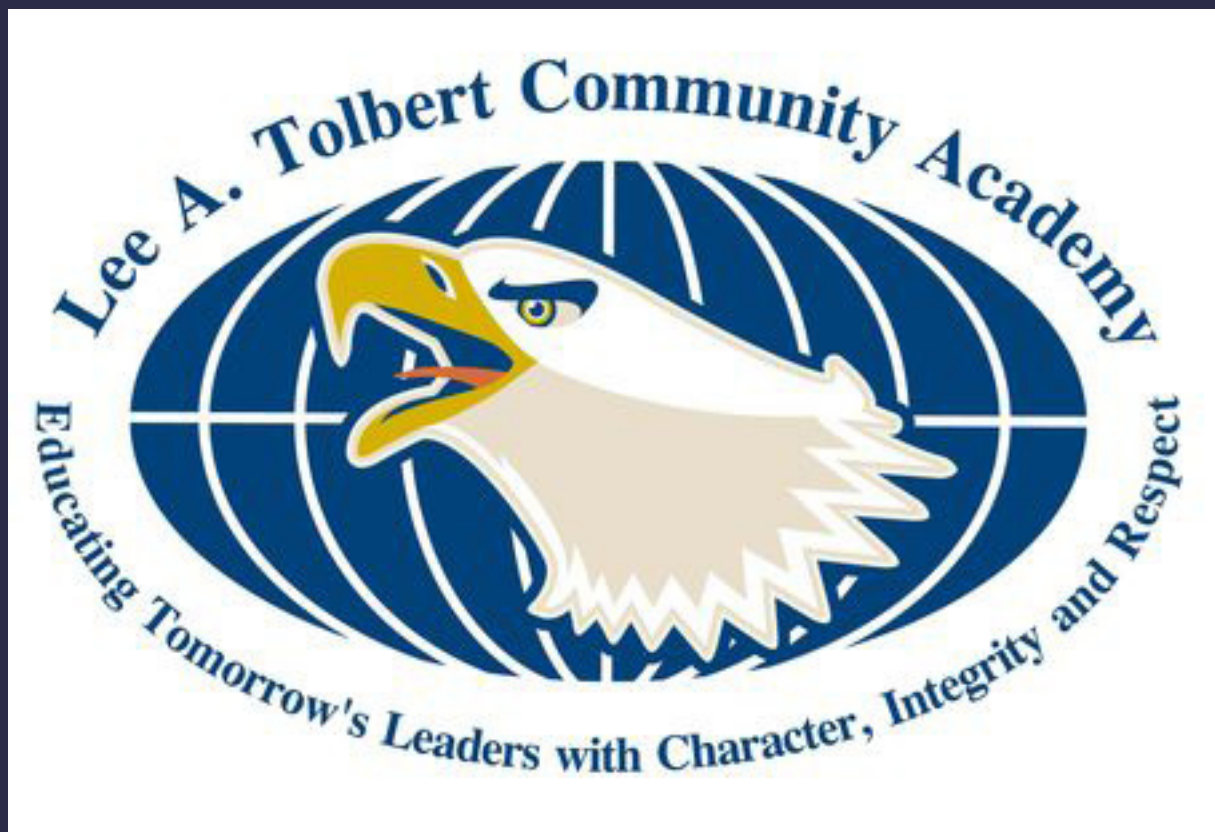
- a. Help school leaders self-reflect on their own practice and correlated impact using relevant data.
- b. Help school leaders use protocols for problem solving.
- c. Provide in-person and virtual staff development focusing on goal setting and personalization.

Desired Practice - Implementation - Outputs
Then we will impact practice/ behavior in the following ways...

- a. ILT will implement agendas focusing on data.
- b. ILT will implement problem solving process.
- c. ILT will train teacher teams to set improvement goals for individual students.
- d. Teachers will develop student-level goals,

Measurable Student Outcomes by Nov 8 - Impact Goals
And we will reach our student outcome goals...

- a. Observable changes in the school leaders' ability to use data to identify problems of practice.
- b. Observable changes in the teachers' ability to use data to identify problems of practice.



SCHOOL BACKGROUND & PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Lee A. Tolbert Community Academy (LATCA) is a K-8 public charter school founded in 1999 with a focus on preparing students for entrepreneurial leadership in the 21st century. Located in the Center City neighborhood in midtown Kansas City, the school serves more than 500 students who are 100% free and reduced lunch, primarily African-American, and 10% have an individualized education plan (IEP). The school is sensitive to the fact that a majority of their students have experienced some sort of trauma. In response, the school has ensured all staff are trained in various methods of care and instruction. They are a trauma-informed school, a B.I.S.T. (Behavior Intervention Support Team) school, and a P.B.I.S. (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) school. They have multiple community partnerships to serve students in need of extra, holistic supports. Through the LINC (Local Investment Commission), they provide extended day care for students to accommodate parents working non-traditional work schedules.

METHODOLOGY

The primary method used to track and assess implementation and the Theory of Action was document review. Innovare SIP's online platform provides multiple tools for school improvement, which they also provide in-person and virtual training on, such as a self-assessment rubric, a driver diagram, the 5 Why's protocol worksheet, a meeting agenda template, and a student-level goal setting spreadsheet. Then, progress using these tools can be assessed by accessing the school's individual portal or via online sharing.

Throughout the study, each of these documents were reviewed for use in practice. In addition to completion of the multiple resources, the goal was to assess evidence of continuous use. This included reviewing school leadership team meeting agendas for use of the template and discussion/agenda items reflecting the multiple other resources shared by Innovare SIP. As well, the use of student-level goal setting spreadsheet by teachers.

FINDINGS

At the time of this report, the study is currently ongoing. To date, the document review revealed completion of the self-assessment rubric, driver diagram, 5 Why's protocol, and implementation of the meeting agenda. The Instructional Leadership Team identified unique primary and secondary drivers for each of their two areas of focus: Math and ELA performance. For example, with Math performance, the primary drivers identified are high-quality instruction, school culture, stakeholder engagement, and the ILT itself. While the ILT is also a primary driver for ELA performance, the secondary drivers are different. An online resource sharing aspect of Innovare's platform allows the leaders at Lee A. Tolbert to learn from other schools and research publications about what strategies work for activating the drivers identified by the team.

Innovare's goal setting template was also completed, but the ILT has not yet begun using the tool. The next steps in implementation are for Innovare SIP to train the ILT on the goal setting process and using the template, and the ILT to train teacher teams in the same practices. As such, there have been no observable changes in the school leaders'/teachers' ability to use data to identify problems of practice (desired outcome), but only due to timing of implementation the fact that the study is ongoing at the time of this report. Still, the Principal has given great qualitative evidence of the benefits of working with Innovare SIP. "Innovare has helped us focus on the areas we want to improve and the dashboard gives us a quick view of data in one location. I love that! It is easy to read and very user friendly."

MODIFICATIONS

During the K12 Fellowship Program, Innovare SIP began working on a new and improved platform to support education leaders to drive student achievement and impact their communities. Whereas the current platform is G-suite based, the new platform has been designed by their team and uses a proprietary technology. It was developed conducting design research with the Lee A Tolbert Instructional Leadership Team and their other school partners. Due to tremendous feedback from their LEU's, the new platform will have several new features and enhancements to old features such as in-app messaging, notifications, administrator privileges for various users, and connectivity to other users.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall Innovare SIP and LATCA have dedicated many hours in in-person and conference meeting time to professional development and implementation of practices that can improve their functioning as a leadership team and school. Although they are midway through implementation, the Instructional Leadership Team gave many praises early on about the impact of their time with Innovare on their own learning and productivity as a team that could impact their students. The major limitation of this study is the short time that does not allow for a full cycle of implementation with Innovare, and therefore precludes the ability to assess outcomes. However, both Innovare and LATCA are committed to continuing with implementation and studying the outcome of this work.