Y6 Apollo: Operationalizing Week 6

**Purpose**

We know that our week 6 vision can lead to dramatic increases in student achievement by creating focused, purposeful, urgent, and calm scholars who maximize every moment of instruction. We need only look as far as schools like Excellence Girls, LPOH, or Endeavor. However, we also know that there are other schools with the same or very similar visions that don’t reach their goals in the first 6 weeks of school with long lasting ramifications for kids. Execution is THE difference. We need to plan for how to make our week 6 vision live and breathe, and to ensure that nothing stops us from achieving our goals.

**Snowball Strategy**

We deeply believe in the efficacy of quickly moving our teachers closest to proficiency to proficiency first. This strategy will:

* Build schoolwide momentum.
* Create a pervasive sense over time that “this is how we do things at our school.”
* Allow us to ensure that the maximum number of scholars are getting a high quality education as quickly as possible.
* Free up resources so that we can truly support struggling classrooms and teachers at an incredibly high level.

Given these facts, we will be explicitly prioritizing supporting teachers who are approaching proficiency throughout week 6. Note, however that this does NOT mean that struggling teachers will not receive support.

**Weekly LT Execution**

\*We will always be outcomes driven and strategic in our actions and use of time. The goal of this section is not to dictate what must happen but to outline a general strategy for effectively utilizing time.

*Weekly Flow*

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| --- | --- |
| Day | Key Actions |
| Monday | * Heavy RTC * Coaching meetings * Narrating bright spots and small wins * Execute weekly strategy * LT Skill building meeting (after school through week 6 likely) * LP feedback |
| Tuesday | * Heavy RTC * Coaching meetings * Narrating bright spots and small wins * Execute weekly strategy * LP feedback |
| Wednesday | * Begin weekly data collection * Reduced RTC (potentially only prioritized movers) * Execute weekly strategy |
| Thursday | * All Data collected by 12PM * Action planning meeting analysis completed by 5PM * Action planning meeting lead by Jesse * Execute weekly strategy |
| Friday | * Heavy RTC * Modify/create PD based on action planning meeting * Individual LT scheduling check-in: what will hold you back from meeting your benchmarks next week? That’s what we co-do (define level of support) |

*Daily Actions*

Morning LT walkthroughs—norming vision/scoring, building skill in RTC (30-45 minutes)

Afternoon LT walkthroughs-- norming vision/scoring, building skill in RTC (30-45 minutes)

Morning meeting—meet as a full LT to name and address broken windows, share updates, and problem solve in the moment

Co-doing—most of Jesse’s day will be spent with one or more deans modeling and providing in the moment feedback/support

**Action Planning Meetings**

Action planning meetings during weeks 1-6 will be THE key structure that we have in place to ensure that we have the right strategy and that we are highly effective in our execution of that strategy. The two purposes of our action planning meetings are:

1. Assess progress to goal (PTG) and build shared accountability and focus on results.
   1. Did we make the progress we aimed to make this week? Why or why not?
   2. Are we on track to achieving our goal? Why or why not?
   3. How many teachers can we have at proficiency (in terms of student outcomes) by the end of next week? Who are they?
2. Analyze our strategy and adjust our approach as necessary.
   1. What do we need to do over the next week to ensure that we make the maximum amount of progress towards our goals?
   2. What do we need to do to ensure that we move the teachers we say we are going to move?
   3. What should Friday PD look like?
   4. How should we leverage our development structures?
   5. What do we need to ensure that all teachers maintain proficiency?

**Pre work for action planning meetings**

Each coach will complete the following analysis of their coaching portfolio and send to Jesse at least an hour in advance of our action planning meeting (as necessary, Jesse will co-do analysis of data with deans on Wednesday evening):

1. Individual Teacher—slot each teacher into the appropriate bucket and then complete a short bulleted reflection for that teacher (guiding questions below
   1. Meeting/exceeding the bar:
      1. What’s their next step?
      2. How (if at all) should we leverage them to help other teachers develop faster?
   2. Cusp teachers
      1. What is holding them back from proficiency?
      2. What will it take for them to get to proficiency?
      3. Can they reach proficiency in one week?
   3. Struggling teachers
      1. Why are they struggling? Do they know they are struggling? Do they take ownership over their struggle?
      2. Do they know what excellence looks like?
      3. What supports will be most high impact for them?

* Prior to the Action Planning Meeting, briefly review the Teacher Tracker Google Doc and incorporate feedback for other coaches where appropriate.

1. Coaching Cohort
   1. What trends do you see in your cohort in terms of both strengths and weaknesses?
   2. Are there particular teams or groups that share struggles?
2. Support
   1. Coaching efficacy
      1. Did you hit your benchmarks this week? Why or why not?
      2. Where were you highly effective?
      3. Where weren’t you? What do you need to do differently?
   2. Interventions
      1. Which interventions were successful? How do you know?
      2. Which interventions weren’t successful? How do you know?
      3. What trends did you notice about what worked or where teachers got stuck?

**Action planning meeting agendas**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| High-Level Progress  (5 minutes) | * Are we on track to meeting our Week 6 Vision? * What percentage of our classrooms are hitting our benchmarks? * Did we hit our benchmarks this week? |
| Where are we?  (15 minutes) | * Who moved? Yay! * Who didn’t? Why not? Think about: * Teacher skill * Teacher mindset * Coaching efficacy * Intervention efficacy * Messaging/investment * What worked really well? Why? How can we capitalize on that? |
| Who’s where?  (10 minutes)  *(Review AOTY tool)* | * Did we sort teachers correctly? * What are the trends for what people need? * What are the skills of our strongest folks? |
| Goal Setting  (10 minutes) | * What are our benchmarks for next week? Who are we moving? Logic check goals and name what this means we will not do. * What skills need to get built for us to meet our benchmarks? |
| What to do?  (30 minutes) | * What should our PD look like? Whole group or split? Who’s leading? * What skill do we need to build to reach our benchmarks? * How will deans spend their time? * How should we leverage bright spots? * How will we ensure that we start and end the week strong? What does that mean we will do tomorrow? Thursday? * How will Jesse spend his time? * Synthesize and review next steps |

**Morning Meeting Agendas**

The LT will meet daily during the first 6 weeks of school for 10-15 minutes for a standing meeting. The rough agenda will be:

* Pump up/positivity
* Make sure we have captured broken windows
* Logistical updates and key information sharing
* Take care of any quick hits
* Align on any cascading communication
* Potentially very quick practice and skill-building

**Sharing Data**

There are 3 reasons that we choose to share data with our staff during the week 1-6 vision:

1. Create an honest, transparent, and data driven culture.
2. Celebrate wins and intentionally highlight excellence.
3. Ensure that we are building teacher ownership over outcomes for kids.

As with all student achievement data at our school, all data collected during week 1-6 observations will be publicly accessible. However, we will only intentionally share out wins, teachers who are strong so folks can learn from them, and overall and grade specific data.

We will have a few key methods for sharing and communicating about data as a school:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Structure | Owner | Notes |
| Daily/Weekly whole school Debriefs | Jesse | 30% celebrating wins, narrating bright spots  10% overview of where we are as a school—general trends, + and –  60% focus on 1 big rock that we can win on within 1 week |
| Whole team data blast | Max | Echoes key messages from whole school debriefs  Includes growth, bright spots, motivation, and quick hits |
| Weekly Individual/co-teacher reflections | Coaches | Teachers complete self-guided reflection where they look over classroom data, own results, set next steps for themselves and send to coach. This happens on off benchmark weeks. |
| Week 2, 4, and 6 stepbacks | Coaches | At each bellweather date teachers will sit down individually or with co-teacher for a coach lead stepback on progress to goals, mindsets, and action steps |
| Scorecards | GL Owners | Grade level owners will give in the moment feedback and a copy of scorecards for R/P observations |

\*data for R/P to be added in later

**Defending the Bar**

There are TWO main purposes when observing and intervening in a classroom: coaching, and defending the bar. As a school and network we have done a lot of the former and not enough of the latter.

Defending the bar is the act of holding teachers and scholars to our shared vision and high expectations in the moment. While doing so we are always coaching, but it is not our primary purpose. An example:

* Noah walks into Jesse’s class. Jesse is a struggling first year teacher. Scholars are not meeting the vision for independent work in a variety of ways (looking around, low quality work, talking while working, etc.).
* Noah assesses the situation and tells Jesse that the classroom is not meeting the bar for independent work, calls his shots, and models positively getting to 100%.
* Afterwards, Noah names for Jesse what he did, and tells him that the #1 thing he must get right is being seen looking to check for scholar habits.
* In a quick follow up meeting Noah asks Jesse what he affirmed him doing in the moment, why that was important, what he gave feedback about in the moment, ensures Jesse identifies BSL, that Jesse can identify the impact, and then quickly practices the application of this with Jesse.

In this instance Noah was doing coaching of Jesse, but his primary purpose is actually to constantly show Jesse the vision for what scholars need to be doing and defend the bar of high expectations. This ensures that Jesse is always clear on what he is working towards.

As a leadership team it is our job to hold people accountable, and to build skill like crazy. But even more foundationally, it is our job to set the bar high and clearly and constantly communicate those expectations to our team.

To do this in classrooms:

1. We will constantly coach, push, and model to get classrooms to meet our vision.
2. Help teachers distinguish between the action step and the vision.
3. Reinforce and celebrate teacher and scholar progress and small wins, while not lowering the bar.

**Utilizing Bright Spots**

The most important role of bright spots is to serve as a beacon of excellence in the school. We will do this by:

1. Identifying teachers who are consistently leading scholars to the outcomes we are looking towards.
2. Naming the accomplishment of those teachers, and either share or have the teacher share the actions they took to reach those outcomes.
3. Filming those teachers in action and sharing that with teachers who are struggling.
4. Having teachers observe bright spots in action (with clear guiding questions, and potential dean support).
5. Having bright spots model lessons in other classrooms.
6. Having bright spots provide feedback in the moment to teachers during practice or during instruction.

We will rely on ALL teachers who demonstrate excellence in particular areas as bright spots, not just teachers who have been designated as bright spots. We will also not hold up a teacher as a bright spot if they do not yet have consistent execution, even if we named them as a bright spot at the beginning of the year.

**LT Roles and Responsibilities during Weeks 1-6**

During weeks 1-6 teacher will have the same coaches that they will have throughout the year. Coaching portfolios are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Jesse | LT, 4th Grade ELA |
| Jem | 2-3 |
| Fran | K-1 |
| Becca | Team LS, 2-4 SS/Sci |
| Noah | 4th grade math, specials |
| RAs | TIRs (TIRs will not receive daily feedback) |

During week 1-6 Jem, Fran, and Becca will spend the VAST majority of their time moving teachers and classrooms to proficiency. They will rely on observations, RTC, and coaching as key drivers of development, but they will also leverage other tools as necessary.

Jesse will spend the VAST majority of his time ensuring that the LT has a normed and high vision for student outputs and teacher skills, and rapidly building and developing dean skill.

Lourdes will spend the vast majority of her time ensuring that the entire school maintains a high bar and normed vision for ALL scholars, and that our reactive culture systems are highly effective.

Noah will be split between moving classrooms to proficiency and Lourdes’ focus.

\*Noah will be coaching 3-5 teachers additionally using RTTC model and framework based on need (these will likely be teachers who we believe can get to proficiency within 3-4 weeks but are farther behind than others)

*Weekly calendaring and planning*

Coming out of our weekly analysis meeting all LT members should have clarity around:

1. Our school wide benchmark for next week.
2. Personal benchmarks for next week.
3. Any areas of ownership for them around school wide goals (PD facilitation, culture club ownership etc.)

All LT members will then create a weekly schedule in outlook that captures:

1. RTC for the week
2. Debrief times
3. Lesson plan feedback
4. Prep time for debrief meetings
5. Analysis time for weekly meeting
6. Any other necessary action steps to reach goals
7. School wide walkthrough times
8. Daily LT meeting
9. Flex time for responsive coaching

On Friday, Jesse will briefly check in with each LT member and together they will align on skill development for the upcoming week. This will be primarily spent co-doing or co-planning, with some other coaching.

*Minimum support levels for each teacher weekly*

* Two 15 minute RTC observations (2nd one with data collection)
* 30 minute coaching meeting (usually individually, sometimes in co-teaching pair), as well as at least a 5 minute follow up anytime coach RTCs in a classroom

**Development Toolkit for Teachers**

The list below is meant to break down some of the different options we have for supporting teachers in their work towards achieving the week 6 vision.

* Real time coaching
* Coaching meetings
* Co-observations
* Video protocols
* Culture club
* Additional practice sessions

**Building Staff Buy-In and Investment**

We cannot hope to possibly be successful in our goal without unlocking the drive, focus, and ambition of all our staff. Doing this will require deep levels of investment for our whole team in the work we are doing. This is a key part of our week 1-6 strategy. It is important to note that we won’t do this by holding back tough feedback, sugarcoating anything, or lowering the bar for our team because that doesn’t build deep investment it builds a long term lack of investment. As a team we will consistently:

1. Lead with rationale—that feels authentic and connected to what our staff believes
2. Celebrate wins—big and small
3. Share data to both build momentum and urgency
4. Do what we say we’re going to do
5. Assume the best of our team and genuinely believe that they can and will be successful
6. Find time to get to know people and talk to them about things that aren’t teaching
7. Model incredibly high levels of investment, engagement, and growth mindset

**Afterschool Interventions**

We will utilize the time from 4:30-5:00 Monday-Wednesday for additional targeted skill building and practice. Afterschool interventions should be lead for teachers by their coaches, although there may be limited exceptions to this. The purpose of afterschool interventions is to provide additional time to rapidly build skill.

Effective afterschool interventions are:

* Targeted to a specific skill set—teachers should not just be practicing for practice’s sake (unless their issue is around internalization)
* Heavily practice based
* Rooted in a clear criteria for success and 1-2 exemplar videos
* Not apologized for or something that we feel guilty about
* Communicated to teachers with any pre-work by EOD Friday

A few notes about interventions:

* They do not need to be held every day M-W
* If a teacher has a conflict, follow your gut but hold a pretty high bar
* Interventions can either target snowball folks or our most struggling teachers—the purpose and tone of these sessions should be different