Transcript of Collaborative Session Video Excerpt

Narrator:
Teachers at Borton Magnet School created a structure designed to share systems thinking strategies they integrate into instruction as they assess the effectiveness of those strategies over time. Teachers start each session by reflecting on their recent work. What’s working? What challenges are they facing? What support do they need?

From there, they move into an open sharing forum talking through individual examples, asking questions, and gathering feedback.

Teacher 1 [using behavior-over-time graphs to reflect on levels of kindness]:
We went back to doing the behavior-over-time graphs again, and they actually did their own individual graph. We looked at their levels of kindness during the day. So we thought it was too much to do the whole day, so we just took part of the morning. And then we started with the very beginning with the pledge and then we worked our way through lunchtime. And so the kids drew the pictures and wrote words.

[out in the hallway] ...but they were kind of thinking too about what happens. They might not be at their kindest point and why. And so then we kind of discussed how we can change that.

Another teacher in the hall: Eric is kind all day!

Teacher 1: Yeah, Eric is kind all day.

All: Laughter

Teacher 1:
Some of them were kind all day! But some of them were really reflecting, really well and really thinking about their morning. They realize that they don’t always stand in line with their peaceful hands and kind hands. Sometimes they get a little anxious.

Another teacher in the hall: But they make statements here about....

Teacher 1:
Yeah they did about.... So we kind of needed to add more, as far as more of a reflection for each child, rather than just we did a big picture kind of reflection.

Teacher 2 [using behavior-over-time graphs of story tension as a pre-writing tool]:
They’ve planned their own story and they’ve graphed story tension. So again I wanted to see that as they write, whether they’re going to be following just the story (’cause I call it the storyboard when you plan out your story) and if they take into account the tension level, because I’m still wondering sometimes about that integration of both parts. I think that sometimes they can talk about the top [pointing to the line on the graph] and they can definitely sequence [pointing to the x-axis showing time], but that integration of both parts, I still find that that’s still developing in first graders. So, that’s where we’re at. So, they all have a storyboard. They’re all ready to write. A few children asked if they could come in at lunch and start writing, which is always nice.
Teacher 3: [using a modified version of a connection circle with a story]:
To start out with, Melissa and I were looking at how to do connection circles and trying to bring it to the level of kindergarten and first grade and realized that it was difficult to do. We instead decided to look at how we could scaffold ideas of making connections and then maybe possibly look at relationships between those things or causal connections. And so there were two constants in each of the scenes and then there was another person or event or situation that those two originals pieces interacted with. And so they did a really nice job of together coming up with the relationship for what the old man did with his door and then what he got in return for that too.

Narrator:
By creating an environment and culture that fosters openness, trust and learning, they are able to consider the impact of their work as individual teachers as well as the impact of their individual decisions on the whole school. They refine their own personal practice and support one another as they work toward a common goal to help students clarify and deepen their thinking.