



JUNE HARLESS CENTER

Instructional Rounds

How can we collaborate to ensure that every school is able to enact powerful teaching and learning that empowers all?



Credit: Stefanie Felix

OVERVIEW

Instructional Rounds (IR) in education evolved from the medical rounds that doctors conduct in teaching hospitals. Originally developed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Instructional Rounds establishes a structure where teachers, administrators, and district leaders **collaborate to increase instructional quality and achievement for every student.**

Instructional rounds are **not** a form of walkthrough or evaluation focused on the individual. Instead, it is a descriptive and analytic inquiry process that centers solely on the host school's self-identified problem of practice and examines only what is happening within the instructional core—the interactions among teachers, student, and content.

IR is a powerful tool to **complement and accelerate instructional improvement efforts** by providing “a key source of data and a powerful feedback loop to tell educators whether their systematic improvement efforts are actually reaching students.”

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Rounds are not about “fixing” individual teachers. Rather, rounds are about understanding what’s happening in classrooms, how we as a system produce those effects, and how we can move closer to producing the learning we want to see.

~Elizabeth A. City

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Instructional Rounds Process

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Host school identifies an observable and actionable problem of practice within the instructional core. The rounds network adopts this high leverage problem as its focus.

OBSERVE PRACTICE

Observation teams collect descriptive, non-evaluative data that is specific, non-judgemental, and focused only on the problem of practice.

DEBRIEFING

Teams aggregate and analyze descriptive evidence to discern patterns, identify the practices that empower or constrain learning, and predict student knowledge and skills.

NEXT LEVEL WORK

Brainstorm next steps to determine what support, resources, and professional learning are necessary to help students and teachers transition to the next level of teaching and learning.

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Instructional rounds are one of the most valuable tools that a school or district can use to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and develop a culture of collaboration.

~Robert Marzano

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Who Should Participate?

Rounds networks span the educational leadership spectrum. These cross-functional groups of teachers, administrators, central office staff, and superintendents facilitate a collegial—rather than hierarchical—partnership among groups that do not frequently collaborate. Together, these groups gather evidence and brainstorm the next level work needed to increase pedagogical acumen and student achievement.



“You don't improve schools by giving them bad news about their performance. You improve schools by using information about student learning, from multiple sources, to find the most promising instructional problems to work on, and then systematically developing with teachers and administrators the knowledge and skill to solve these problems.” -City et al.

Objectives

- » Cultivate a **boundary spanning** collaborative network
- » Articulate a **shared vision** of excellent teaching and learning
- » Develop an inquiry stance that examines the instructional core through **objective, low-inference observations**
- » Refine inquiry skills through practice rounds in **real world classrooms**
- » Explore how IR can be **tailored to district structures** and ongoing improvement initiatives
- » Develop and enact IR, facilitated by June Harless Center staff, to **identify and solve problems of practice**



For more information, visit:

<https://www.marshall.edu/juneharless/contact-us/>



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4. City, E. A., Elmore, R. F., Fiarman, S. E., & Teitel, L. (2009). *Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press
5. Fowler-Finn, T. (2014) *Leading instructional rounds in education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press
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