



The Teacher's Playbook: Practical Pedagogy for Classical Educators with Jerilyn Olson

Lecture 12: Setting the Supports for Teachers

Outline:

Hiring

- Care needs to be taken when hiring new teachers, the craft can be developed but you cannot change an adult's dispositions and loves.
- Since the faculty sets the culture for students and themselves it is important to have a faculty who are intellectually, morally and aesthetically alive.
- You should look for a sense of passion, willingness to learn, love of students, humility and a willingness to accept feedback.

Encouraging the pursuit of Excellence

- Money is normally not a motivation for teachers instead motivation includes mastery, autonomy, purpose and belonging.
- It is important for teachers to have a defined sense of purpose and community.
- Teachers thrive in a culture that is committed to their essential role, that honors their work which can be done through simple acknowledgements or a thank you from staff, parents or the community.
- Remove the bureaucratic hoops and politics so teachers can focus on teaching.

Preparations for Building Mastery and Autonomy

- Set a vision around excellence in teaching and plan for growth that is tied to the vision for education and laid out in your resources and training.
- Have an on-going process of practice and feedback
- Have opportunities for leachers and teachers to reflect on progress and set new goals.

In services and resources

- Should include help the teacher grow in each area:
 - Formation of the classical tradition
 - Formation in content of the discipline
 - Formation in the craft of teaching.



- Opportunities should be available for teachers who want to deepen their knowledge and skills and can be through the in service, mentoring or content support through local colleges and universities
- In services may start with all teachers gathering for a common lecture on a topic that spans the liberal arts.
- There should be a time when teachers can break out by discipline to study the content more deeply or to spend time in joint planning.
- There should also be an ending activity that builds a sense of community.
- Since it is difficult to balance the needs of all teachers at once instead focus on subgroups and target those for the best use of time.
- Talking and reading about professional development only can go so far there also needs to be practice and coaching.
- New Teachers cannot be expected to immediately catch up to veteran teachers and should know how to access the resources available to them.

Coaching, Observation and Feedback

- School leaders should be visiting every classroom a minimum of one time every two to four weeks and following up with brief coaching sessions.
- Leaders should always be referring back to the shared vision of excellence.
- Leaders should be helping teachers identify areas for change, this should be very concrete and also identify what you expect to see on the next visit.
- One area of development should be focused on prior to moving onto another area for improvement.

Reflection Assessment

- Observation and coaching should not create a fear of final judgement but instead focus on the goal of improvement.
- Evaluation of teachers should be similar to how we approach student evaluations and be helpful with dignified feedback that respects the teacher and is committed to their growth.
- There is not a simple rubric or metric that can evaluate a successful teacher.
- A teacher's career pathway should have set benchmarks so they can recognize growth with long- and short-term goals that will help create a sense of progression towards mastery.
- New teachers will have less autonomy because they are still learning the craft.
- As teachers gain mastery, they should gain more autonomy in the classroom and potentially in their development and training. They can then potentially help new teachers in their development.