

# Supporting Teachers, Schools, and Districts in Implementing BTC

Peter Liljedahl - Building Thinking Classrooms Conference 20204

## How to build a thinking classroom?

- Pay attention to the developmental process (chapter 15).
- If a teacher makes a change, the teacher cannot sustain that change if students don't make a change. Otherwise students will regress back.
- If teachers are doing BTC once a week or told to do it once a week, it won't be effective. It's not meant to be used once a week.
- Small change is no change. When teachers make small changes, students don't realize those changes were made.
- Teachers who try "one thing" don't really see an impact.
- Feather in smaller changes afterwards, but start strong.
- Assessment should reflect practice. This is implemented last, on purpose.
- Building students' individual and collective responsibility takes time. These practices are about responsibility and not accountability.
- Teachers' abilities grow over time. A teacher's second year looks different, because they have grown.

## How to support teachers in building a thinking classroom?

- Types of support
  - Structure, materials, and resources - give them what they need to implement tomorrow.
  - Time - it either costs nothing or a lot. Do teachers want a common prep or an off-set prep? That costs nothing. It's just being strategic.
  - Organization - Don't underestimate this.
  - External PD - You need external voices. You're never a prophet in your own land.
  - Permission - Explicit permission is when an administrator says they're supporting the teacher. Teachers don't listen to what an administrator says. They listen to what an administrator does. Implicit moves help teachers know that administrators are all in.
  - Educational leadership - Raise up the voice of authority who can provide the educational leadership. This won't be the administrator.
  - Removing barriers - Teachers are not afraid of parents. Teachers are afraid of administrators who don't support them in front of parents.
  - Differentiated implementation - You will move at the pace of the slowest person and sometimes the pace of the slowest person is not moving. Don't wait for the group to get on board. Don't try to move as a unit.