How has assessment for learning impacted your intentional planning?

T1: I think the word is intentional. I would have to admit that before getting involved in assessment for learning, I would probably have said my planning was intentional. But now when I have a learning goal that I know I want those kids to be working towards, it is not just intentional for me but it is also intentional for the students as well. It helps me focus on what exactly from the curriculum I am getting the students to work towards and how are we going to get there together.

T2: I think it has made me differentiate even further for kids. If I note I have the learning goal up, I am assessing the students constantly, giving them feedback constantly. I am constantly helping and supporting them in developing their own new goals, and everyone’s goal tends to be different along a different pathway and I am supporting those kids in different ways, and helping them support each other in different ways as well as we go through that whole process. I think it helps me differentiate and align the student’s needs and learning styles more carefully.

“We are all in it together”:

T1: I’ve always wanted to have the team approach to learning and assessment for learning has really helped me do that with the students. I get the feeling that we are all in it together. That we are all trying to reach that learning target and we are giving each other feedback on how to get there closer rather than the assessment of learning which always felt more of a judgement. But doing the assessment for learning along the way just seems so fair and equitable to all because they know what they need to do…

“How has the principal been part of developing an assessment for learning culture in your school?”

T1: I can’t imagine her not being there. For me, her being there says that the process is valued at the top of our school, as she is the leader of our school and is learning by example and learning alongside with us. But even just for her to know what is going on in the classrooms is essential. I have never even considered her not being there, I think that would be awful if she wasn’t. I think it is really important that she’s there to learn with us and to know what we are up to.

T3: I like it because she has the bigger picture that I don’t have. I teach in one classroom and I see what goes on in my classroom, but it’s neat when you listen to her talk because she sees what is going on in the grades 1’s and the 2’s and what is happening in the 7’s. And she can make connections and leaps between those two that I can’t. I can’t make those, I am not in the same position as her. She can foresee what is going to happen to these kids as they start moving along.

“To learn the work, you have to do the work”:

T2: I can’t go and say to Joanne, “This is what I learned, this was wonderful” because you have to live it to be able to feel it.

T1: The learning is the doing.

T3: Part of this is that it is the same group of people over an extended period of time. So your PD is a long time, it’s extensive, and it’s building that classroom climate within the group of people there. I feel pretty comfortable emailing Joanne saying, “What are you thinking about this idea?” I know now that I don’t always have to go to Joanne; there are also other people from other schools that I can now contact about some other ideas around, and I think that’s a unique aspect around this type of professional development that I would hate to lose by doing the same thing over a shorter period of time.
Teacher Learning Reflections - Video Transcript
Implications of Assessment for Learning on Teacher and Student Practice

“How does instructional rounds lead to the powerful 'doing and learning' of assessment of learning?”

T3: I think the support time to get ready and to plan is also a big component of this because the intentional planning is such a huge piece and because we are given time to talk to …

T2: I think one of the most powerful conditions that we are just starting into now is that we are truly giving descriptive feedback. Not just about what’s going well - what we see as evidence but where we don’t see evidence of things. I think that is pushing us a little bit further along this pathway and looking at what we are doing. For instance, not “You’re not doing this well”, instead, “I’m seeing this, but I’m not yet seeing this.” It is the “not yet seeing this” for the kids that is pushing them further, and that’s what we need as teachers to push ourselves further.

T1: And that comes with the feeling of safety and time given.

T2: It’s the most powerful learning I have ever done in my entire career. The most powerful, by far. I have tears in my eyes thinking about it – how my teaching has changed and seeing what my kids are doing. They say things that make me shiver; we do the happy dance. Sometimes I think, “I cannot believe you said that!”

T3: I am amazed at what grade 2’s can do, having come from teaching a grade 6 class. I look sometimes at the feedback I am writing and the kids are reading and acting upon and think, this is pretty close to what I would have given to my grade 6’s, and these grade 2’s are doing it – that amazes me. I know their work is different, but it’s amazing what they can do when we give them the tools to do it.