### ‘How-to’ Guide

**INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS**

**WHAT ARE INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS?**
- A group of leaders and/or teachers visiting multiple classrooms at their own or another school
- Focused on instructional practices linked to school/region/state-wide improvement strategies
- Aims to share practice and support scaling systemic improvements of teaching and learning

**WHAT ACTIONS ARE INVOLVED?**

**PHASE 1**
- School identifies a ‘problem of practice’ as the focus for the observations
  - Often presented as a question to frame data gathering

**PHASE 2**
- Observation groups collect data related to the identified ‘problem of practice’
  - Groups of 3-5 teachers
  - Typically facilitated by a school leader
  - Visit a range of classrooms to locate evidence (15-20 minutes per classroom)
  - Observers make detailed, non-judgemental notes

**PHASE 3**
- Groups debrief after observations using agreed protocols
  - Groups identify patterns, wonderings, recommendations across the school related to the ‘problem of practice’
  - Build a picture of teaching and learning throughout the school, not just of individual classrooms

**PHASE 4**
- Groups make recommendations for next stage of work
  - Revisit the ‘problem of practice’ in light of patterns observed
  - Make recommendations to address the ‘problem of practice’ based on the evidence gathered
  - Be specific – Make recommendations for the next week, next month, even the next year – phrase as options for the school to decide their next action (which will later be reported back to the group)

**WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?**
- Shared understanding of purpose and process
- Alignment with school-wide improvement focus
- Groups are unobtrusive observers in the classrooms visited
- Notes taken focus on specific actions observed, not judgements of practice or general ideas and information
- Debriefs are discussions of practice, not evaluations of the observed teachers’ practice
- Feedback is not provided to individual teachers unless specifically requested

**WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?**
- In a diverse group of observers there may not be a shared, common understanding of effective practices
  - Allow time for this to occur/be established prior to observing classes
- External visitors can be perceived as evaluative
  - Ensure that the purpose of the visit is clear and maintain the school-wide improvement focus
- Observed teachers may not receive individual feedback for improvement
  - Communicate with staff prior to observation whether individuals will receive feedback and provide opportunities for staff to debrief

**WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?**
- Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning (City, Elmore, Fiarman & Teitel, 2009)
- Making the Most of Instructional Rounds (Marzano, 2011)