



Solving with Students Learning Cadre

Improving Student Experience in Secondary Math

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
BY THE NEW TEACHER CENTER**

SEPTEMBER 2022

Learn more at impactfl.link/solving



About the Cadre Experience

A Professional Learning Experience Designed for Impact

In Spring 2022, Impact Florida formed the Solving with Students Learning Cadre to pilot an innovative professional learning opportunity based on student feedback. The Cadre enacted the Five Conditions that Support Great Teaching directly in the classroom – shared vision, high-quality instructional materials, effective professional learning, empowered leaders, and effective use of data. Impact Florida chose to focus its support on secondary math teachers due to the strategic need of Florida students to excel in math as a gateway to college and career and success in life.

Through a series of continuous improvement cycles, teachers used Elevate by PERTS to survey students about their classroom experience, review results, and implement research-based teaching strategies. In addition, they participated in check-in calls with Impact Florida staff, attended a series of virtual Community Calls, and came together for an in-person event over the summer. Half of the cadre members also participated in 1:1 coaching conversations with a coach from the New Teacher Center. Teachers enrolled in the cadre after applying through an open process, and they received a monetary stipend for their work.



Solving with Students Learning Cadre Design Features



**Open
Application**



**Monetary
Stipend**



**Elevate by
PERTS**



1:1 Check-Ins



**Virtual
Community
Calls**



**Optional 1:1
Coaching
with NTC**



Kelly Zunkiewicz
Director of Educator
Innovation at
Impact Florida

"As a former secondary math teacher, I wanted this experience to be something that I would have wanted to attend and continue attending. It couldn't be such a huge lift that it became a burden, but still needed to be impactful from day one and challenge teachers' beliefs and skill sets."

Participants At A Glance



49 middle and high school math teachers



1 to 21+ years of teaching experience



16 Florida school districts

Who Can Learn from This Report

The learning from this cadre can serve teachers, school leaders, district leaders, and leaders of networks for improvement. Key topics include student feedback, teacher professional learning, and continuous improvement.



Cadre members participate in a focus group about their cadre experience at the Impact Florida Annual Summit.

Overview

Impact Florida is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that believes excellent classroom instruction can move the needle for all students. The organization focuses on supporting education leaders and teachers with the knowledge and resources they need to ensure that great teaching and learning is consistently realized in all Florida schools. Impact Florida Learning Cadres bring educators and education leaders together across districts to pilot innovative instructional practices and to learn from each other. The Solving with Students Learning Cadre is Impact Florida's first teacher-only cadre.

About the Evaluation

The cadre emphasized students' experiences. Teachers asked students to assess learning conditions four times during the Spring semester, providing multiple opportunities to reflect and respond to students' concerns. Teachers critically examined results for specific survey items and for each of the six Elevate Learning Conditions assessed. Feedback was reported in terms of the percentage of students who provided a positive response to each item and for the learning condition. Teacher results were available by class and overall, and were reported for all students and for specific student groups. Improvements in learning conditions were evaluated along with feedback from teachers about their instructional practices.

Elevate Learning Conditions and Survey Items With Biggest Gains

Explore the Elevate Learning Conditions and view sample surveys at perts.net/elevate

+12 pts	MEANINGFUL WORK What we learn in this class is connected to real-life.
+9 pts	This teacher makes what we're learning really interesting.
+13 pts	TEACHER CARING This teacher cares about my life outside of school.
+11 pts	CLASSROOM COMMUNITY I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts and opinions in this class.
+9 pts	STUDENT VOICE In this class, my ideas are taken seriously.
+9 pts	This teacher responds to student suggestions to make our class better.

Individual teachers reported growth on specific survey items of up to 48 percentage points.

Evaluating the Cadre Experience

Areas of Focus

Based on the student feedback, teachers identified an area of focus for each inquiry cycle.

- Meaningful Work and Student Voice Were a Common Focus**
 Most teachers focused on Meaningful Work (69%) or Student Voice (51%) for at least one cycle. Some participants shifted or added a focus area over time, but a large percentage of teachers sustained a focus on Meaningful Work.
- Influence of Coaching on Focus Area**
 The sustained focus on Meaningful Work was most evident among SWS participants who received 1:1 coaching. Coaching participants were almost twice as likely as non-coached teachers to focus on Meaningful Work for two or more cycles (77% and 41%, respectively).

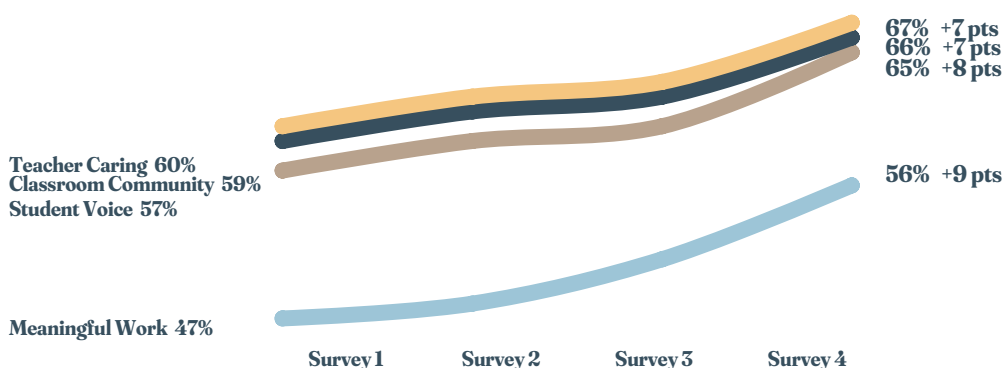
Changes From Survey One to Survey Four

The SWS cadre teacher improvements from survey 1 (baseline) to survey 4 (third cycle) were statistically significant for four of the six learning conditions, both overall and for each student group. The biggest change in student experiences was reported for Meaningful Work, with favorable responses improving from 47% at baseline to 56% in the third cycle. In fact, about 75% of all teachers showed a change of at least +5 percentage points for Meaningful Work, and about 45% showed improvements of +10 or more points.

Impact

- Statistically significant improvements overall and for each student group for Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Classroom Community, and Teacher Caring survey scales.
- Strong relationships between growth in multiple areas. When one condition improved, others likely improved also.

Typical Teacher Change in Percent Favorable Responses from Survey 1 to Survey 4



IMPACT SURVEY

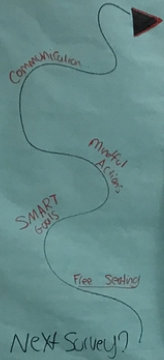
Survey 1 2.8 to 2.11

Affirming Identities	58%
Classroom Community	37%
Feedback for Growth	60%
* Meaningful Work	30%
* Student Voice	34%
Teacher Caring	46%

What do **WE** do next?

- 1) Consider how your actions impact others!
- 2) Real-world Concepts in MATH!
- 3) Free choice Fridays - Must be EARNED!
- 4) It takes all of us to build a better Classroom!

Next Survey?
3.7 to 3.10



Survey 3 4.18 to 4.21

Affirming Identities		
Classroom Community		
Feedback for Growth		
Meaningful Work		
Student Voice		
Teacher Caring		

What do **WE** do next?

Survey 2 3.7 to 3.10

Affirming Identities	61	+3
Classroom Community	51	+14
Feedback for Growth	58	-2
Meaningful Work	38	+8
Student Voice	48	+14
Teacher Caring	53	+7

What do **WE** do next?

- 1) Be mindful of our actions!
- 2) Real world Concepts!
- 3) SMART goals + Planning!
- 4) Teamwork = Dreamwork!

Survey 4 5.17 to 5.20

Affirming Identities		
Classroom Community		
Feedback for Growth		
Meaningful Work		
Student Voice		
Teacher Caring		

What do **WE** do next?

First-year teacher Josey Pearce, Okeechobee County, used a bulletin board showing the Elevate survey results to engage her students in meaningful conversations about their feedback and what they would do next as a class.

Improvements Were Similar for All Student Groups

Through the Elevate survey and reports, students self-identify by gender and race; race/ethnicity is reflected in the aggregated categories of structurally advantaged or disadvantaged. The table below shows the magnitude of changes across student groups in the four learning conditions of greatest focus.

	Classroom Communities	Meaningful Work	Student Voice	Teacher Caring
All Students	+7 pts	+9 pts	+8 pts	+7 pts
Boy/Man	+7 pts	+9 pts	+8 pts	+7 pts
Girl/Woman	+7 pts	+9 pts	+9 pts	+7 pts
Structurally Advantaged	+6 pts	+10 pts	+10 pts	+7 pts
Structurally Disadvantaged	+8 pts	+10 pts	+9 pts	+8 pts

Engaging Students in the Inquiry Cycle

Following each cycle, teachers were asked to report the extent to which they engaged students in conversations about their focus area and/or strategy. Results suggest in general, teachers who engaged students more in those conversations showed more improvements in learning conditions. When teachers did not engage students in inquiry cycle conversations, the percentage of students providing positive feedback generally declined or remained flat.

“

My girls (positive responses) were significantly lower than the boys, and there was one class where it was glaringly obvious. I realized that some of the boys in the class are more vocal about needing help, and the girls kind of work on their own. So I started making sure that I just pull my seat up and drop down in there with [the girls] and just sit and listen to them.”

Katrice Dixon,
Broward County
Impact Florida
Solving With Students Cadre



Student Focus Groups

What did students think about providing feedback to teachers?

Given the focus on student voice in this cadre, Impact Florida hosted two focus groups with 18 students in one school to understand student perceptions of the work.

“It asked primarily all of the right questions you needed. It didn't ask anything about the teacher's personality...the surveys created a way for the teacher to separate personality from the way they're teaching, their teaching styles, the content of the course, and the curriculum.”

“If teachers go over their results with you and they actually take what you want into consideration and listen to the results, I feel as though that goes into a positive relationship in a classroom where you can actually trust your teacher.”

“I feel like it would be beneficial to all teachers, in the long run, to see feedback on their teaching methods. Because at the end of the day, everyone can improve somewhere, and I think this clearly paints out where improvements are needed.”

Student-reported benefits of the cadre experience

Students voiced many benefits of the surveys. Surveys helped build trust between students and teachers. They were informative and help teachers to learn and improve their methodologies, thereby helping students learn better. Further, when a teacher was open to feedback and is willing to change, this modeled growth mindset for the students. Finally, students appreciated an opportunity to provide their input and see changes based on their needs. However, one student felt that surveys took too much time and effort. Another student was also concerned about hurting their teacher's feelings.

Students said the opportunity to give feedback...

- Builds trust
- Provides information
- Shows learning and growing
- Models continuous improvement
- Uplifts student voice
- Takes time and effort

Student perceptions of Elevate questions and design

Students appreciated that the surveys were anonymous because it allowed them to feel safe while providing accurate feedback. They also appreciated having a neutral response option available to them. They thought the questions were in depth and relevant. However, one student mentioned that questions could be hard to comprehend. Additionally, a construct like "meaningful work" was very subjective and not clearly defined.

Students shared these observations about Elevate...

- Anonymity is good
- Questions are in depth
- Questions are relevant
- Neutral response option is nice



What did teachers think about the learning cadre experience?

Impact Florida and NTC hosted one focus group and conducted 11 one-on-one interviews with teachers to understand their experience.

Teacher-reported benefits of the cadre experience

In a pre-survey, teachers said they had limited access to student experience data prior to the cadre. Climate and culture perception data was available to some cadre members through, for example, 5 Essentials or Gallup tools, but only at the district or school level.

96 percent of teachers said they had no student experience data at the classroom level.

28 percent said they created their own surveys to fill this gap.

In interviews and a focus group, teachers reported the Elevate surveys illuminated strengths and weaknesses in their teaching methods and approaches. They described how the surveys have helped them grow professionally and found students recognized and appreciated the changes they made.

Teachers shared these observations about the Cadre and Elevate...

- Engaging in a network of teachers while receiving feedback from students helped encourage them when times were tough and also enhanced their learning.
- Sharing the anonymous reports with students developed a partnership between the teacher and students that was based on trust and action.
- The ready-made survey instrument and data reports made it quick and easy to collect feedback from students.
- Teachers appreciated direct 1:1 support in a non-evaluative, external capacity to analyze and interpret survey results and plan next steps.

“ I wanted to meet people outside of my tiny circle of the five people in my building that also teach math. What else is out there? What else are people struggling with? What other techniques are there?

Ian Boze,
Putnam County

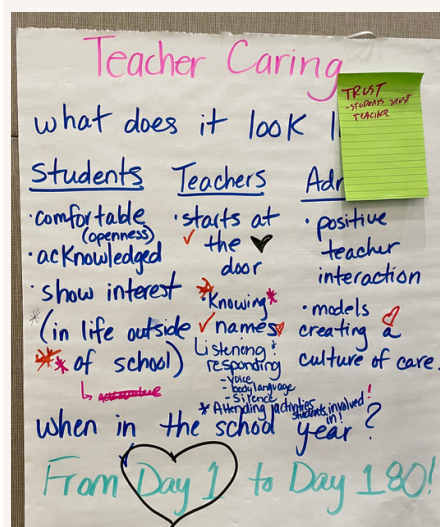
“ Most of the time when we are offered professional development, someone is standing in front of a group presenting something to us. This was an opportunity for me to actually experience feedback first hand and get a chance to implement something right in my classroom.”

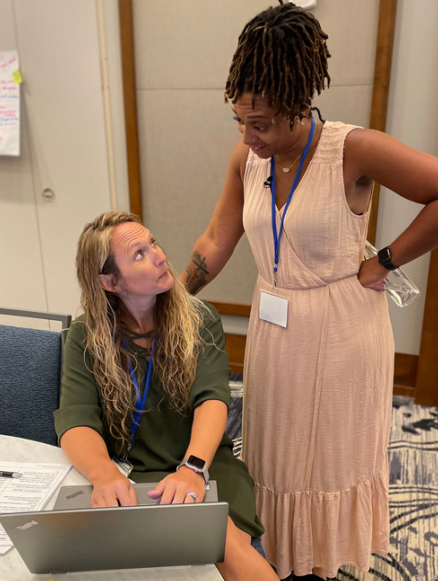
Kellyann Campbell,
Okeechobee County

“ If students don't feel a part of their learning process and know that they're valued, they don't see the value in learning.”

Lori Antos,
Flagler County

Teachers met in person to plan their use of student feedback during a summer Mini-Summit for cadre members. They shared strategies to impact learning conditions in the classroom (below).





Tiana Pitts, [standing] a coach with NTC who previously taught math, coached half the teachers in the cadre through Zoom calls. She also worked with them at an in-person event in Summer 2022.

About The Coaching

One-to-one coaching provided by the New Teacher Center

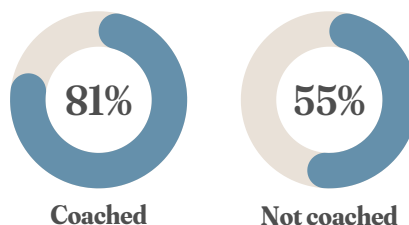
About half of the cadre expressed interest and received professional coaching support from a New Teacher Center coach. Participating teachers met virtually with their coach up to seven times throughout the experience to discuss evidence from the student surveys, to select and plan strategies that addressed student feedback, and to reflect on the results from each inquiry cycle.

Supporting Teachers

The Impact of Coaching

Evidence suggests coaching may be an important factor in the overall likelihood that teachers made meaningful, lasting changes to their practice. Overall 98% of participants agreed or strongly agreed they made permanent and substantive changes, but results differed somewhat according to whether they participated in coaching. Teachers who participated in coaching were more likely to strongly agree they had made permanent and substantive change to their practice as a result of this professional learning experience.

Of coached teachers, 81% strongly agreed they had made permanent and substantive changes, compared with 55% of teachers who were not coached.



What did teachers like about the coaching?

Teachers described the importance of intentionally setting aside time with their coach to reflect on the data and plan strategies.

"This time together has been important. The coaching with Tiana is helpful because...I have to set aside one hour to talk to her, to look at my data."

"She pointed out things that I would never have taken the time to look at, and it helped me tremendously."

Iterating on the Model for Scale

As part of the cadre evaluation, Impact Florida administered pre- and post-surveys that sought to understand which components of the cadre design were most important for impact and sustainability, and how teachers planned to use the Elevate survey and new teaching strategies after the cadre experience concluded.



98 percent of teachers said they made **permanent and substantive changes to practice**.



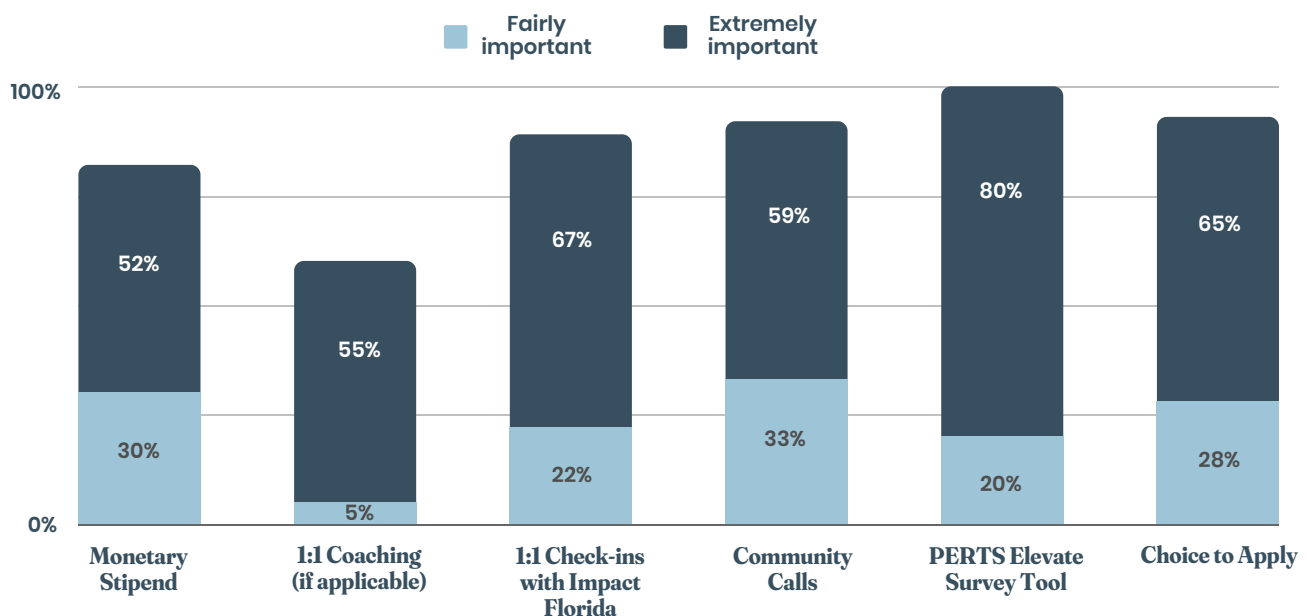
91 percent of teachers reported that the work took **two hours or less per week**.



98 percent of the teachers who are returning to the classroom next year said they would be **interested in participating again**.

Which components of the cadre design were most important?

Teachers rated each component of the cadre design from "not important" to "extremely important." The graph below shows the percentage of teachers rating each component "fairly" or "extremely" important.



Meet the Teachers

Explore videos and read profiles of the teachers at impactfl.link/solving



*Tawanna Rowe,
Middle School,
Broward County*



*Ian Boze,
High School,
Putnam County*



*Kellyann Campbell,
Middle School,
Okeechobee County*

What's Next for the Solving with Students Cadre

Scaling and Learning Agenda

Impact Florida's Solving with Students Learning Cadre will continue in the 2022–23 school year. The Cadre will include alumni from Spring 2022 as well as new members. Selected alumni will serve as scale leaders, expanding the use of the Elevate tool to more teachers within their school communities. The continued cadre will include six surveys over an entire school year, from September to May, which was a direct request from our cadre members. Key design features of the cadre experience will remain, including the open application, the monetary stipend, the optional coaching, virtual community calls, and in-person events. The second year of the cadre will explore several learning questions about the impact of student feedback on teacher professional learning.

Questions for Future Learning

- What does an intensive professional learning experience look like from the beginning of the school year compared to an experience that begins mid-year?
- What is the impact on teacher retention of this professional learning experience? Does effective professional learning increase teachers' intentions to stay in the profession?
- What are measures of classroom experience that are specific to secondary math?
- What are key considerations for scaling the use of Elevate by PERTS from one teacher to many teachers in a school?
- How much coaching support is necessary for improvement in student experience?

Connect with Impact Florida



Impact Florida has compiled videos, stories, and teacher profiles in an interactive online report at impactfl.link/solving. Please contact us at www.impactfl.org, or follow us on social media at @ImpactFla on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.