Episode 9 Transcript

00:00:17,639 --> 00:02:52,079 [Speaker 0]

As a reminder, any time another work is referenced, you will hear a ding. A timestamp document with references will be available in the show notes. In addition, any time there's a direct quote, you will soft music playing underneath it. This will help you as listeners determine the difference between paraphrased information and quotes directly from other sources. This podcast is a unique opportunity to listen to the voices of educators. In doing so, they allowed their voices and opinions to be exposed while also allowing me to critically analyze their responses so that they can relate to each episode's themes. This was all member-checked or checked for validity by the participants before publication. Welcome back to Education Isn't a To-Do List. I'm your host, Hannah Jimenez. In this episode, we are going to continue analyzing the responses of my recent interviews in order to see the different patterns that emerge across educational contexts. The next theme that I want to explore is how each interviewee interprets initiative success or failure. I did not ask about one set initiative, so I allowed them to pull from their own experiences about what initiatives stood out to them. You will hear discussion of culturally sustaining practices as well as technology-focused initiatives. Throughout the course of each interview, we were able to discuss why different initiatives can be successful while others can fail. As a reminder, the following are our interview participants. Ms. Kimberly Jones has been an educator for 19 years, and she was named North Carolina Teacher of the Year in 2023. She predominantly teaches high school English in central North Carolina. Dr. Aaron Gabriel has been in education for 29 years and is currently serving as a superintendent in central North Carolina. Ms. Jill Erwin Hartl has been an educator for 28 years and is currently serving as an IB coordinator in central North Carolina. Mr. Silas Burk has been an educator for 13 years and currently teaches middle school English in central North Carolina. Lastly is Ms. Paula Januzzi-Godfrey, who has been in education for 41 years and currently serves as an elementary school librarian in central North Carolina. You will notice that as we analyze and uncover more themes, they will often overlap with others previously mentioned. Pay attention to these overlaps because I think they tell a unique story about the support public education needs. Let's start by hearing from Ms. Erwin Hartl and her thoughts around s-initiatives.

00:02:52,079 --> 00:03:07,099 [Speaker 1]

I think if you're ever going to seek to, um, create change in a school culture, step one is to really educate for buy-in. If you don't train your teachers on the why,

00:03:07,099 --> 00:03:49,999 [Speaker 1]

it's really hard to get the buy-in to even know how to start. Um, you know, four, four and a half years ago when I entered Statesville High School to implement IB to a high, um, minority, low-performing high school, inner-city high school, not only did the students say, "Oh, I can't do this. I'm not smart enough," the teachers said, "Oh, these kids can't do this. They're not smart enough." And in their mind, that's what they believed because that's what they had been told or that's what they had experienced because they didn't have the tools on how to ask more cultural-based questions or incorporate more, um,

00:03:49,999 --> 00:04:06,539 [Speaker 1]

relevant learning. Um, and so, the students weren't engaged because they were teaching by a practice that didn't engage them, or they were expecting the students to behave, um, based on a social norm that was done, um,

00:04:06,539 --> 00:04:51,579 [Speaker 1]

or that was foreign to the students. And so, I think that that's the first step is that you have to take that time for, um, all of the stakeholders involved to hear out why you want this change, why this practice is important, the research behind it, but in layman's terms that they can understand. Um, and then you have to provide them with tools, um, to be able to do that. Uh, and I think that's where a lot of times public education, especially in the South, is limited because nobody wants to put the time, effort, or funding into providing those resources.

00:04:51,579 --> 00:05:22,219 [Speaker 0]

Jill Erwin Hartl mentioned that students weren't engaged due to a misunderstanding of societal norms. I think it's important to note that while she is explaining her individual experience, this is actually a major systemic issue where our public schools cater to WEIRD, or Western European Industrialized Rich Democratic Cultures, termed WEIRD by Henrich et al, and not the student placed in front of them due to how our national standards are set up.

00:05:22,219 --> 00:05:33,859 [Speaker 0]

Next, Dr. Gabriel will discuss his perspective on where professional development falls in initiative success as well as how important leadership is from beginning to end.

00:05:33,859 --> 00:06:06,656 [Speaker 2]

You have to have somebody who can actually train it and then follow up. So, um, we do not have a, a bevy of external trainings, uh, that we utilize, but the ones we have-... we have the train-the-trainer model in place, and we have those instructional coaches under roof who are able to provide real-time, ongoing support. Um, the, the best way you can have an initiative fail is if you make it the, the, the one, one, uh, one moment in time training, and then you high-five everybody, and nobody ever follows back up later.

00:06:06,656 --> 00:06:06,916 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:06:06,916 --> 00:06:53,355 [Speaker 2]

Um, so if, to guard against it, you have to have your leaders also involved in it. So, I will tell you that is very important. Um, that when we're initiating training, especially when I... I referenced Modern Teacher earlier, because that was the one unifying variable for us, is that we acknowledged the resources we had as a s- as a small system were limited. But if we could tap into the power of technology and some of the programs that really do help us meet kids where they are, um, it could multiply our teachers. And it could, you know, uh, m- make their impact much greater on that, that class itself. But I, as the leader, need to be sitting in and learning as w- excuse me, as well. Even if I don't need that level of granular, uh, understanding, it helps for the teacher who is going to be engaged in this to see that it matters to me as well.

00:06:53,355 --> 00:06:53,455 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:06:53,455 --> 00:07:28,115 [Speaker 2]

So I think foundationally, if you're... They, people, uh, staff will see through it a mile away, uh, if it's a checkbox. Um, and I'll be honest, if it's a state initiative that is required, something like LETRS, there is value in the Science of Reading. There really is. And teachers who have gone through the training definitely say it has helped their ability to, to teach reading, uh, and to get kids to learn how to read proficiently. Um, but at the same time, uh, the amount of time that it takes to get trained in it and how many people it involves from our system, uh, it, it's exhaustive.

00:07:28,115 --> 00:07:28,275 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:07:28,275 --> 00:08:02,615 [Speaker 2]

So, I will say you have to have support at the district level, someone who can champion it after whatever the external... if it is an external program. After those people go away, who's going to champion? The second thing is being able to map out your expectations. So, just like with, uh, school improvement, you know, how often, uh, in a year are we gonna be revisiting the school improvement plan and updating with evidences? It's no different with the training plan or implementation. You have to have a specific plan and you have to have checks and, and balances and check marks to say who's done it and here's where they're at, uh, and what support do they need.

00:08:02,615 --> 00:08:14,395 [Speaker 0]

Dr. Gabriel gave us a big-picture view of implementation at a district level. He mentioned external trainings, as in people coming in from outside companies or consultant firms to provide these trainings.

00:08:14,395 --> 00:08:31,875 [Speaker 0]

These can include companies like IXL or even Apple in some cases. He notes the importance of having leaders in the system, not just outside trainings though, to keep it moving forward. Education requires us to take action, but it must be fruitful action, not just performative. [Bicycle bell rings]

00:08:31,875 --> 00:08:41,615 [Speaker 0]

Ms. Paula Januzzi will discuss a multi-layered approach to initiative implementation, as well as note some strategies that she believes do not lead to success.

00:08:41,615 --> 00:09:13,335 [Speaker 3]

I always go back to, with any type of, uh, programs and their success, I feel like there's several layers, um, that need to hap- that, that... Yeah, several things need to be in place at different levels in schools, schools and school systems. So, you know, starting with the

district on down to the principal, to the teachers. Um, and the families come in there as well. So,

00:09:13,335 --> 00:09:27,175 [Speaker 3]

so if I started at the district, I would say, um, successful programs, uh, the more successful programs I've seen in, um, anything, in technology, in, um,

00:09:27,175 --> 00:09:33,915 [Speaker 3]

culturally sustaining practices, in anything, uh, the way that things are

00:09:33,915 --> 00:09:40,075 [Speaker 3]

either forced or are, um,

00:09:40,075 --> 00:09:58,295 [Speaker 3]

you know, laid out in a way, like over time or, um, just the way that, that people are... I hate to use the word trained, but that is a word they use, but, um, that are [clears throat] trained or through professional learning, [laughs] whatever you want to call it. Um, it...

00:09:58,295 --> 00:10:10,155 [Speaker 3]

That makes a huge difference. So, I have seen, certainly seen many, way too many programs over the years where, you know, a district purchases a curriculum or a program or a

00:10:10,155 --> 00:10:17,395 [Speaker 3]

SEL program or whatever they're gonna do, and they say, um, "This is required. Everybody's gonna do this."

00:10:17,395 --> 00:10:21,215 [Speaker 3]

Here's... You know, used to be in-person

00:10:21,215 --> 00:10:51,175 [Speaker 3]

professional development. Now everything can be done watching videos. But, um, either way, "Here, you're gonna do this [laughs] whether you like it or not." And, um, and then there's, there's no follow-up. Like, there's no-nobody coming around to see how you're implementing it or if you're implementing it or if it's being implemented well. You know, the word fidelity was used for years, but I, it, it... But, um,

00:10:51,175 --> 00:10:55,095 [Speaker 3]

but it is true. If you, if a district

00:10:55,095 --> 00:11:05,535 [Speaker 3]

says, "We're going to start this program, and you are required to do it, and you are required to take this training," and they end it there,

00:11:05,535 --> 00:11:10,195 [Speaker 3]

I have yet to see that succeed. I think, um,

00:11:10,195 --> 00:12:15,195 [Speaker 3]

there needs to be follow-up always, and that cannot be done on a video screen. Uh, it, it just can't be done in that way. Like, human beings need to go and watch it, see how it's happening, um, and, and coach, basically coach. And I was a coach. And, and as a coach, I was asked by the district sometimes to do that. And, and, uh, and it was tough because I didn't always agree with the way they were implementing it or the way they were providing the training. And then the coach is supposed to go in and, um, police it, really. [laughs] And that's just not what coaches should do either. So, those things to me are red flags as far as not being successful and have certainly seen that in the morale of teachers. Um, if it's, if it is presented in that way, um, many, many teachers-... kind of already make up their mind that they don't wanna do it, and their heart's not in it. Anyone who knows teachers, and good, the best teachers,

00:12:15,195 --> 00:12:18,695 [Speaker 3]

their heart is in it. And, and

00:12:18,695 --> 00:12:21,135 [Speaker 3]

if that doesn't happen,

00:12:21,135 --> 00:12:29,215 [Speaker 3]

you're not gonna see as practice in my... That's been my experience, personally, and as a coach, um,

00:12:29,215 --> 00:12:35,155 [Speaker 3]

and mentor. So, I think success is when

00:12:35,155 --> 00:12:54,975 [Speaker 3]

programs are brought to a staff or to a district, and then, um, A, everything doesn't have to happen right at once. It's over time, and so it's in- it's phased in, in a way. Um, but also taking the time to get feedback, to

00:12:54,975 --> 00:13:03,355 [Speaker 3]

make sure everybody's understanding it, make sure it's being implemented the way it was meant to be. Um, that-

00:13:03,355 --> 00:13:17,835 [Speaker 3]

that can be successful. The other, then that's from the district, but then, um, principals in schools are critical. So, if a principal doesn't buy into something that

00:13:17,835 --> 00:13:23,215 [Speaker 3]

they're told they have to do in their school, or if they don't understand it,

00:13:23,215 --> 00:13:35,735 [Speaker 3]

um, and they also don't know how to support teachers with it, it will not succeed. Um, so if principals

00:13:35,735 --> 00:14:49,215 [Speaker 3]

mainly understand it, uh, they may not agree with it, but if they at least understand it and what the- the premise is and what it's supposed to be doing and where to find support, um, and who in their building can provide that support. And it's different for every teacher, you know? Um, so that's the human element to me is if a principal knows their stuff and knows how to create a culture where learning and failing is acceptable, and that you feel supported and, um, and know who you can go to to, um, figure things out, that helps. And that, I think that leads to more successful programs. And then on down to the teachers themselves, again, it's the same thing. Do they- do they understand it? Do they believe in it? You know, um, do they think it's gonna help kids? And sometimes we don't think it will [laughs]. So, um, so I have seen things succ- succeed and I have seen things fail, uh, in- in every school I've been in and every district I've been in. Um,

00:14:49,215 --> 00:14:57,835 [Speaker 3]

so I think there's, um, a lot of value in- in coaching, but I think also in peer-to-peer,

00:14:57,835 --> 00:15:05,355 [Speaker 3]

um, coaching and, um, and again that goes back to a principal and how they

00:15:05,355 --> 00:15:33,575 [Speaker 3]

create the teams in their school, the grade level teams or the dis- the departments or however they do that in that there's, um, there's an art to that, to making sure that you have a balance of experience, a balance of leadership, a balance of learners and people that feel comfortable with each other, and, um, and- and having leadership that's not micromanaging, but is allowing,

00:15:33,575 --> 00:15:52,535 [Speaker 3]

but really sincerely wants you to learn and they want to help you grow as a professional and as a person. Um, if you think somebody wants to help you grow, then you're more likely to learn, even if it's something that you

00:15:52,535 --> 00:16:10,075 [Speaker 3]

maybe are not sure that you want or want to do or believe in. But if- if you know you're being supported by people who are, like, on your side and want you to do well, and that, you know, that's the same with students, they'll do better for teachers who they know are,

00:16:10,075 --> 00:16:11,695 [Speaker 3]

um,

00:16:11,695 --> 00:16:19,415 [Speaker 3]

want them to grow, th- they're really, like, care about them. It's not, they're not just doing something to check it off.

00:16:19,415 --> 00:16:26,075 [Speaker 3]

After a while you- you [laughs] just kinda- kinda watch these programs come and go, and you think, "You know,

00:16:26,075 --> 00:16:39,295 [Speaker 3]

what are we doing?" And, you know, you get a new superintendent, everything changes. You get a new principal, everything changes. You get an- an- an, you know, yeah, it- it just kind of comes back to, uh, trusting,

00:16:39,295 --> 00:16:46,915 [Speaker 3]

trusting teachers [laughs] to teach and listening to teachers sometimes, and not, uh, not just

00:16:46,915 --> 00:16:49,455 [Speaker 3]

forcing things on them.

00:16:49,455 --> 00:17:17,775 [Speaker 0]

Like Dr. Gabriel, Ms. Jannuzzi-Godfrey reiterated the importance of education being active and beneficial. However, she came upon it differently as someone positioned in the school. She notes the importance of differentiating training for teachers as well as keeping coaching separate from implementation checks. Her thoughts nodded the ideas that education should not be based on teacher compliance, but instead teacher freedom, and how hard that can be to implement well in schools and districts.

00:17:17,775 --> 00:17:27,915 [Speaker 0]

In the next audio clip, you will hear me ask a question, and then you will hear Ms. Kimberly Jones' response about a specific implementation strategy.

00:17:27,915 --> 00:17:39,555 [Speaker 0]

So, in school districts that I've been in previously, and ones that I've, you know, visited, they've had this template where, like, culturally relevant teaching and learning, culture sustaining practices is, like,

00:17:39,555 --> 00:17:50,315 [Speaker 0]

a- a section on their lesson plan template and they have to, you know, write in there what they're doing. And then educational technology is another section on that same template, and they have to write in what they're doing.

00:17:50,315 --> 00:18:00,335 [Speaker 0]

In your opinion, is that a solid practice for incorporating these two initiatives into lessons, or do you think there's a better way it can be done?

00:18:00,335 --> 00:18:06,815 [Speaker 4]

I think it's a great... I'm not gonna say great. I think it's a- a sound practice, I'll say that.

00:18:06,815 --> 00:18:06,835 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:18:06,835 --> 00:18:19,644 [Speaker 4]

I think it's a sound practice, and I think it's a sound introductory practice. But our goal, just like there's not a- there's not a Bible...... on a lesson plan that says, "Did you greet your students today?"

00:18:19,644 --> 00:18:19,663 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:18:19,663 --> 00:18:26,123 [Speaker 4]

There might be on obs- some observations or maybe walkthroughs. But there's not a box that says, "Be kind to your students."

00:18:26,123 --> 00:18:26,343 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:18:26,343 --> 00:18:36,644 [Speaker 4]

There's not a box that says, "After a long break, did you inquire about how your students were doing? How their break was? Did you do a self-assessment of their mental health?"

00:18:36,644 --> 00:18:36,963 [Speaker 0]

Mm.

00:18:36,963 --> 00:18:53,883 [Speaker 4]

"Were you friendly to your students? Did you compliment their new backpack? Did you compliment the picture they drew today? Did you tell them great job on the football field?" We don't quantify those things because we expect them to be part of sound teaching.

00:18:53,883 --> 00:18:53,903 [Speaker 0]

Mm.

00:18:53,903 --> 00:19:17,224 [Speaker 4]

And anybody who comes out of, you know, out of, out of an EPP or enters the field, um, I'm, I'm still gonna t- to err on the side of people enter this profession because they do value young people. They do love and, and appreciate children, and want to, you know, equip them with the skills they need to, to live great lives.

00:19:17,224 --> 00:19:20,243 [Speaker 4]

That's not a box we put on the lesson plan.

00:19:20,243 --> 00:19:20,263 [Speaker 0]

Mm.

00:19:20,263 --> 00:19:46,243 [Speaker 4]

Of, "Did you allow for questions?" Because we consider that to be a default part of teaching. And so for me, it's a sound practice at the start, but if it is in your district's mission and vision that all students, all students will be successful and have their needs met, then culturally sustaining practices become a default.

00:19:46,243 --> 00:19:46,643 [Speaker 0]

Hm.

00:19:46,643 --> 00:19:49,663 [Speaker 4]

And this is just how we teach. Now,

00:19:49,663 --> 00:20:04,963 [Speaker 4]

we can't start there, because it's not as default as, "I know Hannah's name," or, "I asked Hannah her favorite color," or, "I saw it was her birthday in PowerSchool, so I said Happy Birthday Hannah." It's not that default yet.

00:20:04,963 --> 00:20:05,303 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:20:05,303 --> 00:20:24,163 [Speaker 4]

But when we center it in our strategic planning, when we center it in the mission and the visions of our school districts, I think over time, it becomes default, and it, that box is no long, no, no longer necessary, because it's just part of good teaching, the same way that wait time, or, [laughs] or, um, you know-

00:20:24,163 --> 00:20:24,183 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm

00:20:24,183 --> 00:20:34,103 [Speaker 4]

... allowing for a plurality of assessments, of formative inve- summative assessments, that's not something you really have to, to put on a box. I mean, I'm sure it-

00:20:34,103 --> 00:20:34,123 [Speaker 0]

Hm. [laughs]

00:20:34,123 --> 00:20:42,343 [Speaker 4]

... it's on a template somewhere. Um, and I'm sure in my first years of teaching, somebody had to tell me that. Like, "Kim, you didn't wait for them to answer the question." [laughs]

00:20:42,343 --> 00:20:42,463 [Speaker 0]

[laughs]

00:20:42,463 --> 00:21:19,523 [Speaker 4]

"You just gave them the answer 'cause you were worried about getting to the next point of your lesson." So absolutely, there's, there's, there's a need for that, but I think it's, it's foundational, and, uh, I wouldn't say it's a best practice, it's a sound practice when you are, are just, um, incorporating these two, these two measures, um, both culturally sustaining practice and the use of, of technology. It's, it's nice to have that box, but eventually it should s- become, become part of your teaching. And I think, um, I firmly think, firmly believe that over time,

00:21:19,523 --> 00:21:29,023 [Speaker 4]

in reaction to who our students are, it's gonna become far more of a default. Because the diversity, at least of our public schools in North Carolina, is going to demand it.

00:21:29,023 --> 00:21:29,643 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm.

00:21:29,643 --> 00:21:34,383 [Speaker 4]

And, again, the sort of

00:21:34,383 --> 00:21:42,743 [Speaker 4]

social and cultural foundation of who our students are and how they see the world is going to demand that technology-

00:21:42,743 --> 00:21:42,763 [Speaker 0]

Mm-hmm

00:21:42,763 --> 00:21:49,963 [Speaker 4]

... become a regular part of how we reach them, how we instruct them, how we allow them to, to show their learning.

00:21:49,963 --> 00:22:13,263 [Speaker 0]

Ms. Kimberly Jones takes us in a new direction, thinking more about how implementations can affect students. Her thoughts show us that while initiatives and implementations are great, there are certain ideas that should be fundamental to educators. These ideas are that students should feel welcomed, heard and safe in our classrooms, regardless of the new initiatives occurring in schools and districts.

00:22:13,263 --> 00:22:25,343 [Speaker 0]

Lastly, we will hear from Mr. Silas Burke as he discusses his experience with implementations. In this clip, you will also hear me asking a more direct question about teacher training.

00:22:25,343 --> 00:22:36,803 [Speaker 5]

We're a K-12 school, kindergarten through 12th grade, and there, there are two things that stick out in my mind. Um, one was not really, uh, an initiative that set out to

00:22:36,803 --> 00:22:54,443 [Speaker 5]

solve a problem. It was an immediate and urgent thing, which was the onset of the COVID pandemic. Um, and so, we had to pretty rapidly make some adjustments to be able to do remote instruction. You know, that fall, we were, um,

00:22:54,443 --> 00:25:23,432 [Speaker 5]

basically four days a week of remote instruction, and in the spring, our student body was kind of split in half. And half would come on Monday and Tuesday to school, and half would come on, uh, Thursday and Friday, and then Wednesday was kind of an, an off day. Um, so there were a lot of people that had to kind of get on board with a method of teaching that they had never done before. Um, and I was one of the point people at school in terms of

enabling them to do that. And again, not exactly the same thing as an initiative that I described before, um, but I think we were as successful as anybody in terms of kind of the rapid, um, identification of the platform to use, the deployment of devices to students, where traditionally we had never done that, and, and so forth and so on. Um, but something that we did starting last school year, and we've continued this school year, we have, um, we've had a one-to-one initiative in place for the entire time that I've been here, or almost the entire time that I've been here. Um, but we have never had our middle school students, um, receive devices that they would take home. So, there was a device for every student on campus, but not everybody took them home with them to, to do, um, schoolwork. So, um, there was some funding that was available as a result of the COVID pandemic that was called the Emergency Connectivity Fund. It was a program that, uh, was sponsored by the FCC, and it could be used to...... um, purchase, uh, devices for students to use. But one of the stipulations was that they had to take them home. And so, I kinda identified that as a, an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. Um, on the one hand, it, um, was an opportunity for us to get some funding, which of course in education is always something that's really beneficial. Um, and to update some of our Chromebooks that were, you know, really falling apart on their last legs. Not suitable, mean, um, not suitable for use really. And [clears throat] also, um, really change the way our middle school teachers were able to teach, because those students having devices that they can use at home for homework, for assignments, for projects and things like that, is a, a game-changer versus if everything has to be on paper, if everything has to be, um, um, written out, um, as sort of the, the person in charge of this stuff, that has been, um, fairly acce- fairly, fairly successful. It feels pretty good.

00:25:23,432 --> 00:25:37,932 [Speaker 0]

And we talked about, or you mentioned teacher training a little bit earlier, but what model do you, are your, is your school using in the teacher training process? Is it like, teach the teacher? Or, or like, what does that look like?

00:25:37,932 --> 00:27:30,431 [Speaker 5]

Yeah. Um, so this is something that I'm thinking about a lot right now, because we actually have an, an upcoming technology initiative, [laughs] um, th- that is, uh, gonna be interesting to see how we decide to implement it. Typically, so going into COVID, um, there were a lot of, there were some, we did some in-person trainings like, you know, socially-distanced, masked. We have a, a large room that, um, some of our juniors and seniors use sometimes when they're working on online, uh, community college classes. And so we were in there. I led some trainings, so that was very, you know, direct to the teacher directly. It wasn't like, train the trainer, whatever you might think of. It didn't have to spread anymore from that. We did it over the course of, I think we did two weeks, two sessions each week. So in that span of time, I got pretty much everybody. And that was focused on making sure, you know,

we settled on Google Classroom as the learning management system we were going to use bec- There's a lot of, you know, "Just figure it out. Just figure it out. Here it is. Just figure it out." And teachers have no time for that sort of thing. Um, i- it's the two things that you can't do to help a teacher out. You can't add money to the budget, and you can't add time to the day, right? And those are really the two things that we need. So we're in the process right now of evaluating, um, interactive flat panels. We have, uh, projectors that are 10, 12, 14, 16 years old, and a lot of them are on their last legs. They're starting to die out. Um, and we've identified IFPs as kind of the way we're going to go when we go to refresh those things. And so, that's something that's on my mind right now, is what's, what's that system going to look like for making sure that everybody's comfortable using them, c- um, I'm thinking

00:27:30,431 --> 00:27:38,971 [Speaker 5]

we are going to, [clears throat] we're gonna be doing it in phases most likely, just out of, you know, budgetary concerns. And so

00:27:38,971 --> 00:28:19,651 [Speaker 5]

my thought at the moment is possibly, okay, if, if you want to be in phase one, if you want to be one of the first people to have one of these in your classroom, then you gotta commit to some stuff for me. You've gotta commit to come to some training sessions that we do. You've gotta commit to being willing to help train other people after the fact. And so it'll be kind of a, a train the trainer I guess you would say. Um, but in a way that hopefully you get people that are willing and active and excited as sort of your first wave, and I think that'll maybe help make it a little bit more successful overall. [instrumental music]

00:28:19,651 --> 00:30:35,991 [Speaker 0]

Over the course of the interviews, we heard a lot about each person's experience with initiatives. Several speakers critique how initiatives are imposed on teachers without their meaningful participation, echoing Freire's idea of banking education, [bell chimes] where teachers and students are treated as passive recipients rather than co-creators of knowledge. Kimberly Jones' point about culturally responsive teaching becoming a default rather than a checkbox aligns with Freire's call for education to be a libratory practice that reflects students' realities. [bell chimes] Freire also emphasized the importance of dialogue in education. [bell chimes] Learning is most effective when students, or in this case, teachers, feel ownership and agency. This connects directly to Dr. Gabriel's point about how initiatives fail when they are a one moment in time training rather than a sustained interactive process. Without follow-up, reflection, and iterative improvement, teachers are disengaged and the system remains unchanged. Beyond Freire's theory, we can also connect

to Giroux's vision of teachers as public intellectuals who engage in critical reflection and action. [bell chimes] This mirrors Jill Irwin Hartle's belief that professional development should be participatory. If teachers are merely passive recipients of training, they cannot effectively guide students in questioning and changing oppressive structures. When we apply the insights of Freire, Giroux, Ladson-Billings, and Paris to the interviews, we see a clear pattern emerge. Number one, education systems as sites of power struggles. Top-down policies mentioned by Ms. Paula Januzzi Godfrey and standardized training mentioned by Dr. Gabriel often reinforce a compliance-based system rather than empowering educators. Giroux would argue that teachers must reclaim their role as intellectuals and resist these structures. [bell chimes] Two, culturally relevant and sustaining practices must be embedded. Ladson-Billings and Paris remind us that equity in education is not just about representation. It's about creating systems that sustain students' languages, histories, and identities. [bell chimes] Kimberly Jones discussed how education should default to these ideas and not just be initiatives for schools and districts to implement.

00:30:35,991 --> 00:31:02,651 [Speaker 0]

Three, praxis is essential for real change. As Freire insists, critical education requires both reflection and action. [bell chimes] Training must be continuous and dialogic, fostering real transformation. Both Jill Irwin Hartle and Dr. Gabriel focus on the importance of training and making sure it is truly beneficial. And last, four, technology and cultural shifts require systemic adaptation.

00:31:02,651 --> 00:31:38,511 [Speaker 0]

Silas Burke noted how the pandemic accelerated shifts in education, but systemic responses must ensure that these changes are culturally affirming rather than further marginalizing for students. [bell chimes] Freire, Giroux, Ladson-Billings, and Paris collectively emphasize that education should be transformative, not transactional. [bell chimes] The insights from the interviews illustrate both the obstacles and opportunities in enacting this vision. That's all the time we have for today, but join me next time as we analyze a new theme that's emerged. [upbeat music]