Pedagogical Thinking in the Reflective Teaching Cycle

The Reflective Teaching Cycle represents the dynamic process of teaching that oscillates between reflective pedagogical thinking and enacting. Teachers plan, instruct, assess, and explore the implications of learning experiences to determine next steps within and across lessons and units aimed at improving student learning. The sense-making role of the portfolio supports teachers in articulating their pedagogical thinking as a means of facilitating intentional practice and sustained professional learning as they continue to engage in the reflective teaching cycle. Each of the facilitation skills helps support different aspects of this process.

Below are some central questions that teachers learn to ask and answer to guide reflective teaching:

- What should/did I teach?
- Why should/did I teach it?
- What are/were my learning goals for this lesson?
- How are/did my planned learning experiences supporting all of my students’ learning?
- How will/did I know who is learning what?

- How are my pedagogical decisions impacting student learning?
- How are my assumptions influencing my pedagogical decisions?
- How might I change my pedagogical decision-making and practices to better support student learning?
- What current teaching dilemmas do I have and how might I work through them?

- How will/did I implement my lesson in a way that supported student learning?
- In what ways will/did my pedagogical decisions support all of my students’ learning?
- How did my teaching moves help and/or hinder student learning?

- How will/did I assess student learning and understanding?
- In what ways is my assessment appropriate for the understandings I want to assess and the students I am assessing?
- How does my assessment help me know what my individual students understand and what each is struggling with?