Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to *Professional Learning Communities at Work.* The Placer County Office of Education is pleased to provide this opportunity to educators in Placer County and throughout our region. This two day conference will help you build a collaborative culture, focus your teams on student learning, and respond as a system when students do not learn. The next two days will be exciting and challenging!

Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) have transformed schools and districts across the country. Many of you are already on the road to becoming dynamic professional learning communities that are focused on ensuring that all students learn at high levels. Some of you are just beginning the journey. Together with our district partners, we are committed to support each other in this important work. In the future, we will provide additional opportunities to learn from both national experts and local colleagues as we engage in the process of building results-oriented professional learning communities. We hope you will continue to be a part of this exciting work. We are here to support you and to learn with you.

Yours in education,

Gayle Garbolino-Mojica
Placer County
Superintendent of Schools

Professional Learning Communities at Work:
Bringing the Big Ideas to Life
Rick & Becky DuFour

January 28, 2009

7:30 – 8:30	**Registration/ Coffee Time**
8:30 – 10:00	**Introductions and opening remarks** **A Case for Professional Learning Communities** **The First Big Idea of a PLC – Focus on Learning** **Team Learning Process**
10:00 – 10:20	**Break**
10:20 – 12:00	**Team Learning Process (continued)**
12:00 – 1:00	**Lunch**
1:00 – 2:15	**The Second Big Idea of a PLC - Build a Collaborative Culture**
2:15 – 2:35	**Break**
2:35 – 3:30	**The Second Big Idea of a PLC (continued)**

January 29, 2009

8:30 – 10:00	**Third Big Idea of PLC – Focus on Results**
10:00 – 10:20	**Break**
10:20 – 12:00	**Breakout Sessions – *Whatever It Takes:*** ***How PLCs Respond When Students Don't Learn***
12:00 – 1:00	**Lunch**
1:00 – 2:15	**General Session – A Focus on Learning For All**
2:15 – 2:35	**Break**
2:35 – 3:30	**Building Consensus for PLCs** **Closing Remarks**

Table of Contents

Menu

Breakfast
Coffee, tea, danish and muffins available each morning
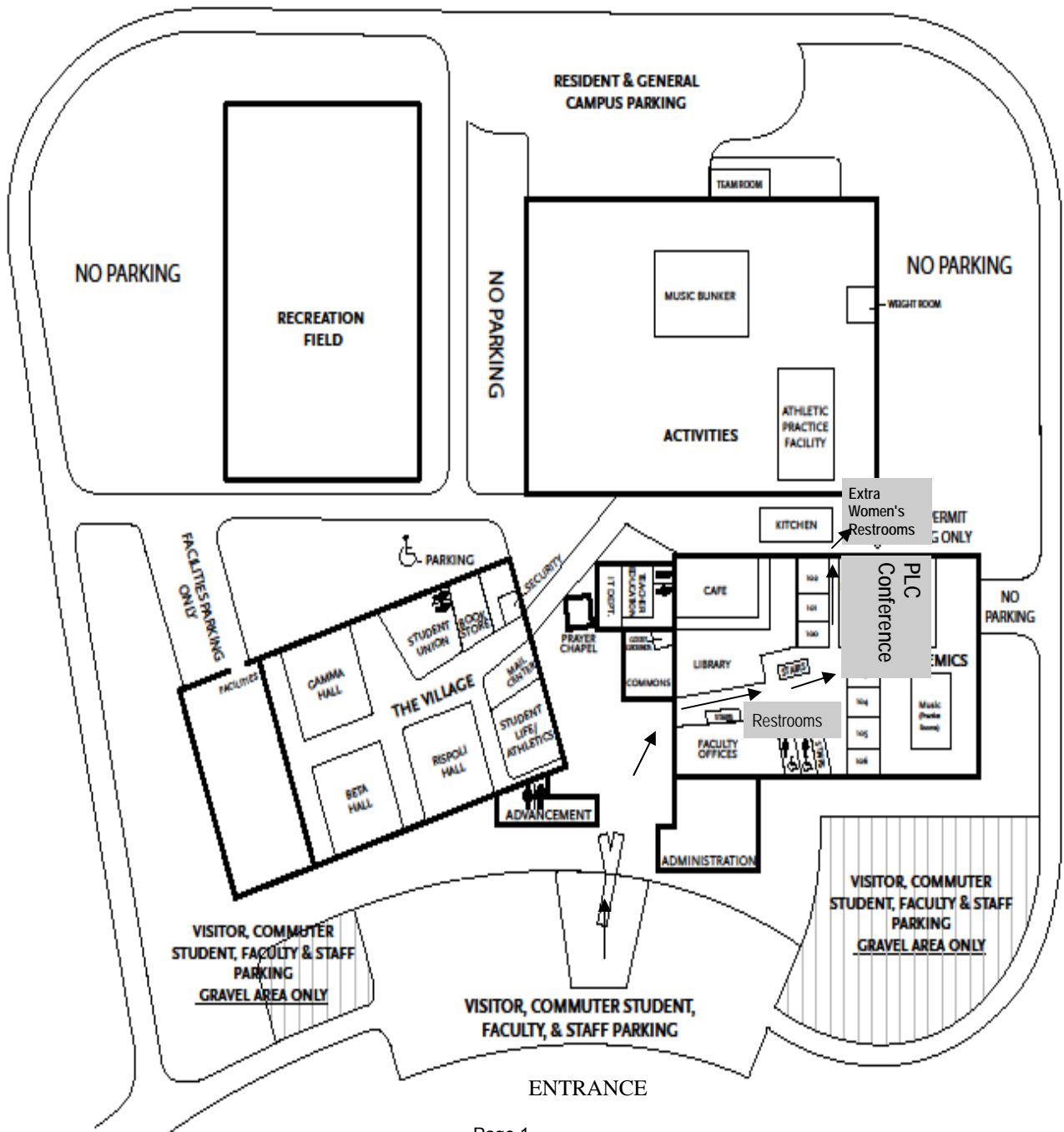
Boxed Sandwich Lunch
Boxed lunch will include sandwich (turkey, ham, or vegetarian), salad, (Day 1 pasta and Day 2 rice salad) and choice of water or soda.

Afternoon Break
Cookies or brownies will be available for the afternoon break.

WJU CAMPUS MAP

RESIDENT & GENERAL CAMPUS PARKING

TEAM ROOM

NO PARKING

NO PARKING

NO PARKING

RECREATION FIELD

MUSIC BUNKER

WEIGHT ROOM

ATHLETIC PRACTICE FACILITY

ACTIVITIES

KITCHEN

Extra Women's Restrooms

PERMIT ONLY

FACILITIES PARKING ONLY

PARKING

SECURITY

STUDENT UNION

BOOK STORE

MAIL CENTER

GAMMA HALL

THE VILLAGE

FACILITIES

IT DEPT.

TEACHER EDUCATION

CAFE

PRAYER CHAPEL

COMMONS

LIBRARY

PLC Conference

NO PARKING

EMICS

Music

Restrooms

FACULTY OFFICES

STUDENT LIFE/ ATHLETICS

RISPOLI HALL

BETA HALL

ADVANCEMENT

ADMINISTRATION

VISITOR, COMMUTER STUDENT, FACULTY & STAFF PARKING GRAVEL AREA ONLY

VISITOR, COMMUTER STUDENT, FACULTY & STAFF PARKING GRAVEL AREA ONLY

VISITOR, COMMUTER STUDENT, FACULTY, & STAFF PARKING

ENTRANCE

Guest Services

Help Desk/First Aid — If you have questions or concerns, visit the Help Desk for assistance. A nurse will be available to assist with first aid needs.

Book Sale Kiosk — Please visit to purchase Professional Learning Communities books offered at discounted pricing.

Technology Kiosk — Available for you to pick up your web mail.

Thank You

Many thanks to the following educators who served on the Planning Committee for this event:

Mary Boyle, Western Placer Unified School District
Eric Bull, William Jessup University
Bonnie Hollitz, Horizon Charter School
Suzanne Laughrea, Roseville Joint Union High School District
Karen McLaughlin, Roseville City School District
Mike Melton, Rocklin Unified School District
John Montgomery, Roseville Joint Union High School District
Carolyn Nichols, Loomis Union School District
Carolyn Nunn Lum, Rocklin Unified School District
Alix Peshette, Placer County Office of Education
Gregg Ramseth, Placer Union High School District
Renee Regacho-Anaclerio, Placer County Office of Education
Linda Rooney, Rocklin Unified School District
Steve Schaumleffel, Placer Hills Union School District
Michele Schuetz, Auburn Union School District
Ron Severson, Roseville Joint Union High School District
Gerald Williams, Placer County Office of Education
Andrea Zimmerman, Roseville Joint Union High School District

And a very special thank you to our logistics team for all the work behind the scenes to make these two days a success:

James Anderberg	Deb Mohsenzadegan	Matt Shawver
Lloyd Dawson	Phawnda Moore	Peter Skibitzki
Ruth Hardin	Mel Nelson	Myrna Smith
Sherry Jones	Joe Rumenapp	Kerri Walker
Billy Maus		

PCOE
GOLD IN EDUCATION
Gayle Garbolino-Mojica
County Superintendent of Schools

The Placer County Office of Education, along with seventeen individual school districts and one community college district, strives to ensure that every child in Placer County is equipped with a first-class education to succeed in a global economy, to appreciate the cultural, social and historical resources of their community, and to be active participants in civic responsibilities.

In order to serve the students of Placer County, the Placer County Office of Education, in conjunction with local school districts, provides an array of programs and services to meet student and school district needs. We accomplish this task by offering the following:

- **Business Services** - Fiscal oversight of all Placer County's school district budgets

- **Early Childhood Education Services** - State and federally funded programs for infant-preschool children and their families

- **Educational Services** - Curriculum and instruction support for districts and schools; a variety of programs to support students and families

  o **Juvenile Court and Community Schools**
  o **Prevention Services**
  o **Professional Development**
  o **Beginning Teacher Support Assessment (BTSA)**
  o **Community Independent Home Study**

- **Human Resources** - Credential monitoring and teacher recruitment and training

- **Regional Occupational Programs** - Career preparation for high school juniors, seniors, and adults

- **Special Education** - Specialized instruction and services to students with special needs

- **Special Education Local Plan Area for Placer County** (SELPA) - Services for districts and parents to ensure that special needs students receive a "free and appropriate education"

- **Technology Services** - Technology support for county and district business, human relations, and educational services departments

PLACER COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Tami Brodnik	Area 1	Rich Colwell	Area 2
Scott Gnile	Area 3	Pam Robie Hart	Area 5
Lynn M. Oliver	Area 5	E. Ken Tokutomi	Area 4
Robert Tomasini	Area 1		

Partners in Education,

On behalf of our students, faculty and staff, welcome to William Jessup University. We are so pleased to partner with the Placer County Office of Education in presenting this conference aimed at enhancing our common educational endeavor. Once again, welcome.

David P. Nystrom, Ph.D. *Vice President, Academic Affairs*

About William Jessup University's Teacher Education Program

The teacher education program at William Jessup University is known as "Credentials with Character". The program is referred to as such to describe how WJU delivers a unique program and to inspire and infuse our courses with fundamentals of character architecture.

The program is designed to build and support ethical individuals who inherently teach with strong morals and conviction. Each of our classes focus on character traits and these are reinforced as teacher candidates gain experience in the classroom via field experience and student teaching.

The multiple subject credential program is designed with a strong core of Christian values and strategically crafted to enable students the ability to complete a BA in Liberal Studies along with a multiple subject credential **in just four years**.

Graduates from the WJU Credentials with Character program are well-equipped, highly-principled individuals who understand diversity as a strength and who provide for individual differences in order to help their students prepare for a diverse and rapidly changing world.

About William Jessup University

Founded in 1939 by William Jessup, the University moved to Rocklin, California, in August 2004. WJU is the first and only WASC accredited private four-year university to have its main campus located in the greater Sacramento area, offering degrees in many different disciplines, including Business Administration, Christian Education, English, History, Intercultural Studies, Liberal Studies (Teacher Education), Music, Pastoral Ministry, Psychology, Public Policy and Youth Ministry. Anticipated majors include fields in the humanities, science and professional studies. WJU also offers an adult Degree Completion Program at its campuses in Rocklin and San Jose in Counseling Psychology, Management and Christian Leadership.

The university's main campus is located in Rocklin, California, and enrolls students from across the country and around the world. WJU inspires its graduates to become learners, leaders, professionals and people who make a difference in the world..

Our state-of-the-art, 128-acre campus provides endless opportunities to meet the growing needs of students and allows them to experience the most of college life. For more information, please visit www.jessup.edu or call (916) 577-2200.

Dr. Richard P. DuFour
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Moneta, VA 24121
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(540) 721-0382 fax

Dr. Rick DuFour was a public school educator for thirty-four years, serving as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. He served as the principal of Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois from 1983 to 1991 and as superintendent of the district from 1991 to 2002. During his tenure, Stevenson became what the United States Department of Education has described as "the most recognized and celebrated school in America." It is one of three schools in the nation to win the USDE Blue Ribbon Award on four occasions and one of the first comprehensive schools designated a New America High School by USDE as a model of successful school reform. Stevenson has been repeatedly cited in the popular press as one of America's best schools and referenced in professional literature as an exemplar of best practices in education.

Dr. DuFour is the author of ten books and almost eighty professional articles, and wrote a quarterly column for the Journal of Staff Development for almost a decade. He was the lead consultant and author for ASCD's seven-part video series on the principalship and the author of two other videos – "How to Build a Professional Learning Community" and "Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School." He was the first principal in Illinois to receive the state's Distinguished Educator Award, received his states highest award as both a principal and superintendent, was named as one of the Top 100 school administrators in North America by Executive Educator magazine, was presented the distinguished scholar practitioner award from the University of Illinois, and was the 2004 recipient of the National Staff Development Council's Distinguished Service Award. He has consulted with school districts, state departments, and professional organizations throughout North America on strategies for improving schools.

Rebecca B. DuFour
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Moneta, VA 24121
(540) 721-4662 phone
(540) 721-0382 fax

Becky DuFour has served as a teacher, school administrator and central office coordinator. As a former elementary principal, Becky helped her school earn state and national recognition as a model Professional Learning Community. She is one of the featured principals in the *Video Journal of Education's* program on "Leadership in an Age of Standards and High Stakes" (2001). She is also the lead consultant and featured principal for the *Video Journal* program, "Elementary Principals as Leaders of Learning" (2003).

Becky is co-author of:
>
> *Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities* (Solution Tree, 2002),
> *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn* (Solution Tree, 2004),
> *Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (Solution Tree, 2006),
> *Professional Learning Communities at Work Plan Book* (Solution Tree, 2006) and
> *Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work* (Solution Tree, 2008).

She is also co-editor of *On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities* (Solution-tree, 2005), a collection of essays from the leading educational authors and consultants.

Becky has written for numerous professional journals, served as a book reviewer for the *Journal of Staff Development* and wrote a quarterly column for the National Association of Elementary School Principals' publication, *Leadership Compass*. Becky has consulted with and worked for professional organizations, school districts, universities, and state departments of education throughout North America.

**Professional Learning
Communities at Work:
Bringing the Big Ideas to Life**

**by
Rick & Becky DuFour
rdufour@d125.org
beck.dufour@jetbroadband.com**

Assumptions

- Educators matter
- Educators care.
- Schools matter.
- If educators and schools have a significant impact on student achievement, they serve a fundamentally moral purpose.

A National Concern

- 1.23 million American students dropped out of school in 2008. A student drops out of school every 26 seconds.
- What are some of the implications you would predict for the student who drops out of school in America today?

The American Dream is Wounded

- Education and family background have become the primary barriers to upward mobility in the United States. The American Dream - the belief that hard work will allow us to achieve our goals and improve our lives - is receding from the reach of many of our children.
  - □ **US News and World Report**
- For the first time in history, two-thirds of Americans don't believe life will be better off for their children than it was for them.
  - □ **NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, July 27, 2006**

Assumptions

- Educators matter
- Educators care.
- Schools matter.
- If educators and schools have a significant impact on student achievement, they serve a fundamentally moral purpose.
- **We now know how to create schools that help more kids learn at higher levels.**

The Power of Professional Learning Communities

The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community.
The path to change in the classroom lies within and through professional learning communities.

—Milbrey McLaughlin (1995)

Organizations that Endorse
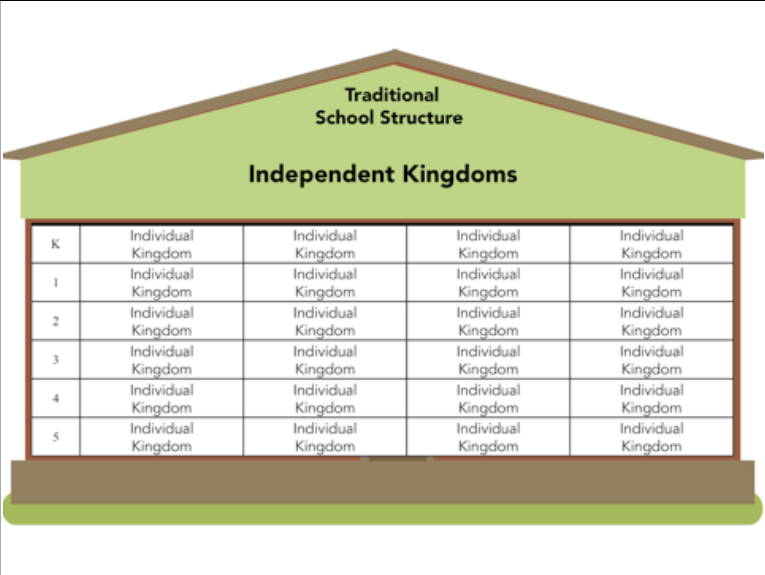# Professional Learning Community Concepts

American Federation of Teachers
Annenberg Institute for School Reform
Assessment Training Institute
California Teachers' Association
Center for Performance-based Assessment
Center for Teaching Quality
Council of Chief State School Officials
Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium
Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Board of Professional Teaching Standards
National Center for Teaching and America's Future
National Center for the Organization and Restructuring of Schools
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Education Association
National Middle School Association
National Science Education Leadership Association
National Science Teachers Association
National Staff Development Council
North Central Accreditation Association
North Central Regional Educational Laboratory
Research For Better Teaching
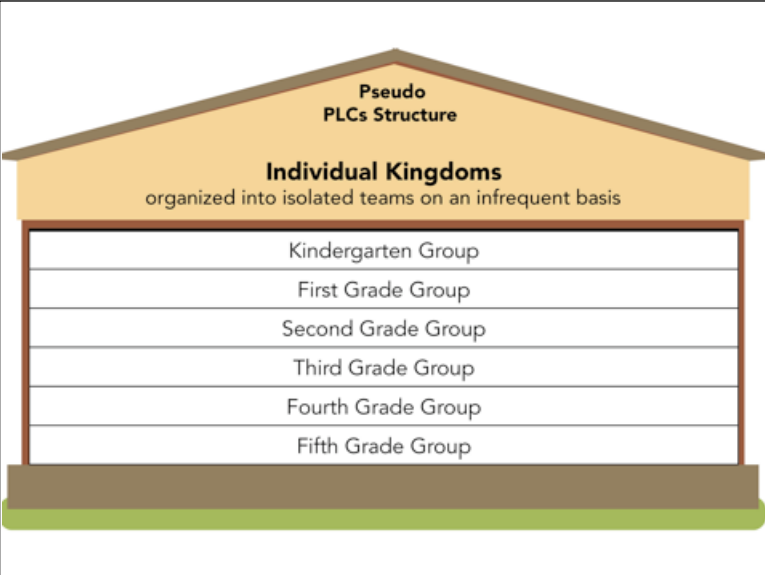Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

Educational Researchers Who Endorse PLC Concepts

Roland Barth	Richard Elmore	Jonathan Saphier	Michael Fullan
Doug Reeves	Richard Stiggins	Fred Newmann	Gary Wehlage
Sharon Kruse	Milbrey McLaughlin	Joan Talbert	Mike Schmoker
Karen Seashore Louis	Carl Glickman	Paul Byrk	Andy Hargreaves
Dennis Sparks	Joan Little	Shirley Hord	Robert Marzano
Thomas Sergiovanni	Art Wise	Dylan Wiliam	Phil Schlecty
Linda Darling-Hammond			

For More information, please visit: www.allthingsplc.info "Articles & Research"

What Is a PLC?

Traditional School Structure

Independent Kingdoms

K	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom
1	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom
2	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom
3	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom
4	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom
5	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom	Individual Kingdom

Pseudo PLCs Structure

Individual Kingdoms
organized into isolated teams on an infrequent basis

Kindergarten Group

First Grade Group

Second Grade Group

Third Grade Group

Fourth Grade Group

Fifth Grade Group

What Is a PLC?

A Professional Learning Community is an ethos that infuses every single aspect of a school's operation. When a school becomes a professional learning community, everything in the school looks different than it did before.
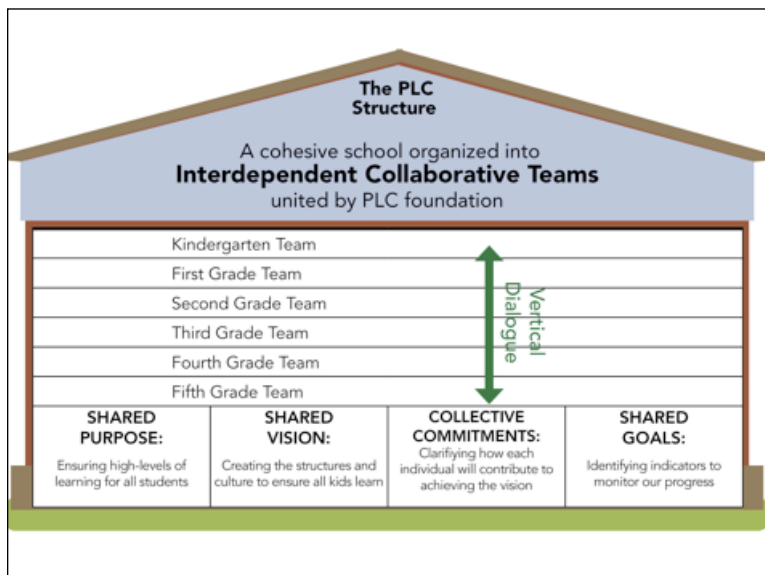
—Andy Hargreaves (2004)

Professional Learning Community (PLC) Defined

Educators are committed to working **collaboratively** in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research in order to achieve better **results** for the students they serve.

PLCs operate under the assumption that the key to improved <u>learning</u> for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators.

—DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many (2006)

The PLC Structure

A cohesive school organized into
Interdependent Collaborative Teams
united by PLC foundation

Kindergarten Team
First Grade Team
Second Grade Team
Third Grade Team
Fourth Grade Team
Fifth Grade Team

Vertical Dialogue

SHARED PURPOSE:	SHARED VISION:	COLLECTIVE COMMITMENTS:	SHARED GOALS:
Ensuring high-levels of learning for all students	Creating the structures and culture to ensure all kids learn	Clarifying how each individual will contribute to achieving the vision	Identifying indicators to monitor our progress

Characteristics of a Learning Community

- Shared mission, vision, values, goals
- Collaborative teams **focused on learning**
- Collective inquiry into **best practice** and **current reality**
- Action orientation and experimentation
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Results orientation

The BIG IDEAS of a PLC

- **We accept <u>learning</u> as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine <u>all</u> practices in light of their impact on learning.**
- We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a **collaborative culture** through development of high-performing teams.
- We assess our effectiveness on the basis of **results** rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.

Is the Professional Learning Community Concept Based on…

…adherence to core practices or individual teacher autonomy?

…strong administrative leadership or teacher empowerment?

…recognition and celebration of current efforts and achievements or discontent with the status quo?

…approaching school improvement with a sense of urgency or demonstrating the patience to sustain an improvement initiative over the long haul?

Simultaneous Loose AND Tight School Cultures

Effective school cultures don't simply encourage individuals to go off and do whatever they want, but rather establish clear parameters and priorities that enable individuals to work within established boundaries in a creative and autonomous way. They are characterized by *directed empowerment* or *a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship.*

If the purpose of school is truly to ensure high levels of <u>learning</u> for all students, schools will:

✓Clarify what each student is expected to learn

Team Learning Process

■ Clarify 8-10 Essential Common Outcomes **(skills, knowledge, dispositions)** <u>per semester</u> by Course/Content Area

The 1st Step in Decision Making in a PLC: Building Shared Knowledge

Professional Learning Communities always attempt to answer critical questions by BUILDING SHARED KNOWLEDGE - engaging in collective inquiry - LEARNING TOGETHER.

If people make decisions based upon the collective study of the same pool of information, they increase the likelihood that they will arrive at the same conclusion.

Resources To Help Teams Build Shared Knowledge & Clarify "Learn What"

- State/Provincial/National Standards (e.g.NCTE/ NCTM)
- **Vertical articulation**
- District or department curriculum guides
- Assessment Frameworks (how will they be assessed)
- Data on past student performance (local/state/ national)
- Examples of student work and the criteria by which the quality of student work will be judged
- Textbook Presentation of Curriculum
- Curriculum Framework of High Performing Schools

Criteria for Identifying Essential Common Outcomes

To separate the essential from the peripheral, apply these 3 criteria to each standard:

1. **Endurance** - are students expected to retain the skills/knowledge long after the test is completed
2. **Leverage** - is this skill/knowledge applicable to many academic disciplines
3. **Readiness for the Next Level of Learning** - is this skill/knowledge preparing the student for success in the next grade/course
   - **Doug Reeves**

Advantages of Team Discussion of Essential Learning

- Greater clarity regarding interpretation of standards
- Greater consistency regarding importance of different standards
- Greater consistency in amount of time devoted to different standards (common pacing)
- Common outcomes and common pacing are essential prerequisites for a team to create common assessments and team interventions
- Greater ownership of and commitment to standards

Levels of Curricula at Work in Your school

1. Intended - What we want them to learn
2. Implemented - What actually gets taught
3. Attained -What they actually learn

*To impact the *attained* curriculum in the most powerful way, make certain the *implemented* curriculum is *guaranteed and viable.*

   - Robert Marzano

If the purpose of school is truly to ensure high levels of <u>learning</u> for all students, schools will:

✓ Clarify what each student is expected to learn

✓ Monitor each student's learning on a timely basis.

Team Learning Process

- Clarify 8-10 Essential Common Outcomes (skills, concepts, and dispositions) per semester by Course/Content Area
- **Develop multiple Common Formative Assessments for each Course/Content Area**

What are Common Formative Assessments?

- We will make the case that common formative assessments are the lynchpin of the collaborative team process in a PLC.
- Define "common" assessment.
- Define "formative" assessment.

Keys to Formative Assessments

To determine if an assessment is formative, ask:

1. Is it used to identify students who are experiencing difficulty in their learning?

2. Are students who are having difficulty provided with additional time and support for learning?

3. Are students given an additional opportunity to demonstrate their learning?

Resources to Help Teams Build Valid Common Assessments

- List of Essential Outcomes/Pacing Guides for Each Course/Subject
- Recommendations from Stiggins, Reeves, Ainsworth, Wiliam…
- Released items from district, state, provincial, and national assessments (ACT, SAT, ITBS, NAEP, etc.)
- Websites such as:
  - **www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/**
- Data from past indicators of achievement
- Methods of alternative assessments
- Examples of rubrics

Two Essentials of Performance Based Assessment

- Can we agree on the criteria by which we will judge the quality of student work?
- Can we apply those criteria consistently (inter-rater reliability)?

Team Learning Process

- Clarify 8-10 Essential Common Outcomes (skills, concepts, and dispositions) per semester by Course/Content Area
- Develop multiple Common Formative Assessments for each Course/Content area
- **Establish Specific Target/Benchmark**
- **Analyze Results**
- **Identify & Implement Improvement Strategies**

THIRD GRADE READING SKILLS: COMMON ASSESSMENT RESULTS (***TARGET SCORE 80/100)

STUDENT	MAKES PREDICTIONS					COMPARES/CONTRASTS STORIES					MAIN IDEA/SUPPORTING DETAILS					CAUSE/EFFECT				
	CLASS #1	CLASS #2	CLASS #3	CLASS #4	TOTALS	CLASS #1	CLASS #2	CLASS #3	CLASS #4	TOTALS	CLASS #1	CLASS #2	CLASS #3	CLASS #4	TOTALS	CLASS #1	CLASS #2	CLASS #3	CLASS #4	TOTALS
1	100	100	100	100		100	100	100	86		50	90	100	70		89	100	100	100	
2	100	100	80	100		86	100	86	100		60	90	100	70		100	78	100	100	
3	80	60	80	100		86	100	89	100		70	90	80	80		78	89	89	89	
4	100	100	100	80		100	100	86	86		92	90	100	80		100	100	89	100	
5	100	100	80	100		100	86	100	67		90	90	100	100		89	100	89	89	
6	80	100	100	60		100	100	100	71		100	100	92	40		100	89	89	56	
7	100	100	80	80		100	100	100	100		90	100	80	70		89	100	100	100	
8	40	80	80	100		100	100	86	100		90	83	83	50		67	89	100	89	
9	100	100	100	100		100	100	100	100		83	100	100	80		100	100	100	89	
10	60	100	100	100		71	100	100	86		60	92	90	70		78	100	89	89	
11	100	100	80	60		86	100	100	71		92	100	90	50		100	89	89	56	
12	100	80	100	80		100	86	100	100		83	100	100	50		78	78	100	100	
13	100	100	80	60		86	100	86	86		92	100	80	100		100	100	100	100	
14	80	100	100	100		100	86	100	86		90	90	80	100		89	100	100	100	
15	100	100	100	100		100	100	100	89		100	100	90	100		89	100	100	89	
16	100	100	100			86	100	86			80	100	80			100	100	89		
17	100	100				100	89				90	92				89	89			
18	100					100					100					100				
Average Score	91%	95%	91%	88%	92%	95%	97%	95%	89%	94%	84%	95%	90%	74%	86%	91%	94%	97%	90%	93%

Standard Group Comparison
2001

Group	Designation	Forced Choice Mastery	Performance Mastery	Total Mastery

10-1: INFERENTIAL RDG

ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00-01) - % Mean 0.72
- MASTERY — - (89%) 63 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 63 89% (15 of 25) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 63 89%
- NON-MASTERY — 8 11% — 0 0% — 8 11%

ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73
- MASTERY — - (89%) 562 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 562 89% (15 of 25) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 562 89%
- NON-MASTERY — 68 11% — 0 0% — 68 11%

10-2: VOCAB STRATEGIES

ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00-01) - % Mean 0.72
- MASTERY — - (61%) 43 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 43 61% (4 of 6) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 43 61%
- NON MASTERY — 28 39% — 0 0% — 28 39%

ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73
- MASTERY — - (73%) 458 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 458 73% (4 of 6) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected 458 73%
- NON-MASTERY — 172 27% — 0 0% — 172 27%

10-3: TERMS & STRUCT LIT

ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00-01) - % Mean 0.72
- MASTERY — - (87%) 62 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 62 87% (3 of 5) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 62 87%
- NON-MASTERY — 9 13% — 0 0% — 9 13%

ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73
- MASTERY — - (90%) 564 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 564 90% (3 of 5) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 564 90%
- NON-MASTERY — 66 10% — 0 0% — 66 10%

10-4: AIMS/MODES OF WRITING

ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00-01) - % Mean 0.72
- MASTERY — - (80%) 57 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 57 80% (5 of 9) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 57 80%
- NON-MASTERY — 14 20% — 0 0% — 14 20%

ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73
- MASTERY — - (78%) 491 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 491 78% (5 of 9) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 491 78%
- Non-MASTERY — 139 22% — 0 0% — 139 22%

10-5: CORRECTNESS OF EXPR

ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00-01) - % Mean 0.72
- MASTERY — - (79%) 56 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 56 79% (6 of 10) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 56 79%
- NON-MASTERY — 15 21% — 0 0% — 15 21%

ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73
- MASTERY — - (73%) 458 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard. 458 73% (6 of 10) — 0 0% (0 of 0) — 80% Selected. 458 73%
- NON-MASTERY — 172 27% — 0 0% — 172 27%

DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker © Solution Tree

Standard Group Comparison
2001

Group	Designation	Forced Choice Mastery	Performance Mastery	Total Mastery
10-6: IDENT. PHRASES/CLAUSES				
ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00–01) - % Mean 0.72		- (77%) 55 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard.		80% Selected.
	MASTERY	55 77% (3 of 5)	0 0% (0 of O)	55 77%
	NON-MASTERY	16 23%	0 0%	16 23%
ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73		- (83%) 520 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard.		80% Selected.
	MASTERY	520 83% (3 of 5)	0 0% (0 of 0)	520 83%
	NON-MASTERY	110 17%	0 0%	110 17%
10-7: IDENTIF SENT/RUN-ON/FRAGS				
ENG110FR ENGLISH - - FOLEY , T(00–01) - % Mean 0.72		- (86%) 61 of 71 Students have Mastered this Local Standard.		80% Selected.
	MASTERY	61 86% (3 of 5)	0 0% (0 of 0)	61 86%
	NON-MASTERY	10 14%	0 0%	110 17%
ENG110FR ENGLISH – (00 – 01) - %Mean 0.73		- (86%) 543 of 630 Students have Mastered this Local Standard.		80% Selected.
	MASTERY	543 86% (3 of 5)	0 0% (0 of 0)	543 86%
	NON-MASTERY	87 14%	0 0%	87 14%

DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker © Solution Tree

Item	A	B	C	D	E	Space	Diff
# 1 -	1 (0%)	17 (3%)	6 (1%)	606 (96%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.962
# 2 -	10 (2%)	10 (5%)	564 (90%) *	27 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.895
# 3 -	29 (5%)	3 (0%)	586 (93%) *	13 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.930
# 4 -	553 (88%) *	37 (6%)	4 (1%)	36 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.878
# 5 -	37 (6%)	19 (3%)	52 (8%)	524 (83%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.832
# 6 -	106 (17%)	458 (73%) *	58 (9%)	10 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.727
# 7 -	11 (2%)	22 (3%)	570 (90%) *	28 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.905
# 8 -	10 (2%)	16 (3%)	38 (6%)	569 (90%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.903
# 9 -	46 (7%)	40 (6%)	13 (2%)	529 (84%) *	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.840
# 10 -	12 (2%)	590 (94%) *	15 (2%)	12 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.937
# 11 -	460 (73%) *	104 (17%)	63 (10%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.730
# 12 -	432 (69%) *	129 (20%)	55 (9%)	14 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.686
# 13 -	3 (0%)	528 (84%) *	34 (5%)	65 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.838
# 14 -	8 (1%)	598 (95%) *	7 (1%)	17 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.949
# 15 -	56 (9%)	461 (73%) *	19 (3%)	94 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.732
# 16 -	78 (12%)	14 (2%)	79 (13%)	460 (73%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.730
# 17 -	112 (18%)	139 (22%)	6 (1%)	376 (60%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.597
# 18 -	21 (3%)	47 (7%)	561 (89%) *	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.890
# 19 -	4 (1%)	407 (65%) *	3 (0%)	219 (35%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.646
# 20 -	548 (87%) *	30 (5%)	5 (1%)	50 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.870
# 21 -	14 (2%)	4 (1%)	21 (3%)	592 (94%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.940
# 22 -	438 (70%) *	64 (10%)	98 (16%)	31 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.695
# 23 -	69 (11%)	457 (73%) *	61 (10%)	44 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.725
# 24 -	56 (9%)	28 (4%)	472 (75%) *	76 (12%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.749
# 25 -	10 (2%)	50 (8%)	556 (88%) *	16 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.883
# 26 -	112 (18%)	120 (19%)	10 (2%)	389 (62%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.617
# 27 -	125 (20%)	269 (43%)	237 (38%) *	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.376
# 28 -	568 (90%) *	37 (6%)	11 (2%)	14 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.902
# 29 -	506 (80%) *	28 (4%)	65 (10%)	34 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.803
# 30 -	64 (10%)	48 (8%)	30 (5%)	488 (77%) *	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.775
# 31 -	11 (2%)	559 (89%) *	16 (3%)	44 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.887
# 32 -	88 (14%)	63 (10%)	422 (67%) *	58 (9%)	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	0.670
# 33 -	107 (17%)	377 (60%)	16 (3%)	131 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.598
# 34 -	427 (68%) *	49 (8%)	81 (13%)	75 (12%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.678
# 35 -	73 (12%)	413 (66%) *	38 (6%)	107 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.656
# 36 -	34 (5%)	398 (63%) *	45 (7%)	154 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.632
# 37 -	78 (12%)	253 (40%)	11 (2%)	289 (46%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.459
# 38 -	97 (15%)	397 (63%) *	62 (10%)	73 (12%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.630
# 39 -	222 (15%)	167 (27%)	170 (27%) *	72 (11%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.270
# 40 -	99 (16%)	44 (7%)	88 (14%)	400 (63%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.635
# 41 -	542 (86%) *	25 (4%)	5 (1%)	60 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.860
# 42 -	36 (6%)	82 (13%)	135 (21%)	378 (60%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.600
# 43 -	12 (2%)	291 (46%)	11 (2%)	318 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.505
# 44 -	486 (77%) *	48 (8%)	91 (14%)	5 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.771
# 45 -	8 (1%)	93 (15%)	518 (82%) *	13 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.822
# 46 -	57 (9%)	421 (67%) *	123 (20%)	33 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.668
# 47 -	54 (9%)	360 (57%) *	41 (7%)	178 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.571
# 48 -	19 (3%)	165 (26%) *	51 (8%)	396 (63%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.262
# 49 -	42 (7%)	574 (91%) *	5 (1%)	9 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0.911
# 50 -	153 (24%)	72 (11%)	9 (1%)	398 (63%) *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.632
# 51 -	542 (86%) *	50 (8%)	41 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	0.860
# 52 -	17 (3%)	307 (49%)	311 (49%) *	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.490

Assessing Your Current Reality

Consider the descriptions of 5 stages of PLC progress regarding:

1. Clarity on What Students Must Know and Be Able to Do

2. Assessing Student Learning on the Essential Curriculum

Individually, silently, and honestly
assess the current status of your school for each indicator
on the Professional Learning Community Continuum

Progress and Problems

Share your assessment with your colleagues:

- Where are areas of agreement?
- Where are the areas of disagreement?
- Where can you celebrate the greatest progress?
- What areas are you finding problematic?

Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap

- What steps could you take to make progress in these indicators?

- Complete the "Where Do We Go From Here" worksheets to begin your plan for becoming a school committed to a focus on learning.

An Audit of Our Commitment to Key PLC Concepts

DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS AUDIT: Individually, silently and *honestly* assess the current status of your school for each indicator according to the levels of implementation identified.

Part I. Learning as our Fundamental Purpose
We acknowledge that the fundamental purpose of our school is to help all students achieve high levels of learning, and therefore we are willing to examine all of our practices in light of their impact on learning.

Indicator	Pre-Initiating	Initiating	Implementing	Developing	Sustaining
We work with colleagues on our team to build shared knowledge regarding state standards, district curriculum guides, trends in student achievement, and expectations for the next course or grade level. This collective inquiry has enabled each member of our team to clarify what all students must know and be able to do as a result of every unit of instruction.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We work with colleagues on our team to clarify the criteria by which we will judge the quality of student work, and we practice applying those criteria until we can do so consistently	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We monitor the learning of each student on all essential outcomes on a *timely* basis through a series of frequent, team-developed formative assessments that are aligned with district and state assessments.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We identify the specific standard or target each student must achieve on each of the essential skills being addressed by the formative assessment.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet
Clearly Defined Outcomes

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
Teachers in the school have worked together to clarify and focus on the essential outcomes for each course, each grade level, and each unit of instruction. These common essential outcomes reflect the teachers' efforts to build shared knowledge regarding best practice.				

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet
Monitoring Each Student's Learning

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
Teachers in the school have worked together to clarify the criteria they use in judging the quality of student work and they apply the criteria consistently. Teachers in the school have worked together to monitor student learning through frequent, team-developed common formative assessments that are aligned to state and local standards.				

The BIG IDEAS of a PLC

- We accept __learning__ as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine __all__ practices in light of their impact on learning.
- **We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a __collaborative culture__ through development of high-performing teams.**

Barriers to a Learning Community

- A professional norm of teacher isolation.

Individual Growth Does Not Ensure Organizational Growth

Student achievement gains and other benefits are influenced by organizational characteristics beyond the skills of individual staff. We saw schools with competent teachers that lacked the organizational capacity to be effective with many students. **The task for schools is to organize human resources into an effective *collective* effort.**

—Newmann & Wehlage (1995), p. 29-30

Need for a
Collaborative Culture

Throughout our ten-year study, whenever we found an effective school or an effective department within a school, <u>without exception</u> that school or department has been a part of a collaborative professional learning community.

—McLaughlin and Talbert (2001)

Need for a
Collaborative Culture

Improving schools require collaborative cultures….Without collaborative skills and relationships, it is not possible to learn and to continue to learn as much as you need to know to improve.

—Michael Fullan (1993), p.17-18

Need for a
Collaborative Culture

Creating a collaborative culture is the single most important factor for successful school improvement initiatives and the first order of business for those seeking to enhance the effectiveness of their school.

—Eastwood & Seashore-Louis (1992)

Need for a
Collaborative Culture

If schools want to enhance their capacity to boost student learning, they should work on building a collaborative culture….When groups, rather than individuals, are seen as the main units for implementing curriculum, instruction, and assessment, they facilitate development of shared purposes for student learning and collective responsibility to achieve it.

—Newmann & Wehlage (1996)

Advantages of Working in
Collaborative Teams

- Gains in student achievement
- Higher quality solutions to problems
- Increased confidence among all staff
- Teachers able to support one another's strengths and accommodate weaknesses
- Ability to test new ideas
- More support for new teachers
- Expanded pool of ideas, materials, and methods

—Judith Warren Little (1990)

Group IQ

There is such a thing as group IQ. While a group can be no smarter than the sum total of the knowledge and skills of its members, it can be much "dumber" if its internal workings don't allow people to share their talents.

—Robert Sternberg (1988)

The Power of Teams

Empowered teams are such a powerful force of integration and productivity that they form the basic building block of any intelligent organization. Given the right context, teams generate passion and engagement. In addition, a team is something to belong to, a support group and political unit with more clout than the individuals in it.

> Pinchot and Pinchot, *The End of Bureaucracy and the Rise or the Intelligent Organization*

We are at a point in time where teams are recognized as a critical component of every enterprise – the predominant unit for decision making and getting things done….Working in teams is the norm in a learning organization.

> Senge, et. al. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*

The leader of the future will master the art of forming teams. Future leaders will master teamwork, working with and through others because no one person can master all the sources of information to make good decisions.

> Ulrich, "Credibility and Capability" in *The Leader of the Future*

Teams bring together complementary skills and experience that exceed those of any individual on the team. Teams are more effective in problem solving. Teams provide a social dimension that enhances work. Teams motivate and foster peer pressure and internal accountability. Teams have more fun.

> Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*

The best way to achieve challenging goals is through teamwork. Where single individuals may despair of accomplishing a monumental task, teams nurture, support, and inspire each other.

> Noel Tichy, *The Leadership Engine*

People who collaborate learn from each other and create synergy. That is why learning organizations are made up of teams that share a common purpose Organizations need togetherness to get things done and to encourage the exploration essential to improvement.

> Charles Handy, "Managing the Dream" in *Learning Organizations*

Learning organizations are fast, focused, flexible, friendly and fun. To promote these characteristics they are far more likely to be organized into teams than in old-fashioned hierarchies.

> Rosabeth Mosss Kanter, "Mastering Change" in *Learning Organizations*

We have known for nearly a quarter of a century that self-managed teams are far more productive than any other form of organizing. There is a clear correlation between participation and productivity.

> Margaret Wheatley, "Goodbye, Command and Control" in *Leader to Leader*

Team Defined

What Is Collaboration?

A **<u>systematic</u>** process in which we work together, **<u>interdependently</u>**, to analyze and **<u>impact</u>** professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results

—DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker (2002)

The Focus of Collaboration

Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they are focusing on the right things they may end up being powerfully wrong.

  - Michael Fullan

A Key Question in PLCs

The critical question in a PLC is
not, "do we collaborate," but rather,

"what do we collaborate about."

You must not settle for
"Collaboration Lite."

Critical Corollary Questions:
If We Believe All Kids Can Learn:

- What is it we expect them to learn?
- How will we know when they have learned it?
- How will we respond when they don't learn?
- How will we respond when they already know it?

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.

The Criterion for Creating Teams

The fundamental question in organizing teams is:

"Do the people on this team have a shared responsibility for responding to the critical questions in ways that enhance the learning of their students?"

Possible Team Structures: Provided Focus Is on LEARNING

- All teachers teaching the same grade level
- All teachers teaching the same course
- Vertical teams (K-2/3-5 or French I-IV)
- Electronic teams
  - **www.isightEd.com**
  - **www.firstclass.com**
  - **professional organizations**
- Interdisciplinary teams
- District or regional teams
- Similar Responsibility Teams

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
2. **Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.**

Making Time for Collaboration

It is imperative that teachers be provided with time to meet during their contractual day. We believe it is insincere and disingenuous for any school district or any school principal to stress the importance of collaboration, and then fail to provide time for collaboration. One of the ways in which organizations demonstrate their priorities is allocation of resources, and in schools, one of the most precious resource is time. The following list is not meant to be comprehensive but is merely intended to illustrate some of the steps schools and districts have taken to create the prerequisite time for collaboration.

➢ **Common Preparation** – Build the master schedule to provide daily common preparation periods for teachers of the same course, or department. Each team should then designate one day each week to engage in collaborative, rather than individual planning.

➢ **Parallel Scheduling** – Schedule common preparation time by assigning the Specialists - Physical Education Teachers, Librarians, Music Teachers, Art Teachers, Instructional Technologists, Guidance Counselors, Foreign Language Teachers, etc. - to provide lessons to students across an entire grade level at the same time each day. The team should designate one day each week for collaborative planning. Some schools build back-to-back specials classes into the master schedule on each team's designated collaborative day, thus creating an extended block of time for the team to meet.

➢ **Adjusted Start & End Time of Contractual Day** – Members of a team, department or an entire faculty agree to start their workday early or extend their workday one day each week to gain collaborative team time. In exchange for adding time to one end of the workday, the teachers are compensated by getting the time back on the other end of that day. For example, on the first day of each school-week the entire staff of Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois begins their workday at 7:30 a.m., rather than the normal 7:45 a.m. start-time. From 7:30–8:30 am, the entire faculty engages in collaborative team meetings. Student arrival begins at 7:40 am, as usual, but the start of class is delayed from the normal 8:05 until 8:30. Students are supervised by administration and non-instructional staff in a variety of optional activities such as breakfast, library and computer research, open gym, study halls, and tutorials. To accommodate for the twenty-five minutes of lost instructional time, five minutes is trimmed from five of the eight fifty-minute class periods. The school day ends at the usual 3:25 p.m., buses run their regular routes, and Stevenson teachers are free to leave at 3:30 rather than the 3:45 time stipulated in their contract. By making these minor adjustments to the schedule on the first day of each week, the entire faculty is guaranteed an hour of collaborative planning to start each week, but their work day or work week has not been extended by a single minute.

➢ **Shared Classes** – Teachers across two different grade levels or courses combine their students into one class for instruction. While one teacher/team instructs the students during that period, the other team engages in collaborative work. The teams alternate instructing and collaborating to provide equity in learning time for students and teams. Some schools coordinate shared classes to ensure that older students adopt younger students and serve as literacy buddies, tutors and mentors.

➢ **Group Activities/Events/Testing** – teams of teachers coordinate activities that require supervision of students rather than instructional expertise (i.e. videos, resource lessons, read-alouds, assemblies, testing). Non-teaching staff supervise students while the teachers engage in team collaboration.

➢ **Banking Time –** Over a designated period of days, instructional minutes are extended beyond the required school day. After banking the desired number of minutes on designated days, the instructional day ends early to allow for faculty collaboration and student enrichment. In a middle school, for example, the traditional instructional day ended at 3:00 p.m.; students boarded buses at 3:20 and the teacher contractual day ended at 3:30. The faculty decided to extend the instructional day until 3:10 p.m. rather than 3:00 p.m. By teaching an extra ten minutes nine days in a row, they "bank" ninety minutes. On the tenth day, instruction stops at 1:30 and the entire faculty has collaborative team time for two hours. The students remain on campus and are engaged in clubs, enrichment activities, and assemblies sponsored by a variety of parent/community partners and co-supervised by the school's non-teaching staff.

➢ **In-Service/Faculty Meeting Time** – Schedule extended time for teams to work together on staff development days and during faculty meeting time. Rather than requiring staff to attend a traditional whole staff in-service session or sit in a faculty meeting while directives and calendar items are read to highly educated professionals, shift the focus and use of these days/meetings so members of teams have extended time to learn with and from each other.

Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work
*(*DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, Solution Tree, 2006)

For More Ideas go to: www.allthingsplc.info **or** www.nsdc.org (*Finding Time*)

Parameters for Collaborative Time

- Can not keep the kids at home
- Can not increase costs
- Can not significantly impact instructional time

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
2. Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.
3. **Focus teams on critical questions.**
4. **Make products of collaboration explicit.**

Example of a Timeline for Team Products

By the end of the:
- 2nd Week - Team Norms
- 4th Week - Team SMART Goal
- 6th Week - Common Essential Outcomes
- 8th Week - First Common Assessment
- 10th Week - Analysis of Student Performance on First Common Formative Assessment

Critical Issues for Team Consideration

Team Name:_____

Team Members:_____

Use the scale below to indicate the extent to which each of the following statements is true of your team.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not True of Our Team				Our Team Is Addressing				True of Our Team	

1. ___ We have identified team norms and proto-cols to guide us in working together.

2. ___ We have analyzed student achievement data and have established SMART goals that we are working interdependently to achieve.

3. ___ Each member of our team is clear on the essential learnings of our course in general as well as the essential learnings of each unit.

4. ___ We have aligned the essential learnings with state and district standards and the high-stakes exams required of our students.

5. ___ We have identified course content and/or topics that can be eliminated so we can devote more time to essential curriculum.

6. ___ We have agreed on how to best sequence the content of the course and have estab-lished pacing guides to help students achieve the intended essential learnings.

7. ___ We have identified the prerequisite knowl-edge and skills students need in order to master the essential learnings of our course and each unit of this course.

8. ___ We have identified strategies and created instruments to assess whether students have the prerequisite knowledge and skills.

9. ___ We have developed strategies and systems to assist students in acquiring prerequisite knowledge and skills when they are lacking in those areas.

10. ___ We have developed frequent common form-ative assessments that help us to determine each student's mastery of essential learnings.

11. ___ We have established the proficiency stan-dard we want each student to achieve on each skill and concept examined with our common assessments.

12. ___ We have developed common summative assessments that help us assess the strengths and weaknesses of our program.

13. ___ We have established the proficiency stan-dard we want each student to achieve on each skill and concept examined with our summative assessments.

14. ___ We have agreed on the criteria we will use in judging the quality of student work related to the essential learnings of our course, and we practice applying those criteria to ensure consistency.

15. ___ We have taught students the criteria we will use in judging the quality of their work and have provided them with examples.

16. ___ We evaluate our adherence to and the effec-tiveness of our team norms at least twice each year.

17. ___ We use the results of our common assessments to assist each other in building on strengths and addressing weaknesses as part of a process of continuous improvement designed to help students achieve at higher levels.

18. ___ We use the results of our common assess-ments to identify students who need addi-tional time and support to master essential learnings, and we work within the systems and processes of the school to ensure they receive that support.

Professional Learning Communities at Work Plan Book © 2006 Solution Tree
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Team Feedback Sheet

Team Name:_____

Meeting Date:_____

Team Goal(s):_____
_____
_____
_____

Team Members Present: Team Members Absent (List Reason):

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

Topics/Meeting Outcomes:

Questions/Concerns:

Administrator:_____

Date:_____

Reciprocal Accountability

Accountability must be a reciprocal process. For every expectation I have of you to perform, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to meet that expectation.

- Richard Elmore

To Help Build the Capacity of Teams, Address...

- Why - (Rationale)
- How - (Process)
- What - (Common Language, Tools, Templates, Materials, Resources, Examples
- When - (Timeline)
- Guiding Questions
- Criteria for Clarifying Quality of Each Product
- Tips and Suggestions

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
2. Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.
3. Focus teams on critical questions.
4. Make products of collaboration explicit.
5. **Establish team norms to guide collaboration.**

The Significance of Team Norms

- When all is said and done, the norms of a group help determine whether it functions as a high-performing team or becomes simply a loose collection of people working together.
- Positive norms will stick only if the group puts them into practice over and over again. Being explicit about norms raises the level of effectiveness, maximizes emotional intelligence, produces a positive experience for group members, and helps to socialize newcomers into the group quickly.
  - Daniel Goleman

Importance of Team Norms

- Social psychologists learned long ago that if you make a commitment and then share it with others, you are far more likely to follow through than if you simply make the commitment to yourself.
  - Kerry Patterson et. al. Influencers, p. 152

The Importance of Norms

- One thing is clear: having clear norms gives teams a huge advantage. A key to effective teams is involving all members in establishing norms, and then holding everyone accountable to what they have agreed upon.
  - Patrick Lencioni, *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

The Importance of Team Norms

■ At the heart of team interaction lies a commitment-building process. The team establishes a social contract among its members that relates to their purpose, and guides and obligates how they must work together. At its core, team accountability is about the promises we make to ourselves and others, promises that underpin two critical aspects of teams: commitment and trust.
   □ Katzenbach and Smith, The Wisdom of Teams

Norms of High Performing Teams

■ Willingness to consider matters from another's perspective
■ Accurate understanding of spoken and unspoken feelings and concerns of team members
■ Willingness to confront a team member who violates norms
■ Communicating positive regard, caring, and respect
■ Willingness and ability to evaluate the team's own effectiveness
■ Seeking feedback about and evidence of team effectiveness from internal and external sources
■ Maintaining a positive outlook and attitude
■ Proactive problem-solving
■ Awareness of how the group contributes to the purpose and goals of the larger organization
   - Daniel Goleman

Guiding Questions For Team Norms

■ Are we clear on the commitments we have made to each other regarding how we will work together as a team?
■ Have we stated our commitments as explicit behaviors?
■ Have we discussed how to address the issue if we feel someone is not honoring our norms?

Developing Norms

Comments to the Facilitator: This activity will enable a group to develop a set of operating norms or ground rules. In existing groups, anonymity will help ensure that everyone is able to express their ideas freely. For this reason, it is essential to provide pens or pencils or to ask that everyone use the same type of writing implement.

Supplies: Index cards, pens or pencils, poster paper, display board, tape, tacks

Time: Two hours

Directions

1. Explain to the group that effective groups generally have a set of norms that govern individual behavior, facilitate the work of the group, and enable the group to accomplish its task.

2. Provide examples of norms by posting the list of norms that appears on page 212.

3. Recommend to the group that it establish a set of norms:

   ■ To ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to contribute in the meeting;

   ■ To increase productivity and effectiveness; and

   ■ To facilitate the achievement of its goals.

4. Give five index cards and the same kind of writing tool to each person in the group.

5. Ask each person to reflect on and record behaviors they consider ideal behaviors for a group. Ask them to write one idea on each of their cards. Time: 10 minutes.

6. Shuffle all the cards together. Every effort should be made to provide anonymity for individuals, especially if the group has worked together before.

7. Turn cards face up and read each card aloud. Allow time for the group members to discuss each idea. Tape or tack each card to a display board so that all group members can see it. As each card is read aloud, ask the group to determine if it is similar to another idea that already has been expressed. Cards with similar ideas should be grouped together.

8. When all of the cards have been sorted, ask the group to write the norm suggested by each group of cards. Have one group member record these new norms on a large sheet of paper.

9. Review the proposed norms with the group. Determine whether the group can support the norms before the group adopts them.

Developing Norms

WHEN ESTABLISHING NORMS, CONSIDER:	PROPOSED NORM
Time ■ When do we meet? ■ Will we set a beginning and ending time? ■ Will we start and end on time?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Listening ■ How will we encourage listening? ■ How will we discourage interrupting?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Confidentiality ■ Will the meetings be open? ■ Will what we say in the meeting be held in confidence? ■ What can be said after the meeting?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Decision Making ■ How will we make decisions? ■ Are we an advisory or a decision-making body? ■ Will we reach decisions by consensus? ■ How will we deal with conflicts?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Participation ■ How will we encourage everyone's participation? ■ Will we have an attendance policy?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Expectations ■ What do we expect from members? ■ Are there requirements for participation?	_____ _____ _____ _____

Survey on Team Norms

Team:_____ Date:_____

Use the following ratings to honestly reflect on your experiences as a member of a collaborative team:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

1. ___ I know the norms and protocols established by my team.

   Comments: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. ___ Members of my team are living up to the established norms and protocols.

   Comments: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. ___ Our team maintains focus on the established team goal(s).

   Comments: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. ___ Our team is making progress toward the achievement of our goal(s).

   Comments: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. ___ The team is having a positive impact on my classroom practice.

   Comments: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Criteria For Team Norms

- The norms have clarified our expectations of one another.
- All members of the team participated in creating the norms. All voices were heard.
- The norms are stated as commitments to act in certain ways.
- All members have committed to honoring the norms.

Tips For Team Norms

- Each team establishes its own norms.
- Norms are stated as commitments to act or behave in certain ways.
- Norms are reviewed at the beginning and end of each meeting until internalized.
- One norm requires team to assess its effectiveness every six months. This assessment should include review of adherence to norms and the need to identify new norms.
- Less is more. A few key norms are better than a laundry list.
- Violations of norms must be addressed.

Assessing Your Current Reality

Consider the descriptions of 5 stages of PLC progress regarding:

Collaborative Teams focus on Issues that directly impact student learning

Individually, silently, and honestly assess the current status of your school for each indicator on the Professional Learning Community Continuum

An Audit of Our Commitment to Key PLC Concepts

Part II. Building a Collaborative Culture Through High Performing Teams
We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose of learning for all students. We cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of high-performing teams.

Indicator	Pre-Initiating	Initiating	Implementing	Developing	Sustaining
We are organized into collaborative teams in which members work together interdependently to achieve common goals.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We are provided time during the contractual day and school year to meet as a team.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We use team time to engage in collective inquiry on questions specifically linked to gains in student achievement.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We have developed and adhere to team norms.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
Each team is called upon to generate and submit products which result from its work on the critical questions related to student learning.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet
A Commitment to a Collaborative Culture

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
Teachers work together as members of collaborative teams. The members of each team work interdependently to achieve common goals.				
Each team is provided with time to meet and uses that time to engage in collective inquiry on questions specifically linked to gains in student achievement.				
Each team adopts and observes protocols that clarify how members will fulfill their responsibilities to the team.				
Each team is asked to generate and submit products, which result from their discussion of critical questions.				

Progress and Problems

Share your assessment with your colleagues:

- Where are areas of agreement?
- Where are the areas of disagreement?
- Where can you celebrate the greatest progress?
- What areas are you finding problematic?

Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap

- What steps could you take to make progress in these indicators?

- Complete the "Where Do We Go From Here" worksheets to begin your plan for becoming a school committed to a focus on learning.

The BIG IDEAS of a PLC

- We accept **learning** as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine **all** practices in light of their impact on learning.
- We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a **collaborative culture** through development of high performing teams.
- **We assess our effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.**

Professional Learning Communities Focus on Results in Two Ways

1. To identify students who need more time and support for learning

2. To identify strategies to improve upon both our individual and collective ability to teach each essential skill and concept

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
2. Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.
3. Focus teams on critical questions.
4. Make products of collaboration explicit.
5. Establish team norms to guide collaboration.
6. **Pursue specific and measurable team performance goals.**

Results-Oriented Goals: Keys to Effective Teams

Leaders foster effective teams when they help teams establish specific, measurable, results-oriented, performance goals. Promoting teams for the sake of teams or focusing on team-building exercises does little to improve the effectiveness of the organization. There is nothing more important than each member's commitment to common purpose and a related performance goal to which the group holds itself jointly accountable.

—Katzenbach & Smith (1993)

SMART Goals

Established a team SMART goal:
- Strategic and specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Results-oriented
- Time-bound

—Conzemius & O'Neill (2000)

Are These SMART Goals?

Strategically aligned with the school-wide goal of improving student performance in language arts, by the end of the 2008–2009 school year we will:

- **Develop and implement four (4) common assessments in the area of writing.**
- **Increase the use of cooperative learning activities in our English classrooms by 25%.**
- **Increase the number of students achieving the target score (80% or higher) on the district reading assessment from 81% to 90%.**

The Importance of Short-Term SMART Goals

People can become so caught up in big dreams that they don't manage the current reality. **Short-term gains are needed to establish credibility for a change initiative over the long haul.** Major change takes times. **Most of us want to see some convincing evidence that all the effort is paying off. We want clear data indicating changes are working.**

—John P. Kotter, (1996), pp. 118–119

SMART Goal Worksheet

School: _____

Team Name: _____ **Team Leader:** _____

Team Members: _____

District Goal(s): _____

School Goal(s): _____

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
	.			

SMART Goal Worksheet: Third-Grade Team

School: George Washington Elementary   **Team Name:** Third-Grade Team   **Team Leader:** Theresa Smith

Team Members: Ken Thomas, Joe Ramirez, Cathy Armstrong, Amy Wu

District Goal(s): We will increase student achievement and close the achievement gap in all areas of our middle and secondary schools, using a variety of local, state, and national indicators to document improved learning on the part of our students.

School Goal(s): We will:

1. Increase the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on both a national reading proficiency assessment and on the state test.

2. Eliminate the achievement gap for minority students.

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Our Reality: Last year, 18% of our third graders were unable to meet grade-level proficiency standards in reading fluency and comprehension as measured by a standardized, individualized assessment program for early literacy development. Six percent of Caucasian and 33% of minority students were unable to demonstrate proficiency.	We will create a common team schedule that reserves 8:30 to 10:30 for language arts each day. We will designate 45 minutes (9:45 to 10:30) each day for regrouping students into three groups (intensive support, strategic support, and achieving benchmark) based on demonstration of reading fluency and comprehension.	Third-grade team will adhere to the agreed-upon schedule and identify the appropriate reading group for each student by the end of September.	End of September	Students will be assigned to one of three groups on the basis of individual reading assessment results.

SMART Goal Worksheet: Third-Grade Team (continued)

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Our Goal: This year, 100% of third graders will demonstrate proficiency in reading fluency and comprehension as measured by the standardized, individualized program for early literacy.	The team will expand to include the special education teacher, Title I teacher, speech therapist, and literacy coach during the designated 45 minutes each day. Students in need of intensive support will be assigned to a member of the team in groups of no more than four students. Students in need of more strategic support will be assigned to groups of no more than eight students. Students at benchmark proficiency will be assigned to the remaining team members for reading enrichment and extension activities created by the team. Student proficiency will be monitored on an ongoing basis and membership in the groups will be fluid.	The team will: 1. Work with the principal and staff members listed above to create the schedule that allows for this intervention. 2. Create a series of ongoing assessments of reading fluency and comprehension and analyze the results. 3. Align assessments with the content and format of the state test for language arts. 4. Identify specific and precise instructional strategies to address the needs of students assigned to each group. 5. Create a variety of enrichment activities for proficient readers, including Junior Great Books reading circles, independent and group research projects, computer-based explorations, silent sustained reading, and teacher read-alouds.	The team will administer the standardized assessment three times this year: in mid-September, January, and late April. The team will develop and administer its own assessments every 6 weeks.	Evidence will include: 1. Student movement to higher groups 2. All students demonstrating fluency and comprehension on the standardized assessment 3. All students meeting the proficiency standard on the state test in language arts

SMART Goal Worksheet: Eighth-Grade Math

School: Thomas Jefferson Middle School   **Team Name:** Eighth-Grade Math   **Team Leader:** Chris Rauch

Team Members: Chris Carter, Dolores Layco, Mary Fischer

District Goal(s): We will increase student achievement and close the achievement gap in all areas of our middle and secondary schools, using a variety of local, state, and national indicators to document improved learning on the part of our students.

School Goal(s): We will:

1. Reduce the failure rate in our school.

2. Increase the percentage of students scoring at or above the established proficiency standard on the state assessment in all areas.

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Our Reality: Last year, 24% of our students failed one or more semesters of math. And 31% percent of our students were unable to meet the state proficiency standard in math.	We will align each unit of our math program with state standards, study the results of the last state assessment, identify problem areas, and develop specific strategies to address those areas in our course.	Entire team	We will complete the analysis on the teacher workday prior to the start of the year. We will review our findings prior to the start of each new unit.	Written analysis of state assessment and strategies to address weaknesses
Our Goal: This year, we will reduce the percentage of failing grades to 10% or less and the percentage of students unable to meet state standards to no more than 15%.	Develop common formative assessments and administer them every 3 weeks. These assessments will provide repeated opportunities for students to become familiar with the format used on the state assessment.	Entire team	Formative assessments will be created prior to the start of each unit of instruction throughout the year. They will be administered on a day designated by the team.	Student performance on team-endorsed common assessments

SMART Goal Worksheet Eighth-Grade Math (continued)

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
	After each common assessment, we will identify any student who does not meet the established proficiency standard and will work with the counselor to have those students re-assigned from study hall to the math tutoring center.	Members of entire team will request tutoring as their supervisory responsibility; team leader will work with the counselor after each assessment.	Assessments administered every 3 weeks. Students will be assigned to the tutoring center within 1 week of assessment.	Daily list of students receiving tutoring in math
	Replace failing grades from our common assessments with the higher grade earned by students who are able to demonstrate proficiency in key skills on subsequent forms of the assessment after completing tutoring.	Entire team will create multiple forms of each assessment. Tutors will administer the assessment after a student has completed the required tutoring.	Multiple forms of an assessment will be created prior to the start of each unit of instruction. Tutors will administer the second assessment within 2 weeks of a student's assignment to the tutoring center.	Compilation of results from subsequent assessments
	Examine the results of each common assessment in an effort to determine which member of the team is getting the best results on each skill, and then share ideas, methods, and materials for teaching those skills more effectively.	Each member of the team	Ongoing throughout the year each time a common assessment is administered.	■ Analysis of findings after each common assessment is administered ■ Decrease in the failure rate ■ Increase in percentage of students proficient on state assessment

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SMART Goal Worksheet: American Government

School: John Adams High School   **Team Name:** American Government Team   **Team Leader:** Tom Botimer

Team Members: Dan Hahn, Andy Bradford, Nick Larsen, Helen Harvey

District Goal(s): We will provide more students with access to our most rigorous curriculum in each subject area and grade level.

School Goal(s): We will increase by at least 10% the number of students enrolling in:

1. Advanced placement courses

2. Capstone courses in a departmental sequence

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Our Reality: All students must complete a semester of American Government as a graduation requirement. Last year only 10% of the graduating class fulfilled that requirement by enrolling in advanced placement (AP) American Government.	We will make a presentation in each section of United States History, encouraging students to enroll in AP American Government and listing the advantages for doing so.	Team leader will coordinate the schedule for these presentations with the team leader for United States History. Each member of the team will assist in making these presentations and will distribute a written list of advantages created by the team.	Complete presentations by the end of January prior to students registering for their courses for next year.	The presentation has been made in every United States History class
Our Goal: At least 20% of the current junior class will enroll in and complete the advanced placement American Government class next year.	We will coordinate with the guidance department to ensure that when counselors register students for classes, they encourage any student who receives an A at the end of the first semester of United States History to enroll in AP American Government.	Team leader will attend the counselors' team meeting to enlist their support, explain advantages of the AP program, and share the team's strategies for supporting students in AP Government.	End of first semester	Minutes of meeting

SMART Goal Worksheet: American Government (continued)

Team SMART Goal	Strategies and Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
	We will advise parents of the benefits of AP American Government.	The team will draft a letter to parents of students who earn an A in United States History at the end of the semester. The letter will list the advantages of completing this course while in high school for any student planning on attending college. It will also include the team's strategy to provide students with additional support. The team will also create a flyer on the benefits of the AP program to be distributed during parent open house.	The flyer will be created for distribution at the open house in early October. The letter will be sent at the end of the first semester.	Completed documents
	We will create study groups to review material prior to the comprehensive assessments we administer every 6 weeks.	The team will create the common comprehensive assessments. Each member will be responsible for conducting one study group to help students review for these tests. Study groups will be held on three evenings in the week prior to the test.	Ongoing throughout the semester	Completion of common assessments and student performance on common assessments. The number of students earning honor grades on the AP exam in American Government will double over last year's total.

SAMPLE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Any Town Elementary School   Year: _____

District Goal 1: We will increase student achievement and close the achievement gap in all areas using a variety of indicators to document improved learning on the part of our students.

School Goal 1: We will improve student performance in language arts as measured by local, district, state/provincial, and National indicators.

TEAM SMART GOALS	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES/ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATES	BUDGET	EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS
Grade K: **Current Reality:** Last year, 81% of kindergarten students scored a 2 on the District Reading Rubric in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 87% of kindergarten students will score a 2 or higher on the District Reading Rubic in May.	**Curriculum:** **1.** Clarify & pace Essential Learnings (skills, concepts & dispositions) in each area of Language Arts utilizing Standards Documents, Curriculum Guides, assessment blueprints, and textbooks.	All Instructional Staff	Reading: Oct. 15 Writing: Nov. 15 Listening & Speaking: Dec.15		Lists of Each Team's Essential Learnings & Pacing Guides
Grade 1: **Current Reality:** Last year, 65% of first grade students scored a 3 or higher on the District Reading Rubric in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 70% of first grade students will score a 3 or higher on the District Reading Rubric in May.	**Assessments:** 2. Develop and implement local, common, formative grade level assessments to:1.) frequently monitor each student's learning of essential outcomes 2.) provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate progress in meeting and exceeding learning targets.	Grade-Level Teams, Principal	September-May checkpoints at mid-point of each nine-weeks; (district benchmark assessments at end of each nine-weeks)		Increased results for all students on local, district, state/provincial, and national indicators
Grade 2: **Current Reality:** Last year, 91% of second grade students passed the District Second Grade Reading Test when first administered in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 93% of second grade students will pass the District Second Grade Reading Test when first administered in May.	**Instruction:** 3. Create/implement a master instructional schedule at each grade level to provide protected blocks of instructional time for all areas of the content.	Principal, Instructional Teams	August 20th		Common Grade Level Schedules; Faculty Survey— January & June
	4. Initiate individual and small group programs to provide additional intervention and enrichment learning time for students.	Principal, Instructional Teams, Volunteers	Daily: September - May		Intervention/Enrichment Schedule; Student Records; Volunteer Log

TEAM SMART GOALS (cont.)	SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES/ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATES	BUDGET	EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS
Grade 3: **Current Reality:** Last year, 85% of third graders met or exceeded standard on the state's Writing Subtest in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 90% of third graders will meet or exceed standard on the state's Writing Subtest in May.	5. Provide parents with resources and strategies to help their children succeed academically. Information will be provided through grade-level workshops, weekly folders/parent logs; newsletters, and parent/teacher conferences.	All Instructional Staff, Principal	September–May		Number of Parents in Attendance, Study Guides & Newsletters
Grade 4: **Current Reality:** Last year, the national percentile for our fourth graders in vocabulary on the Stanford 9 was 62%. **SMART Goal:** This year, the national percentile for our fourth graders in vocabulary will be at least 66%.	6. Utilize a variety of instructional strategies to help students learn all Essential Skills at or above grade level proficiency targets.	All Instructional Staff, Principal	Sept. – Dec. Faculty Meetings, Staff Dev. Days, & Team meetings		Results on all indicators; Lesson Plans
	Staff Development: 7. Collaboratively study standards & curriculum guides to generate grade level lists of essential skills.	All Instructional Staff, Principal	Sept. - May Faculty Meetings, Staff Dev. Days, & Team meetings		Grade Level Lists of Essential Skills
Grade 5: **Current Reality:** Last year, 78% of fifth graders scored at or above proficiency on the state's Reading/Literature and Research English Subtest in May.	8. Create a variety of common, formative assessment instruments designed to monitor student learning of essential skills in reading and writing.	All Teams, Principal	September–May Faculty Meetings; Staff Dev. Days; Team meetings; Additional Time by team request		Grade Level Common Assessments
SMART Goal: This year, at least 85% of fifth graders will score at or above proficiency on the state's Reading/Literature and Research English Subtest in May.	9. Develop, implement, and evaluate Team Action Research Projects to improve teaching & learning. Use information from common assessments to identify staff development needs. Provide ongoing, job-embedded staff development.	All Instructional Teams, Principal		$3,500.00 Staff Dev. Funds	Quarterly Reviews; Mid Year Progress Reports; End-of-Year Team Evaluations; Assessment Results

SMART GOAL ACTION PLAN
TEAM: Grade 3   Year: _____

District Goal 1: We will increase student achievement and close the achievement gap in all areas using a variety of indicators

to document improved learning on the part of our students.

School Goal 1: We will improve student performance in language arts as measured by local, district, state/provincial, and

National indicators.

TEAM SMART GOAL	STRATEGIES/ACTION STEPS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATES/TIMELINE	EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS
Grade 3: **Current Reality:** Last year, 85% of third graders met or exceeded the target score of 3 on our District's Writing Prompt in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 90% of third graders will meet or exceed the target score of 3 on our District's Writing Prompt in May.	**Curriculum:** **1.** Clarify & pace Essential Student Learning Outcomes in Writing utilizing Standards Documents, Curriculum Guides, assessment blueprints & data, Wish-List of Skills from 4th Grade Team	All Members of our Third Grade Team	October 15th	Lists of Essential Student Learning Outcomes & Pacing Guide Increased results for all students on team, district, state/provincial, and national indicators
	Assessments: 2. Develop, implement, and collaboratively score grade level formative writing prompts to: a.) frequently monitor each student's learning of essential writing outcomes b.) provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate progress in meeting and exceeding learning targets in writing; c.) learn with and from each other better ways to help students become proficient writers	All Members of our Third Grade Team	October -May checkpoints at mid-point of each grading period; (district benchmark assessments at end of each semester)	Common Writing Prompts Common Writing Rubric Increased results for all students on team, district, state/provincial, and national indicators
	Instruction: 3. Provide students with writing assignments in all subject areas & utilize a variety of instructional strategies to help students learn all Essential Writing Skills.	All Members of our Third Grade Team	Daily: September - May	Commonly scored writing samples in multiple subjects; Increased results for all students on team, district, state/provincial, and national indicators

Grade 3:	Action Steps	Who	When	Evidence of Effectiveness
Current Reality: Last year, 85% of third graders met or exceeded the target score of 3 on our state's Writing Prompt in May. **SMART Goal:** This year, at least 90% of third graders will meet or exceed the target score of 3 on the state's Writing Prompt in May.	4. Initiate individual and small group sessions to provide additional intervention and enrichment focused on writing.	Third Grade Team, Principal, Resource Staff, Volunteers	Daily: September-May	Intervention/Enrichment Schedule; Student Learning Results
	5. Provide parents with resources and strategies to help their children succeed as writers. Information will be provided through grade-level workshops, weekly folders/parent logs; grade level newsletters, and parent/teacher conferences.	All Members of our Third Grade Team	1st Semester Workshop: 10/20 2nd Semester Workshop: 1/19 Bi-weekly Grade Level Newsletters; End-of-Grading Period Conferences	Number of Parents in Attendance, Study Guides & Newsletters
	Staff Development: 6. Develop, implement, and evaluate Our Team Action Research Project in Writing to improve our individual & collective ability to help our students learn to write at high levels. Use information from our common formative assessments to identify staff development needs & engage in ongoing, job-embedded staff development in the area of writing.	All Members of Our Third Grade Team	Weekly collaborative team meetings; staff development days; faculty meeting sessions; additional professional learning time by request	Grade Level Common Assessments Quarterly Reviews; Mid -Year Progress Reports; End-of-Year Team Evaluations; Increased results for all students on team, district, state/provincial, and national indicators

Seven Keys to Effective Teams

1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
2. Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.
3. Focus teams on critical questions.
4. Make products of collaboration explicit.
5. Establish team norms to guide collaboration.
6. Pursue specific and measurable team performance goals.
7. **Provide teams with frequent access to relevant information.**

Interpreting Data

- Student Performance on the High-Stakes State Math Test:

Mean	**178**
Median	**177**
Mode	**180**

- Use the data presented above to answer the following question: To what extent is this school helping all students achieve at high levels in math?

Schools Suffer from the DRIP Syndrome

Schools are often **D**ata **R**ich, but **I**nformation **P**oor. Data are not information; translating fact to understanding means relating data to something you know and can visualize. This typically requires comparison.

- Robert Waterman

Student #	Homeroom Class # 4
1	70
2	70
3	80
4	80
5	100
6	40
7	70
8	50
9	80
10	70
11	50
12	50
13	100
14	100
15	100
Average Score	74%
Number Proficient	7
Percent Proficient	47%

STUDENT	Class #1	Class #2	Class #3	Class # 4	Total
1	50	90	100	70	
2	60	90	100	70	
3	70	90	80	80	
4	92	90	100	80	
5	90	90	100	100	
6	100	100	92	40	
7	90	100	80	70	
8	90	83	83	50	
9	83	100	100	80	
10	60	92	90	70	
11	92	100	90	50	
12	83	100	100	50	
13	92	100	80	100	
14	90	90	80	100	
15	100	100	90	100	
16	80	100	80		
17	90	92			
18	100				
# Proficient	14	17	16	7	54/66
% Proficient	78%	100%	100%	47%	81%

To inform and impact professional practice, ensure all teachers receive:

- Timely and frequent information on the achievement of <u>their</u> students,
- In meeting an agreed-upon standard,
- On a valid assessment,
- In comparison to others.

Sharing Data:
Beginning of Community

Collecting data is only the first step toward wisdom, but sharing data is the first step toward community.

- Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Transparency Rules

There is no way continuous improvement can occur without **constant transparency fueled by good information.** Effective organizations create systems to ensure clear and continuous display of results and clear and continuous access to practice -- that is, what is being done to get the results.

- Michael Fullan (2008)

Power of Formative Assessments Improved Student Learning

- A focus on the use of formative assessment in support of learning, developed through teacher learning communities, promises not only *the largest potential gains in student achievement*, but also provides a model for teacher professional development that can be implemented effectively at scale.

Dylan Wiliam and Marnie Thompson (2007)

Power of Formative Assessments to Improve Student Learning

- A review of over 250 articles by researchers from several countries established that improving formative assessments raises achievement. ***Few initiatives in education have had such a strong body of evidence to support a claim to raise standards.***

  Paul Black, et. al. (2004), p. 9

Power of Formative Assessments

- ***Assessment for learning, when done well, is one of the most powerful, high-leverage strategies for improving student learning that we know of***. Educators *collectively* become more skilled and focused at assessing, disaggregating, and using student achievement as a tool for ongoing improvement.

  – **Michael Fullan (2005), p. 71**

Insist on Common Assessments Formative Assessments

Teachers of the same course or grade level should have absolute common agreement on what they expect all their students to know and be able to do. Therefore, ***they should have common, collaboratively scored assessments at least once each quarter.*** The classroom activities leading up to those assessments might differ. The need to administer the same assessment should not differ.

- Doug Reeves (2002) p. 37

Common Formative Assessments: Key to Improved Results

Powerful, proven structures for improved results already exist. They begin when a group of teachers meet regularly as a team to identify essential and valued student learning, develop common formative assessments, analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, and then share and create lessons and strategies to improve upon those levels**.**

- Mike Schmoker (2004), p. 10

Common Assessments Can Improve Student and Adult Learning

- To the extent that teachers work together in teams to 1) analyze, understand and deconstruct standards, 2) **transform standards into high quality classroom assessments, and 3) share and interpret results together**, they benefit from the union of their wisdom about how to help students continue to grow as learners.

- Rick Stiggins (2005), p. 82

Linking Formative and Common Assessments

- Two strategies seem especially promising for schools. One is to expand the quality and variety of formative assessments; a second is to promote and organize collective inquiry into and discussion of student progress and achievement based on a range of assessments.

- Judith Warren Little, (2006), p. 9

Why Common Assessments

- **Efficiency** - by sharing the load, teachers save time
- **Fairness** - promotes common goals, similar pacing, and consistent standards for assessing student proficiency
- **Effective monitoring** - provides timely evidence of whether the guaranteed and viable curriculum is being taught and learned
- **Informs individual teacher practice** - provides teachers with a basis of comparison regarding the achievement of their students so they can see strengths and weaknesses of their teaching
- **Team capacity** - collaborative teacher teams are able to identify and address problem areas in their program
- **Collective response** - helps teams and the school create timely, systematic interventions for students

Assessing Your Current Reality

Consider the descriptions of 5 stages of PLC progress regarding:

A Focus on Results through providing teams with relevant information

Individually, silently, and honestly
assess the current status of your school for each indicator on the Professional Learning Community Continuum

Progress and Problems

Share your assessment with your colleagues:

- Where are areas of agreement?

- Where are the areas of disagreement?

- Where can you celebrate the greatest progress?

- What areas are you finding problematic?

An Audit of Our Commitment to Key PLC Concepts

Part III. A Focus on Results
We assess our effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.

Indicator	Pre-Initiating	Initiating	Implementing	Developing	Sustaining
Each of our teams has identified a SMART goal that aligns with one of our school goals.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
Each member of the team receives frequent and timely feedback regarding the performance of his/her students on team, district and state assessments.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We use common assessments to: a) identify students who need additional time and support for learning; b) discover strengths and weaknesses in our individual teaching; and c) help measure our team's progress toward its goals.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
For each of the academic and affective goals we have identified for students, we ask, "How do we know if our students are achieving this goal?"	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff members approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet
Collaborative Teams Turn Data Into Information for Continuous Improvement

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
Collaborative teams of teachers regard ongoing analysis of results as a critical element in the teaching and learning process.				
Data are transformed into information that impacts practice because evidence of results is easily accessible and openly shared among teammates.				
Teachers use results to identify strengths and weaknesses in their individual practice, to help each other address areas of concern, and to improve their effectiveness in helping all students learn.				
The focus on results is critical to both the school's system of interventions and their culture of celebration.				

Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap

- What steps could you take to make progress in these indicators?

- Complete the "Where Do We Go From Here" worksheets to begin your plan for becoming a school committed to a focus on learning.

All Kids Can Learn

- Based on ability
- If they take advantage of the opportunity
- Something, and we will create a warm, pleasant environment for them
- And we will do whatever it takes to ensure they achieve the agreed-upon standards

If the purpose of school is truly to ensure high levels of <u>learning</u> for all students, schools will:

✓ Clarify what each student is expected to learn (essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions) of each course/subject, unit-by-unit
✓ Monitor each student's learning on a timely basis through the use of frequent, formative common assessments
✓ Create systems to ensure students receive additional time and support if they **are not** learning
✓ Create systems to ensure students receive additional time and support if they are learning.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

ALL KIDS CAN LEARN!

.... BASED ON THEIR ABILITY
We believe that all students can learn, but the extent of their learning is determined by their innate ability or aptitude. This aptitude is relatively fixed, and as teachers we have little influence over the extent of student learning. It is our job to create multiple programs or tracks that address the different abilities of students, and then guide students to the appropriate program. This ensures that students have access to the proper curriculum and an optimum opportunity to master material appropriate to their ability.

.... IF THEY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN.
We believe that all students can learn if they elect to put the forth the necessary effort. It is our job to provide all students with this opportunity to learn, and we fulfill our responsibility when we attempt to present lessons that are both clear and engaging. In the final analysis, however, while it is our job to teach, it is the student's job to learn. We should invite students to learn, but honor their decision if they elect not to do so

.....AND WE WILL ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THEIR GROWTH.
We believe that all students can learn and that it is our responsibility to help all students demonstrate some growth as a result of their experience with us. The extent of the growth will be determined by a combination of the student's innate ability and   effort. It is our job to encourage all students to learn as much as possible, but the extent of their learning is dependent on factors over which we have little control.

...AND WE WILL ESTABLISH HIGH STANDARDS OF LEARNING THAT WE EXPECT ALL STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE.
We believe that all students can and must learn at relatively high levels of achievement. It is our job to create an environment in our classrooms that results in this high level or performance. We are confident that with our support and help, students can master challenging academic material, and we expect them to do so. We are prepared to work collaboratively with colleagues, students, and parents to achieve this growth.

Rethinking Our Assumptions

The assumptions, beliefs, expectations and habits that constitute the culture for most schools go largely unexamined. We act in accordance with our understanding of traditional practice and conventional wisdom. If culture reflects "the way we do things around here," we face the challenge of making conscious, that which is typically unconscious.

Seeing With New Eyes

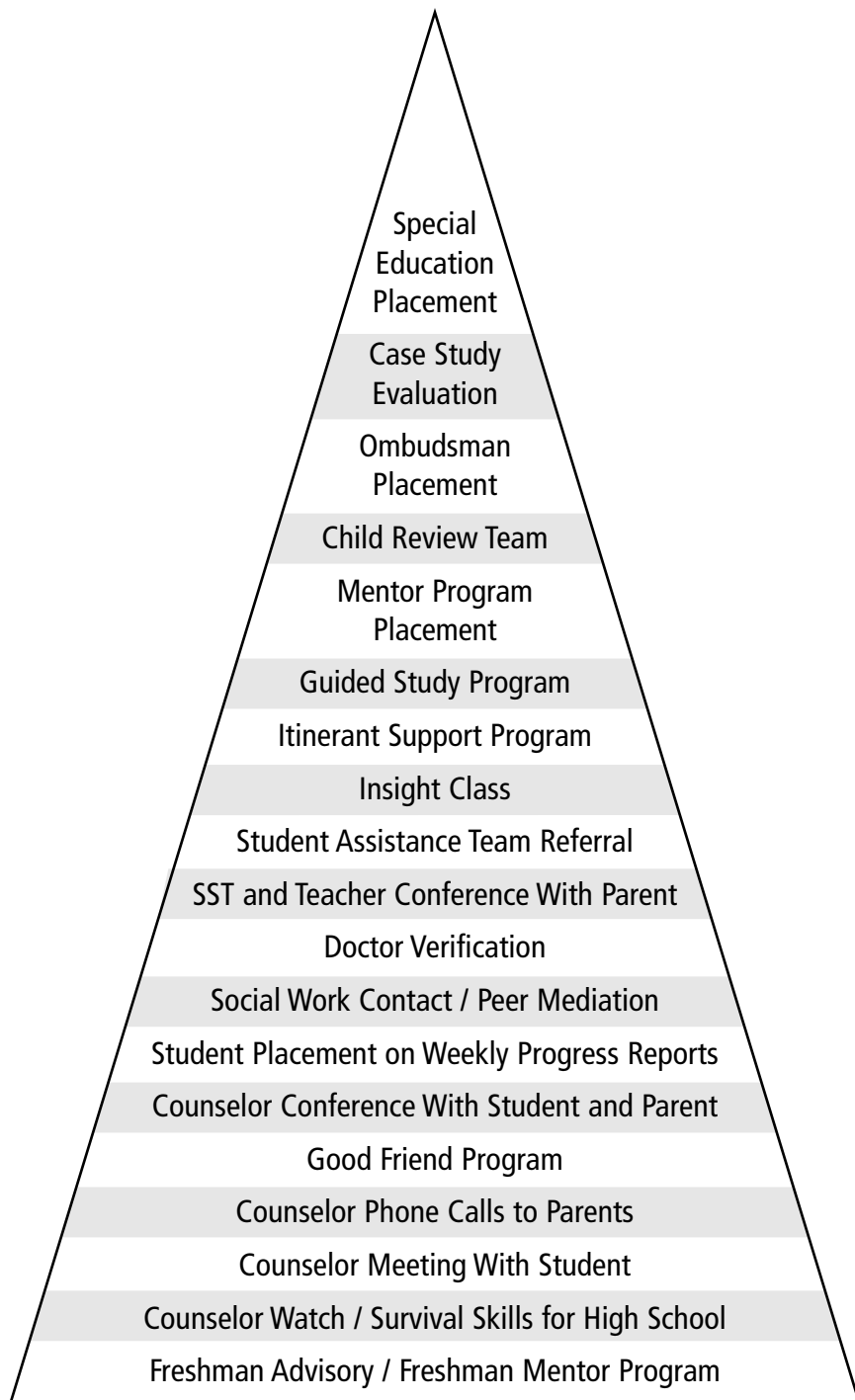Sometimes the art of discovery isn't finding new lands, it is seeing with new eyes.
  − Marcel Proust

You must have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.
  – Jim Collins

The School's Response

- Increased levels of time and support when student is not being successful
- Response is increasingly directive, not invitational
- Response is timely
- Response is SYSTEMATIC

Special
Education
Placement

Case Study
Evaluation

Ombudsman
Placement

Child Review Team

Mentor Program
Placement

Guided Study Program

Itinerant Support Program

Insight Class

Student Assistance Team Referral

SST and Teacher Conference With Parent

Doctor Verification

Social Work Contact / Peer Mediation

Student Placement on Weekly Progress Reports

Counselor Conference With Student and Parent

Good Friend Program

Counselor Phone Calls to Parents

Counselor Meeting With Student

Counselor Watch / Survival Skills for High School

Freshman Advisory / Freshman Mentor Program

**A Support System for Students:
The Pyramid of Interventions**

Pre-enrollment initiatives
  Counselor watch/Good Friend/Privilege
For all entering students
  Daily meeting with a faculty advisor
  Daily small group meeting with a senior mentor
  Weekly meeting with counselor
  Participation in two co-curricular activities
  Progress reports or grades in every class every three weeks

A Systematic Response to Students Who Are Not Learning

- At 3 weeks: conferences/ offer of tutoring services/ peer tutoring
- At 6 weeks: mandatory tutoring/weekly progress reports
- At 12 weeks: guided study and parent conferences
- At 18 weeks: mentor program

For Information on the Stevenson High School Pyramid of Interventions

- Go to www.allthingsplc.info "Evidence of Effectiveness"
- Go to www.district125.k12.il.us/docs/sitevisits/ sscos.pdf Download the Adobe file.
- Go to www.solution-tree.com or call 800.733.6786 to purchase *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*

What Happens When Kids Don't Learn?

High expectations for success will be judged not only by the initials staff beliefs and behaviors, but also by the organization's response when some students do not learn.

—Lezotte, (1991)

A Syllogism of What Should Be Rhetorical Questions

- Do we believe it is the purpose of our school to ensure all students learn at high levels?
- Do we acknowledge that students learn at different rates and with different levels of support?
- Therefore, have we created a schedule that guarantees students they will receive additional opportunities for learning through extra time and support, in a systematic way, regardless of who the teacher might be?

Align School Structures

A traditional elementary schedule often includes:

- Frequent interruptions to teaching or learning blocks

- Sporadic specials, resource, or related arts classes during each week

- Sporadic planning time for instructional staff

- No collaborative time built into the schedule

- Little time for additional support for student learning **except** before-and after-school tutoring

Is There a Better Way?
(Can we change the way we do things around here?)

How can our school better allocate

existing resources
—time, people, materials, money—
to provide additional support for **ALL**
students to learn at higher levels than ever
before?

Align School Structures

Traditional schedule

- Frequent interruptions to teaching or learning blocks
- Sporadic specials classes throughout the week
- Sporadic planning time for instructional staff
- No collaborative time built into the schedule
- No time for additional support built into the daily schedule *except* before- and after-school tutoring

New master schedule

- Protected time for teaching and learning
- Daily specials for all students
- Daily individual planning for all instructional staff
- Weekly collaborative planning for all teams
- Intervention or enrichment block for all grade levels during the school day

A Pre-Requisite for Systematic Intervention

Before effective systems of intervention can be created, teams must first be able to agree upon:

- Essential knowledge, skills, & dispositions;
- Common Pacing Guides/Curriculum Maps;
- Common *formative* assessments;
- Common standard of proficiency;
- Students who need additional time and support based upon analysis of common assessment data;
- **A designated grade-level block of time for intervention/enrichment in addition to new direct instruction in all subject areas.**

3rd Grade Schedule For Instruction

	Monday					Tuesday				Wednesday					Thursday						Friday				
SPECIALS	LIB	COM	GUI	MUS	PE	LIB	COM	GUI	PE	LIB	COM	GUI	MUS	PE	LIB	COM	GUI	MUS	ART	PE	LIB	COM	GUI	ART	PE

Time																									
8:00 - 8:15	**TEACHER WORK DAY BEGINS**																								
8:15-8:40	**STUDENTS ARRIVE- BREAKFAST, MORNING TAKE-IN PROCEDURES**																								
8:40 - 8:50	**TARDY BELL, MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS, INSTRUCTIONAL DAY BEGINS**																								
8:50 - 9:20	3D			3J	3F		3F	3J	3D			3F	3D	3J			3J	3F	3D	3D	3D		3J		3F
9:25-9:55			3D								3F				3F		3D		3J	3J		3J			
9:55 - 12:15																									
12:20 - 1:00	LUNCH: 3J 12:20 - 12:50; 3F 12:25 - 12:55; 3D 12:30 - 1:00																								
1:00 - 3:00																									
3:00 - 3:15	Afternoon announcements/K and 1st car riders and loading buses;3:05 dismissal for 2nd-5th grades; buses depart at 3:10																								
3:10 - 3:30	*INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PLANNING*																								

Third Grade Master Schedule For Instruction

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 - 8:15	TEACHER WORK DAY BEGINS				
8:15-8:40	STUDENTS ARRIVE- BREAKFAST, MORNING WORK, TAKE-IN PROCEDURES				
8:40 - 8:50	TARDY BELL, MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS, INSTRUCTIONAL DAY BEGINS				

SPECIALS (sub-columns per day: LIB · COM · GUI · MUS · ART · PE)

Time	Monday LIB/COM/GUI/MUS/ART/PE	Tuesday LIB/COM/GUI/MUS/ART/PE	Wednesday LIB/COM/GUI/MUS/ART/PE	Thursday LIB/COM/GUI/MUS/ART/PE	Friday LIB/COM/GUI/ART/PE
8:50 - 9:20	LIB 3D, MUS 3J, PE 3F	GUI 3J, MUS 3F, PE 3D	GUI 3F, MUS 3D, PE 3J	LIB 3F, GUI 3J, MUS 3F, PE 3D	LIB 3D, GUI 3J, PE 3F
9:25-9:55	GUI 3D		LIB 3F	ART 3D, PE 3J	GUI 3J

Time	Activity
9:55 - 11:45	LANGUAGE ARTS/SOCIAL STUDIES
11:45 - 12:15	INTERVENTION/ENRICHMENT
12:20 - 1:15	LUNCH/RECESS
1:15 - 2:15	MATH
2:15 - 3:00	SCIENCE
3:00 - 3:10	Afternoon announcements/K and 1st car riders and loading buses;3:05 dismissal for 2nd-5th grades; buses depart at 3:10
3:10 - 3:30	INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PLANNING

INTERVENTION/ENRICHMENT SCHEDULE

8:20 – 8:50:   FIFTH GRADE

8:50 – 9:20:   FOURTH GRADE

9:30 – 10:30:   FIRST GRADE – (CENTERS)

10:30 – 11:30:   KINDERGARTEN –(CENTERS)

11:40 – 12:15:   THIRD GRADE

12:15 – 1:00:   LUNCH/PLANNING

1:00 – 1:30:   SECOND GRADE

1:30 – 2:00:   *ADDITIONAL TIME K – 5
                           (BY REQUEST)

2:00 – 2:30:   FIFTH GRADE

2:30 – 3:00:   RECORD KEEPING/PLANNING

*IF YOUR GRADE-LEVEL NEEDS ADDITIONAL INTERVENTION TIME, PLEASE SEE THE PRINCIPAL (When no classes are scheduled, the tutors utilize time for Remedial Record Keeping, creating new centers for Pod, assisting students & teachers with requested tasks.)

STUDENT	Class #1	Class #2	Class #3	Class # 4	Total
1	50	90	100	70	
2	60	90	100	70	
3	70	90	80	80	
4	92	90	100	80	
5	90	90	100	100	
6	100	100	92	40	
7	90	100	80	70	
8	90	83	83	50	
9	83	100	100	80	
10	60	92	90	70	
11	92	100	90	50	
12	83	100	100	50	
13	92	100	80	100	
14	90	90	80	100	
15	100	100	90	100	
16	80	100	80		
17	90	92			
18	100				
# Proficient	14	17	16	7	54/66
% Proficient	78%	100%	100%	47%	81%

The Questions Facing Each Team

- How will we provide additional support for students who experience initial difficulty in a way that is timely, directive, and systematic?

- **How will we enrich and extend the learning for the students who already know it?**

- **Who is available to assist our team in responding to our students?**

Extra Time and Support for Students in an Elementary School

- Utilize Existing Human Resources, such as:
- General Education Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Resource Specialists
- Teacher Assistants

in a **coordinated and systematic effort** to provide **additional time and support** for learning.

Resource Specialists & "Floating Tutors" will:

- Instruct "flexible groups" of identified students;
- Deliver intervention/enrichment services to **supplement** (not supplant) new, direct classroom instruction;
- **Lead/supervise enrichment activities, allowing classroom teachers to serve as tutors for students identified for intervention.**
- Provide practice & reinforcement in study/test-taking/ critical thinking/problem solving skills;
- Utilize/develop lesson plans & activities aligned with essential skills *in coordination with grade-level teams to guide their work*;

Extra Time and Support for Students in an Elementary School

- Utilize Grade Level Teachers, Resource Specialists, Teacher Assistants, and Floating Tutors in a coordinated and systematic effort to provide additional time and support for learning.
- Develop strategies to enlist additional human resources in the effort to support students:
  - **Parent volunteers**
  - **Business partners**
  - **Senior citizens**
  - **Partnership with the high schools**
  - **Partnership with area colleges**

Extra Time and Support for Students in an Elementary School

- Utilize Grade Level Teachers, Resource Specialists, and Floating Tutors in a coordinated and systematic effort to provide additional time and support for learning.
- Develop Strategies to Enlist Additional Human Resources in the Effort to Support Students
- **Develop strong parent partnerships to provide students with additional Time & Support at home.**

Building Successful Partnerships
National PTA Standards

- Conduct grade level parent workshops at least twice each school-year.
- Provide tools, tips and materials for at-home practice during parent workshops and via frequent grade-level newsletters.
- Establish on-going systems for two-way communication with each parent.
- Send student work folders home - with teacher feedback- for parent review, comments, questions & signature.
- See Chapter 14 - *Revisiting PLCs at Work*

Extra Time and Support for
Students in an Elementary School

- Grade Level Teachers, Resource Specialists, Floating Tutors
- Organize parent volunteers, business partners, senior citizens, high school & college interns to serve as a mentors and tutors along with the school-based team.
- Team Designs Parent Materials for at Home Tutorials
- Buddy Programs/Peer Tutoring
- Save One Student
- Re-defining focus of Child Study Team to Plan Additional Interventions

To sustain the continuous improvement momentum, PLCs…

…Celebrate small wins early and often!!

A Pyramid of Interventions
An Answer to "Response to Intervention" (RTI)

Tier I

Daily New Direct Instruction for ALL Students

All students in Tier 1 receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction, differentiated to meet their needs, and are screened on a periodic basis to identify struggling learners who need additional support.

Tier II

Intervention & Enrichment for All

In Tier 2, students not making adequate progress in the core curriculum are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress.

Tier III

Very Intensive Support (Individualized Schedule)

Students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the students' skill deficits for the remediation of existing problems and the prevention of more severe problems.

Special Education

How To Sustain Momentum in a Change Initiative

Complex change strategies risk losing momentum if there are no short-term goals to meet and celebrate. Most people won't go on the long march unless they see compelling evidence…that the journey is producing expected results. Without short-term wins, too many people will give up. But *creating* short-term wins is different from *hoping* for short-term wins.
　　　John Kotter, *Leading Change*

Milestones that are identified, achieved, and celebrated represent an essential condition for building a learning organization.
　　　John Thompson, *Learning Organizations*

The most effective change processes are incremental – they break down big problems into small, doable steps and get a person to say "yes" numerous times, not just once. They plan for small wins that form the basis for a consistent pattern of winning that appeals to people's desire to belong to a successful venture. A series of small wins provides a foundation of stable building blocks for change.
　　　James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*

Specific goals should be designed to allow teams to achieve small wins as they pursue their common purpose. Small wins are invaluable to building members commitment and overcoming the obstacles that get in the way of achieving a meaningful, long-term purpose.
　　　J. Katzenbach and D. Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*

When people see tangible results, however incremental at first, and see how the results flow from the overall concept, they will line up with enthusiasm. People want to be a part of a winning team. They want to contribute to producing, visible, tangible results. When they feel the magic of momentum, when they begin to see tangible results – that's when they get on board.
　　　Jim Collins, *Good to Great*

Win small. Win early. Win often.
　　　Gary Hamel, *Leading the Revolution*

What Are You Celebrating?

- Celebrations weave our hearts and souls into a shared destiny. People come together to celebrate beginnings and endings, triumphs and tragedies.
  - Bolman and Deal, Leading With Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit

Actively Promote a Climate of Achievement:
Incentives and Celebrations

- Recognize improvement/achievement on daily school announcements & within classrooms
- Create classroom, grade level and school-wide incentive programs (i.e. display "Hand in Hand We All Learn" people chain, recognizing books read.)
- Celebrate via classroom/school/district newsletters, media broadcasts, etc.
- Provide public recognition at awards assemblies, PTO/PTA Meetings, Family Nights, School Board Meetings, etc.
- Share professional learning & achievements at team, vertical, faculty, and district level meetings.

What was/is the Impact of Systematic Interventions?

Just to name a few…
- Increased Student Achievement (local, district, state/provincial & national indicators) Go to www.allthingsplc.info for "Evidence of Effectiveness"
- Decreased Discipline Infractions
- Improved Perceptions about the school
- Greater job satisfaction for educators

Assess Your School's Response When Kids Don't Learn or Already Know It

- Are our students assured **extra time and support** for learning?

- Is our response **timely**? How quickly are we able to identify the kids who need extra time and support? Does our focus prompt intervention or enrichment rather than sluggish remediation?

- Is our response **directive** rather than invitational? Are kids **invited** to put in extra time or does our system **ensure** they put in extra time?

- Is our response **systematic**? Do kids receive this intervention or enrichment according to a schoolwide plan rather than at the discretion of individual teachers?

Assessing Your Current Reality

Consider the descriptions of 5 stages of PLC progress regarding:

Systematic Interventions Ensure Students Receive Additional Time and Support for Learning

Individually, silently, and *honestly* assess the current status of your school on the Professional Learning Community Continuum

Progress and Problems

Share your assessment with your colleagues:

- Where are areas of agreement?
- Where are the areas of disagreement?
- Where can you celebrate the greatest progress?
- What areas are you finding problematic?

An Audit of Our Commitment to Key PLC Concepts

Part I. Learning as our Fundamental Purpose (Continued)
We acknowledge that the fundamental purpose of our school is to help all students achieve high levels of learning, and therefore we are willing to examine all of our practices in light of their impact on learning.

Indicator	Pre-Initiating	Initiating	Implementing	Developing	Sustaining
We provide a system of interventions that guarantees each student will receive additional time and support for learning if he/she experiences initial difficulty.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
Students are required rather than invited to devote the extra time and receive the additional support until they are successful.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We have developed strategies to extend and enrich the learning of students who have mastered essential skills.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.
We continually work together to identify policies and procedures that encourage learning in areas such as homework, grading, discipline, recognition, etc.	We have not yet begun to address this issue.	We are talking about this, but have taken no significant action to make it a reality.	We have begun to do this, but at this stage of the implementation process, many staff approach the task with a sense of compliance rather than commitment.	We have moved beyond initial implementation and continue to work our way through the process. Support is growing, but changes remain fragile.	This practice is deeply embedded in our culture. Most staff are committed to doing this and feel it is an important factor in the collective effort to improve the school.

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet
Systematic Intervention

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
The school has developed a system of interventions that guarantees each student will receive additional time and support for learning if he or she experiences initial difficulty. The interventions are timely and require, rather than invite, students to devote the extra time and receive the additional support for learning. The intervention plan is multi-dimensional. If one intervention strategy proves unsuccessful, the plan provides for alternative strategies to be used.				

Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap

- What steps could you take to make progress in these indicators?

- Complete the "Where Do We Go From Here" worksheets to begin your plan for becoming a school committed to a focus on learning.

Which is Most Likely To Persuade an Educator to Change?

- Supervision and evaluation
- Workshop or Courses
- A research article or book
- Evidence of his/her skewed grade distributions
- Evidence of the lack of success of his/her students on the state assessment

Seven Ways to Change Someone's Mind

1) **Reason. Appealing to rational thinking and decision making.**
2) **Research. Building shared knowledge of the research base supporting a position.**
3) **Resonance. Connecting to the person's intuition so that the proposal "feels right."**
4) **Representational Re-descriptions. Changing the way the information is presented (for example, using stories or analogies instead of data).**
5) **Resources and Reward. Providing people with incentives to embrace an idea.**
6) **Real World Events. Presenting real-world examples where the idea has been applied successfully.**
   - Howard Gardner

Keys to Responding to a Resister

- Assume good intentions
- Seek to understand
- Use strategies of persuasion
- **Identify specific behaviors essential to the success of the initiative**
- **Focus on behavior not attitude. Monitor behavior.**

Focus on Behavior

- The central challenge and core problem of all substantive change initiatives is *changing people's behavior.* Change efforts must focus on what people do, and the need for significant changes in what people do.
  - □ John Kotter and Dan Cohen, *The Heart of Change*

Three Powerful Levers to Change Behavior

- Kerry Patterson's research on the most effective strategies for changing someone's behavior cites 3 powerful levers.
- Effective PLCs are designed to use all three!

Lever One:
Positive Peer Pressure

- When seeking tools to influence, no resource is more powerful and accessible than the people who make up our social networks. The approval or disapproval of our fellow human beings can do more to assist our destroy our change efforts than almost any other source.
  - □ Patterson, et. al.

Lever Two: Concrete Evidence of Irrefutably Better Results

- Nothing changes the mind like the hard cold world hitting it with actual real-life data.
  - □ **Patterson, et. al**
- Teachers have to feel there is some compelling reason for them to change practice, with the best direct evidence being that students learn better. The key to enduring change in teacher practice is demonstrable results in terms of student achievement.
  - □ **Richard Elmore, 2003**
- Transparency of results creates an aura of "positive pressure - pressure that is actionable in that it points to solutions and pressure that at the end of the day is inescapable.
  - □ **Michael Fullan, 2008**

Lever Three:
Personal Experience

- The great persuader is personal experience. It is the mother of all cognitive map changes!
  - □ **Kerry Patterson, 2008, p. 51**

The Sequence of Changing Attitudes (Including Your Own)

- **Attitude**
  - is shaped by
- **Experience**
  - is a result of
- **Behavior**

- To change attitudes, focus on behavior.

7

We Can Behave our Way to New Attitudes

- There is a large literature demonstrating that attitudes follow behavior. People accept new beliefs as a result of changing their behavior.
  - Pfeffer and Sutton

Fundamental Human Longings

- To be **successful** (Achievement)

- To **belong** (Connection)

- To **make a difference** (Significance)

**Bringing the Big Ideas to Life:
Turn Aspirations Into Actions**

We must turn aspirations into actions. It will not be enough to run visioning workshops; the visions will have to be reflected in daily behaviors. It will not be enough to declare an intent; leaders will have to deliver results. **To accomplish results leaders engage employees' <u>hearts</u> (emotions), <u>minds</u> (cognitions), and <u>feet</u> (action).**

—Dave Ulrich, (1996), p. 211

Learning by Doing

Capacity building … is not just workshops and professional development for all. It is the daily habit of ***working together***, and you can't learn this from a workshop or course. You need to learn it by doing it and having mechanisms for getting better at it on purpose.

—Michael Fullan (2005)

Thank You for
Bringing the Big Ideas to Life!

**Rick & Becky DuFour
rdufour@d125.org
beck.dufour@jetbroadband.com**

CONFERENCE EVALUATION AND SURVEY OF FUTURE INTERESTS

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey below. We greatly value your input!
The information collected will be used to plan future professional development.
Thank you very much for your time.

1.) How would you rate your experience with PLC's?
   _____ Just getting started
   _____ Familiar with the concepts
   _____ Some experience with implementation
   _____ Actively engaged in a PLC; We're almost there!

2.) How did this conference meet your needs?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3.) Follow up in which of the following PLC areas would be most beneficial to you?
   (Please order your preferences starting with 1)

   a.   ___ Assessing current reality
   b.   ___ Barriers to Learning Communities
   c.   ___ Assessments
   d.   ___ Collaborative Teams
   e.   ___ Team Norms
   f.   ___ Results-Orientated Goals
   g.   ___ Effective use of achievement data
   h.   ___ Interventions
   i.   ___ Changing the Culture

4.) I would prefer follow-up professional development:
   (Please order your preferences starting with 1)

   ___ After school   ____ On line
   ___ During the school day   ____ Summer
   ___ Saturdays

5.) If you were to return to a conference with the DuFour's next year, what topics would
you like to see covered that were not addressed at this year's event?

_____
_____
_____

NOTES

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NOTES

Coming Soon…

Placer County ACSA Presents:

Administrators' Forum   February 3, 2009

Placer County Office of Education Presents:

Mike Mattos – RtI PLC's and How to Respond when Students Don't Learn   April, 24 2009
Ken O'Connor – How to Grade for Learning, Fixes for Broken Grades   May 21, 2009

Dr. Mike Schmoker   October 21, 2009
Dr. Richard and Rebecca DuFour   January 2010

Placer County ACSA Presents:

ADMINISTRATORS' FORUM

Ron Severson – Executive Director, Curriculum & Instruction
John Montgomery – Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction
Roseville Joint Union High School District

Professional Learning Communities ~
What's in it for me?
Tools for success—   Table group discussions—
Opportunities for planning following DuFour's PLC workshops

Tuesday, February 3, 2009
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Rocklin Unified School District Board Room
2615 Sierra Meadows Drive, Rocklin, CA

$15 per person. Make checks payable to: **ACSA, Placer County Charter** **by 1/30/09**

Send check to: Loomis Union School District, Attn: Kim Chase (SORRY, NO PURCHASE ORDERS!) 3290 Humphrey Road, Loomis, CA 95650, 916-652-1800 FAX this form to 916-652-1809

Name:_____   School:_____
E-mail:_____   District:_____

SAVE THE DATE
April 24, 2009
Location & Time TBD

Placer County Office of Education Presents: RtI, Professional Learning Communities, and How to Respond when Students Don't Learn

Presenter: Mike Mattos

About the Presenter: Mike Mattos is currently the principal of Pioneer Middle School, in Tustin, California. A thriving Professional Learning Community (PLC), Pioneer has consistently ranked among the state's top schools for student performance and has received national recognition.

To achieve success, Mike implements PLC concepts, sustaining a collaborative environment among his staff.

Overview: In 2004, the federal government revised special education law, promoting a radically different model for helping students with special needs: Response to Intervention (RtI). The underlining premise of RtI is that schools should not delay providing help for struggling students until they fall far enough behind to qualify for special education, but instead should provide timely, targeted, systematic interventions to all students that demonstrate the need. Yet, for Professional Learning Community schools, this approach should hardly be considered "new", as the PLC practice of creating a "Pyramid of Interventions" is essentially the same work. This conference is designed to help educators understand how to implement PLC practices to create a powerful, highly-effective site intervention program.

Participants will:
• Develop a practical understanding of Response to Intervention (RtI)
• Identify the essential characteristics of an effective intervention program
• Understand how Professional Learning Community (PLC) practices are perfectly aligned to implement RtI and ensure high levels of learning for all students
• Study real-life, highly effective elementary and secondary intervention programs
• Leave with a practical, step-by-step implementation plan for creating a Pyramid Response to Interventions

SAVE THE DATE
May 21, 2009
Location: William Jessup University

Placer County Office of Education Presents: How to Grade for Learning - Fixes for Broken Grades

Presenter: Ken O'Connor

About the Presenter: Ken O'Connor is an educational consultant. He has been a staff development presenter and facilitator on assessment, grading and reporting, and curriculum design in 32 states and seven provinces. O'Connor has presented at: the National Staff Development Council Annual Conference, the Rick Stiggins Summer Institute, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals Annual Conference, among others.

In this Session, standards-based grading practices will be discussed, and approaches that encourage effective learning and support student success will be presented. Teachers are effectively linking an increasingly broad range of assessment and evaluation approaches with their teaching to improve learning. The next stage is linking this to grading practices in order to make grades accurate, meaningful, consistent, and supportive of learning.

Participants will:

• Analyze fifteen fixes for grades, which really make a difference when they are applied in classrooms

• Have opportunities to discuss the implications of the ideas presented to their school/district

SAVE THE DATE
October 21, 2009
Location & Time TBD

Placer County Office of Education Presents: Dr. Mike Schmoker

Dr. Mike Schmoker has written four books and numerous articles which have appeared in Educational Leadership, Phi Delta Kappan , Education Week and TIME magazine.

He has just published another book: *RESULTS NOW: How We Can Achieve Unprecedented Improvements in Teaching and Learning*

Mike Schmoker argues convincingly that if student achievement is to improve, especially in the higher-order proficiencies, instruction will necessarily have to change and improve simultaneously. He sets out a clear but simple agenda to achieve such a transformation in American schools. This book should be required reading for everyone in educational leadership and anyone concerned about the quality of teaching and learning.

Practical PLC Tools and Documents by Dr. Mike Schmoker

- Write More, Grade Less
- Administrative Team Protocols
- Team Protocols / Norms

Coming in January 2010
PCOE brings the DuFours back to Placer County!

Recommended PLC Resources

For interactive, no-commerce PLC information, visit www.allthingsplc.info

**For books, videos, or events, contact Solution Tree
at www.solution-tree.com or (800) 733–6786**

Books

Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, available June 2008)

A Leader's Companion (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2007)

Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006)

Professional Learning Communities at Work Plan Book (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2006)

On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, Eds., 2005)

Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004)

Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Learning Communities (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002)

Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement (DuFour & Eaker, 1998)

Videos

The Power of Professional Learning Communities at Work: Bringing the Big Ideas to Life (DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2007)

Let's Talk About PLC: Getting Started (DuFour, Eaker, DuFour, & Sparks, 2003)

Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School (DuFour, 2002)

How to Develop a Professional Learning Community: Passion and Persistence (DuFour, 2001)

Articles (Available at www.allthingsplc.info)

"Leadership Is an Affair of the Heart." (Rick DuFour). *Journal of Staff Development,* Winter 2004.

"What Is a Professional Learning Community?" (Richard DuFour). *Educational Leadership,* May 2004, *61*(8), 6–11.

"Building a Professional Learning Community." (Rick DuFour). *The School Administrator,* May 2003.

"Central-Office Support for Learning Communities." (Rebecca Burnette DuFour). *The School Administrator,* May 2003.

"How We Formed Our Community: Lights and Cameras Are Optional, but Action Is Essential." (Becky Burnette DuFour). *Journal of Staff Development,* Winter 2002.

"Pull Out Negativity by Its Roots." (Rick DuFour & Becky Burnette). *Journal of Staff Development,* Summer 2002.

"The Learning-Centered Principal." (Richard DuFour). *Educational Leadership,* May 2002, *59*(8), 12–15.

Other Resources

National Staff Development Council: www.nsdc.org

American Association of School Administrators: www.aasa.org

"Learning Communities: What Do They Look Like and How Do You Get There?" Special issue of *The School Administrator*, May 2003.

Resources to Support and Grow
Your Professional Learning Community

Visit the All Things PLC Website at: www.allthingsplc.info

MISSION

The All Things PLC website provides research, articles, data and tools to educators who seek information about Professional Learning Communities at Work™. This information is provided so schools and districts have relevant, practical knowledge and tools as they create and sustain their Professional Learning Community.

VISION

The All Things PLC website will be the definitive clearinghouse of information for educators building or refining their Professional Learning Community.

GOALS

- To provide up–to–date, timely and useful information to educators regarding Professional Learning Community concepts and practices.
- To provide educators with insights from leading practitioners through an interactive web log (blog).
- To provide research and articles about Professional Learning Community concepts.
- To provide information about schools that have successfully implemented the Professional Learning Communities at Work model.

Look for Updates on Local Events and Resources at the Placer County Office of Education PLC Website:

www.placercoe.k12.ca.us/plc

_____

What Is a "Professional Learning Community"?

To create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold yourself accountable for results.

By Richard DuFour

The idea of improving schools by developing *professional learning communities* is currently in vogue. People use this term to describe every imaginable combination of individuals with an interest in education—a grade-level teaching team, a school committee, a high school department, an entire school district, a state department of education, a national professional organization, and so on. In fact, the term has been used so ubiquitously that it is in danger of losing all meaning.

The professional learning community model has now reached a critical juncture, one well known to those who have witnessed the fate of other well-intentioned school reform efforts. In this all-too-familiar cycle, initial enthusiasm gives way to confusion about the fundamental concepts driving the initiative, followed by inevitable implementation problems, the conclusion that the reform has failed to bring about the desired results, abandonment of the reform, and the launch of a new search for the next promising initiative. Another reform movement has come and gone, reinforcing the conventional education wisdom that promises, "This too shall pass."

The movement to develop professional learning communities can avoid this cycle, but only if educators reflect critically on the concept's merits. What are the "big ideas" that represent the core principles of professional learning communities? How do these principles guide schools' efforts to sustain the professional learning community model until it becomes deeply embedded in the culture of the school?

Big Idea #1: Ensuring That Students Learn

The professional learning community model flows from the assumption that the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn. This simple shift—from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning—has profound implications for schools.

School mission statements that promise "learning for all" have become a cliché. But when a school staff takes that statement literally—when teachers view it as a pledge to ensure the success of each student rather than as politically correct hyperbole—profound changes begin to take place. The school staff finds itself asking, What school characteristics and practices have been most successful in helping all students achieve at high levels? How could we adopt those characteristics and practices in our own school? What commitments would we have to make to one another to create such a school? What indicators could we monitor to assess our progress? When the staff has built shared knowledge and found common ground on these questions, the school has a solid foundation for moving forward with its improvement initiative.

As the school moves forward, every professional in the building must engage with colleagues in the ongoing exploration of three crucial questions that drive the work of those within a professional learning community:

*   What do we want each student to learn?

*   How will we know when each student has learned it?

*   How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

The answer to the third question separates learning communities from traditional schools.

Here is a scenario that plays out daily in traditional schools. A teacher teaches a unit to the best of his or her ability, but at the conclusion of the unit some students have not mastered the essential outcomes. On the one hand, the teacher would like to take the time to help those students. On the other hand, the teacher feels compelled to move forward to "cover" the course content. If the teacher uses instructional time to assist students who have not learned, the progress of students who have mastered the content will suffer; if the teacher pushes on with new concepts, the struggling students will fall farther behind.

What typically happens in this situation? Almost invariably, the school leaves the solution to the discretion of individual teachers, who vary widely in the ways they respond. Some teachers conclude that the struggling students should transfer to a less rigorous course or should be considered for special education. Some lower their expectations by adopting less challenging standards for subgroups of students within their classrooms. Some look for ways to assist the students before and after school. Some allow struggling students to fail.

When a school begins to function as a professional learning community, however, teachers become aware of the incongruity between their commitment to ensure learning for all students and their lack of a coordinated strategy to respond when some students do not learn. The staff addresses this discrepancy by designing strategies to ensure that struggling students receive additional time and support, no matter who their teacher is. In addition to being systematic and schoolwide, the professional learning community's response to students who experience difficulty is

* *Timely*. The school quickly identifies students who need additional time and support.

* *Based on intervention rather than remediation*. The plan provides students with help as soon as they experience difficulty rather than relying on summer school, retention, and remedial courses.

* *Directive*. Instead of *inviting* students to seek additional help, the systematic plan *requires* students to devote extra time and receive additional assistance until they have mastered the necessary concepts.

The systematic, timely, and directive intervention program operating at Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, provides an excellent example.

Every three weeks, every student receives a progress report. Within the first month of school, new students discover that if they are not doing well in a class, they will receive a wide array of immediate interventions. First, the teacher, counselor, and faculty advisor each talk with the student individually to help resolve the problem. The school also notifies the student's parents about the concern. In addition, the school offers the struggling student a pass from study hall to a school tutoring center to get additional help in the

course. An older student mentor, in conjunction with the struggling student's advisor, helps the student with homework during the student's daily advisory period.

Any student who continues to fall short of expectations at the end of six weeks despite these interventions is required, rather than invited, to attend tutoring sessions during the study hall period. Counselors begin to make weekly checks on the struggling student's progress. If tutoring fails to bring about improvement within the next six weeks, the student is assigned to a daily guided study hall with 10 or fewer students. The guided study hall supervisor communicates with classroom teachers to learn exactly what homework each student needs to complete and monitors the completion of that homework. Parents attend a meeting at the school at which the student, parents, counselor, and classroom teacher must sign a contract clarifying what each party will do to help the student meet the standards for the course.

Stevenson High School serves more than 4,000 students. Yet this school has found a way to monitor each student's learning on a timely basis and to ensure that every student who experiences academic difficulty will receive extra time and support for learning.

Like Stevenson, schools that are truly committed to the concept of learning for each student will stop subjecting struggling students to a haphazard education lottery. These schools will guarantee that each student receives whatever additional support he or she needs.

Big Idea #2: A Culture of Collaboration

Educators who are building a professional learning community recognize that they must work together to achieve their collective purpose of learning for all. Therefore, they create structures to promote a collaborative culture.

Despite compelling evidence indicating that working collaboratively represents best practice, teachers in many schools continue to work in isolation. Even in schools that endorse the idea of collaboration, the staff's willingness to collaborate often stops at the classroom door. Some school staffs equate the term "collaboration" with congeniality and focus on building group camaraderie. Other staffs join forces to develop consensus on operational procedures, such as how they will respond to tardiness or supervise recess. Still others organize themselves into committees to oversee different facets of the school's operation, such as discipline, technology, and social climate. Although each of these activities can serve a useful purpose, none represents the kind of professional dialogue that can transform a school into a professional learning community.

The powerful collaboration that characterizes professional learning communities is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice. Teachers work in teams, engaging in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep team learning. This process, in turn, leads to higher levels of student achievement.

Collaborating for School Improvement

At Boones Mill Elementary School, a K-5 school serving 400 students in rural Franklin County, Virginia, the powerful collaboration of grade-level teams drives the school improvement process. The following scenario describes what Boones Mill staff members refer to as their *teaching-learning process*.

The school's five 3rd grade teachers study state and national standards, the district curriculum guide, and student achievement data to identify the essential knowledge and skills that all students should learn in an upcoming language arts unit. They also ask the 4th grade teachers what they hope students will have mastered by the time they leave 3rd

grade. On the basis of the shared knowledge generated by this joint study, the 3rd grade team agrees on the critical outcomes that they will make sure each student achieves during the unit.

Next, the team turns its attention to developing common formative assessments to monitor each student's mastery of the essential outcomes. Team members discuss the most authentic and valid ways to assess student mastery. They set the standard for each skill or concept that each student must achieve to be deemed proficient. They agree on the criteria by which they will judge the quality of student work, and they practice applying those criteria until they can do so consistently. Finally, they decide when they will administer the assessments.

After each teacher has examined the results of the common formative assessment for his or her students, the team analyzes how all 3rd graders performed. Team members identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning and begin to discuss how they can build on the strengths and address the weaknesses. The entire team gains new insights into what is working and what is not, and members discuss new strategies that they can implement in their classrooms to raise student achievement.

At Boones Mill, collaborative conversations happen routinely throughout the year. Teachers use frequent formative assessments to investigate the questions "Are students learning what they need to learn?" and "Who needs additional time and support to learn?" rather than relying solely on summative assessments that ask "Which students learned what was intended and which students did not?"
Collaborative conversations call on team members to make public what has traditionally been private—goals, strategies, materials, pacing, questions, concerns, and results. These discussions give every teacher someone to turn to and talk to, and they are explicitly structured to improve the classroom practice of teachers—individually and collectively.

For teachers to participate in such a powerful process, the school must ensure that everyone belongs to a team that focuses on student learning. Each team must have time to meet during the workday and throughout the school year. Teams must focus their efforts on crucial questions related to learning and generate products that reflect that focus, such as lists of essential outcomes, different kinds of assessment, analyses of student achievement, and strategies for improving results. Teams must develop norms or protocols to clarify expectations regarding roles, responsibilities, and relationships among team members. Teams must adopt student achievement goals linked with school and district goals.

Removing Barriers to Success

For meaningful collaboration to occur, a number of things must also *stop* happening. Schools must stop pretending that merely presenting teachers with state standards or district curriculum guides will guarantee that all students have access to a common curriculum. Even school districts that devote tremendous time and energy to designing the *intended* curriculum often pay little attention to the *implemented* curriculum (what teachers actually teach) and even less to the *attained* curriculum (what students learn) (Marzano, 2003). Schools must also give teachers time to analyze and discuss state and district curriculum documents.

More important, teacher conversations must quickly move beyond "What are we expected to teach?" to "How will we know when each student has learned?" In addition, faculties must stop making excuses for failing to collaborate. Few educators publicly assert that working in isolation is the best strategy for improving schools. Instead, they give reasons why it is impossible for them to work together: "We just can't find the time." "Not everyone on the

staff has endorsed the idea." "We need more training in collaboration." But the number of schools that have created truly collaborative cultures proves that such barriers are not insurmountable. As Roland Barth (1991) wrote,

> Are teachers and administrators willing to accept the fact that they are part of the problem? . . . God didn't create self-contained classrooms, 50-minute periods, and subjects taught in isolation. We did—because we find working alone safer than and preferable to working together. (pp. 126–127)

In the final analysis, building the collaborative culture of a professional learning community is a question of will. A group of staff members who are determined to work together will find a way.

Big Idea #3: A Focus on Results

Professional learning communities judge their effectiveness on the basis of results. Working together to improve student achievement becomes the routine work of everyone in the school. Every teacher team participates in an ongoing process of identifying the current level of student achievement, establishing a goal to improve the current level, working together to achieve that goal, and providing periodic evidence of progress. The focus of team goals shifts. Such goals as "We will adopt the Junior Great Books program" or "We will create three new labs for our science course" give way to "We will increase the percentage of students who meet the state standard in language arts from 83 percent to 90 percent" or "We will reduce the failure rate in our course by 50 percent."

Schools and teachers typically suffer from the DRIP syndrome—Data Rich/Information Poor. The results-oriented professional learning community not only welcomes data but also turns data into useful and relevant information for staff. Teachers have never suffered from a lack of data. Even a teacher who works in isolation can easily establish the mean, mode, median, standard deviation, and percentage of students who demonstrated proficiency every time he or she administers a test. However, data will become a catalyst for improved teacher practice only if the teacher has a basis of comparison.

When teacher teams develop common formative assessments throughout the school year, each teacher can identify how his or her students performed on each skill compared with other students. Individual teachers can call on their team colleagues to help them reflect on areas of concern. Each teacher has access to the ideas, materials, strategies, and talents of the entire team.

Freeport Intermediate School, located 50 miles south of Houston, Texas, attributes its success to an unrelenting focus on results. Teachers work in collaborative teams for 90 minutes daily to clarify the essential outcomes of their grade levels and courses and to align those outcomes with state standards. They develop consistent instructional calendars and administer the same brief assessment to all students at the same grade level at the conclusion of each instructional unit, roughly once a week.

Each quarter, the teams administer a common cumulative exam. Each spring, the teams develop and administer practice tests for the state exam. Each year, the teams pore over the results of the state test, which are broken down to show every teacher how his or her students performed on every skill and on every test item. The teachers share their results from all of these assessments with their colleagues, and they quickly learn when a teammate has been particularly effective in teaching a certain skill. Team members consciously look for successful practice and attempt to replicate it in their own practice; they also identify areas of the curriculum that need more attention.

Freeport Intermediate has been transformed from one of the lowest-performing schools in the state to a national model for academic achievement. Principal Clara Sale-Davis believes that the crucial first step in that transformation came when the staff began to honestly confront data on student achievement and to work together to improve results rather than make excuses for them.

Of course, this focus on continual improvement and results requires educators to change traditional practices and revise prevalent assumptions. Educators must begin to embrace data as a useful indicator of progress. They must stop disregarding or excusing unfavorable data and honestly confront the sometimes-brutal facts. They must stop using averages to analyze student performance and begin to focus on the success of each student.

Educators who focus on results must also stop limiting improvement goals to factors outside the classroom, such as student discipline and staff morale, and shift their attention to goals that focus on student learning. They must stop assessing their own effectiveness on the basis of how busy they are or how many new initiatives they have launched and begin instead to ask, "Have we made progress on the goals that are most important to us?" Educators must stop working in isolation and hoarding their ideas, materials, and strategies and begin to work together to meet the needs of all students.

Hard Work and Commitment

Even the grandest design eventually translates into hard work. The professional learning community model is a grand design—a powerful new way of working together that profoundly affects the practices of schooling. But initiating and sustaining the concept requires hard work. It requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement.

When educators do the hard work necessary to implement these principles, their collective ability to help all students learn will rise. If they fail to demonstrate the discipline to initiate and sustain this work, then their school is unlikely to become more effective, even if those within it claim to be a professional learning community. The rise or fall of the professional learning community concept depends not on the merits of the concept itself, but on the most important element in the improvement of any school—the commitment and persistence of the educators within it.

References

Barth, R. (1991). Restructuring schools: Some questions for teachers and principals. *Phi Delta Kappan, 73*(2), 123–128.
Marzano, R. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Richard DuFour recently retired as Superintendent of Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois. He currently resides in Moneta, Virginia, and may be reached at (540) 721-4662; rdufour@district125.k12.il.us. His forthcoming book is *Whatever It Takes: How a Professional Learning Community Responds When Kids Don't Learn* (National Educational Service, in press).

In Praise of Top-Down Leadership

by Dr. Rick DuFour

I have noticed an interesting phenomenon when I work with educators on strategies to improve student achievement in their schools. They sometimes confide in me that the central office has issued a "top-down" mandate that all their schools must embrace and model certain key concepts and practices. The phrase "top-down" is uttered with disdain, a pejorative term used in much the same way Rush Limbaugh would use "liberal," and they expect me to be appalled at this affront to the autonomy of educators. After all, isn't there ample evidence that top-down improvement doesn't work (Fullan, 2007)? Isn't it clear that improvement initiatives will not occur unless there is buy-in, a willingness of those engaged in the initiative to rally around it. Haven't researchers warned that without this buy-in you will only generate resentful compliance that dooms the initiative to inevitable failure (Hargreave and Fink, 2006; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2006)? Shouldn't the people closest to the action, those at the school site, decide the direction of their schools?

In the ongoing debate of the efficacy of top-down versus bottom-up strategies to improve school districts, top-down is clearly losing. Many district leaders are reluctant to champion improvement for fear of being labeled with the epithet, "top-down leader," the unkindest cut of all.

The glib advice given to superintendents and principals who actually hope to foster improvement is they must simply build widespread consensus for a concept or initiative before proceeding. But what happens when a well-intentioned leader does everything right in terms of engaging staff members in the consideration of a change initiative and makes a compelling case for moving forward, but the staff prefers the status quo? Now let's add one more element to the scenario. The initiative unquestionably represents a clearly better way of operating than what currently is in place. Is the laissez-faire

leadership of simply allowing people to do as they wish really the only alternative when collective inquiry, persuasion, and attempts at building consensus fail to stir people to act in new ways?

The tension regarding "who decides who decides" how (or even if) a school will be improved, ignores a more central question: does professional autonomy extend to the freedom to disregard what is widely considered best practice in one's field? I suggest that educators have danced around this question rather than addressing it, and their inattention to the issue has fostered an unhealthy and unrealistic sense of what constitutes professional autonomy. District leaders have contributed to this peculiar view of professionalism because they have allowed teachers and principals the discretion to ignore even the most widely recognized best practices of the profession.

There is considerable evidence that leaving the issue of school improvement to each school to resolve on its own does not result in more effective schools (Fullan, 2007; Schlechty, 2005; Elmore, 2003). Conversely, there is considerable research to suggest that high-performing districts have coherent strategies for improvement that hold adults accountable for impacting student learning in a positive way (Harvard PELP Project, 2007; Shannon and Bylsama, 2004).

Leaders who create schools and districts capable of sustained substantive improvement are not laissez-faire in their approach to education but rather are skillful in implementing the concept of *simultaneous loose and tight leadership*. The concept has also been referred to as *directed empowerment* (Waterman, 1987) or *a culture of discipline within an ethic of entrepreneurship* (Collins, 2001). This leadership approach fosters autonomy and creativity (loose) within a systematic framework that stipulates clear, non-discretionary priorities and parameters (tight).

Of course, one of the most essential elements of effective loose-tight leadership is getting "tight" about the right things. There is abundant evidence that certain practices, processes, and school cultures result in high levels of student achievement. For example,

students learn more when those who teach them are very clear about and very committed to ensuring that each student acquires the intended knowledge, skills, and dispositions of each course, grade level, and unit of instruction. They learn more when their teachers check for understanding on an ongoing basis and use frequent team-developed common formative assessments rather than individually created summative assessments. They learn more when their school has timely, directive, and systematic interventions that guarantee them additional time and support for learning when they experience difficulty. They learn more when their teachers work in collaborative teams rather than in isolation - *if* their teachers stay focused on the right work. They learn more when members of those collaborative teams work interdependently to achieve specific, results-oriented goals linked to student learning, goals for which they are mutually accountable. They learn more when each teacher has the benefit of frequent and timely information on the achievement of his or her students, user-friendly information that helps the teacher determine the strengths and weaknesses of various instructional strategies. They learn more when professional development in the school is job-embedded and structures are in place to help teachers learn from one another as part of their routine work practice. These practices are supported by research, proven to be effective in hundreds of schools, and endorsed by professional organizations. Most importantly, they are not counter-intuitive. They pass the test of common sense.

For simplicity sake, let's call the conditions described in the preceding paragraph the practices of a professional learning community (PLC). How might district leaders attempt to integrate these practices in their schools?

 A tale of three districts

I witnessed the following change processes in three districts that attempted to implement PLC concepts in their schools

District A.   The Autocratic Approach.

The district had shown little interest in professional learning communities until one of its schools demonstrated remarkable gains in student achievement. When the faculty

attributed the gains to their implementation of PLC concepts, the central office announced every school was now required to become a PLC. Unfortunately the pronouncement was not accompanied by any attempt to clarify the term, by training, by time for faculties to do the work of PLCs , or by resources of any kind. The central office made no effort to monitor the progress of the initiative in any school and did nothing to model its own commitment to PLC practices. This central office approach had no effect on student achievement, but it did cause a great deal of resentment toward the school that had been singled out for its success.

District B.   The Laissez-Faire Approach

The superintendent of this large district became convinced of the merits of the PLC concept and the Board of Education stipulated in its annual goals that every school would become a PLC. The district devoted considerable resources to the initiative, offering ongoing training for all principals and for a teacher team from each of its schools. Unfortunately, the central office did not speak with one voice regarding the priority of the initiative. Some assistant superintendents supported principals, clarified expectations, monitored the progress of each school, and worked with the district's professional development department to coordinate training according to the specific needs of each school. Other assistant superintendents left the initiative to the discretion of each principal. Many of their principals opted not to attend the training. No effort was made to monitor the progress of their schools. At the end of two years some schools had made remarkable progress while others had made none.

District C: Loose-Tight Leadership at Work

The superintendent had become convinced that the PLC concept offered the best hope for significant, sustained school improvement for his district. He arranged for two-days of introductory training for the principal and a team of teachers from every school. He advised the teacher union representative of the training and invited her to attend. He actively participated in all of the training, and his entire central office leadership team attended as well.

The training was specifically designed to create a common vocabulary, build shared knowledge about the PLC concept, make a compelling case for the benefits of the concept, and give all participants the opportunity to express their concerns and questions to the consultants providing the training. A segment of each day was devoted to "ask the superintendent," and everyone in the room was invited to present a question directly to the superintendent for an immediate and public response. The superintendent made certain to check in with his central office staff, principals, and teachers during lunch and breaks to get their perspectives on what they were learning.

By the end of the two days there was palpable, widespread enthusiasm for the concept. Then, in the midst of the initial enthusiasm, the union representative posed a critical question to the superintendent, "This all sounds fine, but are you saying we will be *required* to do this? Is this a top-down mandate?" It was a pivotal moment in the improvement process. His answer captured the essence of loose-tight leadership.

He said: "Why wouldn't we do this? Is anyone aware of any evidence that this is detrimental to student learning, teacher effectiveness, or positive school cultures? This concept is supported by research, endorsed by our professional organizations, implemented with great success in schools around us, and it just makes sense. Knowing the commitment of the teachers in this district to do what is best for kids, how could we not go forward with this? I admit I am not certain as to all the details of implementation, and I will need your ideas as to how we can help all your colleagues becoming familiar with the concept. I know all of us will need time and resources to move forward, and we will need to consider what we will remove from our plates if we take on this challenge. But I propose this is the work we should be doing, and we need to build on the energy and enthusiasm in this room today and commit to doing whatever it takes to make this happen in our district."

Over the course of the next two years the district supported ongoing training for every school in the district. Practices were aligned with the initiative, schedules were adjusted to provide teachers with time to engage in the work of PLCs, the focus of administrative

meetings changed to support principals in their implementation efforts. Central office staff met with concerned faculties and groups of teachers to address their questions. In two years, the district had the greatest gains in student achievement in the state.

If some regard the scenario described in District C as "top-down leadership," then I come to praise top-down leadership, not to bury it. One of the most essential responsibilities of leadership is clarity – clarity regarding the fundamental purpose of the organization, the future it must create to better fulfill that purpose, the most high-leverage strategies for creating that future, the indicators of progress it will monitor, and the specific ways each member of the organization can contribute both to its long-term purpose and short-term goals (Buckingham, 2005). If educational leaders contend that the purpose of the organization is to ensure all students learn at high levels (as virtually all our mission statements contend), and then they allow people throughout the organization to opt out of practices and processes that are clearly more effective at promoting learning than the prevailing practices, they send mixed messages that will succeed in creating confusion and cynicism but will fail to improve their schools and districts. Thus, they will fail as leaders.

Leaders should certainly utilize every component of an effective change process (see sidebar #1) and should commit to what Richard Elmore (2006) has referred to as "reciprocal accountability." This principle calls upon leaders to help build the capacity of the members of the group to accomplish what they have been asked to accomplish. For example, if teachers are being asked to collaborate, leaders have an obligation to create structures that make collaboration meaningful rather than artificial, to guarantee time for collaboration during the contractual day, to establish clear priorities and parameters so that teachers focus on the right topics, to help teams make informed decisions by making the essential knowledge base easily accessible to them, to provide meaningful and timely training based on the specific needs of each team, to offer templates and models to guide their work, and to specify clear expectations and standards to help them assess the quality of their work. In this sense, the leader functions as a "servant leader" asking, "what can I

do to give people in this organization the tools and skills to ensure their eventual success as they undertake this challenge."

But just as certainly, leaders must be prepared to insist that those within their organizations heed rather than ignore clear evidence of the best, most promising strategies for accomplishing its purpose and priorities. Educational leaders must provide both pressure and support if they are to play a role in improving their schools and districts.

Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap

I offer four assertions.

First, students will not achieve at higher levels unless the schools that serve them undergo significant changes in both their structures (policies, programs, procedures, schedules) and cultures (assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations, and habits that constitute the norm for that school). While it is relatively easy to implement structural change, it is *very* difficult to change the culture of an organization. Every existing system has a well-entrenched culture already in place. It is only natural that people working within that system will typically seek to preserve the status quo. They will also be inclined to filter improvement initiatives through the lens of the existing culture, distorting the initiative to fit the culture rather than changing the culture to align with the initiative. In the midst of cultural change educators are likely to perceive that their school has been weakened, their opinions are not valued, and that the stability of the school has been undermined. Periods of frustration, and even anger, are not uncommon (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Conflict and disagreements are inevitable (Fullan, 2007). In short, real cultural change is real hard, and it is unrealistic to believe it will be universally embraced.

Second, cultural change will not occur without intentional leadership. There is abundant evidence regarding the positive impact on student achievement when the practices mentioned earlier in this article are in place. Furthermore, educators will typically

acknowledge the benefits of those practices. Too often, however, they take no steps to implement them. Schools suffer from what Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) call the "knowing-doing gap" – the puzzling mystery of why knowledge of what needs to be done so often fails to result in action consistent with that knowledge. The key to improving schools is ensuring that educators *do* the right work, but too often leaders settle for the illusion of doing. Strategic planning isn't doing, training isn't doing, writing mission statements isn't doing, talking isn't doing, even making a decision isn't doing unless it results in action. Getting people to do differently, to act in new ways, remains the central challenge of every improvement process (Kotter and Cohen, 2002), and it takes intentional leadership to meet that challenge.

3. Leaders should fully engage staff in the consideration of a change process.
Leaders make a mistake when they say, "I have looked at the data and research, and I know what needs to be done." They are much more effective when they engage staff in learning together, building shared knowledge. It is clear that people are more committed to a decision if they were engaged in the process that led to the decision (Covey, 1989; Axelrod, 2002). And while large group convocations may be an efficient way for leaders to present an initial case for change, small group dialogues are more effective in engaging people in the decision-making process. During these conversations leaders should honor the concerns and objections that are presented and be willing to compromise if the modification does not violate the fundamental principles of the initiative. But it is also legitimate for leaders to present evidence and arguments that are intended to convert those who resist the initiative. Howard Gardner's (2006) insights on how to change someone's mind offer helpful advice on this topic (see sidebar #2).

If, however, all attempts to persuade educators to do the right work fails to persuade them to do it, leaders should exercise their authority to *require* that the work be done. A "*professional*" is someone with expertise in a specialized field, an individual who has not only pursued advanced training to enter the field, but who is also expected to remain current in its evolving knowledge base. A professional does not have the autonomy to ignore what is regarded as best practice in the field. We would have contempt for a

doctor who continued to use a razor blade to perform radial keratotomy on a patient's eye rather than use the much more effective, pain-free process of lasek surgery. We would not tolerate an attorney who continued to cite arguments from case law that had been overturned by higher courts. We would not support the notion that a United Airlines pilot should have the right to fly a propeller plane rather than a jet because he has an affinity for propellers. Leaders within a profession have every right to expect people to seek and implement the best practice in their field.

Much is required of school leaders if they are to build the capacity of people throughout the organization to help more students learn at higher levels. They must encourage people throughout the organization to examine and articulate their assumptions. They must help build shared knowledge and encourage learning by doing. They must create new experiences for people that call upon them to act in new ways. They must build continuous improvement processes into the routine practices of each school. They must demonstrate fierce resolve and consistent commitment to a sustained direction over an extended period of time. And, very significantly, they must be emphatically assertive when necessary and use the power of their position to get people to act in ways that are aligned with the mission of higher levels of learning for all.

Sidebar #1: Key steps in Leading a Change Process

The old adage asserts that managers do things right while leaders do the right things. What are some of the "right things" that leaders do when initiating a substantive change process?
1. Remember the Law of the Few – the ability of a small close-knit group to champion an idea or proposal until it reaches a "tipping point" and spreads throughout the organization (Gladwell, 2002). Create a guiding coalition to assist in building consensus, reaching a tipping point, and implementing the change process.
2. Engage staff in examining the current reality – an honest assessment of the brutal facts regarding student achievement and the existing practices within their schools.

3. Provide evidence of the benefits of the proposed initiative – the supporting research base, examples from successful schools, endorsements of professional organizations – and ask staff to examine the evidence with you.

4.Create a forum for small-group dialogues to hear the concerns and questions of staff.

5. Engage in active listening. Seek to understand rather than be understood. Solicit ideas from staff regarding how the initiative might be modified in order to be more effective and be willing to compromise while remaining true to the core principles of the initiative.

6. Create pilot programs to test the initiative and learn by doing.

7. Use all of Gardner's research-based strategies on persuasion and seek to find common ground. Create a critical mass for moving forward rather than waiting for unanimity as a basis for action.

8. Encourage site-based autonomy in the details of implementation while remaining tight on the core principles of the initiative.

9. Protect schools from competing initiatives and help create a list of things schools can "stop doing" in order to devote more time to the priority.

10. Provide resources –time, materials, training – to support the implementation effort.

11. Align all district policies, practices, and procedures with the core principles of the initiative.

12. Create a precise common language regarding key concepts of the initiative.

13. Provide clear standards for assessing all aspects of the work to be completed and ensure that people throughout the organization know how to apply those standards to their efforts.

14. Communicate the significance of the initiative by creating processes to monitor its progress.

15. Celebrate small wins as the initiative moves forward.

16. Celebrate failed attempts for the insights that were gained.

17. Create systems to embed the initiative into the routine practices of the school.

18. Tell stories that appeal to both the head and the heart - stories that capture the efforts of people throughout the organization and describe the impact it is having on the lives of students.

19. Ensure that leaders throughout the organization are speaking with one voice on what the district is "tight" about.

20. Confront those who violate what you have proclaimed must be tight.

Sidebar #2

Effective leaders will encourage rather than ignore or squash disagreement because they recognize that when managed well, disagreements provide an opportunity to draw out assumptions, build shared knowledge, clarify priorities, and find common ground. They will recognize there will be more than one way to solve any given problem and will be open to exploring alternative strategies or timelines for implementation. On the other hand, they will hold firm to the core principle that professionals have an obligation to seek out and implement the best practices for achieving the purpose and priorities of the school and district. Toward that end, they will be willing to utilize every strategy that Howard Gardner has identified for changing someone's mind as presented below.

1.   Reasoning and rationale thinking. "Doesn't it make sense that we can accomplish more by working together collaboratively rather than in isolation, by checking for student understanding through formative assessments rather than waiting for the results of summative assessments, by creating timely school-wide systematic interventions when students experience difficulty rather than expecting each teacher to try to figure out how to respond?"

2.   Research. "I have shared the research with you that supports this initiative. I found it very compelling. Do you interpret it another way? Do you have any research refuting it we could look at together?"

3.   Resonance. "I know you believe in equity and fairness. Wouldn't it be more equitable and fair if we could assure students they would have access to the same guaranteed curriculum no matter who their teacher is, that their work would be assessed according to the same criteria, that we have a consistent way of responding when they struggle to understand?"

4.   Representational Re-description. "I have presented you with the data regarding the fact that large numbers of our students are not being successful. But let me put those numbers in human terms. Let me tell you some stories of the impact their failure is having on their lives."

5.   Rewards and Resources. "I acknowledge this will be difficult. That is why I ask your help in identifying the resources you will need to be successful – time, training, materials support, etc.. Let's work together to identify them and I pledge I will do everything in my power to make them available."

6.   Real-World Events. "I understand you have misgivings and predict negative consequences if we implement this initiative. But let's visit some schools and districts that have done it successfully. You will hear the enthusiasm of the teachers as they explain how they and their students have benefited."

7.   Require. "I understand you remain unconvinced, but this is the direction in which we are going, and this is what you must do to help us get us there. My hope is, as you work through the process it will be a positive experience, and you will come to have a more positive disposition toward it."

Effective leaders must recognize that school improvement cannot wait for everyone in the organization to have a favorable attitude toward the proposed change. There is abundant evidence in the fields of psychology, organizational development, and education that changes in attitudes follow rather than precede changes in behavior. When work is designed to require people to *act* in new ways, the possibility of new experiences are created for them. If those new experiences are positive, the can lead to new attitudes and assumptions over time.

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