Tool 1b: Team Development Strategies

Purpose
Research suggests that teams develop and grow over time as they regularly build in opportunities to examine and clarify their beliefs, norms, and practices. Teams that work at higher levels of effectiveness cultivate abilities to self-monitor, self-reflect, and self-modify. These ways of working are particularly important when engaging in conversations about equity. Without these abilities, teams risk repeating nonproductive patterns that reproduce inequities. The primary goal of team development is to strengthen staff's individual and collective capacities to make improvements that benefit all students' learning.

Tool 1b: Team Development Strategies is an optional guidance tool and includes the following strategies to enhance team development:

- **Developing Working Agreements** *– Working agreements describe the patterns of behavior an SBLT believe will allow the team to effectively collaborate and have efficient meetings. Once established, the agreements serve as a point of reference for the team. Working agreements may be modified over time to meet the needs of the group and to adapt to changed conditions. Working agreements set the conditions that allow equity focused conversations to happen.*
- **Group Member Capabilities** *– Capabilities define what group members are able to do in groups. This includes four of the most critical collaborative actions that individual members can intentionally practice.*
- **The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work** *– The "Seven Norms of Collaborative Work" are used to define how teams will do the work. The "Seven Norms of Collaborative Work" provide conditions that ensure that group members can respond to each other and push thinking in equity conversations.*

When to Use
The three strategies described within this tool are used at different times:

- **Developing Working Agreements** *– SBLTs can develop working agreements at the start of each school year. These agreements should be posted for reference and may be revisited periodically to ensure that members are adhering to them throughout the year. For example, the working agreements may be revisited when beginning an equity conversation.*
- **Group Member Capabilities** *– The "Group Member Capabilities" reading can prompt initial thinking about teaming practices or serve as a reference for more advanced refinements of thinking and action. It can be used at any time in group development.*
- **The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work** *– The Seven Norms description and associated Norm Inventories can be used at any phase of team development. Focused work on strategies work best after some self-assessment has occurred.*

How to Use
Below are guidelines for how to use each of the three strategies described within this tool.

Developing Working Agreements *- Each SBLT member individually compiles his or her list of agreements – optimally 5 to 7 agreements stated in the positive (*what we will do*). Then, the team dialogues about the agreements and decides upon a workable set. Working agreements are posted and referenced each meeting.*

Example:
- *Begin and end the meeting on time.*
- *Be fully attentive during the meeting (set aside technology and other distractions from attention).*
- *Listen actively - seek to understand the speaker's meaning and intention.*
- *"Share the air" - seek balanced participation of all group members*
- *Lean into discomfort - have courageous conversations about difficult matters.*
- *Presume that others are trying their best.*

Group Member Capabilities - *Download the handout "[Group-Member Capabilities](#)."*
Consider the following protocol as a way for exploring the handout:
- *Organize team members into groups of four.*
- *Have each person read the introductory section together.*
- *Jigsaw the article's four capabilities, assigning one to each person in the group of four.*
- *Ask each person to read their section and prepare a one-minute summary of the assigned capability reading and examples of the capability.*
- *Take turns sharing the learning and examples, offering opportunities to explore the ideas and determine possible applications for the team.*

The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work - *Download the handout "[The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work](#)."*
- *Select the appropriate inventory for self-rating on the Seven Norms:*
  - a) [Norms Inventory: Rating Perceptions of Myself](#)
  - b) [Personal Seven Norms Assessment](#)
  - c) [Norms Inventory: Rating Our Perceptions of Our Group](#)
  - d) [Group Seven Norms Assessment](#)
- *Have team members rate the Seven Norms for developing personal goals (using inventories a or b) or for determining the team's goals (using inventories c or d).*
- *Based on the results of the self-rating inventories, define the norm that will the group may target for their development. Download the appropriate reading on the selected Norm:*
  - o [Pausing](#)
  - o [Paraphrasing](#)
  - o [Posing questions](#)
  - o [Putting ideas on the table](#)
  - o [Providing data](#)
  - o [Paying attention to self and others](#)
  - o [Presuming positive intentions](#)
- *Select the norm for further study and focus. As an individual or team, read the targeted handout to explore the ideas associated with the focus norm.*
- *Pose questions to clarify meanings and decide on actions that will lead to the norm being practiced and how the group will measure the use of the norm.*

Mandatory Versus Flexible: SBLT Toolkit

Mandatory	Flexible
None	*Use of this guidance tool is optional*