

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Professional Learning Community Handbook

What is a Professional Learning Community (PLC)?

- A process of how do you collectively determine the type of school you want it to be; how are you going to work together to get that type of school.
- Focuses your organization on learning.
- [6 Characteristics of a PLC](#)

A Focus on Learning

- This is the fundamental focus
- What should be happening to see student learning? Collaborative learning; absolute clarity regarding the essential knowledge, skill, and dispositions all students must acquire.
- Processes in place to monitor the students learning along the way.
- Interventions for students that are struggling.
- Enrichment for proficient students.
- Use assessment data to diagnose where students are doing well and where they need help.
- Teachers use data to conform and improve their practice.
- Test is no longer the end of learning; it would be the beginning.
- Data-driven

*Data should be reviewed in PLCs to ensure schools are meeting desired goals and focusing on learning. Please see the link below for the Data Team Manual.

* [Data Team Manual](#)

4 Fundamental Questions

- Embed learning with the following questions;
 - What do we want all students to learn?

- How will we know if they have learned it?
- How will we respond when they do not learn it?
- How will we respond when students already know it?

- What do we want all students to learn?
 - Shared knowledge on all resources that have been designed and answer that question; (state standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, and assessment frameworks) ask for a wish list of skills they want when students begin their grade.
 - Clarify the most essential skills, concepts, and dispositions. Want students to learn and create a list.
 - [MAAP Power Standards](#)

- How will we know if they learned?
 - Assessments are an important tool to monitor student progress.
 - Benchmark assessments (district) look at each problem and determine misconceptions of wrong answers
 - Formative assessments are used to identify students who need additional help; also, identify effective teaching strategies.
 - [Understanding the Common Formative Assessment Process](#)

- How will we respond when student do not learn?
 - Grade reports and progress reports
 - [Determining Interventions by Classifying Student Errors](#)
 - Mandatory tutoring (per grading term)
 - Response to student failing is a DIRECTIVE (Tutorial attendance will not be optional)
 - Implement and refer to a pyramid of interventions for next steps regarding the tier process.
 - The schedule is flexible; a teacher may take them off the pyramid, if students improve.
 - Systematic, school-wide, and timely' every 3 weeks monitor and intervene.

- [MDE Intervention Services](#)
- How will we respond when students already show mastery?
 - Enrichment is just as important as remediation.
 - Add more electives.

Cultural shifts

- PLCs will ensure all students learning are the focus through a systematic, collaborative approach to data analysis and implementation of proven research based instructional practices.
- Be diagnostic.
- Focus on individuals and their learning by data.
- Stop placing blame on students.

Reflections

- Staff agrees to take responsibility that every student learns.
- Empower individuals who are conducting the PLCs.
- Go the extra mile.

Culture of Collaboration

- Teams and collaboration are key to PLCs
- Working together interdependently is key.
- The creation of a team will be the foundation of implementing PLCs.
 - Team- a group of people who are working interdependently to achieve a common goal for which they are mutually accountable.
- Collaboration is the action (work) that must be done by the team to ensure effectiveness to gain results.
 - Collaboration; a systematic process in which the adults in our building engage in constant collective inquiry and action research that's designed to ultimately impact their practice in order to get better results.

Teams at Work

- Steps to Collaboration
 - Embed- collaboration into the routine practices of the school.
 - Assign everyone to a team and have a focus on learning.
 - Create protected time to collaborate on a weekly basis.
 - Bank minutes system
 - Time must be made during school day.
 - Use learning questions to engage in collective inquiry.
 - Generates commitment
 - Use question that are the 4 essential in program 2
 - Monitor the work of collaborative teams through their products.
 - Essential outcomes
 - Common assessments
 - SMART goals
 - SMART
 - Questions to consider
 - What is a smart goal?
 - Why do we need a smart goal?
 - What are some examples of smart goals?
 - Can you recommend tools, templates, or processes to assist in writing smart goals?
 - When must I complete and submit a smart goal?
 - What criteria can we use to assess the quality of our smart goals?
 - [CSD PLC Team Planning Guide](#)

Cultural Shift

- Reflection is the key to growth.

- Ask yourself; what can I do better?
- Be open and honest with your responses.

A Focus on Results

- Implement a collective responsibility for results.
- Data analysis is mandatory.
 - Constantly gather data to conform and improve teaching.
 - Common and classroom assessments
- Diagnose and improve student learning.
- Transform data from numbers into students.
 - The data asks teachers to collaborate and achieve learning for all students.
- Provide alternative ways for students to receive and master the information.
 - Reteach and relearn.
 - [5-Step Procedure for How to Intervene or Reteach](#)
 - [15 Ways to Vary Instruction](#)

Goals for PLC

- Be clear about primary purpose
 - Focus on learning
 - Create a culture of collaboration
 - Focus on results by gathering and seeking evidence of effectiveness as it applies to learning.
 - Data informs your practice as it measures the effectiveness of instruction.
 - [Types of PLCs](#)
- Dispense leadership throughout the school.
 - Effective instructional leadership is the key to promote growth in student learning.
 - Build capacity of the staff through delegation of leadership responsibilities.
- Employ a system of reciprocal accountability

- Place others in a situation to lead and give them feedback.
- Ask questions
- Create a school culture that is simultaneously loose and tight.
 - Meaning I am tight about formative assessments but I am loose about how you may teach.

Learning by Doing

- Help individuals learn from their work through coaching cycle and reflection.
- Get excited teachers involved.
- Lighten your workload by building the capacity of instructional staff.

PLC Guidelines

[The PLC Guidebook](#)

Required documentation for EVERY PLC meeting.

- Three anchors from each class.
 - The anchors are measured against the standard being taught.
 - Regarding the standard, be able to determine what you want students to know and what they are able to do.
 - The standard and rubric defines if the work is;
 - Below average
 - Average (middle of pack work)
 - Above Average
- Be able to discuss the trends of each class and individual students.
- You must have information (data) to support your statements.
 - Statements without data are strong opinions.
- Have your plan of action for students with misconceptions and students that are on track.
 - This is a plan stating next steps with students that have misconceptions, etc.
 - Not every plan should be the same.

- Every class represents a different type of learning issue
- [Guiding Principles for PLCs](#)

PLC Sources *Sources will be updated frequently

[3 Qualities of High Performance Teacher Teams](#)

[5 Mistakes of the Modern Teacher](#)

[Differentiation video...TED](#)

[Effects of Flipped Learning](#)

[Flipped Classroom Cyberman](#)

[Flipped Classroom...Implementing](#)

[Flipped Classroom...Parents and students enjoy](#)

[Flipped Learning Certification](#)

[Flipped Learning..Pre Learning](#)

[Grading Formative and Summative assessments](#)

[Grading Practices](#)

[Seamless Assessment](#)

[Why Teacher Assignments Matter](#)

[Fuzzy math](#)

[I want to be a teacher](#)

[Types of PLCs](#)