

AGENDA

- Define PLC and identify characteristics
- Review and discuss current research on PLCs
- Identify and discuss benefits of PLCs
- Define administrators' roles in the PLC process
- Create a plan for implementing PLCs

BENEFITS OF PLCS

Consistent and effective use of PLCS can

- Improve communication skills
- Provide teachers with other viewpoints and perspectives
- Promote educational risk-taking
- Build interpersonal trust
- Improve conflict-resolution skills
- Streamline student learning
- Increase student achievement
- Provide support in a sometimes isolating profession
- Build excitement and passion about teaching and learning



PLANNING QUESTIONS

How does it make sense to organize teachers into teams at your school? By grade level, content area, or department (Approach #1)? Or, by students taught (Approach #2)?

ADVICE:

- Have staff plan across school teams.
- Define teams by students taught or content covered. Ideally, staff will have time throughout the year to work with both horizontal and vertical teams (e.g., weekly in grade-level teams, once a month work by department). Staff can then discuss students in common and their instructional approaches.
- Consider teams as student advisors, responsible for all aspects of the students' experience at your school.

Which staff members do not "fit" into teams?

ADVICE:

- Group "singleton" teachers (one teacher of any given grade/subject, like one chorus teacher or one French teacher) with the team with whom they share common planning time, the team with whom they share students, or relevant subject areas (e.g., all world language teachers).
- Singleton teachers can also be connected across schools either in person or with technology (e.g. all middle school Spanish teachers in the district).



From The New Jersey
Department of
Education

PLANNING QUESTIONS

What common time do you have now, and is that time flexible? Do your teachers participate in any other common meetings? If so, how was time found for those meetings?

ADVICE:

- Assess your current meetings schedule and the effectiveness of those meetings honestly.
- Prioritize collaborative team meetings over other meetings/activities. This may mean stopping other activities or changing the way you have been operating.
 - Some schools have re-purposed their faculty meeting time by eliminating agenda items that can be handled through email.
 - Some schools have given up certain faculty activities to make time for team meetings.

What does your collective bargaining agreement say about time and your school day? What are the parameters you will need to work within related to time?

ADVICE:

- Clarify your understanding of where you do or do not have flexibility.
- Look for windows of time within and outside of your school day to facilitate time for teams.

WHAT MAKES UP AN EFFECTIVE PLC?

1. PLCs are collaborative, and require groups of teachers and administrators working together.
2. PLCs are reflective, requiring participants to engage in the inquiry process.
3. PLC participants demonstrate shared values and vision in regards to student learning that align with the school's mission.
4. PLCs promote shared and collective leadership where both teachers and administrators share leadership roles.
5. Conclusions drawn from PLCs are shared with the larger community (school district).
6. PLCs are designed to improve teaching methods AND student learning; PLC discussions should further this goal.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM PLCs ARE SHARED WITH THE LARGER COMMUNITY (SCHOOL DISTRICT).

- Will all information/data gleaned from PLCs be shared with the larger community? If not, what information “makes the cut”?
- How will this information be distributed (ex: method, contact person, etcetera)?



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