



Implementing Professional Learning Communities

DATAG - March 2019



Who's Here?

- Teachers
- Principals/Asst. Principals
- DDCs
- District Administrators
- BOCES/RIC
- Who did I forget?



Presentation Goals

1. Connect the big ideas of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process with the beliefs and practices within a school/district.
2. Provide some tools/resources for people to take back to begin discussions about implementing these ideas in their school/district.

What is a Professional Learning Community?



This is a term we have all heard and used while working in our schools and districts.

Share with us your definition:

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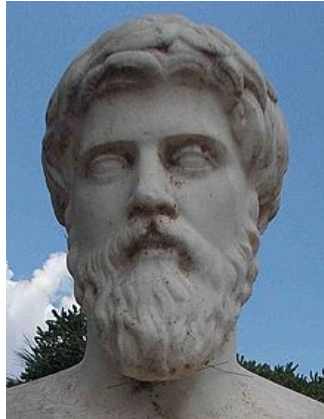
Definition of a PLC



A Professional Learning Community "is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve."

-DuFour, DuFour, Eaker & Many, *Learning by Doing* (2010) p. 11

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"The mind is not a vessel that needs filling, but rather wood that needs igniting." - Plutarch

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BIG PICTURE OF THE PLC

3 BIG IDEAS

**FOCUS ON
LEARNING**

**COLLABORATIVE
WORK**

**RESULTS
DRIVEN**

6 CHARACTERISTICS

Shared Mission, vision & values
on learning

Results Orientation

Collaborative Culture focused
on learning

Collective Inquiry into best
practices.

Learning by Doing: Action
Orientation

Commitment to continuous
improvement

4 QUESTIONS

What do we want students to learn?

How do we know they learned it?

What do we do if they didn't learn it?

What do we do if they already know it?

Three Big Ideas of the PLC Model

1. Focus on Learning rather than Teaching
2. Work collaboratively on matters related to learning.
3. Team members hold themselves accountable for the kind of results that fuel improvement.

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Half-Life of Facts: Everything We Know Has an Expiration Date

"Knowledge in most fields evolves systematically and predictably, and this evolution unfolds in a fascinating way that can have a powerful impact on our lives."

Arbesman, S. *The Half Life of Facts: Everything We Know Has An Expiration Date* (2012) p. 31

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Big Idea 1: Focus on Learning rather than teaching

10 Principles of Learning

1. Most children enter school with a growth mindset.
2. Learning is continuous
3. Without the opportunity to correct, learning is likely to stop
4. We improve with multiple attempts
5. Effort and proper preparation are the main determinants of success.
6. The brain is chunking and searching for connections as we learn
7. We are natural problem solvers and explorers
8. People are wired differently with different experiences
9. We work longer and harder when we are internally motivated
10. We learn best in a positive environment

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Big Idea #2: Work Collaboratively on matters related to learning

- ❖ What do we collaborate about?
 - 4 Questions of the PLC
 - What do we want students to know?
 - How do we know when they know it?
 - What do we do when they don't know it?
 - What learning extensions do we provide to students who do get it?
- ❖ Collaboration vs. Co"blab"oration
 - What's going on in your department/team meetings?

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Big Idea #3: Team Members hold themselves accountable for the kind of results that fuel improvement

Can we make our parents this promise?

"No matter which teacher your child has at our school, your child will receive the highest quality instruction, the best assessment practices, and extra time and support to learn at high levels."

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Big Idea #3: Team Members hold themselves accountable for the kind of results that fuel improvement

Formula for improving team building & accountability:

- Increased values of trust
- Building a culture of collaboration and **break down silos.**
- "We aren't comparing or competing against each other, we are working together to help our students."



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Six Characteristics of the PLC Model

1. Shared Mission centered with a focus on learning.
2. Collaborative Culture with a focus on learning for all.
3. Collective Inquiry into best practice and current reality
4. Active Orientation: Learning by Doing
5. Commitment to continuous improvement
6. Focus on Results

See Handout

We are Aiming Higher!



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Four Critical Questions of a PLC

- 1 What knowledge, skills, and dispositions should every student acquire as a result of this unit, this course, or this grade level?
- 2 How will we know when each student has acquired the essential knowledge and skills?
- 3 How will we respond when some students do not learn?
- 4 How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?

Question #1: What do we want students to learn?

We want all of our children to be exposed to the same essential rigorous "guaranteed & viable curriculum."

Curriculum Maps are not something that just sit on a shelf
- they are an important tool in the PLC process.

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Question #1: What do we want students to learn?

Professional learning teams embrace accountability and see mastery of content and skills as their personal responsibility:

- Teams set annual measurable goals that they hold themselves accountable to
- They redesign the way they define they define their curriculum
- They systematically track progress in their classrooms

Keep

Discard

Create

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Question #2: How will we know they learned it?

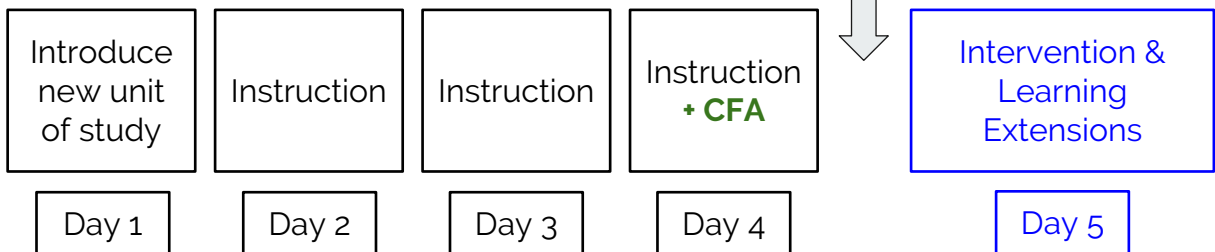
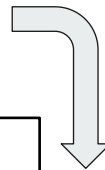
Common Formative Assessments:

- Team Developed
- Frequent

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CFA Implementation Model (4 + 1 Example)

Work collaboratively as a team to review the data from the CFA and have different interventions designed to meet student needs



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Question #3: What do we do when students don't learn?

How to answer this Third Critical Question:

- Are students assured extra time and support for learning?
- Is our focus prompt intervention rather than sluggish remediation?
- Is our response timely and directive rather than invitational?
- Is our response systematic?

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Question #4: What do we do when students already know it?

How do we provide learning extensions for our students?

- This is **not** offering AP/IB or Honors type classes!
- What are we are talking about:
 - Enrichment activities
 - Learning extensions - how do we "honor the learning" the students have already accomplished?

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Closing Words - The Engine of Hope

- What we are doing here is important.
- You can do this!
- I'm not going to give up on you - even if you give up on yourself

Say it.

Model it.

Organize for it.

Protect it.

Reward it.

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Contact Information



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