

## PLC FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

### MODULE 3 – Building Effective PLC Teams

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

1. How are effective teams developed within a PLC?
2. What are the qualities of effective teams?
3. How do we know if our team is effective?

#### MODULE OUTCOMES:

1. Identify the characteristics of high functioning and effective teams
2. Describe the stages of team development
3. Assess the use of goals in a PLC
4. Conduct effective meetings (agendas/roles/facilitation)
5. Communicate the work of PLCs across school/district
6. Use resources and tools that support collaborative inquiry, adult learning, and problem solving
7. Assess the work of your team and determine next steps

#### PLC NORMS:

- Active Listening
- Recognize that everyone is a learner
- Check your assumptions
- Trust the process
- Respect all voices
- Start and end on time

#### HOW WE WORK TOGETHER:

- We use **norms** to create safe spaces for working together
- We make use of **protocols** to structure discussions and keep the focus on student and teacher work as a means to improving teaching and learning
- We **model** tools and practices for PLC implementation, group activities to promote learning from each other, gradual release of responsibility as we go through the work, and sharing of our learning through presentations and peer critique

Time	Agenda Item	Framing of Activity	Materials	Rationale for Activity	Facilitator
9:00	Welcome, Agenda, & Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome, frame the day, &amp; review agenda</li> <li>▪ Overview outcomes &amp; essential questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agendas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connect and structure the day</li> </ul>	
9:10	Norms & Ground Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitate “Peeves and Traits” Protocol. Ask group members to share their peeves and traits.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ask the group how they can keep this new information in mind going forward.</li> <li>○ Overview the established Team Norms from last meeting and add any necessary Norms given the conversation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Assign a “Norm Checker”. Review the importance of the “Norm Checker”.</li> <li>▪ Also assign a “Note Taker” and “Time Keeper”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peeves &amp; Traits protocol</li> <li>▪ Norms from last meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reminder of the critical importance of creating and honoring norms.</li> <li>▪ This Module gets into the bulk of teamwork and the team will now begin using more processes and protocols for working together.</li> </ul>	
9:35	Connections Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explain how this day is all about effective teams and that a major part of teams is building trust. The Connections Activity is an activity that teams may want to use consistently in their work.</li> <li>▪ Facilitate “Connections”.</li> <li>▪ Debrief the activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connections activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Connections activity is a great way to open meetings and to hear from each person.</li> </ul>	
10:00	Case Study and Characteristics of Effective Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remind the group that today is all about creating teams.</li> <li>▪ Distribute the Case Study, “Organizing for Success: What Does an Effective Team Look Like” and have participants read silently.</li> <li>▪ If this is an illustration of an effective team, what is an effective team NOT?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overview “What an effective team is not?”</li> <li>○ Ask if any of these characteristics are familiar?</li> <li>○ Will any characteristics be particularly challenging to overcome?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Ask the group to reflect on the Case Study and consider the actual characteristics of effective teams.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Record answers and pull out any similarities of the suggestions to the “Characteristics of an Effective Team”.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Study: “Organizing for Success”</li> <li>▪ Handout: “What an effective team is not”</li> <li>▪ Handout: “Characteristics of an Effective Team”</li> <li>▪ Chart paper and marker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating effective teams that are committed to improving student, team and school performance is a complex undertaking.</li> <li>▪ Understanding what creates effective teams will help make the PLCs successful.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distribute the “Characteristics of an Effective Team” and have everyone look it over.</li> <li>○ Highlight examples that the group is already using. For instance, the group has been working with norms since the beginning.</li> </ul>			
<b>11:00</b>	Diving into Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This next section will look at how effective teams develop a culture of trust. A high functioning and trusting team allows its members to take risks.</li> <li>▪ Building trust requires time. Once norms are created, the team needs to work together on how to honor them. PLC time has to consistently provide opportunities for staff to work collaboratively without disruption by something ‘more urgent’. Attention needs to be purposefully directed to discourse on valuing differences in culture, experience, and expertise that each brings to the school environment.</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the “Compass Points” activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compass Points activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A culture of trust allows members to look at their practice openly rather than defensively.</li> <li>▪ Schools that have strong relational trust deliberately create the professional learning community structures, conditions, and culture that promote the building of strong trust among professionals.</li> </ul>	
<b>11:30</b>	<b>STRETCH BREAK</b>				
<b>11:40</b>	Diving into Purpose – “Continuum Dialogue”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This next section looks into purpose.</li> <li>▪ Explain that in order to begin looking into shared purpose, the group will continue building trust while gaining a common understanding of where each member is coming from.</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the “Continuum Dialogue” activity.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overview the activity Norms.</li> <li>○ Go through activity for at least 5 statements and add more if you wish.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Facilitate a discussion on what group members learned. Ask what they learned about one another and themselves. Did anyone hear any new insights they had not previously considered? What new thoughts do they have for working with one another?</li> <li>▪ Also debrief on process. What worked in this protocol? What could be improved for next time? What are some thoughts on protocols in general now that several have been attempted?</li> <li>▪ Instruct the group that now that they have a deeper understanding of each individual that we will now consider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Continuum Dialogue” activity</li> <li>▪ Vision &amp; Mission statements from previous meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effective teams have a clearly defined purpose that guides their work and specific, measurable goals that they achieve. Most productive teams have a purpose or mission that they are deeply committed to. All actions and decisions must make sense relative to this purpose.</li> <li>▪ The work of all PLCs in schools is focused on teaching and learning. Teams who find themselves working on issues which are a long way from what happens in the classroom would be</li> </ul>	

		<p>why we are a team in the first place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Why are we a team?”</li> <li>○ “What is our purpose?”</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider your previous Vision and Mission statements, or the Vision and Mission statement developed by your school’s Leadership Team. Ask the group to consider how their discussed purposes align to those visions. If needed, revise the individual group’s vision and mission.</li> </ul>		<p>well advised to ask themselves, “How is what we do in our work together positively impacting teaching and learning? What is our evidence? ”</p> <p>This question can serve as a reflective benchmark throughout a team’s work together and should be revisited frequently.</p>	
<p><b>12:40</b> <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p>					
<p><b>1:25</b></p>	<p>Diving into Accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inform the group that you are now going to begin to consider how your team will actually work together. With purpose established, the group will be able to create specific, measurable goals and will eventually need to hold one another and the team accountable for attaining those goals.</li> <li>▪ Review the structures that the team already has in place for accountability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Norms have been established and the team has begun to use a variety of roles</li> <li>○ The team has also begun to think about goals for teamwork and may have created an action plan to look at culture.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ For the rest of the time you will revisit Norms, establish system for roles, and brainstorm systems for communication.</li> <li>▪ Explain that a key logistical point and also a characteristic of effective teams is the use of Agendas. It may seem silly to the group to worry about so much, but agendas can effectively drive the work and structure discourse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ask the group what they think is most important for agendas. Keep a list of traits.</li> <li>○ Show some of the sample agendas.</li> <li>○ Agree on an agenda format that will be used each time.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Also revisit the importance of PLC roles and establishing a role rotation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sample agendas</li> <li>▪ Chart paper &amp; markers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This final section gives the group an opportunity to formalize norms and structures to ensure the functioning of the team.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finally, lead the group in a brainstorming session of how best to communicate with one another and also how best to communicate to the whole school community.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consider options such as Google Drive, a wiki, or list serv.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<b>2:10</b>	Team Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remind the team that all teams go through stages of development. Share the “Stages of Team Development” handout.</li> <li>▪ Overview “Assessing the Team’s Quality of Work”.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Individually, participants should consider the indicators on the handout.</li> <li>○ Ask participants to share where they think the PLC is for the indicators.</li> <li>○ Discuss some practical goals for the group that will help develop effective PLC practice.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Handout: “Stages of Team Development”</li> <li>▪ Handout: “Assessing the Team’s Quality of Work”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One of the facets of PLC is in assessing progress in how the team is functioning, a protocol which should be addressed at regular times in the team’s calendar.</li> </ul>	
<b>2:40</b>	Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review the outcomes for the day and make sure that each was achieved.</li> <li>▪ Collectively set the agenda for the next meeting. If you will be implementing Module 4, share a preliminary outline and see if anything else needs to be addressed. Determine any necessary Next Steps between now and then.</li> <li>▪ Ask the “Norm Checker” to report on the norms for the group. Ask if anyone has any reflections or feedback as related to the norms.</li> </ul>		We use these end of the day reflections to inform our work and to help us look at how Module 4 – Part I will best fit participants’ needs	