

Toppenish

Professional Learning Communities Guiding Principles



Work in progress 2-08

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) foster mutual cooperation, common understanding, shared accountability, and effective professional growth. When staff members work together to analyze data, adjust instruction, and assimilate group ideas for maximized learning, they build on each other's strengths and become more reflective about their practice. Professionals are then more apt to deprivatize what is too often practice in isolation. When the collective expertise is tapped, everyone becomes better at what they do. There are a variety of successful collaboration models (Dufour and Russo), and each model has a personalized adaptation for grade level, subject area, school district networks and local consortium meetings. This protocol was created from research and best practices for use as a tool to measure the level of effectiveness of the Professional Learning Community and ensuring all students receive the individual support they need to reach/exceed the common standards.

Transparent and Public Practice	Reflective Dialogue and Feedback	Collaboration and Teamwork	Collective Focus on Student Learning	Shared Beliefs/Norms and Core Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development includes investigation of own and each other's practice. • Professional development is based on best practices and has direct application to improving practice and increasing learning. • Professional development is grounded in participant's questions about their work. • The community shares clear learning targets and goals for their learning drawn from each student's needs. • The community openly shares about progress, findings, success and areas for growth. • Resources from best practices are solicited and utilized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings regularly include data driven discussions about teaching and learning. • Professional discourse is based on evidence of student learning and professional research. • Opportunities for professional discourse are frequent, structured, consistent, and sustained during meetings. • Continuous improvement in teaching and learning is fostered through reflection on practice data and adjustments for learning. • Professional development is identified by staff through surveys about their needs for learning. • Professional development is structured and is embedded by mentoring and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A climate of relationships, trust, encouragement are the foundation for new learning. • Peer coaching skills and practices develop safe environment for collegial conversations. • Mentorship is used to support instructional growth. • Peer observations are used to study and to develop exemplary and emerging practices. • Collegial research (e.g. collaborative action research) is included in professional development. • Distributive leadership is shared among all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development centered on individual student learning needs. • The community shares belief about their ability to effect student success. • The community is valued as the fundamental unit of change, focusing on individual learning. • Student work is a primary source for adjusting instruction and gauging progress in learning. • The community adapts to and accommodates new ideas and practices validated by action research. • Interventions are timely and based on student work and assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community shares a structured collective responsibility for student learning. • Instructional decisions about professional development is democratic, inclusive, and binding. • The community shares strong commitment to learn and improve. • Risk-taking and innovation are supported with opportunities and aligned resources. • Professional inquiry is informed by what is currently known about teaching and learning. • Practice, planning and resource allocation integrate professional development needs.

