





Learning by Doing

A Handbook for Professional Learning
Communities at Work



Chapters 1 & 2 Book Study
July 14, 2020



PLC Chairs

Kinder - Lindsay Anton

1st - Amanda Goodavish

2nd - Lindsey Goyak

3rd - Candace Nelson

4th - Julie Clarke-Butcher

5th - Jennifer Conner

MS - Benjamin Quinones

SPED - Cindy Sorensen

Admin Team- Cesar Tiu, Eric Threeton, Meagan Hoffmann, Sue Owens, Manuel Herrera

Role of the PLC Chair

The PLC chair is charged with organizing and leading the PLC grade level weekly meetings to follow the best practices for professional learning communities, around subject standards.

Chairs will participate in a book study beginning in July, and will be part of our PLC cadre that helps envision and develop roll out.

Book Study Dates

- **Chapters 1 & 2**
 - Tuesday, July 14th @8am - 10:30am - Via Zoom
- **Chapters 3 & 4**
 - Tuesday, July 28th @8am - 10:30am - Location TBD
- **Chapter 5 & 6**
 - Week of August 3rd - Location TBD
- **Chapters 7 - 10 TBD**

Book Format

7 Parts in each Chapter:

Part 1 - The Case Study

Part 2 - Here's How

Part 3 - Here's Why

Part 4 - Assessing Your Place on the PLC Journey

Part 5 - Tips for Moving Forward

Part 6 - Questions to Guide the Work of Your PLC

Part 7- Dangerous Detours and Seductive Shortcuts

Pre-Discussion Question

- The term **PLC** has become a very popular term among educators that seems to have many meanings. It is actually in danger of losing all meaning. Now that you've read chapters 1 and 2, has your definition of a PLC changed? How would you define a Professional Learning Community (PLC)? <https://padlet.com/manuelherrera1/6ziyofah83402mau>
- Based on PLCs we had in the past at Lone Mountain, how do you envision them being different this upcoming year?
<https://padlet.com/manuelherrera1/Bookmarks>

Chapter 1: A Guide to Action for PLCs at Work

What a PLC is NOT:

- Not a book club
- Not a program
- Can't be purchased
- Not a meeting

What is a PLC?

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. Requires educators to ACT on the new information.

3 Big Ideas That Drive the Work of a PLC

1. **Focus on Learning**
2. **Collaborative Culture and Collective Responsibility**
3. **Results Orientation**

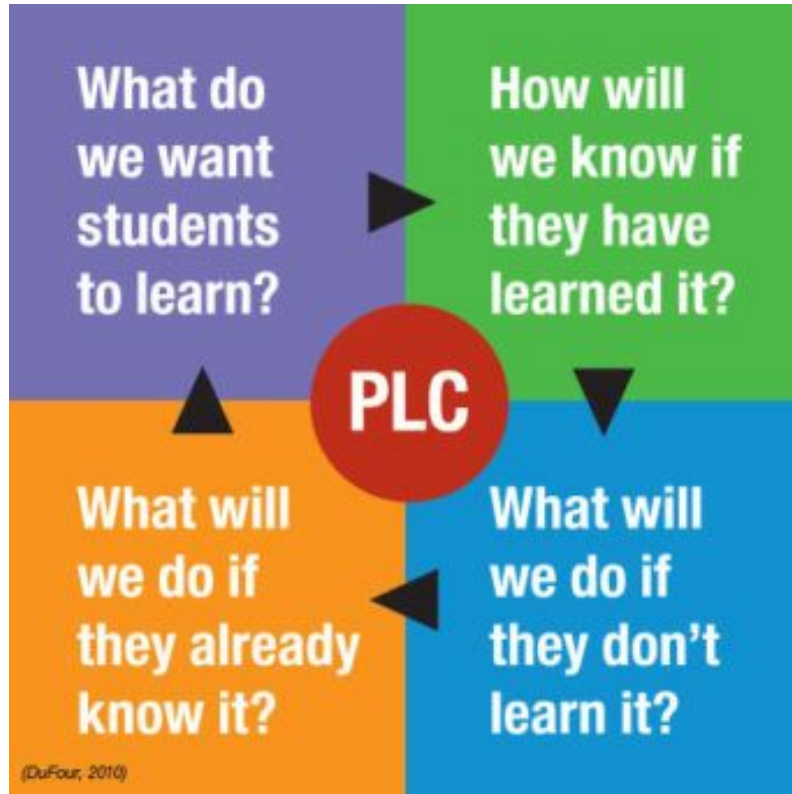
1. Focus on Learning

The fundamental purpose of the school is to ensure *high levels of learning for all students*.

To do so, we must ensure that we:

- Monitor each student's learning on a timely basis
- Provide interventions that ensure students receive support for learning when they struggle
- Extend student learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes
- Ensure that ALL students actually acquire the knowledge and skills of each unit/course/grade level (not just taught or given the opportunity to learn)

Four Critical Questions of the PLC Process



2. Collaborative Culture

- The team is the engine that drives the PLC effort and the primary building block of the organization.
- In order to ensure that all students learn at high levels, educators must work collaboratively and take collective responsibility for the success of each student.
- In a PLC, collaboration represents a systematic process in which teachers work together interdependently in order to impact their classroom practice in ways that will lead to better results for their students, for their team, and for their school.

3. Focus on Results

To assess their effectiveness in helping all students learn, educators in a PLC focus on results - *evidence of student learning*. Then they use that evidence of learning to inform and improve their professional practice and respond to individual students who need intervention or enrichment.

PLC Cycle:

- Gather evidence of current levels of student learning
- Develop strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implement those strategies and ideas
- Analyze the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Apply new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

The PLC Process Requires a Culture That is Simultaneously Loose and Tight

- The PLC process empowers educators to make important decisions and encourages creativity and innovation in the pursuit of improving student learning. These aspects of the PLC Process are said to be “loose”:
 - What to teach
 - The sequencing and pacing of content
 - The assessments used to monitor student learning
 - The criteria they will use in assessing the quality of student work
 - The norms for their team
 - The goals for their team

Tight Elements in a PLC

1. Educators work collaboratively rather than in isolation, take collective responsibility for student learning, and clarify the commitments they make to each other about how they will work together.
2. The fundamental structure of the school becomes the collaborative team in which members work interdependently to achieve common goals for which all members are mutually accountable.
3. The team establishes a guaranteed and viable curriculum, unit by unit, so all students have access to the same knowledge and skills regardless of the teacher to whom they are assigned.
4. The team develops common formative assessments to frequently gather evidence of student learning.
5. The school has created a system of interventions and extensions to ensure students who struggle receive additional time and support for learning in a way that is timely, directive, diagnostic, and systematic, and students who demonstrate proficiency can extend their learning.
6. The team uses evidence of student learning to inform and improve the individual and collective practice of its members.

The Importance of Effective Communication

- Powerful communication is simple and succinct, driven by a few key ideas, and is repeated at every opportunity.
- Leaders should demonstrate consistency between what they say and what they do.
- How would you assess our school's current status for effective communication? Page 16-17

What stuck with you in Chapter 1?

- When we know better, we have an obligation to do better.
- Schools are more effective when they operate as PLCs.
- Our effectiveness is based on student results
- Focus on learning rather than teaching

Break

During your break, please reread the
Case Study on page 25-26



BREAK

Chapter 2: Defining a Clear and Compelling Purpose

The Case Study

Principal Dion's Proposed Mission Statement:

"It is our mission to ensure all our students acquire the knowledge and skills essential to achieving their full potential and becoming productive citizens."

Staff Proposed Mission Statement:

"It is our mission to give each student the opportunity to learn according to his or her ability and to create a school that is attentive to the emotional needs of every student."

The Foundation of a PLC

Educators in a PLC benefit from clarity regarding their shared purpose, a common understanding of the school they are trying to create, collective communities to help move the school in the desired direction, and specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound

The foundation of a PLC rests on the four pillars of:

Mission - Why do we exist?

Vision - What must our school become to accomplish our purpose?

Values - How must we behave to achieve our vision?

Goals - How will we mark our progress?

LONE MOUNTAIN'S VISION, PLEDGE, AND MOTTO

Our Vision:

Somerset Academy: A college prep school cultivating effective leaders, good character, and a desire to render service.

Our School Pledge:

We are **W**ise, **I**nnovative **L**eaders who are **D**isciplined,
Cooperative, **A**ccountable, **T**rustworthy, and **S**trong.
We are **WILDCATS!**

Our School Motto:

LEAD like a **WILDCAT!**

Building the Foundation of a PLC

- How would you assess our school's current status of establishing a solid foundation? Page 47-49

What stuck with you in Chapter 2?

- The words of a mission statement are not worth the paper they are written on unless people begin to **do** differently.
- Learning together is the very essence of a learning community
- As educators, we must do more than give students the chance to learn. We must align our practices to promote learning.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 28th @ 8am

Chapters: 3 & 4

Location TBD

****Please complete both reflection forms and email them to Meagan and Manuel****