

# Leader and Teacher Professional Learning Toolbox: Supporting the Development of Professional Learning Communities

“Together We Succeed”



Georgia Professional Standards Commission 2018

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## Introduction

### **Purpose of the Professional Learning Toolbox.**

This *Teacher and Leader Professional Learning Toolbox: Supporting the Development of Professional Learning Communities* is designed to supplement the preparation work described above by serving as a quick reference guide for district, school, and teacher leaders. The toolbox is designed to be used in much the same way a toolbox might be used at home: if a screw is loose in a door hinge, where is my screwdriver so I can address this little problem to prevent a larger problem that will occur if the fix is not made? Schools and districts may well need much more in depth training that would be provided by professional learning experts. The toolbox addresses nuts and bolts, those things that, left unattended, eventually become more serious problems. In schools, dysfunctional teams left unattended mean teaching and learning suffer and children are negatively impacted. Use this toolbox to resolve problems that eventually have a negative impact on the whole school.

A very important tool in the tool box is the set of rubrics leaders can use to help assess progress in implementing continuous job-embedded learning in the professional learning community. Using the rubrics, leaders can gauge where the school is in its journey. The professional learning community is a journey. No organization ever arrives at a finish line to say, “Now we have a high functioning learning community – we won!” Learning communities are ways of organizing the work on the organization’s culture. This work is never completed. A metaphor for culture is a garden: rain, fertilizer, weeds control, etc. all go into the wonderful vegetables produced only after the hard work of gardening. Even after the harvest, preparations must be made for the next crop. The process is continuous when creating productive gardens. Productive schools are no different; using a professional learning community as the organizer for creating a high-performance school culture ensures quality teaching and learning become regular practice and students thrive.

### **History.**

On July 1, 2017, the Georgia education community turned the page on professional learning centered primarily in workshops, measured by seat time, and moved to a professional learning system based on research, best practice, and national standards. Professional learning for the purpose of certificate renewal must be continuous job-embedded learning in the context of a professional learning community. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) have worked together and statewide with Georgia educators to design a professional learning system that will improve teaching and learning resulting in better prepared students who can succeed in postsecondary education after high school graduation.

Preparation for the major rule change that took place in July 1, 2017, began as a professional learning task force was created by GaPSC to respond to recommendations of a legislative study committee that completed its work in fall 2010. The task force worked for a year to develop recommendations for changes to the certificate renewal rule which links educator professional learning to professional licensure. The task force completed its work in fall 2014. GaPSC staff developed a new certificate renewal rule that was approved by the Commission in spring 2015 to become effective on July 1, 2017.

GaPSC developed training modules for district level professional learning directors, principals, teacher leaders, and university faculty. Workshops were held throughout the state over a two-year period. The workshop modules were designed to create a base level understanding of professional

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learning communities and the new certificate renewal requirements. Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) worked with GaPSC staff in coordinating training sessions. In 2016 GaDOE began development of training modules that supplement and go beyond the GaPSC modules to provide additional training for Georgia educators. GaPSC also added a professional learning web page that can be accessed through the GaPSC website.

**How to Use the Toolbox**

Some direction has been provided in this tool box as well as some sample items. These are intended to be helpful and may be changed to fit the needs of individual PLCs. Collaboration and Communication among colleagues is vital for the PLC to be successful.

## Terms, Definitions, Ideas, Questions, Roles

**What Is a Professional Learning Community?** A professional learning community (PLC) is a way of organizing the school’s culture so that the focus is on student and adult learning. The culture of an organization is always organized around some idea: When America moved away from the one-room school house there was no model for what schools should “look like,” so we borrowed from industry and schools became assembly lines complete with raw materials (students), line workers (teachers at various grade levels), constant movement down the line (all students must learn all of the content in a school year that is the same length for every student), and finally, the end of the line for “finished” products (students who were high achievers or not, if they didn’t dropout, they completed even though every student did not learn at high levels).

PLCs pay a lot of attention to mission, vision, values, and norms, and work hard to establish agreements that allow members to work collaboratively. The PLC is the whole school. Under the school umbrella are various collaborative teams that can be configured in various ways to meet the needs of the school. A high school department can be a collaborative team as can a grade level team. Other collaborative teams can include a vertical team so that language arts teachers from all grade levels meet to work on curriculum articulation issues; a team that specializes such as a professional learning team that addresses learning support for PLC members; or a cross-school team of art teachers who network electronically.

Research on PLCs over several decades has identified various dimensions that describe the concept of PLC. A chart is included in this toolbox that outlines fifteen dimensions of learning communities identified in research. In addition, fifteen rubrics have been developed that teachers and leaders can use to examine implementation progress. Using these rubrics will help participants “live” the definition of professional learning community.

The shortest definition of PLC is a collaboratively organized school whose members follow agreed upon norms to focus collaborative work on teaching and learning. The craft of teaching is made public, educators work reflectively, teachers are empowered to make decisions about teaching, and the importance of trust is understood, valued, and protected so that colleagues can learn from one another.

**PLCs and Continuous Improvement: Making Connections in the Research.** Business and industry actually realized the value of learning communities before educators did. Industry moved away from the factory/assembly line model because they found that failure to engage the line worker resulted in poor quality work and hurt company profits. When companies implemented learning community concepts, they found marked increases in productivity, employee loyalty, innovation, product quality, etc. Educators began to explore PLC concepts in the 1980s, but not until the 1990s was much research done to find out if PLCs made any difference. While a lot of researchers have examined PLC concepts over the years, the best known and probably the most widely respected research has been the work of Karen Seashore Louis and Sharon Kruse. Steve Barkley has also written about learning communities as has Rick DuFour and his team. All of these researchers and professional developers agree that PLCs serve as mechanisms for continuous improvement in schools.

The Georgia Department of Education has recently adopted its Systems of Continuous Improvement, based on the research of Anthony Bryk and his colleagues that began in the

Chicago Public Schools in the early 1990s and concluded about 2007. The rich data coming out of this longitudinal research identified five dimensions that must be effectively addressed to ensure continuous school improvement. This same research supports the understanding that job-embedded learning in collaborative teams (in other words, a schoolwide PLC) is essential to continuous improvement.

## **Terms Used When Thinking about Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**

### **Glossary of Professional Learning Community Terms**

The terms defined below are commonly used in the context of professional learning community literature. In Georgia, the intent of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) certificate renewal rule is to move the focus of professional learning from seat time in workshops to job-embedded continuous learning in professional learning communities (PLCs). There may be other definitions of these terms, but for the purpose of improving teaching and learning in Georgia schools, the expectation is that educators will understand these terms as defined in this document.

**Agenda** – Used as a way of organizing a meeting so the group gets done everything it intends to accomplish in that meeting. No meeting should be held without first establishing the agenda. Team members should have input in developing the agenda. Agendas should be published in advance of meetings so participants can come prepared, thus creating more effective meetings.

**Collaborative Team** – Any group of people who work together and meet regularly to focus on common work constitute a collaborative team. Various configurations can be used such as grade level or subject area collaborative teams, or collaborative teams that have a schoolwide focus such as the school’s professional learning committee, media committee, strategic planning committee, etc. Team members are responsible to one another. Members carry out assigned roles and bring assigned materials to meetings. High levels of trust are a hallmark of high-functioning collaborative teams.

**Collaborative Work** - Collaboration means working together to combine knowledge that will be greater than if member worked individually. Collaborative work results in decisions agreed upon by team members and work products that ensure all students have access to the knowledge of the best teachers in the school. Research is clear: student achievement is higher in schools where educators work collaboratively.

**Common Assessments** – An assessment of student learning that uses the same instrument or common process utilizing the same criteria for determining the value of student work. Often times these assessments are created by the District and are called benchmarks. In a Collaborative Team, common assessments are created by a team of teachers with collective responsibility for the learning of a group of students which are expected to learn the same knowledge and skills. The team developed assessments provide team members with a base line of data which can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning or identify students who need enrichment opportunities to stretch their learning. This information can then be used to change instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students.

**Communication Structures** – High-functioning professional learning communities (PLCs) create structures that allow members to know about and participate in the work. Communication

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structures might include publishing summaries of meetings, calendars, newsletters, routine announcements about learning community work, channels established to recognize accomplishments, regular reporting of data, etc.

**Cycle of Work/Learning** – Successful collaborative teams use a widely accepted process to guide their work/learning to ensure they are focused on problems of practice and are able to successfully address the particular problem of practice. A typical cycle of work would include

- Examining evidence of student performance – what is the current level of performance?
- Analyzing possible instructional strategies that address student strengths and weaknesses – based in data, what is the most appropriate strategy to use?
- Developing common assessments that will provide data as new strategies are used – what does the data tell us about the effectiveness of the strategies?
- Implementation of the agreed upon instructional strategies and common assessment -
- Analyzing changes in student learning – did the instructional strategy worked?
- Incorporating the new professional learning as the work/learning cycle continues

**Deprivatization of Practice** – Teachers make their craft visible to others. Teachers may observe one another, and using a coaching or mentoring process, give and get feedback. Teachers share and collaboratively analyze student work samples. Teachers are not concerned about colleagues knowing about problems of practice and student performance in one another’s classrooms.

**Empowerment of teachers** – Teachers are viewed as experts capable of making decisions about instruction. At the same time, teachers give up individual autonomy in favor of group autonomy so that collective decisions about teaching and learning are made by teams of experts. Teachers and leaders know the ground rules surrounding empowerment; all parties trust one another to effectively carry out their roles.

**Guiding Questions** – Agreed upon questions that guide the work of the PLC and its collaborative teams. Guiding questions help maintain the focus on teaching and learning, and remind everyone about issues of equity. When guiding questions are used effectively, the focus is on every child – no child falls through the cracks.

**Job-Embedded Professional Learning** – The best way to understand “job-embedded learning” is to think about professional learning as “working on the work.” The old mindset about professional learning was sitting in workshops (divorced from the work of teaching and learning) rather than working on the working (direct engagement with teaching and learning). After all, the purpose of professional learning is to strengthen the craft of teaching to impact student learning and raise student achievement. Job-embedded means working collaboratively with others within the school as cross-content teams, grade level teams, departmental teams, or some other configuration. In addition, sometimes it is necessary to work with people outside of the school to work on the work. Art and music are fields where teachers may be isolated from others who teach the same content, so working on the work may mean working with similar teachers in other schools and districts.

**Professional Learning Community (PLC)** – This term describes the culture of a school whereby teachers and leaders seek agreement on shared values, beliefs, and norms and based on

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these shared values, beliefs, and norms, develop structures, processes, and policies that engage members in common work to resolve problems of practice aimed at improving teaching and learning. The PLC has at its core a focus on student success, use of collaborative processes, a deep sense of trust among members, regular use of data and a common drive to create a school where every child succeeds and achieves at high levels.

**Professional Learning Goals** – As part of the certificate renewal process, every educator must create professional learning goals. These goals should be balanced between the identified learning needs of the educator and the learning needs of the team, school, and school district. Goals must be based on data, developed by the individual educator with input from colleagues as long as the educator is comfortable in discussing performance with colleagues, and approved by the educator’s supervisor.

**Professional Learning Plans** – Certain categories of educators (induction level teachers and leaders, for example) are required to formalize their professional learning goals into plans that lay out objectives, resources, timelines, etc.

**Protocols** – Carefully designed processes aimed at arriving at the best conclusions since the protocol controls for time, who speaks, what is to be accomplished, etc. There are several different types of protocols including 1) decision-making, 2) brainstorming, 3) examining student work, 4) team building, 5) discussions, and others. Some protocols are recognized across the nation (Tuning Protocol, for example), but individual educators can create their own. Many protocols can be used by educators as well as by their students. Protocols can be found in books, articles, and on websites. One good source is the National School Reform Faculty website, [www.nsrffharmony.org](http://www.nsrffharmony.org).

**Reflective Dialogue** - Public conversations focused on teaching practice and student learning. Reflective dialogue builds self-awareness among teachers and leaders and lessens the likelihood of teacher isolation. Reflective dialogue is dependent upon trusting colleagues enough to share challenges and successes.

**Response to Intervention (RtI)** – The process of teachers changing their instruction based on how well the students responded to it. “Response” is a key word; this moves the teacher to ask, “how can I change instruction to meet student learning needs?” changing instruction DOES NOT mean lowering standards; instead, it means trying a different approach. “Intervention” is another key word – “what actions can I take to meet the learning needs of this student? RtI focuses on meeting the needs of the individual student when usual teaching strategies do not work.

**Results Orientation** – The PLC has a collective focus on student learning so that, above all else, student learning comes first. Collaborative teams and the PLC as a whole examine data to determine if the work has moved student success forward. Results matter; student learning as measured by student achievement on multiple measure (not just standardized tests) helps tell the story. Other data is important too. For example, has student attendance improved, is the dropout rate lower, are achievement gaps closing, are student succeeding at the next level, etc? The measure of success in the PLC is results; this is where the focus must be and everyone must understand collaborative work is the vehicle for achieving the desired results.

**Shared Mission** – Where every member of the school faculty deeply understands and believes in the school’s mission. The mission is about teaching and learning. Other things may be important,

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but none so much as the shared mission. Detailed discussions help faculties institute their shared mission.

**Shared Norms** – What is “normal” in our school in terms of how we do the business of teaching and learning? Norms develop in every group. The important thing is to guide the development of norm so that all group members have had input into what the norms should be. Toxic learning environments are generally places where norms are not shared by the group. When norms are shared, everyone looks out for everyone else: students don’t fall through the cracks, nor do first year teachers because the norms are aimed at success for all.

**Shared Values** – How much time and effort has been devoted to deciding what we value in our school? Valuing something means protecting it. Valuing means creating policies, processes, and structures that assure what is valued is protected. It is easy to say we value protecting instructional time, but are there policies and procedures in place that actually do that? Or we say we value equity, but when we look at the master schedule do we find that all students have access to the best teachers?

**Shared Vision** – A vision is not a dream. Instead, vision is what we have all agreed (teachers and leaders, not just the principal) is where we want to see our school go. Visions are dynamic meaning actions must support the vision. Creating a shared vision and then making it become a reality requires collaborative work. Visions are more likely to be achieved when people do work collaboratively.

**SMART Goals** – Collaborative teams should develop SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely) goals to set purposeful goals that relate to their teaching practices based on student data. SMART goals should be specific in clarifying what students should learn and the level of learning during a specified time.

**Socialization of new staff** – When new people join the staff, they don’t know the school’s history. They weren’t here when the current improvement initiative started, so without carefully planned orientation, they will be out of step with the work that engages the remainder of the faculty. Simply assigning a mentor is not sufficient. There needs to be a carefully planned set of opportunities for new staff to learn about vision and mission, norms and protocols, and all of the other moving parts of the school’s culture and learning community.

**Systems of Continuous Improvement** – Researcher Anthony Bryk and his colleagues created a continuous improvement framework based on years of longitudinal research. The Georgia Department of Education has adopted this framework as the state model for continuous improvement in schools and districts. There are five dimensions that determine improvement; failure in any of the five dimensions diminishes the chances for success in raising student achievement. The five dimensions include: effective leadership, coherent instruction, professional capacity, supportive learning environment, and family and community engagement.

**Teacher Leader** – Those teachers who, through formal or informal roles, engage in the process of influencing other teachers, leaders, and others in the school community to improve teaching and learning with the intent of improving student achievement (paraphrase of Jennifer York-Barr’s definition of teacher leadership). Teacher leaders may engage through formal roles such as coaching, mentoring, leading a grade level team, as a member of a committee, etc., or through informal processes as a member of a collaborative team, through their participation in various

types of meetings, and through participation with other teachers in informal leadership activities. Teacher leader effectiveness is enhanced when the teacher leader complete training in a degree or endorsement program based on state teacher leader standards.

**Trust** – A key ingredient in the success of schools. Do people trust each other by believing in the goodness of their intent, by committing to care out group decisions, by sharing openly about teaching challenges without fear of violations of confidentiality? Trust involves teachers trusting one another, students, leaders, and parents. It also involves each of these groups trusting one another. Trust creates predictability in the learning community so that people can count on one another.

### **Key Roles in Districts and Schools**

Professional learning communities (PLCs) can be successful only when everyone does their part. Various people have important roles to play. Following is a list that reminds every one of the minimum they must contribute to the success of the learning community.

#### **Superintendent**

- Communicates the vision and expectation for PLCs in all schools
- Articulates the importance of PLCs to all stakeholders and works to make certain stakeholders understand how and why PLCs operate the way they do
- Holds the district accountable for PLC implementation

#### **District Staff**

- Facilitates the district vision for PLCs
- Provides tangible support for schools in PLC implementation and ongoing function
- Actively participates in a district PLC as well as in school PLCs
- Actively analyze data and based on analysis, provide appropriate district support to schools

#### **Principals**

- Holds school accountable for PLC implementation expectations
- Leads the school to create a shared mission, vision, and norms that support the development and success of the PLC
- Assures that appropriate organizational structures, including the organization of time, are in place to support the success of the PLC
- Fosters the development of a collaborative school culture aimed at high performance for adults and children
- Collects and process data and report it to support PLC work, and expect all educators to base decisions on school data
- Uses data to monitor progress and make adjustments based on data
- Provides feedback to collaborative teams
- Sets expectations for the role in the PLCs for assistant principals, service field educators such as school counselors, academic coaches and other teacher leaders, etc.
- Engages in the PLC as a learner and as one committed to the work of the PLC

**Assistant Principal and/or Teacher Leaders**

- Reinforces/advances the shared mission, vision, and norms of the PLC
- In daily work models the vision and expectations of the PLC
- Works with the principal to collect and process data and report it to support PLC work, and expect all educators to base decisions on school data
- Teaches and uses protocols to support the work of the PLC
- Develops and delivers professional learning for the PLC
- Supports the principals work in monitoring progress by collecting evidence of implementation
- Provides coaching/mentoring and other expert help in support of the PLC
- Engages in the PLC as a learner and as one committed to the work of the PLC

**Teacher**

- Actively participates in the PLC and as a member of a collaborative team
- Consistently participates in agreed upon collaborative work following the established norms and using appropriate structures that support effectiveness in the PLC
- Produces agreed upon data and share data in support of collaborative work
- Works reflectively as an individual and engages in reflective dialogue as a collaborative team member
- Provides professional feedback to collaborative team members
- Advocates for students in support of equitable treatment so that all students have access to the best learning opportunities

**Other School Professionals Such as Media Specialists, Counselors and School Social Workers**

- Actively participates in the PLC and as a member of a collaborative team
- Consistently participates in agreed upon collaborative work following the established norms and using appropriate structures that support effectiveness in the PLC
- Produces agreed upon data and share data in support of collaborative work
- Works reflectively as an individual and engages in reflective dialogue as a collaborative team member
- Provides professional feedback to collaborative team members
- Advocates for students in support of equitable treatment so that all students have access to the best learning opportunities
- Uses expertise to provide specific support to the PLC and its collaborative teams

**Paraprofessional**

- Supports the PLC and the work of collaborative teams
- Works with teachers to develop and implement learning materials
- Actively engages as a learner in the PLC

## **Glossary of Acronyms**

LKES – Leader Keys Effectiveness System, the state evaluation model for school principals and assistant principals

PLC – Professional learning community

PLG – Professional learning goal

PLP – Professional learning plan

RtI – Response to Intervention, a national model used in Georgia to address changing instruction to meet student learning challenges

TKES – Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, the state evaluation model for classroom teachers

## Collaborative Teams

### Roles and Responsibilities

“Together We Succeed” means that all members of our team are responsible for the success of our students. To achieve the success needed everyone is responsible to work collaboratively and share the work load to accomplish the goals of the group. Below are some examples of the shared roles and a short description of the duties for each position.

#### **Facilitator**

- Develops the agenda with input from team members and distributes to everyone prior to the meeting
- Facilitates the meeting
- Keeps the team focused on the agenda and goals of the meeting
- Ensures all voices are heard
- Reviews any protocols that will be used during the meeting and ensures appropriate materials will be available for successful use of the protocol
- Reviews, emphasizes, and reinforces the agreed upon norms

#### **Recorder**

- Takes the minutes of the team meeting on an agreed upon format
- Records any important dates for the team on a shared calendar
- Submits minutes and evidence to designated leadership if required
- Ensure that absent team members are apprised of the minutes

#### **Time Keeper**

- Monitors time for the meeting, including start and finish
- Ensure that all participants are on the topic being discussed
- Calls for decision-making when appropriate
- Sets and monitors time limits when protocols are being used

#### **Data Analyst**

- Collects tests and/or quiz data from team members prior to the meeting
- Records every teacher’s data and distribute to everyone prior to the meeting or at the meeting
- Facilitates discussion on students’ achievement
  - Uses appropriate protocols for data analysis when necessary

### **TKES Manager**

- Ensures the TKES rubric is available for use at every meeting
- Reminds and assists team members to identify the appropriate TKES standards being addressed for every lesson

### **All Collaborative Team Members**

- Prepare for the upcoming meeting by reading the agenda prior to the meeting
- Bring to the meeting any materials that support the work specified in the agenda
- Adhere to the meeting norms
- Report data to the Data Analyst at the agreed upon time
- Keep focused on student learning and achievement
- Reflect upon the TKES rubric
- Remember the importance of confidentiality
- Follow through with next steps and the action plan developed in meeting

### **School Leaders**

- Avails himself/herself of opportunities to learn as much as possible about PLCs and the role of leaders in fostering the success of the PLC
- Encourages cultural shifts to support and enrich the school’s PLC and the work of Collaborative Teams
- Adjusts the school schedule to allow for collaborative team meetings
- Examines of the levels of commitment to the PLC across the faculty and finds ways to enhance faculty understanding of the work
- Engages teachers in making decisions about the PLC and teaching and learning
- Creates a reward system that recognizes the accomplishments of teams
- Leads the creation of an environment in which teachers and students are encouraged to take risks in teaching and learning
- Communicates regularly with Collaborative Team Facilitators
- Reads team agenda and minutes to keep abreast of Collaborative Team work and student achievement
- Observes Collaborative Teams in action and provides specific feedback
- Identifies and provides connections to relevant training, resources, etc.
- Provides regular and specific feedback about Collaborative Team performance
- Maintains a strong, observable commitment to the PLC and the work of Collaborative Teams

## **Developing Norms**

At the beginning of the school year each Collaborative Team should discuss and decide upon a list of norms for their meetings. These norms will provide efficiency and productivity to the collaborative meetings throughout the year if all team members follow the set norms.

There are various protocols that can be used to assist your team in developing norms for your meetings. Refer to the Resource page at the end of this guide for Protocol information.

Important points to consider in developing meaningful norms:

- Time/Place
  - When and where will we meet?
  - What is the exact time allotted for meetings?
- Listening/Speaking
  - What will we do when someone is not focused on our team work?
  - How will we respond to someone who is talking over others?
- Decision making
  - Are all participants required to agree on decisions?
  - How can we resolve conflicts or disagreements on decisions?
- Participation
  - How will we encourage everyone’s participation?
  - Will we have a late policy and an attendance policy?
- Expectations
  - What do we expect from each member?
  - What will we do when we have a break down in roles and responsibilities, and processes?

## **Tips to Ensure the Team Norms Are Successful**

- Norms should be revisited at the beginning of each meeting to confirm that members understand expectations for the meeting.
- Post the Norms during each meeting.
- If a new member joins the team, review the norms and offer an opportunity for their input.

## **Guiding Questions**

The main focus of the PLC or Collaborative Teams needs to be on student learning. Use the following questions to guide the team discussions, focus, and instructional strategies.

1. What student learning is essential for their success (now as well as later)?
2. What strategies will we use if students are struggling to meet learning goals?
3. When students learn, how will we help them expand their learning to include deeper and broader understandings?
4. What are we doing to ensure equitable learning opportunities so every student can learn and achieve high performance goals?

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5.How will we celebrate student learning?

**“In the age of new standards and accountability, it is more important than ever to establish ourselves as effective leaders, growing our team and leveraging our collective talents for the benefit of all children” – Mike Fisher**

## Resources for Implementing Effective Teams

### Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members in Attendance:

Specific Topics of Discussion:

What student learning is essential for their success (now as well as later)? (**PLAN**)

What strategies will we use if students are struggling to meet learning goals? (**IMPLEMENT**).

How will we know if every student has met the learning goals? (**MONITOR, ASSESS**)

When students learn, how will we help them expand their learning to include deeper and broader understandings? Data based. (**PLAN, IMPLEMENT**)

What are we doing to ensure equitable learning opportunities so every student can learn, and achieve high-performance goals? Data based. (**PLAN, IMPLEMENT**)

How will we celebrate student learning?

Best Practices That Were Shared During the Meeting

### Check-up for Collaborative Teams

**Instructions:** The Teacher Leader or Facilitator of the Collaborative Team can give this survey to each team member or discuss the answers as a team.

**Suggestion:** give the Check-up at the early in the school year, midway through, and near the end of the year.

Our Collaborative Team...

1. Adheres to the agenda set for the team meeting, which is focused on student learning.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
2. Follows norms that have been created and regularly reviewed by our collaborative team.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
3. Uses student data to inform future goals and priorities.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
4. Monitors student progress and adjusts instructional strategies.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
5. Collaborates to address student achievement and professional learning needs.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
6. Uses **SMART** goals that are...

**Specific**

Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

**Measureable**

Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

**Attainable**

Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

**Relevant**

Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

**Time Sensitive**

Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

**“Together We Succeed”**

**Evaluate Yourself as a Collaborative Team Player**

Collaborative teams are made up of individuals who work well together. The way each person interacts with the members has a great impact on the team’s ability to work effectively. Answer each question honestly and describe your behavior as accurately as possible.

1. I offer ideas, suggestions, and relevant information during my team’s discussions.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
2. I express my willingness to cooperate with others in my collaborative team.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
3. I am open and candid in my interactions with the team.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
4. I offer my opinions in our team discussions.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
5. I support others’ opinions even when those opinions do not align with my thoughts.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
6. I communicate with team members in a positive manner.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
7. I offer my help and assistance to anyone on the team to improve their performance.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
8. I take risks in expressing new ideas to improve the team’s success.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
9. I support and accept the openness of others when they take risks in expressing their ideas.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
10. I share materials, books, sources of information and other resources with team members to promote the success of all members and the team.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
11. I work hard to follow the norms our collaborative team has established.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
  
12. I might try the following to increase the effectiveness of our team success:

This survey should be given anonymously and tabulated by the Teacher Leader or collaborative team facilitator to assess the team behaviors and interactions. A discussion of the tabulated results should be conducted with the collaborative team determining the implications. Identify the areas where the team is performing well, what areas need work, and strategies for improvement.

<b>Collaborative Team:</b>		<b>Date &amp; Time of Observation:</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>		<b>Observer:</b>
		<b>Comments/Evidence</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Meeting logistics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members were in attendance</li> <li>• All members were on time</li> <li>• Members had prior knowledge of agenda items</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Agenda/Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members came prepared for the meeting</li> <li>• Norms were adhered to by all members</li> <li>• All members participated in the meeting by using various collaboration strategies and protocols</li> <li>• Members were focused on student learning</li> <li>• Members exhibited professionalism in their communication with others on the team</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Decisions/Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meeting was productive and efficient</li> <li>• Data was analyzed and used to identify student achievement</li> <li>• Data was used to inform or change instruction</li> <li>• Goals and/or actions plans were developed for intervention, enrichment or re-teaching</li> <li>• Reviewed lesson plans for the upcoming agreed upon period.</li> </ul>	

This observation form can be used by Teach Leaders or Administrators to provide feedback for Collaboration Teams.

## Teacher Survey on Principal

**Instructions:** Teachers should complete the following survey anonymously in order for Principal to assess the culture of their staff.

1. Our Principal values the ideas and suggestions of the staff.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
2. Our Principal understands the importance of Collaborative Teams.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
3. Our Principal is committed to focusing on student learning.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
4. Our Principal have made physical or schedule changes to ensure teachers are able to work in Collaborative Teams.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
5. Our Principal has provided needed resources in support of our Collaborative Teams.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
6. Our Principal support teachers when they take risks when trying new instructional strategies.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
7. Our Principal often attends or becomes part of our Collaborative Team.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
8. Our Principal has created a culture of trust and respect at our school.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
9. Our Principal empowers teacher leaders and respects their involvement.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always
10. Our Principal celebrates our accomplishments and successes in student learning.  
Never 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      Always

Additional comments:

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### Guiding Questions for Principals

Self-Reflection Questions for Principals	How Do You Know? List Evidence
<p><b>Mission–Vision–Goals- Commitments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does your faculty really believe about students?</li> <li>• What can you commit to as a school learning community?</li> <li>• How do you align your decisions as a leader to your school’s mission?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Shared Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of responsibilities do your department chairs (team/grade level chairs) have?</li> <li>• What strategies have you used to build your teacher leaders?</li> <li>• What kinds of responsibilities do other teacher leaders have (not department chairs or team/grade level chairs)?</li> <li>• What strategies do school leaders use to communicate with collaborative teams and teacher leaders?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Focus on Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What practices support student learning?</li> <li>• What practices hinder student learning (eg. grading, teaching assignments etc.)?</li> <li>• What plan can you create to resolve the hindrances?</li> <li>• What does professional learning for teachers look like in my school?</li> <li>• What data is used to determine professional learning for teachers and others?</li> <li>• How do you ensure equity for all students?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What processes have been set up at your school for collaboration?</li> <li>• What templates are used?</li> <li>• When and how often are team meetings held?</li> <li>• How are norms created and how are people held accountable?</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are critical conversations held?</li> <li>• What protocols are used schoolwide and why?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Curriculum</b> (What do we want students to know?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your lesson plan or unit plan expectations?</li> <li>• How do teams plan and record their plans for the day, week or unit?</li> <li>• How are power standards defined and used?</li> <li>• How are pre-tests or checkpoints used?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Assessment or Data</b> (How do we know they learned it?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are common assessments defined?</li> <li>• How do teams create common assessments?</li> <li>• How do teams collect and share the data?</li> <li>• What data is collected?</li> <li>• How do teams write their smart goals?</li> <li>• How are school leaders involved in the data talk process?</li> <li>• What are your grading practices and are they set up for student learning?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>RTI</b> (What do we do when students don't learn?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does your RTI pyramid look like (instruction and behavior)?</li> <li>• What programs do you have in place to help struggling students?</li> <li>• What does re-teaching and recovery look like in my school?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Enrichment</b> (What do we do when students do learn it?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do our advanced programs and opportunities look like?</li> <li>• How do we enrich the curriculum?</li> <li>• How are students identified and placed in advanced classes or given advanced learning opportunities?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is my school on the PLC rubrics?</li> <li>• How are we celebrating our successes?</li> </ul>	

Adapted from: Kullar, Jasmine. “33 Questions to Help Navigate Your PLC Journey.” Solution Tree Blog. March 11, 2016.

## **SMART Goals**

**SMART** goals are set with the purpose of increasing student achievement. SMART goals are specific in that they clarify precisely what students should learn, the level of the learning, the assessments that will be used to make the determination of learning within a specific time frame.

A **SMART** Goal is:

**Specific** – Goals should focus on specific student learning.

**Measureable** – Student success is measured by assessments, which monitor the progress of the goal. Progress should be measured at intervals so necessary adjustments to instruction and support can be made.

**Attainable** – The team goal should set high expectations for student achievement, but reasonable enough to ensure success for students who are encouraged to stretch and are supported by good teaching and appropriate resources.

**Results Oriented** – The team goal should yield specific, desired, and observable outcomes.

**Time Bound** – A clearly-defined time frame should be determined for the team goal.

In working with your Collaborative Teams you may need to give them help in setting their goals. Here are some talking points you may want to use to guide them.

1. What data points did you use in determining your Collaborative Team SMART goal?
2. Why does your team want to reach this goal?
3. Is the goal tied to student learning standards?
4. Is the goal realistic for team members and students?
5. Is your goal measureable?
6. What will be your data points to measure the goal?
7. Will the students be able to write their own personal goals based on the team goals?
8. How will you celebrate your successes?

## **Data Analysis**

Frequent and effective teacher collaboration concerning data is important to drive student success. The purpose of Data Conversations is to provide a setting and a framework for teachers to discuss and act upon assessment results so they can provide focused support to students who need additional help to meet the standards. Many schools suffer from being data rich but information poor. The key to becoming a high performing Collaborative Team is to be able to turn data received from any common assessment into information that can then be used directly in the classroom. To help your teacher process their data have protocols in place. The form on the next page may help guide the discussion.

SMART Goals Worksheet

Draft Goal:

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	Answers at Time of Development	6 Month Update
<b>Specific</b> What is the desired result? (who, what, when, why, how)		
<b>Measureable</b> How can you quantify completion? How can you measure progress?		
<b>Attainable</b> What skills are needed? What resources are necessary? Does the goal require high but realistic expectations?		
<b>Results Oriented</b> Are the assessments providing the correct data to show student learning progress?		
<b>Time-Sensitive</b> When is the deadline? Is the deadline realistic?		

Final Goal:

## Response to Intervention (RTI)

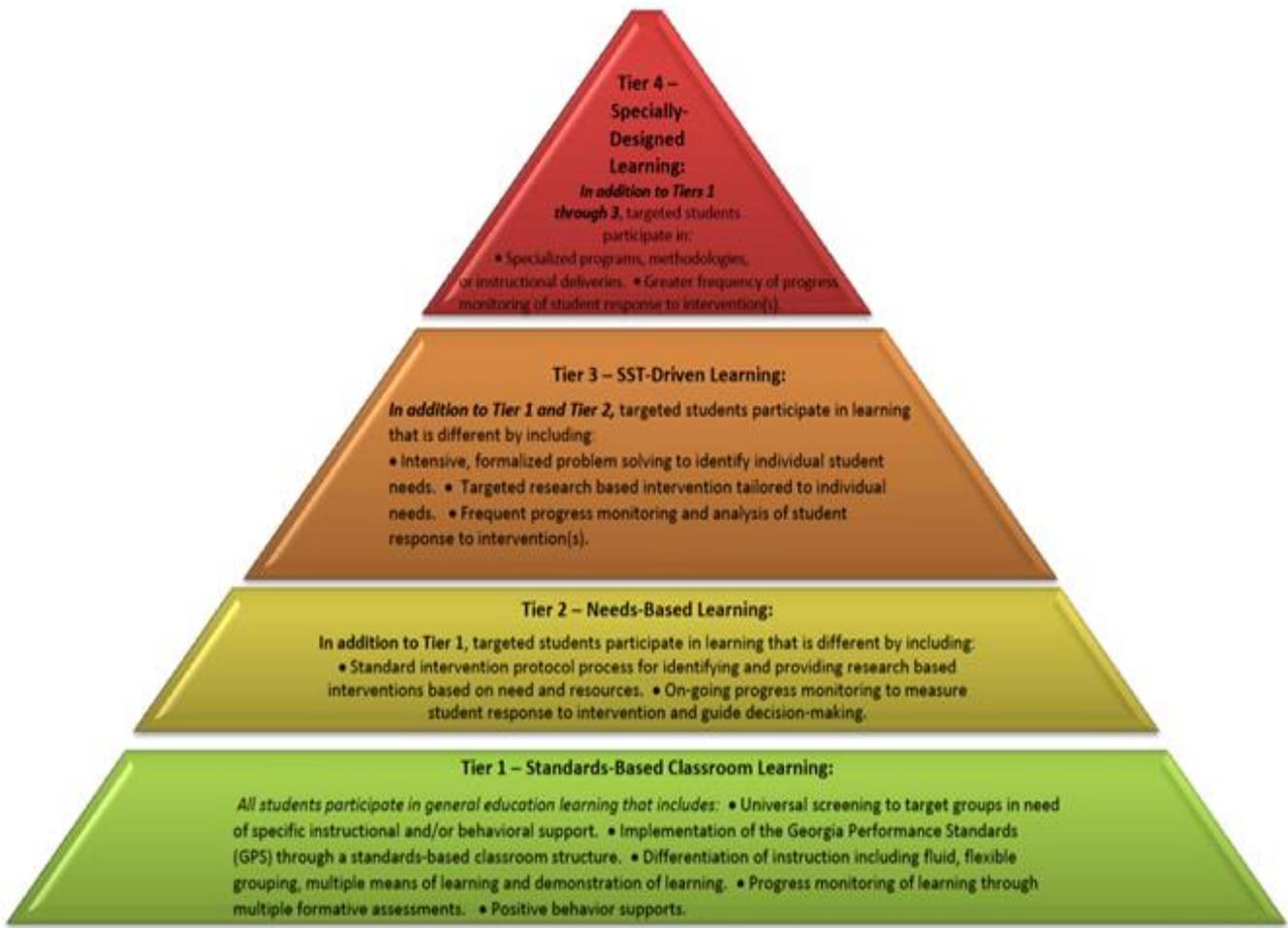
The process of teachers changing their instruction based on how well the students responded to it – known as “Response to Intervention” (RTI) – has steadily become the national model for successfully reaching students when they are just beginning to fall behind expected benchmarks and providing appropriate supports and interventions at increasing levels of intensity. This can prevent the rapid decay of learning desire that comes when a student senses it may be impossible to catch up with the class.

### Georgia Pyramid of Intervention

This pyramid exhibits a systematic approach to addressing the student learning needs and behavioral needs through multiple tiers of support. The desired outcome is improved academics and behavior for all Georgia students to successfully achieve the Georgia standards.

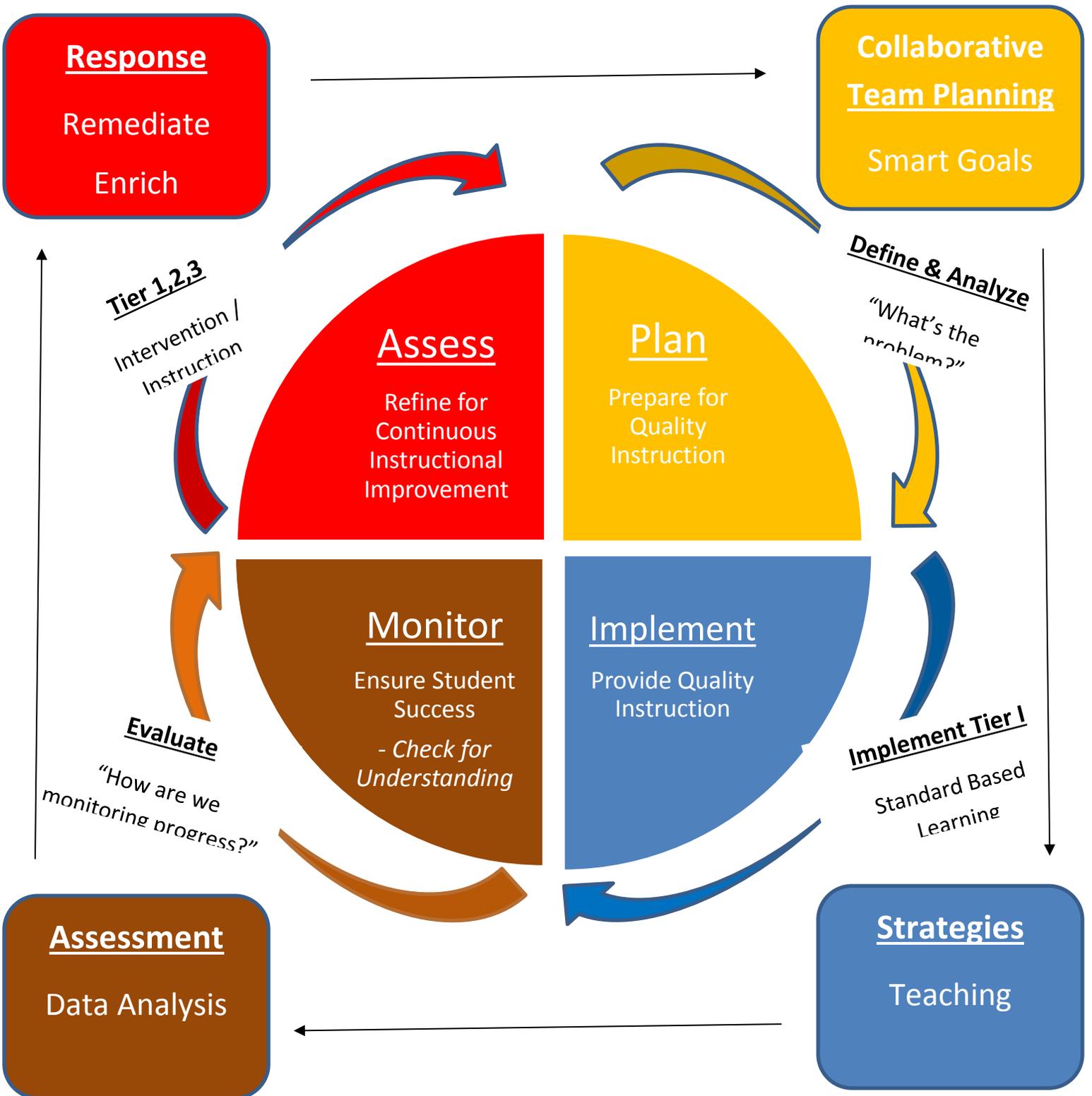
## Response to Intervention

### The Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions



Following is a graphic which depicts Georgia DOE’s System for Effective School Instruction, aligned with the RTI Tiers as well as the work of Collaborative Teams/Professional Learning Communities.

# Cycle of Work for Collaborative Teams in a PLC



**Collaborative Team Member Data Form**

**Team Members need to complete this form before their Collaborative Team Meeting**

What instructional strategies/materials were used effectively resulting in my students scoring high on certain standards/skills?	
Which instructional strategies/materials were not effective enough?	
Was there enough guided and individual practice?	
How will I reteach in a different way to the lower-achieving students and still keep up with the pacing guide?	
Which student(s) should I be particularly concerned about?	
What best practices can I bring to my Collaborative Team Data Conversation meeting?	

This form provides some guidance to teachers in looking at their assessment data and thinking about their instructional strategies and the impact on student learning. Collaborative Teams will then have discussions based on their responses on the form. The teams will use the information to identify students who need additional help or enrichment opportunities, share or develop new best practices, and determine the progress on their SMART goals.

**"Unity is strength...When there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved." –Mattie Stepanek**

**Getting Started and Maintaining Momentum**

## Quick Start Toolkit Guide for Effective PLCs (Collaborative Teams)

This quick start tool is a condensed guide that provides the organizational structure of Professional Learning Communities/Collaborative Teams.

Remember the following steps provide only a quick check list to help you get started. To find more in-depth information refer to the resource pages in the Toolkit or on the hot links attached.

1. Organize your staff into [Collaborative Teams](#), which fit the needs of your school
  - a. Teacher Leaders
  - b. Grade levels
  - c. Subject areas
  - d. Other?
2. Define the purpose of [Collaborative Teams](#)
  - a. Research based
  - b. Results oriented
3. Schedule a specific meeting time and place for your [Collaborative Teams](#) to meet
  - a. Help your teachers understand the importance that everyone adheres to the schedule
4. Educate your staff about the importance of developing the necessary components for a successful [Collaborative Team](#) meeting
  - a. Planned Agenda
  - b. Established Norms
  - c. Protocols for work
  - d. Roles for each participating member (refer to definition of roles in Toolkit)
5. Communicate to the Collaborative Team members the job-embedded focus for each meeting
  - a. [Student work and achievement](#)
  - b. [Analysis of Data](#)
  - c. [Creating SMART Goals](#)
  - d. Data-informed priorities in creating an action plan
  - e. Creating minutes to keep track of the work of the team
  - f. Setting the agenda, next steps, and the members assigned work in preparation for the next meeting
6. These are some of the aspects of healthy [Collaborative Team](#) cultures:
  - a. Trust
  - b. Respect
  - c. Growth Mind Set
  - d. Collaboration
  - e. Deprivatization of practice
  - f. Accountability by all members
  - g. Confidentiality

\*See Reference page at the end for more information.

**“Coming together is a beginning; Keeping together is progress; working together is success.” –  
Henry Ford**

## **Beyond the Quick Start to the Work of Collaborative Teams**

Once you have gone through the steps of the Quick Start Guide there are some things to keep in mind to ensure the success of the teams. Your enthusiasm and belief in collaboration is important and needs to be conveyed to your faculty. You can enact positive change in your school if you show interest and become involved with your Collaborative Teams.

### **Collaboration**

Teachers have for too long been relegated to their classroom with little or no interaction with their peers. A Professional Learning Community and Collaborative Teams challenge the practice of isolation and foster de-privitization. Remember that high performing schools embrace collaboration and make it part of their culture. It is essential that this professional practice become part of the way we do business. This is job-embedded professional learning at its best.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is key. It is critical that a safe environment for team members is developed. Teachers will not share unless they feel safe in their environment. For instance, if someone leaves a team meeting and discusses a team member’s data they will shut down. You also need for your faculty to understand that in sharing and discussing the data of each teacher that it is a professional matter and not a personal matter.

### **Maintaining Focus**

Keeping focused on student learning is often a challenge. The school is filled with distractions and they often cloud our thoughts, purpose and ultimately our attention. With limited time to accomplish many tasks it is imperative that the focus be maintained. Keeping the Collaborative Teams on track takes skill and practice but in time the meetings will flow smoothly from one agenda item to the next. Remember that the Collaborative Team meetings are not for discussing trivial daily items but the focus is always on student learning.

### **New Members**

Most schools will see some degree of grade level or subject level movement during the summer months or the hiring of new teachers. It is critical that the new members of a team are embraced and educated in the team spirit. It’s important that new bonds are created among members.

**We are not a team because we work together. We are a team because we respect, trust, and care for each other. – Vala Afshar**

### Other Reminders

Recognizing and utilizing Teacher Leaders will lessen the load for administrators in creating the collaborative culture in your school. Value their expertise and enlist their help in becoming coaches and mentors that help keep the focus on student learning.

**“Today’s teacher leaders assume responsibilities once considered the sole domain of principals: they serve as peer coaches and mentors, they lead curriculum teams, they model exemplary instructional practices, and much much more.” - Sean Slade in Education Week Teacher**

Use your staff handbook as a resource for protocols and procedures for your Professional Learning Community and Collaborative Teams. Structure faculty meetings like PLC meetings, modeling how meetings should be structured and led by other school leaders as a shared leadership experience.

Create and share a data picture of your school with all stakeholders. The entire staff needs to be involved in a process of creating a mission and goals based on the current status and the school that the faculty wants to create.

If you are just beginning your journey with Collaborative Teams institute a multi-year implementation plan. Revisit the procedures in place continuously and as a good functioning PLC make the changes that improve the focus on student learning. It takes a minimum of three years to change the culture in your school. Begin with one step at a time. The important thing is to just begin! Perfection isn’t the goal, action is.

Create opportunities for incorporating celebration into the culture of the school. Make celebrations everyone’s responsibility and create opportunities for many winners. Celebrate students as well as faculty members.

**“The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other. Without collaboration, our growth is limited to our own perspectives.” –Robert John Meehan**

## Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement

The Georgia Department of Education developed a common continuous improvement framework which focuses on the systems and structures that must be in place for sustained improvement in student outcomes. The Georgia’s System of Continuous Improvement framework focuses on the systems and structures (the “what”) that must be in place for sustained improvement in student outcome. It also utilizes a problem-solving model (the “how”) to provide a clear process for identifying improvement needs, planning for improvement, and implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the improvement efforts.



Go to Georgia Department of Education for more information.

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/School-Improvement-Services/Pages/Georgia%E2%80%99s-Systems-of-Continuous-Improvement.aspx>

**“Children are the Priority. Change is the Reality. Collaboration is the Strategy.” –  
Judith Billings, Washington State Superintendent**

## Sample Template for Mission and Vision

District Mission Statement:

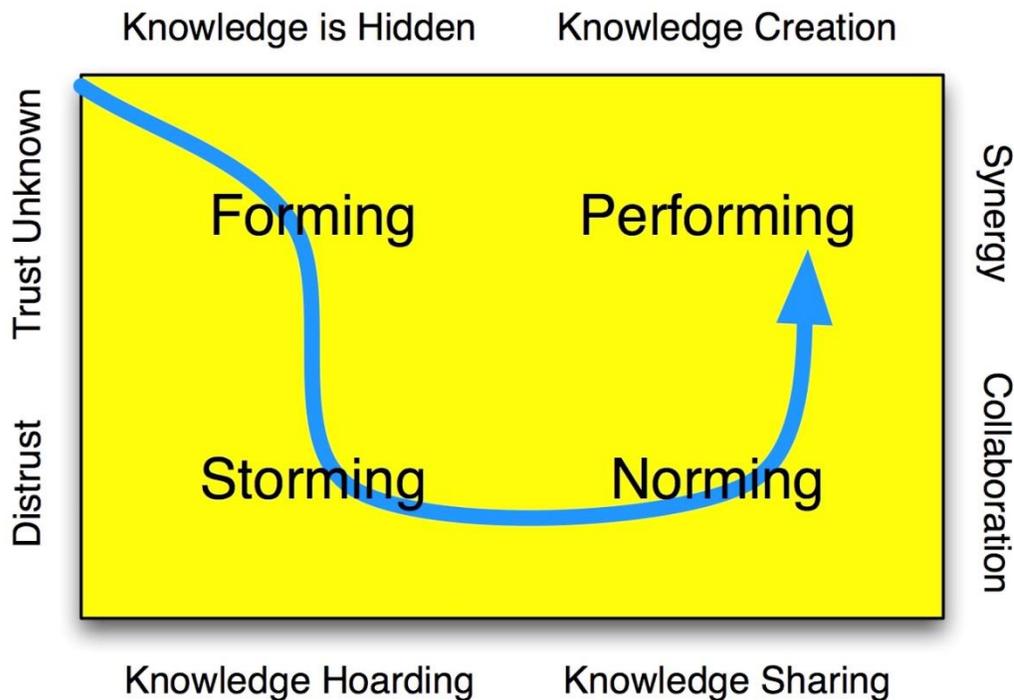
District Vision Statement:

School Mission Statement:

School Vision Statement

School Organizational Values:  
We value

### Stages of Collaborative Team Development



**Forming:** In the first stage when Collaborative Teams are getting started, most members are positive and polite toward each other and talk about safe topics. Everyone is getting to know team members but the level of trust is unknown.

**Storming:** Next, the team members move into the storming phase, where there may be resistance to collaboration or resistance to de-privitization and conflicts may arise. This is the stage where many teams fail.

**Norming:** Gradually, the team realizes that norms should be adhered to and protocols set in motion as they work collaboratively. This is when members start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues' strengths, become engaged and supportive and develop cohesion.

**Performing:** The team reaches the performing stage when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the team's goal. The team works interdependently and collaboratively in a healthy system.

**“Great leaders build trust and collaboration while focusing on developing people’s capacities rather than focusing on their limitations.” –Leithwood ET AL., 2004**

## Assessing Implementation: Implementation Assessment Rubrics for Professional Learning Communities

The attached 15 rubrics (one rubric for each dimension of professional learning communities) are designed for leaders and teachers to assess implementation progress of school learning communities. They are informal tools. They have not been subjected to validity or reliability studies. **Consequently, in no way should they be used as part of an evaluation process.**

These rubrics are based on the research of Karen Seashore Louis and Sharon Kruse that identified 15 dimensions of professional learning Community (PLC). The Louis and Kruse dimensions are based on professional learning community research. The 15 dimensions are divided into three categories: 1) characteristics of PLCs, 2) structural conditions that must be present to support PLCs, and 3) various supports that must be in place that support the healthy development of PLCs. Others such as Rick DuFour and his colleagues and Steve Barkley have studied learning communities, too. Their work is helpful in deepening educator understanding of professional learning communities.

The 15 rubrics are designed as a holistic view of each dimension. There has been no attempt to calibrate the five implementation levels, therefore, scoring cannot be accurate and consequently, should not be done. The intent is for teachers and leaders to read the descriptors for each level and consider whether thinking, discussion, action, etc similar to what is described, has taken place at one of the five levels. The question for the educators using the rubric is: “Does our school look more like this level or that level at this point in time?” Arriving at an answer should generate deep discussion. Each rubric has a section where participants must list evidence of why a particular implementation level was chosen: “We chose this implementation level as most closely describing our school because of the following evidence.” In addition, use of each rubric should conclude with educators responding to an important question: “What critical tasks must be completed to move our school to the next level?” Answers to this question will help the PLC plan appropriate steps to move forward in the continuous improvement process.

Educators do not have time to apply all 15 rubrics at the same time. In fact, if taken seriously, a school might choose to apply three, four, or five of the rubrics during the course of a school year making use of the rubrics a multi-year process. Done this way, participants should select those PLC dimensions that might make the biggest difference in improving their school. Focusing on a few dimensions at a time will allow participants to go deep in examining the school’s learning community.

Schools are encouraged to improve the rubrics. The descriptors for each level can be altered to better describe implementation progress. The rubrics in this toolbox provide a starting point; work on improving the rubrics can very well be part of the professional learning for participants

as they work hard to understand their implementation progress. As you work with the rubrics, please expand the sizes of the two boxes where evidence of implementation and critical tasks are listed. Obviously, more space will be needed.

### **How the rubrics SHOULD BE USED**

1. Used informally by educators to gauge implementation progress of professional learning communities.
2. Used as a springboard for deep discussion about the school’s PLC.
3. Used as a way of examining evidence of implementation and taking this evidence as the foundation for planning and implementing improvements in the PLC.
4. Used judiciously: 15 rubrics applied at the same time would be very burdensome if applied as intended; applied quickly with little thought would diminish the effectiveness of using such a tool to produce real evidence of implementation.
5. Used as part of a continuous improvement process so that the rubrics are used as regular intervals to check progress.

### **How the rubrics SHOULD NOT BE USED**

1. Do not use the rubrics as an evaluation instrument - no validity and reliability studies have been conducted.
2. Do not use the rubrics as a “gotcha” tool. They are designed for open, honest discussion of how a school can improve its PLC.
3. Do not attempt to apply all 15 rubrics in a short span of time; the result would be poor use of a tool that could produce very valuable information if used correctly.
4. Do not engage in deep conversations about implementation and then carelessly share information that might make the school look bad. Honest, but confidential discussions will result in improvement; sharing information out of context creates tension and makes people unwilling to engage in the future.

The chart on the next page summarizes the 15 dimensions of professional learning community. This chart is a good overview that helps the reader see the big picture and the three categories of dimensions - characteristics, structures, and supports

Professional Learning Communities – Characteristics, Structural Conditions, Supports – Kruse & Louis (1995)

<b>Characteristics of PLC</b>	<b>Structural Conditions that Support PLC</b>	<b>Support for PLC</b>
<p>1. Shared values and norms.</p> <p>An agreed upon set of core beliefs, values, and norms provides the foundation for teaching and learning.</p>	<p>1. Time is created for collaborative work.</p> <p>Regular blocks of time during the school day devoted to professional learning and school improvement for team and task groups.</p>	<p>1. Administrators and teachers are open to improvement.</p> <p>Improvement is viewed as routine. There is support for risk-taking.</p>
<p>2. Collaborative work.</p> <p>Mutual learning and discussion of classroom practice and performance. Sharing ideas, joint planning, setting common expectations.</p>	<p>2. Physical barriers to the PLC have been neutralized when possible.</p> <p>Creation of common work spaces. Arranging for close physical proximity to encourage collaborative work.</p>	<p>2. Levels of trust and respect are high.</p> <p>Expertise is honored, and there is a sense of loyalty and commitment. There is predictability because of commonly agreed upon norms, values, and beliefs.</p>
<p>3. Deprivatization of practice.</p> <p>Practice is open. Coaching and mentoring is the norm. Teaching problems are brought to the table. Successes are displayed.</p>	<p>3. The administration and the faculty understand the interdependence of teaching roles.</p> <p>Collaborative work is predictable and recurring. Teachers plan, teach, and problem-solve together.</p>	<p>3. Leadership is supportive of the work of the PLC.</p> <p>Leader actions signify support. Leaders focus on, learn about, and become experts in the learning community.</p>
<p>4. Collective focus on student learning.</p> <p>The collective conscience of the school puts student learning first.</p>	<p>4. Teachers are empowered to work in a PLC.</p> <p>Individual autonomy is put aside in favor of group autonomy. The impact of collective decisions and work is the focus. The school is empowered to work as an autonomous unit.</p>	<p>4. Socialization of new teachers and administrators has been thoughtfully designed into the PLCs work.</p> <p>Orientation of new members is thorough. New members quickly know the processes and the work of the school.</p>
<p>5. Use of reflective dialogue is part of the school's culture</p> <p>Public conversations that foster self-awareness focus on teaching practice and student learning. Isolation is reduced as teachers take on a school-wide focus.</p>	<p>5. Communication structures to support collaborative work are in place.</p> <p>Structures are in place and routines have been created that foster school-wide communication.</p>	<p>5. The cognitive/skill base of the faculty is strong.</p> <p>Expertise within the faculty is valued. Sharing knowledge is the norm, and ongoing learning is routine.</p>

PLC Implementation Assessment of Characteristic #1: Progress toward Consensus about Shared Beliefs, Values, and Norms

Performance Levels					
	<b>Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION</b>	<b>Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference</b>	<b>Underway, but making progress</b>	<b>Underway, but only beginning</b>	<b>Haven't Started</b>
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Shared beliefs, values and norms</b>	An agreed upon set of core beliefs, values, & norms routinely guide practice in our school. We have incorporated our shared beliefs, values, & norms into policies & structures to ensure consistency across the school. We regularly revisit our beliefs, values, & norms as part of a continuous improvement process, & make adjustments when necessary.	We have a consensus on a set of agreed upon core beliefs, values, & norms to guide teaching & learning. Our struggles are now to incorporate these consistently into our practice. We can see progress in measures of effective teaching and learning.	We are making progress in developing a set of agreed upon core beliefs, values, & norms. Deep discussions have surfaced disagreements; we are struggling to gain consensus.	We have acknowledged the need to develop a set of agreed upon core beliefs, values, & norms. Our discussions have scratched the surface. Discussions don't go deep because we don't yet know what others are thinking or we don't know what others might think about our beliefs and values.	There is no set of agreed upon core beliefs, values, & norms to assure that all students have access to best practices in teaching & learning. The work of teachers is guided by individual beliefs & values.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Characteristic #2: Strength of Focus on Collaborative Work

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Collaborative Work</b>	Policies & structures are in place that routinely guide the practice of collaborative teams in our school. Implementation is consistent across the school. Collaborative teams regularly evaluate their effectiveness as part of the school's continuous improvement process. Teams are always looking for tools to improve team effectiveness as measured by student performance.	We have consensus on essential questions to guide the work of collaborative teams. In addition, protocols are in place to assure that teams are efficient & effective in their work. The faculty agrees that collaboration is making a difference in teaching & learning; data is being produced that supports this feeling.	We are making progress in implementing collaborative teams. Most of the necessary teams are in place; the challenge now is for everyone to understand & use the structures that will make collaborative teams successful. Deep discussions have surfaced disagreements about the importance of collaboration, but we are working through the disagreements.	As a school, we have acknowledged the need to establish collaborative teams to share ideas, jointly plan, set common expectations, & use data to adjust practice. Some collaborative teams exist, but not everyone in the school understands the need to work together.	There is no agreement to engage in mutual learning & discussion of classroom practice & student performance. Teachers do not routinely share ideas with all appropriate colleagues. Collaborative teams are not in place to share ideas, jointly plan, set common expectations, & use data to adjust practice.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

**PLC Implementation Assessment of Characteristic #3 – Progress in Deprivatizing Practice**

<b>Performance Levels</b>	<b>Policy &amp; structures are in place supporting ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION</b>	<b>Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference</b>	<b>Underway, making some progress</b>	<b>Underway, but only beginning</b>	<b>Haven't Started</b>
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Deprivatizing Practice</b>	<p>Teaching practice is routinely deprivatized. Collegial teams work with other teams schoolwide when they see value in collegial feedback across teams. Policies &amp; structures are in place to routinely guide the practice of collegial sharing &amp; feedback across the school. Implementation is consistent across the school. Teams are always looking for tools to improve team effectiveness as measured by student performance. Examination of practice is part of a continuous improvement process.</p>	<p>We have consensus on the need for policies and structures to support various collegial feedback processes as well as how to share problems of practice and data in collaborative team meetings. In addition, protocols are being tried out to make sure teams are efficient and effective in examining practice. The faculty agrees that collegial feedback is making a difference in teaching and learning; data is being produced that supports this.</p>	<p>We are making progress in implementing collaborative feedback processes. There is consensus around the value of collegial feedback, and many are experimenting with various feedback processes. At collaborative team meetings, problems are openly discussed by some teachers, but others are reluctant to share about problems or share data. The challenge now is for everyone to become comfortable with collegial support. We are working to determine appropriate policies and structures that will make deprivatizing practice routine.</p>	<p>As a school, we have acknowledged the need to deprivatize practice through collegial mentoring, coaching, or other feedback processes. Some teachers engage in collegial feedback processes, but this is not common practice across the school. Teachers sometimes discuss problems of practice with other team members, but this also is not common practice. Everyone is not comfortable with collegial practices that deprivatize practice.</p>	<p>Teaching is a private practice in our school. Teachers rarely observe one another teaching outside of mentors observing novice teachers. There is no agreement to engage in collegial mentoring, coaching, or other feedback processes that support collaborative examination of practice. Teachers rarely discuss problems of practice with team members.</p>
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Characteristic #4: Expanding Our Collective Focus on Student Learning

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, but making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
PLC Dimension					
<b>Collective focus on student learning</b>	All staff are collaborating & supporting the focus on student learning. School decisions about policies & structures are made through the lens of student learning. There is a schoolwide effort to identify roadblocks to student learning that might be difficult to spot. We are engaged in helping the community understand & value the focus on student learning. As part of a continuous improvement process, data about structures & processes is examined to assess impact on student learning.	Structures & policies supporting a collective focus on student learning are commonly understood & practiced schoolwide. Protocols are in place to assure this focus is implemented schoolwide. Faculty agrees a schoolwide focus on student learning is making a difference; data is produced supporting this belief. We are examining how to engage auxiliary staff like counselors & social workers in supporting the student learning focus.	We are making progress in creating a schoolwide collective focus on student learning. Discussions are deep and sometimes difficult. More adults are using the terms "our," & "we," suggesting progress. Many policies & structures have changed to support a focus on student learning. The challenge now is for everyone to understand & use the structures that will make a collective focus on student learning a reality.	As a school, we have acknowledged that student learning should be our priority, but we have not yet figured out the old beliefs, policies, & structures that must change to make student learning at high levels a reality. Discussions take place about student learning, but it is hard for some adults to see how they are responsible for the learning of all students; there is a strong sense of "my students," rather than "our students."	There is no common understanding across the school that all adults are responsible for the learning of all students. Adults mostly talk about "my students" & "your students." Little time has been spent to examine alignment of beliefs, curriculum, instructional practices, and school procedures to determine impact on student well-being. Little attention has been given to making student learning the priority of the school.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Characteristic #5: Progress toward Using Reflective Dialogue as Part of the Culture

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Use of Reflective Dialogue is Part of the School's Culture</b>	Reflective dialogue has become common practice across the school. As a result, teachers are more effective in helping students learn reflective dialogue skills. Students are often seen using reflective practices in classrooms.	Structures & policies supporting reflective dialogue are in place. A core group has become comfortable with the practice & is helping other teachers practice & develop reflection skills. People are noticing discussions schoolwide are much more focused on student learning & problems of practice. Some teachers are finding reflective practice protocols are useful to their students.	More teachers are engaged in the practice of reflective dialogue. Some protocols have been developed to support reflective dialogue practices, even though many participants find the process awkward. Some teachers still see reflective dialogue as time consuming & unnecessary.	As a school, we have acknowledged that reflective dialogue should be an integral part of collaborative work. It seems like a good idea, but few make time to learn how to use reflective dialogue. No protocols are in place to structure reflective dialogue. In addition, policies that support the practice are not in place.	There is no common schoolwide acceptance of reflective dialogue as an important part of adult learning & school improvement. Individuals might engage in self-reflection, but few engage in reflection with others. Some are threatened by the idea; some see reflection as time consuming, preferring to devote more time to working alone. Because reflective dialogue is not common practice, many teachers feel isolated in addressing problems of practice.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Structural Condition #1: Progress Is Being Made in Creating Time for Collaborative Work

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Time Created for Collaborative Work</b>	Common planning for collaborative team work & learning has become a routine part of the school's structure. Collaborative teams use time effectively & efficiently. Data indicate student performance is higher. As part of the continuous improvement process, the school regularly examines the effectiveness of how collaborative teams use time & makes adjustments when deemed necessary.	We have implemented policies & created structures to support the work of collaborative team use of common planning time. There is a consensus that common planning is a time for all collaborative team members to work together not only planning, but also examining student work samples, analyzing data, & working on problems of practice. Anecdotal observations suggest common planning time results in all students being exposed to the same curriculum & held to the same standards; common assessments create formative data used by teams to make adjustments in teaching.	We are making progress in finding ways for collaborative teams to work together. We have made some adjustments to the master schedule to create common planning time. This works for most, but not all, of the faculty. We are working to determine appropriate policies & structures that will strengthen how we use time. Not everyone understands the proposed policies & structures; often we hear teachers talk about "my planning period" & how collaborative team work will penalize their personal planning time.	As a school, we have acknowledged the need to rearrange time so collaborative teams can work together, but so far, we have not made changes. Some teachers make time to work together on a regular basis, but this is not practiced schoolwide. Consequently, collaborative work on data, analyzing student work, discussion of problems of practice & other collaborative work is inconsistent across the school. Time on task with students is often heard as the reason we should not change.	Use of time has not changed in the school & no one has sought ideas for how time can be created for the work of collaborative teams. As a result, teaching continues to be primarily private practice. Teachers may find time to plan together, but little or no time is made for analyzing data & student work as a way of making decisions about instruction. Since time is not made for collaborative team work, teachers rarely discuss problems of practice with team members.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Structural Condition #2: Progress in Eliminating Physical Barriers to the PLC

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Physical barriers to the PLC have been neutralized when possible</b>	Collaborative team work is a routine part of how the school works. Members of these teams acknowledge that changing how space is used has had a positive impact on how effectively & efficiently the school operates. As part of the continuous improvement process, the school regularly examines the use of space to determine impact on collaborative work as well as impact on teaching & learning, & makes adjustments when necessary.	We have implemented policies & created structures to regulate the use of classrooms & work spaces in ways that support the work of collaborative teams. Most teachers find the changes to be suitable & admit that collaborative work is made easier when team members are in close proximity. If work spaces have been created to support collaboration, teachers find these spaces to be suitable.	We are making progress in finding ways for members of collaborative teams to work in close proximity. We have also identified some spaces suitable for collaborative team meetings. This works for most, but not all, of the faculty. We are working to determine appropriate policies & structures that will strengthen how we use spaces in our school. Some teachers are not happy with moving classrooms since "I've taught 10 years in MY room; I don't see why it's so important for me to move."	As a school, we have acknowledged the need to address physical barriers that interfere with collaborative team work, but discussions indicate a reluctance to move teacher classrooms or look for spaces that can be used for collaborative team work.	Physical barriers to the PLC have not been addressed. There has been no analysis or discussion of how physical barriers might impact the PLC & collaborative teams. As a result, some teachers are isolated & their participation in the PLC & collaborative teams is limited by their isolation. Since physical barriers have not been addressed, It is difficult for members of collaborative teams to work together.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Structural Condition #3: Increasing Understanding of The Interdependence of Teaching Roles

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Everyone understands the interdependence of teaching roles</b>	Because all adults in the school understand the interdependence of teaching roles, student performance has improved. People have noticed that rates of teacher attrition have sharply declined. The language of adults in the school is always about "we" & "our" in reference to students and the work of teachers. When new staff is hired, leaders & teachers make sure they understand how everyone works together.	Discussions have resulted in creation of structures & policies supporting interdependent work across the school. There is a consensus that because students are "ours," we must work interdependently. We are finding data such as attendance, discipline, dropout, & classroom performance indicating across-school collaboration makes a difference for students.	We are making progress in creating a schoolwide understanding of how teaching roles are interdependent. We are having regular discussions to pinpoint curriculum overlap as places to work together. In addition, we have begun to routinely discuss shared students and their learning challenges. School leaders are helping by identifying resources to support common work across the school.	As a school, we have acknowledged that we need to find more ways to work together since we often share the same students & because curriculum does overlap. We've made little progress, though, because we haven't reached any agreements about the interdependence of teaching roles. Some don't see how working together regularly can improve student learning, although they agree to do some common projects with colleagues.	There is no common understanding across the school that all adults are responsible for the learning of all students & therefore their roles are interdependent. Adults mostly talk about "my class/my department" and "administrators don't understand what it's like." Teachers spend little time working together to address common problems. Teachers view school leaders as out of touch with challenges teachers face. "It's not my responsibility" is commonly heard.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment for Structural Condition #4: Progress in **Empowering Teachers to Work in a PLC**

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Teachers are empowered to work in a PLC</b>	Teachers & leaders are routinely engaged in conversations about teaching & learning; both parties feel the conversations are two-way & productive. Teachers frequently take the lead to solve schoolwide problems of practice. More teachers call themselves teacher leaders: some occupy newly created teacher leader roles or act in informal roles as teacher leaders. Data supports the direction in which the school has moved.	Policies & structures that support empowerment are in place & seem to be working. The “way we do business around here” has changed & people are beginning to understand how empowerment works. There is acceptance that empowerment allows those closest to the work to make important decisions about the work. We are beginning to see progress in measures of effective teaching and learning. Teacher attrition has declined.	In-depth discussions have resulted in reaching consensus on how to define teacher empowerment in our school. We are making progress in developing a set of policies & structures to support the work of empowered teachers. We still struggle with the belief of some that this is a way of dumping work on teachers & just a fad that will go away. There is a lot of excitement, though, because articles the faculty has been reading suggest empowerment works.	There have been discussions about empowerment. School leaders are attempting to engage teachers in minor decision-making roles regarding curriculum & instruction. Many teachers are suspicious; some see this as a way for the administration to dump work on teachers. There is a lot of uncertainty and lack of trust among teachers & school leaders.	There is no set of agreed upon core beliefs, values, & norms that support the empowerment of teachers. Decisions are top down. Teachers may serve in advisory capacities, but significant decisions about curriculum, instruction, & use of data are determined by administrators. Teachers view themselves as autonomous practitioners, not a collective whole responsible for “our students.”
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of Structural Condition #5: Improving Communication Structures to Support Collaboration

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
PLC Dimension					
<b>Communication structures are in place to support collaborative work</b>	Communication structures to support collaborative work are routinely used by the school. There is discussion of how to expand communication to parents & even to other schools. Some teachers want to create a blog or use some other process to expand the school learning community to include educators in other settings. As part of the continuous improvement process, there is regular examination of the effectiveness of schoolwide communication; adjustments are made when needed.	We have implemented policies & created structures that support schoolwide communication about the work of collaborative teams. There is consensus that we should focus communication on issues related to teaching & learning, including recognition of individual student & teacher successes. Anecdotal observations suggest teachers are routinely taking responsibility for schoolwide communication of collaborative work. Teachers admit they are learning a lot from others they rarely have direct contact with.	We are making progress in finding ways to communicate across collaborative teams. We reached consensus on several communication tools that we are now implementing. We still don't have total buy in about the use of these tools, but many individual teachers & collaborative teams are beginning to use these tools.	As a school, we have acknowledged the need to improve communication across the school to allow teachers to share ideas and successes & learn from one another. However, we have only begun to consider how this might be done. Teachers are beginning to experiment with ways to improve communication within their grade level or departmental teams, but all have not been sold on the value of communicating about instruction across the school.	No changes have been made in how we conduct schoolwide communication. No one has sought ideas for how communication can be improved to support collaborative work. As a result, teachers continue to work primarily in isolation. In cases where teachers do work together, it is unlikely others in the school will know the results of their work.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of PLC Support #1: Growth in Leader & Teacher Openness to Improvement

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>School leaders and teachers are open to improvement</b>	The language of continuous improvement is routinely used by teachers & leaders as they regularly examine how to improve teaching & learning. Policies & procedures are in place & updated as needed. Discussion about the impact of beliefs is part of the school's culture. Risk-taking based on data is encouraged. Teachers have implemented classroom protocols to support student risk-taking too. Data indicate student achievement is higher since risk-taking became part of the school's culture.	Structures and policies supporting continuous improvement are commonly understood and practiced schoolwide. More protocols are in place that support continuous improvement & are being used schoolwide. There is general agreement across the faculty that beliefs about teaching & learning have a direct impact on student achievement. Collaborative team meetings give attention to supporting teachers as they experiment with new ideas.	School leaders are providing training for teachers to enhance their skills in continuous improvement work. Some protocols are being tried that support continuous improvement. Teachers & leaders are becoming comfortable with discussions about adult beliefs & their impact on teaching and learning. Data sharing processes have recently been established; teachers are sharing, but some reluctantly. More teachers are trying out new ideas as they become comfortable with the belief that failure is part of the formative process leading to success.	School leaders know GaDOE has developed a continuous improvement cycle, but teachers have little or no understanding of how this cycle applies at the school & classroom level. Some discussions have taken place regarding beliefs about teaching & learning, but there is no consensus about the impact of these beliefs on students. Only a few teachers occasionally share data; there is no process for schoolwide sharing. Only a few teachers openly discuss their successes & failures when trying new ideas.	There is no common understanding across the school of a cycle of continuous improvement. Little time has been spent examining beliefs about teaching & learning & how these beliefs may relate to student achievement & student well-being. Because data is not shared among teachers, little or no attention is given to improvement issues that span grade levels or subject areas. Teachers & leaders are reluctant to try new ideas & risk failure because there is no sense of support for one another.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of PLC Support #2: Moving to Higher Levels of Trust and Respect

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Levels of trust and respect are high</b>	Data indicate trust levels are high. Teachers across the school use many of the trust building strategies they have learned to work on trust issues in their classrooms. No one takes trust for granted. We are always aware that trust is fragile so we regularly examine ways to maintain high levels of trust.	Discussions as well as the work of a committee have resulted in creation of structures and policies to improve shared decision-making, communication, consistency in addressing problems, & other trust issues. Faculty study groups (or an outside facilitator) are helping us make real progress to improve trust. Continued use of surveys & other feedback mechanisms indicate we are making progress.	We are making progress by using surveys to determine specific trust issues. A committee is examining survey results and developing proposals to address concerns. As we become more comfortable with the concept of PLCs, we are finding it easier to discuss tough issues like trust. Some grade or subject area teams are creating guidelines that address some of the trust issues like communication and decision-making. School leaders and teacher leaders have identified resources we can use to improve trust in our school.	As a school, we have acknowledged that we need to work on trusting one another, but we haven't accomplished much because no one really knows where to start. People feel better since the problem has been acknowledged, but are frustrated that little different is happening. School leaders put trust on the agenda at some meetings, but we haven't gotten beyond acknowledging the problem.	There is little trust of school leaders & among colleagues. People are concerned about breaches of confidentiality. People don't feel supported by leaders or colleagues. Agreements are often not honored, & sometimes people accuse one another of not being truthful. Important information is often not shared. People don't have confidence in each other, so there is little chance decision-making will be shared. Problem resolution is often avoided & difficult situations are often put off.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

**PLC Implementation Assessment of PLC Support #3: Leadership Is Supportive of the Work of the PLC**

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
PLC Dimension					
<b>Leadership is supportive of the work of the PLC</b>	Teachers & leaders are routinely engaged in conversations about teaching & learning; both parties feel the conversations are two-way & productive. Because “the way we do our work” has changed, teachers frequently take the lead to solve schoolwide problems of practice. More teachers call themselves teacher leaders: some occupy newly created teacher leader roles or act in informal roles as teacher leaders. School leaders ensure that teacher leaders have appropriate training & support as they lead collaborative teams. Data supports the direction in which the school has moved.	School leaders show support for the work by agreeing to policies & structures that support the PLC; new ways of doing business seem to be working. School leaders clearly do different work than before: they are more engaged with collaborative teams regarding teaching & learning. School & teacher leaders continue to learn about the importance of their roles in support of the PLC. Protocols are routinely used. We are seeing progress in measures of effective teaching & learning. Teacher attrition has declined.	School leaders have participated in training about the work of the PLC. They are now leading discussions about the kinds of changes that need to be made in structures & policies. Discussions suggest some of the present teacher leaders may not be suited to lead collaborative teams. School leaders express openness to getting the right teacher leaders in place. There is some dissension about changes like this, but school leaders attempt to use protocols to lead meaningful discussions & make collaborative decisions that engage interested faculty.	Discussions about PLCs and collaborative work have begun, leaders admit to needing more information and resources about PLCs, but no concrete evidence exists to suggest school leaders and teacher leaders understand the importance of their support for the work of the PLC. Following faculty & leadership team discussions, school leaders have decided to seek expert help to learn more about PLC implementation.	The everyday work of school leaders & teacher leaders (grade level chairs, department chairs, & others) has not changed. Leadership tends to be more about managing than leading. Even though teachers may serve in an advisory capacity, decision-making is top down. School & teacher leaders know very little about learning communities and collaborative teams; there seems to be little effort to learn.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

PLC Implementation Assessment of PLC Support #4: Progress in Focusing on Socialization of New Teachers and Leaders

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
<b>PLC Dimension</b>					
<b>Socialization of new teachers &amp; leaders has been thoughtfully designed into the PLC's work</b>	Collaborative teams are involved in making hiring decisions about new teachers. Orientation & mentoring of new staff is routinely implemented and regularly evaluated. Teacher attrition has declined. Data suggest that new teacher performance quickly aligns with the performance of strong veteran teachers.	The new orientation process for new staff is in place and each year assessed for effectiveness. Changes have been made based on feedback from new staff. Protocols have been developed for interviews, orientation, and mentoring new staff. Mentoring is becoming more consistent because mentors are trained to use specific protocols when working with new staff. New staff more quickly become engaged in the PLC.	Printed orientation materials about the PLC have been developed. In addition, the faculty handbook contains a detailed section about the work of the PLC. Mentors are trained to ensure consistency in messaging about the PLC. Leaders have engaged the faculty in discussions about those characteristics people need to work effectively in a PLC. There is discussion of seeking district approval to secure expert help in designing a dispositions instrument to use in the interview process.	Newcomers get minimal information about the PLC. Since mentors are not trained & there are no printed materials about the PLC, what & how much new staff learns varies widely. Interviewees are informed of the PLC, but little consideration is given to whether the applicant is a good fit for collaborative work. There are discussions about producing print materials to give each new staff member, & there has been discussion of making the PLC a prominent topic for orientation sessions.	Teachers & leaders new to the school go through an orientation program, but this program does not address the history of the school's PLC or how the PLC functions. Printed materials for new staff do not address the PLC or collaborative teams. New staff may be assigned mentors, but mentors have no training in how to orient new staff to the PLC. When interviews for new staff are conducted, little or no consideration is given to whether the applicant is a good fit for collaborative work.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

**PLC Implementation Assessment of PLC Support #5: Making The Cognitive/Skill Base of the Faculty Strong**

Performance Levels	Policy and structures are in place to support ongoing continuous improvement; we are performing at a high level on THIS DIMENSION	Underway, a lot of progress has been made and we can see a difference	Underway, making some progress	Underway, but only beginning	Haven't Started
PLC Dimension					
<b>The cognitive /skill base of the faculty is strong</b>	Collaborative learning is routine in the school. The teacher leader role is highly valued as a source of expertise, but all teachers are comfortable sharing problems of practice & seeking solutions from colleagues. Some teachers & leaders are providing professional learning for other schools or at professional meetings. Student achievement has steadily risen.	Structures and policies supporting the PLC & collaborative work are in place & working. Various teachers & leaders have been identified for their particular expertise & have become professional learning providers when workshops are needed. Outside experts are still used, but much more judiciously than in the past. Collaborative teams realize working on the work is a way of learning and are valuing the chance to learn from colleagues.	More teachers are buying into the idea of job-embedded learning. Here & there throughout the school, teachers are sharing ideas and trying them out in the classroom. Some policies & structures are in place to support collaborative work, but some teachers are still reluctant to engage in collaborative learning.	Initial discussions have been held about job-embedded learning; some faculty like this idea, but others are reluctant to believe they can learn from working on the work. Workshops are still seen as the best way to improve expertise. Since there are no policies or structures in place to support collaborative teams, there is little opportunity to learn from others.	There is a pervasive belief that knowledge & skill is gained mostly in degree programs & sometimes through professional development courses. Leaders & teachers don't consider colleagues as experts or as sources of professional learning. Faculty have a hard time understanding why certificate renewal no longer counts PLUs. Faculty expertise is kept secret because of perceived or real pressure from others to keep quiet.
<b>Evidence Supporting Our Implementation Rating:</b>					
<b>What are the critical tasks we must complete to move our PLC to the next level?</b>					

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