

PLC Implementation Plan: Pine Mountain Middle School

	This Year 2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Focus on Learning	<p>Begin Revising Practices (grading, recovery etc.) – (#2)</p> <p>Begin Establishing Priority Standards (#1)</p>	<p>Focused Weekly PLC meetings</p> <p>Implement Electives Based on Student Needs</p> <p>Begin Creating an RTI Pyramid of School Wide Interventions (#3)</p>	<p>Focus is More on #3 and #4</p>
Collaboration	<p>Shared Leadership</p> <p>Establishing Relationships</p> <p>Establishing PLC Teams</p> <p>Establishing a Healthy School Culture of Problem Solvers</p>	<p>Establishing PLC Roles</p> <p>Establishing PLC Norms</p>	<p>PLC's Meet More Than Weekly</p>
Results Oriented	<p>Establishing SMART Goals</p>	<p>Common Assessments</p> <p>Timely Data Analysis Weekly and Quarterly</p> <p>Common Gradebooks</p> <p>PLC Minutes</p>	<p>Consistency in Grading</p> <p>Uniting PLC's</p>

Northwestern Middle School



Professional Learning Community Manual

2014-2015 School Year

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Leadership Team Responsibilities

Grade Level Chair Versus Content Chair

Grade Level Chair	Content Chair
Monitor teacher attendance/tardies	Review PLC units
Review discipline write ups before given to admin	Review minutes from PLC minutes
Weekly communication to department via email	Monitor weekly PLC emails/blogs/websites
Facilitate bi-weekly or monthly meetings	Facilitate content meetings
Bring grade level concerns to ILT	Bring content concerns to ILT
Plan and organize field trips for grade level	Attend county meetings
Locker keys	Attend PLC meetings to offer support when needed
Arrange class splits when there is no sub	Approve instructional videos
Organize grade level tasks and committees	Approve department spending
Monitor teacher duty posts (am/pm) periodically	Teacher observations
Monitor online grade level calendars	Communicate as needed from admin/county



PLC Teams



Language Arts PLC's By Grade

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Diane Biesadecki	Natalie Butterworth	Amy Deal
Tracey Miller	Marlene Hosmer	Ann Gambil
Ann Roberts	Allison Plott	Barbara Irons
Gabrielle Van Hoesen	Kevin Rembert	Lindsey Murano
	Harriett Tuggle	Christie Street
	Diane Wilson	Samantha Sturm

Math PLC's By Grade

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Kim Cherry	Margie Halls	Julie Z Bailey
Johndra Jordan	Patti Harden	Tammy Daniel
Haley Mascaritolo	Frank Kline	Leslie Harris
Rebecca Yun	Rachel Luthringer	Bo Jackson
	Ellen Mayo	John Pearson
		Sherri Wylie

Science PLC's By Grade

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Allison Adams	John Bartlett	Kristen Brening
Trace Burnetto	Cat Boggus	Julie Cohen
Vonya Green	Kent Cranor	Scott Diesch
Regina Karow	Julie Godfrey	Jacques Johnson
Paula Perque	Katie Long	Natalie Rankart
		Kataryzna Trainum

Social Studies PLC's By Grade

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Kristen Evans	Allison Major	Michael Brennan
John Crumb	Rebecca Manny	Bruce Fielden
Stephanie Jeffries	Robin Moore	Kelly Hummel
Lana Smith	Amy Rugg	Deana Skimel
Julie Warner	Nicholas Waltz	Jeff Swope

World Language PLC's By Grade

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Carmen Gama	Jose Franco	Ivy Chiodo
Fernando Gonzalez	Diona Nadir	Karl Myrthil
Amy Kunin	Amy Kunin	Kimi Orr
	Karl Myrthil	Katherine Ziolkowski
	Kimi Orr	

PE/Health PLC

Karla Armstrong
Kelly Conron
Darren Holzapfel
Marie Lewis
Cara Miller
Tim Godby
Eric Swanburg



PLC Meeting Days and Rooms

Every Thursday

8th Grade: 9:20am - 11:00am

Content	Room Number
Math	815
Science	802
ELA	821
SS	806
WL	105

7th Grade: 11:45am - 1:20pm

Content	Room Number
Math	714
Science	702
ELA	725
SS	705
WL	127

6th Grade: 2:30pm -4:00pm

Content	Room Number
Math	616
Science	602
ELA	624
SS	605
WL	918

PE and Health

1:30pm - 2:00pm

Our Non-Negotiables

1. Do we have to meet every Thursday?

Yes. No other meetings are allowed during that time. The expectation is every PLC is meeting for the duration of the planning time.

2. Do our assessments (quizzes, tests, performance assessments) have to be the same?

Yes. All assessments are required to be the same from beginning to end. The assessments in the special education and TAG/advanced classes should have the appropriate accommodations. However, all assessments at each level are required to be the same (eg. On-level assessments are the same, TAG/advanced assessments are the same).

3. What about class work and anything else other than tests/quizzes/performance assessments?

Your day to day class work can be different but the number of grades in your gradebook has to be the same as your PLC members. At the beginning of your units, as a PLC, decide on how many assessments/grades you think are sufficient and then pick what those assessments will be. Therefore, classroom assignments, lessons, etc. could differ from teacher to teacher depending on the needs of the students and teacher style, but the number of grades given to students needs to be the same.

4. What about data?

Data needs to be discussed in a timely fashion so student concerns can be addressed and planned for. This means any minor assessment given between Friday and Wednesday, should be discussed at that next Thursday's PLC meeting so instruction can be adjusted, and plans can be put in place to help students before the next assessment.

5. How are we implementing SMART goals?

This year, our SMART goals in each PLC will be related to class failures.

6. What will happen in the curriculum quarterlies?

Your PLC will meet with your content chair, counselor, graduation coach and administrators to go through summative assessment data from each quarter. Everyone is required to be in attendance. SMART goals will be reviewed and examined if they were met. Specifically, each PLC should bring and be prepared to discuss the following:

- Summative assessment and recovery data
- Results of the SMART goals
- Names of students still failing and strategies tried
- Assessments

7. Are minutes required during PLC meetings?

Yes. They need to be emailed to your content chair and all administrators by Friday afternoon.

8. What should the agenda for PLC meetings look like?

The agenda should always be focused on 4 major questions:

- 1) What do you want the students to learn?
- 2) How do you know they learned it?
- 3) What will you do when they don't learn it?
- 4) What will you do when they do learn it?

9. What if PLC members want to discuss something outside of the 4 questions listed on the agenda?

No. Your conversations should only be based on those 4 questions. Anything outside of those questions should be discussed at some other time.

10. How much time should be spent on each question?

You may only discuss 1-2 questions in your PLC meeting and that's okay. You are not required to go through all 4 questions. Some weeks, the focus may be on number 1 as you are planning a unit whereas another week your focus may be on question 2 as your focus is on creating a common assessment. And yet other weeks your focus may be on question 3 and 4 to discuss specific students. However, PLC's should ensure time is spent on all 4 questions throughout a specific unit. In other words, you should not be spending every meeting discussing question 1 – you are required to move on to other questions so that student needs can be addressed. Questions 3 and 4 are probably the hardest but that's where the most important work is.

PLC Roles Defined

Facilitator

- Develop the agenda and distribute to everyone prior to meeting
- Facilitate the meeting
- Keep team focused on the agenda
- Ensure all voices are heard

Recorder

- Takes minutes
- Records dates on shared calendar
- Records plans for the upcoming week and shares with team

Time Keeper

- Monitors time
- Keeps everyone on the topic being discussed
- Monitors start and end time of meeting
- Tables topics for discussion when appropriate
- Calls for making a decision when appropriate

Data Analyst

- Collects test and quiz data from everyone prior to meeting
- Records every teacher's data and distributes to everyone prior to meeting or at meeting
- Facilitates discussion on students' achievement

TKEYS Coordinator

- Ensures the TKEYS rubric is at every meeting
- Asks questions about how tkeys standards are being addressed for every lesson



PLC Meeting Agenda Template

Content	
Grade	
Date	

Roles	Person Responsible

Norms

Agenda (sample items listed underneath each heading)

1. What do we want students to learn?

- a) Plan units and essential questions
- b) Create pre-tests
- c) Analyze pre-test results
- d) Review lesson plans for the week
- e) Review content to be covered
- f) Discuss different strategies/ideas

2. How do we know they've learned it?

- a) Create common assessments and rubrics
- b) Discuss various formative assessment strategies
- c) Review and discuss assessment data

3. What do we do when students don't learn it?

- a) Discuss strategies to help students who did not learn it
- b) Create plans for recovery
- c) What worked for success

4. What do we do when students do learn it?

- a) Discuss strategies for enrichment
- b) Create extension activities

- ❖ *Every item you have on the agenda should fit under one of the 4 headings/questions above*
- ❖ *In some meetings, you may not discuss all 4 headings/questions*

PLC Meeting Agenda Examples

Sample Agenda 1

Main Goal for Today: Create common assessment

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - a) Plan lessons for upcoming week (10 minutes)
 - b) Discuss how to differentiate 1 of those lessons (20 minutes)
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a) Create common assessment for end of unit (30 minutes)
 - b) Discuss data from previous quiz (10 minutes)
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
 - a) Discuss strategies for students who failed previous quiz (20 minutes)
- 4. What do we do when students do learn it?**
 - a) Create extension activities (10 minutes)

Sample Agenda 2

Main Goal for Today: Create rubric

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - a) Plan lessons for upcoming week (10 minutes)
 - b) Set dates for upcoming assessments (5 minutes)
 - c) Discuss how to make 1 of the lessons academically challenging (20 minutes)
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a) Create rubric for performance assessment (25 minutes)
 - b) Discuss data from previous quiz (10 minutes)
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
 - a) Discuss strategies for students who failed previous quiz (20 minutes)
- 4. What do we do when students do learn it?**
 - a) Create extension activities (10 minutes)

Sample Agenda 3

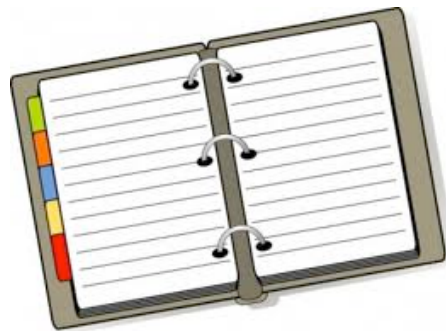
Main Goal for Today: Consistency in Grading

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - a) Write EQ's for upcoming week (10 minutes)
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a) Assess some essays together to grade consistently (60 minutes)
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
 - a) Discuss strategies for students who are currently failing (20 minutes)
- 4. What do we do when students do learn it?**
 - a) Create extension activities (10 minutes)

Sample Agenda 4

Main Goal for Today: Plan Next Unit (Backwards Design)

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - a) Plan upcoming unit plan – outline of all lessons/topics (40 minutes)
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a) Create all major common assessments for the unit (60 minutes)
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
 - a) N/A
- 4. What do we do when students do learn it?**
 - a) N/A



Example of PLC Minutes: Science

Content	Physical Science
Grade	8
Date	1/15/15

Roles	Person Responsible
Facilitator	Kristin Brening
Time Keeper	Julie Cohen
Recorder	Natalie Rankart
Data Analyst	Jacques Johnson
Calendar Person	Katrina Trainum

Norms

Work to have an honest and open atmosphere so that everyone can contribute equally.
Be a professional by being on time and respectfully communicating to each other
Give 100% by being prepared and contributing to the conversation.
Each person should focus on the task at hand and amend the agenda beforehand unless the thought arises during the meeting.

Agenda:

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - Plans for next week –types of simple machines and test review-completed
 - Team Teaching Time –completed
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a. Decide on points for the “you have the power” lab-completed
 - b. Edit unit 3B test-completed
 - c. Create formative assessments for next week’s lessons-ME and MA practice, TOTD in order to review for the test (ME and MA, Levers)
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
 - a. Instructional strategies for students who are struggling-
 - i. Provide formulas for the test

- ii. Communicate with parents and attach the study guide and answer key
- iii. Bring in real life examples of levers

b. Ideas for differentiating our lessons next week- Simple Machine mini-project, Lever labeling activity, ME/MA practice, Friday test review

4. What do we do when students do learn it?

- Ideas for extension/enrichment –Rube Goldberg Machine, Newton’s 2nd Law of Motion lab

5. Homework:

- Send quiz data to Jacques by Wednesday
- Work and Power tests
- TOTD on Wednesday ME/MA



Example of PLC Minutes: Math

Content	Mathematics
Grade	8
Date	2.5.15

Roles	Person Responsible
Facilitator (creates Agenda)	Bo Jackson
Recorder	Tammy Daniel
Time Keeper	John Pearson
Data Analyst	Leslie Harris
TKEYS Coordinator	Sherri Wylie
Team Teaching	Julie Zahner-Bailey

Norms

1. Come prepared
2. Be on time
3. Stay on task
4. Be open to other's opinions, listening carefully and reflectively

Main Goals for Today: Create common assessment/Review Quiz Data

- 1. What do we want students to learn?**
 - a) Plan lessons for upcoming week (10 minutes)
 - a. Unit 6 is all updated in Planbook.edu through solving systems by elimination.
 - b. All materials are attached for teacher use
 - c. 2nd quiz scheduled for 2.13.15 and Test for 2.24.15
 - b) Discuss how to differentiate 1 of those lessons (20 minutes)
 - a. Discussed effectiveness of 'post-it' lesson for substitution
 - b. Illustrated a lesson similar for elimination
 - i. Write two addition or subtraction statements
 - ii. Show how when combined the result is another true statement
- 2. How do we know they've learned it?**
 - a) Create common assessment for end of unit (30 minutes)

- a. Discussed points for 2.6.15 quiz (9 points each problem with partial credit)
 - b. Reviewed Quiz 2 for 2.13.15 includes:
 - i. Checking a solution (1)
 - ii. Solve by graphing (1)
 - iii. Solve by substitution (1)
 - iv. Solve by elimination (4)
- b) Discuss data from previous quiz (10 minutes)
- a. Turn in Unit 5 test and Unit 6 Pre-test data to Leslie by 2.10.15
- 3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**
- b) Discuss strategies for students who failed previous quiz (20 minutes)
 - a. Not needed today- Unit 5 quiz results are superior!
- 4. What do we do when students do learn it?**
- b) Create extension activities (10 minutes)-we have multiple scavenger hunts, puzzles to use



Example of PLC Minutes: Social Studies

Content	Social Studies
Grade	7
Date	11.13.14

Roles	Person Responsible
Facilitator	Alison Major
Data keeper	Nicholas Watz
TKEYS facilitator	Amy Rugg
Minutes keeper	Becca Manny
Team Teaching	Robin Moore

Norms

1. Respect each other
2. Be on time
3. Listen to new ideas
4. Everyone contributes

1. What do we want students to learn?

a. Discussed different strategies/ideas

- Junior Scholastics, scantrons or new computer program?
- Geography stations: map tag, race the arrow, descriptor cards, Barbasol map, etc
- Monsoon reading, group think post-in note activity, interactive flow chart
- Pollution readings with literature circles
- Desk maps
- Pollution solutions bill to law
- Pollution demonstration, Ganges video

2. How do we know if they have learned it?

a. Reviewed and discussed assessment data

- quiz data from yesterday's quiz reviewed and discussed
- Made changes to quiz for next year

3. What do we do when students don't learn it?

a. Created plans for recovery – review recovery sheet from Deana

- What worked for success
 - Gallopade small group pull-out
 - Webquest independent activity

4. What do we do when students do learn it?

a. Created extension activities

- Trouble at the Taj Mahal reading and annotating



Example of PLC Minutes: Language Arts

Content	ELA
Grade	7th
Date	2/12/15
Time	11:45-1:20

Roles

Cat Boggus	Data Analyst
Natalie Butterworth	Facilitator
Marlene Hosmer	TKEYS Coordinator
Harriet Tuggle	Time Keeper
Kevin Rembert	Historian
Diana Wilson	Recorder
Allison Plott	Data Analyst

Norms

Be on time
No whining or off-task behavior
Volunteer your strengths
Come prepared
Follow roles for PLC members

Main Goals for Today: Calibrate Scoring of Essays

1. What do we want students to learn?

Review Lesson Plans for 2/16 – 2/20

- a. Link for Shared Lesson Plans
- b. Outline for next Unit –
 - i. “Rikki Tikki Tavi”
 1. ELACCRL6 – How author develops & contrasts Points of View of characters (Story is 3rd person omniscient)
 2. ELACCRL7 – Compare & contrast text to video
 3. ELACCRL2 – How does an author reveal and develop a theme?
- c. Plan for Major/Minor assessments
 1. Formative:
 - i. Comparison to Video ESSAY?

ii. Narrative essay related to personal conflict?

2. Summative:

- i. TEST over concepts covered in unit
- ii. Literary analysis essay?

2. How do we know they've learned it?

- 1. Calibrating the scoring of the Literary Analysis Essay (Major Assessment)
 - i. Everyone score two of the same essays (one low, one high)
 - ii. Have completed by planning meeting on Tuesday so we can compare marks and calibrate.

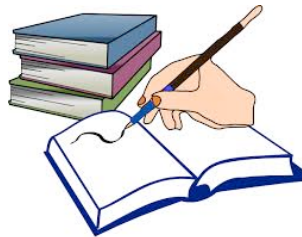
3. What do we do when students don't learn it?

- i. Group kids based on STAR Data / Lexile levels & provide them with leveled reading selections which can meet their individual reading needs.
- ii. Extra help posted on Edmodo (links to resources)

4. What do we do when students do learn it? (didn't discuss)

HOMEWORK:

Cat Boggus	Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Natalie Butterworth	Create agenda for next meeting; Find nonfiction text for unit; Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Marlene Hosmer	Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Harriet Tuggle	Create Vocab assignment for "Rikki Tikki Tavi;" Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Kevin Rembert	Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Diana Wilson	Finalize minutes and send to PLC and Christie Street; Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.
Allison Plott	Create anticipation guide for unit; Grade 2 student sample essays in preparation to compare marks on TUESDAY.



NMS Curriculum Quarterlies

Who:

- PLC (content teachers), Graduation Coach, Grade Level Counselor, RTI/504 chair, Content Chair, Content Area AP, Principal

What to bring (one copy):

- Goals and assessment data
- Names of students still struggling and strategies attempted so far
- All assessments (including special education) for each completed unit

Presentation/Discussion:

- Data discussed by each teacher
- Recovery data to show difference (if any)
- Names of students still struggling
- What has been done with the struggling students so far
- How can the people in the room help support the students

When:

- 4 times a year (once per quarter)

Where:

- Curriculum Room

Why:

- To ensure that students who are not being successful receive maximum support
- To support each other with ideas, feedback and strategies to help students reach their fullest potential
- Structured, planned meetings in advance to ensure meaningful dialogue takes place with the appropriate personnel so support can be provided

Curriculum Quarterly Dates and Checklist

Quarter 1 Dates: 09/24 – 09/25

Quarter 2 Dates: 11/12-11/13

Quarter 3 Dates: 02/25-02/26

Quarter 4 Dates: 04/29-04/30

Each PLC is to bring the following materials in the order below:

Page 1

- Title Page (course name, unit numbers and dates)
- SMART goals with results to date (eg. Goal was 85% will pass class – actual is 80% at the moment)

Page 2-3

- Data by teachers (grades of students at the moment)

On Level Classes

Teacher Name	Total Number of Students	Number of A's	Number of B's	Number of C's	Number Failed

TAG/Advanced Classes

Teacher Name	Total Number of Students	Number of A's	Number of B's	Number of C's	Number Failed

Resource Class

Teacher Name	Total Number of Students	Number of A's	Number of B's	Number of C's	Number Failed

Page 4

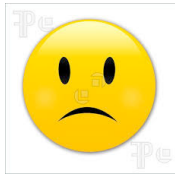



- List of Students Failing and Strategies

Students Still Failing	Strategies Tried

Page 5

- Assessments (quizzes and tests) for each level

OUR JOURNEY...

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings required every week • Conversations held around what is being taught and sharing of ideas • Common assessments introduced to have 10 questions the same on major assessments • Concept of recovery introduced <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision, mission and collective commitments created with stakeholders • Leadership team transformed to a true instructional leadership team • Common gradebook expected • Common assessments now defined as the same tests, quizzes and rubrics • Recovery process streamlined to include a set criteria prior to being eligible • PLC Q&A shared outlining expectations and structure <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings required to last entire planning • Teacher positions realigned • Teachers relocated to help strengthen PLC's • Implementation of SMART goals for each unit • Pre and post unit meetings held with administration • Required to submit PLC agenda prior to meeting • PLC meeting agenda template introduced • RTI pyramid introduced • Data discussion implemented – comparing and analyzing data from quizzes, tests and projects • PLC expectations outlined in faculty handbook <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings are held more than the required times • Uniting PLC's (STEM and Humanities) to create integrated units • Pre-tests implemented for each unit • Data discussions include specific number of A's, B's, C's and F's by teacher – not averages • Failure reports shared with each PLC • Consistency in grading begins • Unit meetings transformed to curriculum quarterlies • Required to submit PLC minutes after meeting <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

PLC Reflection Questions

Keep in the mind the following....

1. How are you sitting?
2. Are the norms being followed?
3. Are the individual roles being followed?
4. Have you taken the time to understand the responsibilities of each role?
5. Is there a structure to the meeting – or is it just a free open discussion of whatever comes to mind?
6. How much time is spent talking about students versus how much time is taken by planning what topic is being covered for the upcoming week?
7. How much time is taken up by discussing the following:
 - a. How are we differentiating this lesson?
 - b. What kinds of higher order questions can we ask during this lesson?
 - c. How are we assessing during the lesson?
8. How often is data (by student/by teacher) brought to PLC's (a copy for each) and discussed?
9. What happens when someone doesn't bring their data (ie. didn't have time to grade it yet)?
10. How often do you visit your PLC's norms or have those "heart to heart" conversations to become better?

PLC End of Year Reflection

Is Your PLC Sustaining or Developing ?

Collaborative Culture Indicator – Rubric from Rick DuFour’s Work

Sustaining: Teachers function as a team. They work collaboratively to identify collective goals, gather relevant data, and learn from one another. Unlike a work group, they are characterized by common goals and interdependent efforts to achieve those goals.

Developing: Teachers function in work groups that meet periodically to complete certain tasks such as reviewing intended outcomes and coordinating calendars.

Why?

Signatures:

Leadership Team Quotes

“My role as a leader used to be as the "one in charge" or as the one who was responsible for making the decisions and delivering information. My role as a leader now has become about being the motivator- the one who supports my team members to strive to raise the bar in all aspects of their job. My role is to encourage my teammates to believe in our common vision and to feel ownership in the role each person plays in reaching our goals in our department.”

- *Karla Armstrong, PE Department Chair*

“My role as a leader has completely changed! When I originally took the role as department chair I thought I would go to a few meetings and re-deliver information as needed. Instead, I have become a person that works directly with the teachers in my department help them, encourage them and problem solve with them as needed. It has allowed me to truly get to know the department and all of its strengths and weaknesses. The leadership team has become a team that creates change that we believe in rather than just passing on information. This role has challenged me, but it has also made me realize what a positive difference we are all making!”

- *Kristen Brening, Science Content Chair*

“With equitable learning as our focus, and strengthened instructional and assessment strategies as our goals, we were able to push through the awkward conversations and challenges that all trail-blazers experience when they start a new journey. Despite the complaints from a few laggards, the work load did not increase. In fact, by sharing as a PLC, work become shared among us. I can say that because of the PLC model, I am a better teacher and have found fulfillment and satisfaction knowing that my PLC depends on me to be collaborative, just as I depend on them. We chuckle at the thought that we naturally gravitate towards each other during passing time and planning periods to have on-the-spot PLC meetings. We jokingly will shout “P-L-C” when we want

to have a quick chat to discuss a student success, strategy that worked, or even to explain how a lesson fell flat and we desperately need advice on how to fix it.”

- *Natalie Butterworth, Advanced Program Chair*

“My position in leadership has changed from one that passively distributes information from administration to teachers and students, to one that helps create and implement the information that is used by teachers and students. There is more ownership in what we have created and therefore we are more invested in seeing our plans in action.”

- *Marlene Hosmer, 7th Grade Chair*

“It is a pleasure to work in a school where teacher leaders routinely participate in school decisions. This allows teachers to guide instruction not only in their classrooms but in their departments as well. PLC’s empower teachers to use data to fine-tune instruction. The result is more collaboration and less competition.”

- *Ellen Mayo, Math Department Chair*

“I am able to effectively collaborate with my colleagues, gain ideas and new perspectives, and grow as an educator. I never knew the value creating common assessments could have on my teaching. Many of the teachers in my department enjoy planning with each other so much we often end up meeting throughout the week. I truly feel the experiences I have in our weekly PLC meetings help me to be a more creative and innovative teacher.”

- *Diona Nadir, World Language Chair*

“I have learned how to put myself in the position of others, see their points of view, motivate and build team spirit. I strive to keep everyone

focused as a team and one individual teacher is not alone. I have learned to focus on collaboration, and a team approach for a common goal, which of course is our students' education. "

- *Natalie Rankart, 8th Grade Chair*

"Working in true PLC's has changed the climate of our school. Instead of being left in isolation to "figure out" what you need to teach, you have peers to collaborate and calibrate with on the best practices within education. My department has blossomed through their discussions on how to integrate more student centered teaching strategies into their practice. As department chair, I have found leading each of the PLC teams to be the best professional development I have ever received. We are learning from each other as we discuss ways to meet the needs of all of our students. It's a win-win for all!"

- *Deana Skimel, Social Studies Department Chair*

"Implementation of actual shared leadership. Instead of leadership being merely a vehicle to announce policies and strategies, leaders are encouraged to bring ideas to admin and nothing is ever "announced" to us after the decisions have already been made. Leadership has an impact on what we do as a school rather than merely going back and parroting what we were told by admin. Teacher leaders can understand how decisions impact teachers and students in a way that administrators may not always be aware of, and that insight is not dismissed or ignored by administrators. "

- *Christie Street, ELA/Reading Content Chair*

"PLC's allow you both the ability to collaborate and combine the best parts of each teacher in the team, as well as allow each teacher the flexibility and ability to be who they are as an individual.

- *Nicholas Waltz, 6th Grade Chair*

Study Guide Requirements

Students at Northwestern Middle School will be provided a study guide for which to study for their assessments.

- Study Guides should be created in the Professional Learning Communities.
- Study Guides should be prepared when tests are created as to coordinate the information that will be assessed.
- Study Guides should be created and provided to the special education teacher with enough time to alter, modify or make accommodations for their differentiated assessment.
- Everyone in the professional learning community should have the same study guide.
- Study Guides should include, but are not limited to
 - a. Key vocabulary
 - b. Essential questions to be answered
 - c. A list of standards may accompany the study guide, but should not be the only thing provided.
- Study Guides should be provided at least 1 week prior to assessments. If providing anticipation guides or class notes, the time may be earlier.
- Study Guide answers should be provided to students prior to the assessment. Answers may be provided in class or online (ie. Website or blog), but also on paper for those students without computer access.
- Study Guides should not be graded, but may be counted as a class assignment.

Student Support Services

Binder Busters

This program is designed to help students stay organized. A member of the counseling staff helps organize students and their binders and notebooks.

Lunch Bunch

Tables and laptops are set up in the cafeteria atrium where students can bring their lunch and work on school assignments. A member of our counseling staff is present to provide support.

PASS AM

Students are referred (self, parent, teacher or counselor) to Pass AM where they receive academic support before school by a member of our counseling staff.

Study Sessions

Every teacher offers a publicized help session at least once a week. Because teachers collaborate, what they are teaching and how they are assessing is all the same so students can go to different teachers for study sessions if they are not understanding from one particular teacher.

Example of the study session schedule can be seen at the link below.

http://school.fultonschools.org/ms/northwestern/Documents/Curriculum%20Files/Homework_help_calendar.pdf

Grade Recovery

Students who earn below 70% in any of their courses on their January report card are enrolled in a grade recovery program during second semester. Students use an online program to demonstrate mastery in the standards they failed and have the opportunity to recover from their failing grade. This program is held before school and is facilitated by a teacher. In addition, each PLC has their own recovery policy which provides students multiple opportunities throughout each unit to master the standards.

Student Incident Reporter

We provide an online reporter tool (through a weebly website) where students can report any incidents – positive or negative. The website is checked daily.

<http://nmsreporter.weebly.com>

Sources of Strength/Peer Leadership

Sources of Strength is a mental wellness project that utilizes the power of peer social networks to improve norms and culture to one of healthy choices. We empower peer leaders and caring adults to communicate messages of the 8 sources of strength: Mental Wellness, Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, Healthy Activities, Generosity, Spirituality, Medical Access and Mental Health. Adult advisors meet with peer leaders twice a month to plan activities to promote these messages of health, hope and strength.



Parent Support Services

Assessment Calendars

The school website publishes grade level calendars where all assessment dates are posted. This ensures no more than two assessments are given to students per day and it also allows parents to know when upcoming assessments are. Example of the grade level calendar can be seen at the link below:

<http://school.fultonschools.org/ms/northwestern/Pages/Calendar-Grade6.aspx>

Friday Notes

Every Friday, all teachers are required to send a blurb to parents regarding any upcoming news, announcements, important dates etc. for the following week. Parents in turn receive one email Friday after school that has all the blurbs from all their child's teachers. Example of a Friday note is below:

Attention parents of STUDENT NAME

Course Name: Lang Arts 8

- Here are your Friday Notes

It's Friday! We've begun grammar this week and have covered prepositional phrases, appositives, and participles. Next week, we will continue with grammar: infinitives and gerunds. There will be a quiz on Tuesday, February 24th, covering prepositions, appositives, infinitives, and gerunds. Students will also have to provide an example of a logical fallacy. On Friday, students will read a narrative and respond to short answer questions. This reading passage will be given during class on Tuesday, so students will have time to read and prepare for the questions on Friday. Enjoy the long weekend! Ms. Sturm

Course Name: Georgia Studies 8

- Here are your Friday Notes

Hello! We finished up this week with the first half of our unit on civil rights. We will continue with the second half of the unit on Tuesday and finish with a test on Friday, February 27th. Have a great three-day weekend! Jeff Swope, 8th Grade Georgia Studies Teacher

Course Name: Sci/Phy World Lv A

- Here are your Friday Notes

February 13, 2015 Happy Friday the 13th! Next week in science we will begin our new unit on electricity, chapter 17. By the end of the week the students should be able to build a circuit and explain how they work! Have a great long weekend. Julie Cohen

Course Name: Spanish 8

- Here are your Friday Notes

Dear Parents, We have taken this week to review material covered to date. The students received a review sheet which covers all the grammar introduced since August. The sheet and the answers can be found posted on our websites. It is an excellent source for quick review or reference. Next week we will begin our new chapter U4.2. We will post the chapter assessment dates on the NMS 8th grade calendar as well as on our website calendars and in our classrooms. Have a wonderful long weekend. Stay warm and Happy Valentine's Day. Sra. Ziolkowski

Course Name: Math 8 Level A

- Here are your Friday Notes

Math 8 students took the second quiz over solving systems of linear equations today. We will continue to work with all three methods to solve systems of linear equation application problems next week. The unit 6 test is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2015.

Media Center Resources

Our media center offers a centralized location with various online resources that can offer support to parents as they help their children in various content areas at home.

<http://nmsmedia.weebly.com/additional-online-resources-for-students.html>