



# Professional Learning Community (PLC) Roadmap

**A Professional Learning Community (PLC)** is a group of educators that meet during a regularly designated time to collaboratively analyze evidence of student learning in order to adjust instructional practices while addressing individual student needs and advancing student achievement. Professional Learning Communities have a profound impact on schools and districts. They have the ability to change the culture and improve the beliefs and practices of the adults that serve its learners.

The PLC Roadmap has its greatest impact when a district and school create and espouse a shared vision and mission. In addition, high functioning Leadership Implementation Teams (LIT) should be in place. The LIT serves as a catalyst to move the work toward full implementation.

Because the PLC Roadmap uses the Stages of Implementation Science, the time that it will take to achieve high functioning PLCs is dependent upon where a district or school enters the process. This process will move forward more efficiently if it is led by committed district and school leaders, Leadership Implementation Teams, and adults that share a commitment toward achieving high functioning PLCs.

**The purpose** of the PLC Roadmap is to provide district leaders, school leaders, leadership teams, and PLC teams guidance as they work toward full implementation of highly effective PLCs. District and school leaders, Leadership Implementation Teams and PLC Leads are primarily responsible for leading the conversation toward full implementation.

**This Professional Learning Community (PLC) Roadmap** is a tool designed to help Districts, Schools and teams chart their progress toward becoming top performing PLCs. The PLC Roadmap is organized using the Implementation Science Framework. It is divided into four Structures:

## **Leadership   Collaborative Culture   Standards and Instruction   Data and Evidence**

Each structure is subdivided into Critical Features to support the structure. Critical features follow the stages of implementation, progressing from Exploration to Full Implementation.

### **Leadership**

- Establish a School Culture Focused on Learning
- Select and Develop PLC Leads
- Align School-Wide and PLC Mission, Vision and Goals
- Utilize Communication and Feedback Protocols
- Monitor Fidelity of PLCs

### **Collaborative Culture**

- Establish Structure for PLCs
- Establish Team Membership
- Communicate to Meet Students' Needs
- Develop Collaborative Cultures Focused on Learning for all Students
- Utilize a Cycle of Improvement

## **Standards and Instruction**

Focus on Learning for All – Standards and Benchmarks

Focus on Learning for All – Instructional Practices

## **Data and Evidence**

Utilize Data and Evidence to Improve Instruction

Create and Use SMART Goals

Implement a Variety of Assessment Practices to Analyze Student Growth in Relationship to Instruction

Incorporate a School-Wide Data Collection System

Examine Data and Evidence Practices

Implementation is defined as a specific set of activities designed to put a program/activity into practice. Implementation processes are purposeful and are described in sufficient detail to describe their strengths. Implementation Teams can help create readiness by using Implementation Stages. The Implementation Frameworks used by skilled Implementation Teams provide ways to increase the likelihood that good outcomes can be achieved.

**Exploration Stage** – During Exploration, readiness is assessed by an Implementation Team. The Implementation Team is accountable for helping create readiness, an important function when the goal is to reach an entire population.

**Installation Stage** – The function during this stage is to acquire or repurpose the resources needed to do the work ahead. Teams help organizations recognize the need for these resources and help organizations secure the needed resources to do the work ahead and prepare staff for the new practices.

**Initial Implementation** – This is the time when the innovation is being used for the first time. Practitioners and staff are attempting to use newly learned skills. Implementation Teams help to develop the staff competencies required by the evidence-based program, help administrators adjust organization roles and functions to align with the program, and help leaders in the organization to fully support the process of using the program and incorporating the necessary implementation supports.

**Full Implementation** – The new ways of providing services are now the standard of work where practitioners and staff routinely provide high quality services and the implementation supports are the way the provider organization carries out its work.

The actions and processes within each stage define the work of teams in that stage. Critical Questions are provided to help teams identify and position themselves along the continuum of stages. Finally, resources are identified for each critical feature to provide support and to enable collective capacity-building efforts for teams as they make progress toward reaching their goals.

**NOTE:** The PLC Roadmap should be used in collaboration with other tools and resources that support school and district continuous improvement. The PLC Roadmap provides direct links to resources that address modifications and variations within a variety of settings.

## Leadership

### Why do building leaders need to establish high-functioning PLCs?

“A justifiable conclusion one can glean from the research is that the more skilled the building principal, the more learning can be expected among students. Stated differently, the research now supports what practitioners have known for decades: powerful school leadership on the part of the principal has a positive effect on student achievement. The principal's influence on student achievement passes through teachers. Our evidence also points to the continuous preference of many teachers to be left alone. These teachers typically view the presence of a principal in their class room as unnecessary and bothersome. This traditional structure and culture have made it difficult for principals to have an impact on the professional practice of teachers. The PLC process, and the collaborative team structure in particular, are specifically designed to alter this dynamic by changing the traditional practices of schooling. The principal can now work closely with six teams rather than thirty individuals" (DuFour and Marzano, 2011, p. 48-51).

### Establish a School Culture Focused on Learning

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>The principal researches and defines what it means to ensure high levels of learning for all students.</p> <p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads research and define what it means to ensure high levels of learning for all students.</p>	<p>The principal provides guidance, time for professional development, and resources to establish a shift in school culture to ensure high levels of learning for all students.</p> <p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads model, coach, and begin to create a shift in school culture to ensure high levels of learning for all students, without exception.</p>	<p>The principal models, coaches, and begins to ensure high levels of learning for all students by leading a shift in school culture and defining the resources needed to support the shift.</p> <p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads provide guidance, time, and resources to establish a shift in school culture to ensure high levels of learning for all students, without exception.</p>	<p>The principal monitors and supports feedback processes to support and sustain the shift in school culture, ensuring high levels of learning for all students, without exception.</p> <p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads establish monitoring and support plans as well as feedback processes to support the sustainability of a school culture focused on ensuring high levels of learning for all students.</p>

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What is the principal’s and team’s understanding of ensuring high levels of learning for all students?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do the principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads model, coach, and begin supporting a shift in school culture?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do the principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads provide guidance, time, and resources to all staff to establish a shift in school culture?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do teams establish monitoring, support plans and feedback processes that focus on ensuring high levels of learning for all students?</p>

**Resources**

- [Closing the achievement gap](#) (EL article)
- ASCD [Book](#): Educating Everybody’s Children
- [How do principals really improve schools](#) (EL article)
- [Teach up for excellence](#) (EL article)
- [All Things PLC \(Solution Tree\)](#)
- [Carol Dweck TED Talk](#)
- [Mindset Assessment](#)
- All kids can learn if ([activity](#))

## Select and Develop PLC Leads

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>The principal and leadership team examine a variety of processes for selection of PLC team leads.</p> <p>The principal and leadership team explore structures to support the development and sustainability of PLC leadership skills.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team communicate selection processes, roles, and responsibilities for PLC Leads.</p> <p>The principal and leadership team select and develop staff to serve as PLC Leads.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team guide and coach PLC Leads as they implement PLCs.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team monitor the fidelity of PLC Leads to the expectations of job descriptions.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the selection process of PLC Leads ensure commitment to the development of high quality PLCs?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> Are the right people selected as team leads and representatives of the staff?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> Do team leads promote a positive growth-minded school culture?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What training is implemented to build the capacity of team leads to be strong instructional leaders?</p>

**Resources:**

[Developing Team](#)

[Effective PLC Team Leaders](#)

## Align School-Wide and PLC Mission, Vision and Goals

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>The principal and leadership team examine the school-wide mission, vision, and goals to develop and align the PLCs' missions, visions, and goals.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team train PLC Leads in how to develop and align the PLCs' and school-wide missions, visions, and goals.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team guide each PLC's development and alignment to the school-wide missions, visions, and goals.</p>	<p>The principal and leadership team monitor PLCs' progress toward meeting the PLCs' and school-wide missions, visions, and goals.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What process is used to regularly examine the development of the school's mission, vision, and goals and the importance of purposeful alignment of the PLCs' mission, vision and goals?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> Are the PLCs' mission, vision, and goals aligned with the school's and district's mission, vision, and goals?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> What evidence does the leadership team utilize to support alignment of PLCs' mission, vision, and goals to the school's and district's mission, vision, and goals?</p> <p>What monitoring tools does the leadership team use to determine alignment with the PLC and school-wide mission, vision, and goals?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the leadership team adjust the teams practices based on monitoring of alignment?</p>

**Resources:**

- [How Principals lead PLCs](#)
- [Principal Action Resource](#)

## Utilize Ongoing Communication and Feedback Protocols

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
The principal and leadership team explore a variety of communication and feedback protocols for effective PLCs.	The principal and leadership team inform and initiate the practice of communication and feedback protocols with staff.	The principal and leadership team consistently monitor and adjust the utilization of communication and feedback loops.	The principal and leadership team assess the effectiveness of the communication and feedback loops and makes adjustments as needed.
<b>Critical Question:</b> What criteria is identified to create functional communication protocols?	<b>Critical Question:</b> What is the identified communication system and how will effectiveness be measured?	<b>Critical Question:</b> Are staff regularly asked if communication is effective and also consulted for ideas for improvement?	<b>Critical Question:</b> Are communication feedback loops positively adjusted based on staff input?

### Resources:

[Leadership Team Rubric](#)

[Critical Issues for Team Consideration](#)

## Monitor Fidelity of PLCs

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>The principal explores personal schedule options to conduct regular PLC visits.</p> <p>The principal and leadership team research effective PLC monitoring and feedback tools.</p>	<p>The principal creates a personalized schedule to conduct regular PLC visits and shares with the leadership team.</p> <p>The principal and leadership team select PLC monitoring and feedback tools.</p>	<p>The principal makes regular visits to PLCs a priority by following the created schedule.</p> <p>The principal uses selected monitoring tools to provide feedback after each PLC visit.</p>	<p>The principal shares PLC visit observations with the leadership team to analyze trends, processes, and successful practices.</p> <p>The principal shares feedback with leadership team after each PLC visit based on evidence from the monitoring tool.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do the principal and the leads create a “culture of acceptance” among staff while using effective feedback and monitoring tools?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> Is a schedule created and followed to visit PLCs to determine successful practice?</p> <p>What tools are developed to monitor PLC successful practices?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> Is there consistent understanding and evidence gathered of expectations for the successful PLC?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the Leadership Team adjust for effective PLCs based on the principal feedback?</p>

### Resources:

[Monitor fidelity](#)

["Are You on a 'Learning by Labeling' Journey?"](#)

## Collaborative Culture

### Why do teams establish collaborative culture?

High-performing schools promote collaborative problem solving and support professional communities and exchanges among all staff. Teachers and staff collaborate to remove barriers to student learning and communicate regularly with each other about effective teaching and learning strategies. They have regularly scheduled time to learn from one another (National Education Association, 2003, as cited in Learning by Doing, 2006).

“[High-achieving schools] build a highly collaborative school environment where working together to solve problems and to learn from each other become cultural norms” (WestEd, 2000, p. 12).

### Establish Structure for PLCs

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads explore options for scheduling effective weekly PLC meetings.</p> <p>The principal and PLC Leads study and understand the need for consistent protocols: agenda formats, PLC minutes and notes, norms, member roles/responsibilities, decision-making, and PLC celebrations.</p>	<p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads establish consistent weekly PLC meeting times for PLC teams.</p> <p>The principal and PLC Leads select a consistent agenda and minutes format.</p> <p>PLCs establish norms, protocols, and systems that are consistent and include a conflict-resolution plan and consensus building.</p>	<p>Each PLC meets weekly with a goal of a 60-90 minute meeting.</p> <p>Each PLC abides by established protocols and norms at each meeting. The team members remind each other of the established protocols and use conflict resolution and consensus building.</p> <p>Each PLC follows PLC expectations and provides feedback to and from the leadership team.</p>	<p>The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads periodically monitors PLCs' adherence to the schedule.</p> <p>The PLC teams consistently implement protocols and norms in each meeting and use conflict resolution and consensus building.</p> <p>The PLC teams reflect, revisit, adjust, and re-evaluate norms and protocols to accommodate needed changes.</p>

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What structures are in place now to support continual PLC meeting time?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does a PLC establish norms?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How are the norms followed and how is the leadership team made aware of any teams that are struggling with norms?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What is the consistency of following norms and protocols?</p>

**Resources:**

[All Things PLC – Time for PLCs](#)

[TEPSA News – Time for Collaboration](#)

[Middle School PLC Agenda Sample](#)

[Venables – Business of PLCs](#)

[U of M – How to create mission and vision](#)

[Dufours – developing norms](#)

[AiHub – implementation](#)

[PLC Meeting Minutes Sample](#)

## Establish Team Membership

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads investigate possible team configurations that support the needs of all students.	The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads configure teams that support the needs of each student.	PLCs meet in the selected configurations to determine if student needs are met.	PLC team configuration is continually monitored, analyzed, and adjusted to meet student needs.
<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> Are all staff currently expected to attend PLC meetings?</p> <p>How are these meetings configured?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the leadership team address the placements of singletons and program staff into PLCs? (special education, English learners, specialists, etc.)</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> Do the configurations of PLC groups meet student needs?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How are teams monitored for effectiveness?</p>

### Resources:

[All Things PLC – Options for Structuring Teams](#)

[All Things PLC – Departmentalization](#)

[All Things PLC – Vertical Teams](#)

[All Things PLC – Media Specialist role in PLC](#)

## Communicate to Meet Students' Needs

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads explore ways to communicate between PLCs and with principal specifically around student needs.	The principal, leadership team, and PLC Leads develop a vertical and horizontal communication plan that ensures each student's needs are met.	PLCs utilize the communication plan to effectively meet the needs of each student.	PLCs continually utilize the communication plan; periodically review and adjust so the needs of each student are met.
<b>Critical Question:</b> What is the current communication plan for PLCs?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How can PLCs effectively communicate with specialists as well as grade levels above and below?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How effectively is your communication plan working?	<b>Critical Question:</b> In what ways might the communication plan be adjusted?

### Resources:

[AiHub – Communication protocol](#)

## Develop Collaborative Cultures Focused on Learning for all Students

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLC members examine their instructional beliefs and values about student learning and success.</p> <p>PLCs explore protocols to build instructional capacity of each team member.</p>	<p>PLCs develop a common understanding and characteristics that demonstrate a belief that each student can learn at his or her fullest potential.</p> <p>PLCs identify each other's instructional strengths and develop systems to grow each other's capacity.</p>	<p>PLCs work focuses on the learning of each student to his or her fullest potential.</p> <p>PLC members respect each other's strengths and use them to the advantage of the teamwork process.</p>	<p>PLCs consistently reflect on their instructional practices to monitor evidence that each student can learn to his or her fullest potential.</p> <p>PLCs address behaviors that do not reflect the belief that all students can learn to their fullest potential.</p> <p>PLCs collaborate in a systematic process using individual's strengths to collaboratively analyze, reflect upon, and adjust professional practice to improve instruction for students.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the leadership team support the belief that all students can learn?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How do PLCs identify each other's instructional strengths?</p> <p>How will the instructional strengths be shared to increase the capacity of all PLC members?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do PLC members support each other in meeting the needs of all students?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How do PLCs and the principal keep the focus on all students learning to their highest potential?</p> <p>How do PLCs address behaviors that do not reflect the belief that all students can learn to their highest potential?</p>

### Resources:

[Mindsetworks](#)

[Growth Mindset Survey](#)

[Dufours – Values/Beliefs](#)

[What is a Professional Learning Community?](#)

[Learning by Doing – Collaborative Culture](#)

Reading Recommendation: Norm Setting Protocol: D. Venables The Practice of Authentic PLCs, p. 153

## Utilize a Cycle of Improvement

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs explores methods to ensure PLC work has quick turn-around cycles of instructional focus, collective inquiry, and action research.</p>	<p>PLCs develop protocols to ensure PLC work has quick turnaround cycles of instructional focus, collective inquiry, action research focused on standards/benchmarks, classroom delivery, and assessment.</p>	<p>PLCs follows protocols to ensure PLC work has quick turnaround cycles of planning, instructional focus, collective inquiry, and action research.</p>	<p>PLCs work in quick turnaround cycles of improvement that continuously plan, deliver, and measure instructional practices until goals are met within a supportive and collaborative culture.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What is currently in place to assure an action focused PLC that allows for quick turnaround cycles and what needs to be developed?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What protocols are needed/in place to support a quick turnaround cycle in PLCs?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How are PLC members ensuring that their work has quick turnaround cycles?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How will you maintain the effectiveness of the turnaround cycle?</p>

### Resources:

[NIRN – PDSA Cycle](#)

[All Things PLC – Planning Tool](#)

[All Things PLC – Team Analysis Protocol](#)

## Standards and Instruction

### Why focus on Standards and Instruction?

“The framework of a professional learning community is inextricably linked to the effective integration of standards, assessment, and accountability... the leaders of professional learning communities balance the desire for professional autonomy with the fundamental principles and values that drive collaboration and mutual accountability” (Reeves, 2005, pp. 47–48).

### Focus on Learning for All—Standards and Benchmarks

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
PLCs examine their beliefs around standards-based instruction.	PLCs understand and commit to standards-based instruction ensuring all students are provided equal access to common learning outcomes.	PLCs provide all students standards-based instruction, ensuring equal access to common learning outcomes.	PLCs ensure all students receive high-quality engaging access to standards-based instruction.
<b>Critical Question:</b> Have teachers been guided through an exploration process of their beliefs about standards-based instruction?	<b>Critical Question:</b> Are teachers able to identify the support they need to provide all students equal access to standards-based instruction?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How are teachers supported in ensuring all students have equal access to common learning outcomes?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How do PLCs review effectiveness of all instructional decisions based on evidence of learning?

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs work to ensure that all members understand that standards and benchmarks set the expectations for all preK-12 students and provide the foundation for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.</p> <p>PLCs analyze the standards and benchmarks to understand what students need to know and be able to do by considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning progressions</li> <li>• Integration across strands</li> <li>• Instructional shifts</li> <li>• Appropriate rigor</li> <li>• Achievement level descriptors</li> </ul>	<p>PLCs participate in professional development focused on standards and benchmarks.</p> <p>PLCs develop tools and procedures to monitor students' learning of the standards and benchmarks.</p> <p>PLCs review and revise units, lesson plans, assessments, scope and sequence, and the alignment documents to reflect evolving understanding of standards and benchmarks.</p>	<p>PLCs provide all students adequate and equitable opportunities to learn through standards-based instruction.</p> <p>Based upon new understandings, PLCs again review and revise units, lesson plans, assessments, scope and sequence, and the corresponding alignment documents.</p>	<p>PLCs reassess instructional practices to ensure all students receive high-quality, engaging access to grade level standards.</p> <p>As teachers develop deeper understandings of the standards and benchmarks, PLCs work to develop specific connections across the standards of other disciplines.</p>
<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> Have teachers explored their beliefs about standards-based instruction?</p> <p>Do PLCs understand the standards and benchmarks and how to use them to guide curriculum, instruction and assessment?</p> <p>Do the PLCs understand how the standards and benchmarks fit within learning progressions, other content area standards, and student's needs?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> What supports need to be put in place to help teachers use the standards to guide their instruction?</p> <p>What is the PLC's process for reviewing and revising curriculum plans?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do the PLCs know that all students have access and are given opportunities for learning in their grade-level standards and benchmarks?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How are students supported when they are not successful or not reaching mastery?</p> <p>How are teachers supported in standards implementation in order to best meet student needs?</p>

**Resources:**

[Minnesota Standards](#)

## Focus on Learning for All—Instructional Practices

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs analyze their current instructional practices by considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Universal Design and differentiation</li> <li>• Concept and skill development</li> <li>• Cultural responsiveness</li> </ul> <p>PLCs determine gaps between current instructional practices and evidence-based practices.</p> <p>PLCs develop an understanding of evidence-based practices and select appropriate practices for student needs.</p>	<p>PLCs set goals to implement instructional evidence-based practices.</p> <p>PLCs determine what supports are needed so that all teachers become fluent with the selected practices.</p> <p>PLCs develop instructional supports, and communicate additional needs to the leadership teams as needed.</p>	<p>PLC members implement evidence-based instruction focused on the benchmark.</p> <p>In a quick turnaround cycle, PLCs collectively gather and act upon data and evidence to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what students need to know, understand, and be able to do to achieve the designated benchmark;</li> <li>• how they know they are teaching effectively to ensure all students are learning the designated benchmark;</li> <li>• how they know students are learning the designated benchmark; and</li> <li>• what they will do when students are not learning the benchmark or are reaching mastery before expectation</li> </ul>	<p>PLCs engage in continual efforts to analyze the effectiveness of instructional practices and to support teachers in successful implementation of selected practices.</p> <p>PLCs continuously determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what students need to know, understand, and be able to do to achieve the designated benchmark;</li> <li>• how they know they are teaching effectively to ensure all students are learning the designated benchmark;</li> <li>• how they know students are learning the designated benchmark; and</li> <li>• what they will do when students are not learning the benchmark or are reaching mastery before expectation.</li> </ul>

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> What resources are needed for PLCs to analyze their practices?</p> <p>To what extent do the PLC’s beliefs lead to evidence-based instructional practices?</p> <p>What is the PLC’s process for exploring and selecting evidence-based practices?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> If gaps are discovered, how will PLCs be supported to address the gaps?</p> <p>What supports do PLCs need to implement the selected practices?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How do teachers select interventions for students?</p> <p>How do PLCs monitor how well students are learning?</p> <p>How do PLCs respond when students aren’t learning?</p> <p>How do PLCs respond if students already know it?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How are teachers supported to continuously and collaboratively analyze student data to determine adjustments in instructional practice?</p>

**Resources:**

- [RCE Literacy Block. From- To](#)
- [Improving Comprehension K-3](#)
- [Critical Issues for Team Consideration](#)
- [Norms Template](#)
- [Developing Norms 1](#)
- [Developing Norms 2](#)
- [Team Survey on Norms](#)
- [Data Analysis Protocol](#)
- [PLC Capacity Planning Checklist](#)

## Data and Evidence

### Why Data/Evidence?

“Schools in which principals have created a results orientation constantly seek evidence that students are learning at high levels. Faculty members encourage the efficient and effective use of data as part of a continuous improvement process—a process solely devoted and designed to provide timely and accurate information about student learning to individual teachers, teacher teams and the school. Teachers in schools with a results orientation embrace the belief that their policies, practices and procedures are aligned to promote the idea that all students can learn” (Many, 2009).

Educators have previously been trained to teach, test, and continue on with the next unit, with the focus on TEACHING. Through the implementation of PLCs, educators teach, assess, review the data, change instruction to meet the needs of the student, assess again. This shifts the focus to LEARNING (Parscale, 2011).

### Utilize Data and Evidence to Improve Instruction

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs explore a variety of available academic and non-academic data and evidence to improve instruction.</p> <p>PLCs explore a variety of evidence, for example, standardized assessment data, anecdotal data, teacher artifacts, and student work.</p>	<p>PLCs receive professional development on analyzing and examining academic and non-academic data and evidence.</p> <p>PLCs identify gaps and/or replications in student data and evidence.</p>	<p>PLCs collect and analyze multiple types of data and evidence to improve instruction.</p> <p>PLCs examine data and evidence of instructional practice for effectiveness and alignment to rigor of grade-level benchmarks.</p>	<p>PLCs continually monitor data and evidence that is collected and use it to maximize teaching effectiveness and optimize student growth.</p>

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How is academic and non-academic data currently collected, and what process is used to collect this data?</p> <p>How is the academic data accurately accessing the Minnesota state standards?</p> <p>What are other PLCs using for assessments?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> What professional development has already been provided to the PLCs around examining data?</p> <p>What process is followed to determine the gaps and replications of student data and evidence?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What process is followed when examining data to influence changes in instructional practice?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How are PLCs continuing to receive professional development around analyzing data?</p>

**Resources:**

[Systematic Data Inventory](#)

[Five Categories of Educational Data](#)

## Create and use SMART Goals

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
PLCs research the use of SMART goals focused on student learning and long-term and short-term priorities.	<p>PLCs use data to create SMART goals.</p> <p>PLCs create action steps to achieve SMART goals.</p>	PLCs implement action steps to achieve SMART goals.	PLCs use SMART goals within a “Plan-Do-Study-Act” (PDSA) cycle to continuously drive instruction forward.
<b>Critical Question:</b> What process is used to develop both short-term and long-term SMART goals?	<b>Critical Question:</b> What are the action steps used to achieve these SMART goals?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How is the progress monitored toward achieving these SMART goals?	<b>Critical Question:</b> How are PLCs currently using the PDSA cycle to drive instruction?

### Resources:

[SMART Goal Definition](#)

[SMART Goal Template](#)

[Plan, Do, Study, Act Form](#)

## Implement a Variety of Assessment Practices to Analyze Student Growth in Relationship to Instruction

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs explore a variety of assessment practices.</p> <p>PLCs inventory individual/department/school/district current assessment practices.</p> <p>PLCs explore formative and summative assessments used in their own classrooms.</p> <p>PLCs explore professional development opportunities on the use of and differences between formative and summative assessments.</p>	<p>PLCs participate in professional development on formative and summative assessments.</p> <p>PLCs begin to plan for the use of formative and summative assessments.</p>	<p>PLCs utilize assessments and examine them for alignment, effectiveness, and rigor.</p>	<p>PLCs regularly use both formative and summative assessments to analyze student growth.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What professional development has already taken been around formative and summative assessments?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What are some ways used to measure student progress using formative, summative, and common assessments?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How are assessments used to change teaching practices?</p> <p>What variety of assessments are used?</p> <p>What are the fidelity measures used for the implementation of formative, summative, and common assessments?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How do assessment results ensure that instruction contains the appropriate academic rigor?</p>

### Resources:

[Formative Assessment Practice Profile](#)

Recommended Reading:

Formative Assessment in Practice: A Process of Inquiry in Action by Margaret Heritage

Embedding Formative Assessment: Practical Techniques for K-12 Practices by Dylan William

## Incorporate a School-Wide Data Collection System

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs and leadership team identify current systems of data collection.</p>	<p>PLCs and leadership team identify and organize the who, what, where, when, and how of data collection.</p>	<p>PLCs and leadership team use a school-wide data collection system within a PDSA cycle.</p>	<p>PLCs and leadership team collaboratively utilize a school-wide system to collect data to inform instruction.</p>
<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What systems are in place to manage school-wide data collection?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> What systems are in place to manage grade-level data collection?</p> <p>How often is data collected and analyzed?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How is the data collection system within your school monitored and improved?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> How does the system monitor the use of a school-wide data system for effective instruction?</p>

**Resources:**

- [Data Map for Needs Assessment](#)
- [PDSA Cycle](#)

## Examine Data and Evidence Practices

Exploration	Installation	Initial Implementation	Full Implementation
<p>PLCs examine current team and school methods for assessing and evaluating MN academic standard and benchmarks.</p> <p>PLCs explore current assessment administration and evaluation practices.</p> <p>PLCs explore rigorous assessment criteria.</p>	<p>PLCs determine common criteria for assessing and evaluating the MN academic standard and benchmarks.</p> <p>PLCs determine criteria for how assessments will be consistently administered.</p> <p>PLCs determine the criteria to consistently evaluate how they judge the quality of student work.</p> <p>PLCs receive professional development on creating common assessments and begin to collaboratively create common assessments.</p>	<p>PLCs use common criteria to review data and evidence and establish inter-rater reliability.</p> <p>PLCs monitor and discuss assessment administration practices and adjust to assure consistency.</p>	<p>PLCs collaboratively create a wide range of common assessments, employ consistent administration and scoring, and embed sharing and analyzing of assessment results to determine effective instructional practices.</p>
<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> When examining the MN academic standards and benchmarks, how are assessment practices determined?</p> <p>How familiar is the staff with the MN academic standards?</p>	<p>Critical Questions: How is access to the MN academic standards provided for staff?</p> <p>Which standards are currently being assessed?</p> <p>What processes are used to determine the rigor of benchmarks assessed?</p>	<p><b>Critical Question:</b> What processes are used to develop consensus criteria to evaluate the quality of student work?</p>	<p><b>Critical Questions:</b> How are common assessments are developed?</p> <p>What common assessments are used?</p> <p>How do PLCs agree to administer common assessments?</p>

### Resources:

[Tuning Protocol](#)

[Peeling Onion Protocol](#)

[Considering Evidence Protocol](#)

[MN Academic Standards](#)

[Depth of Knowledge Chart](#)

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