



Professional Learning Communities

Definition:

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are groups of individuals who have an interest in education and a desire to work collaboratively to achieve the collective purpose of learning for all.

Guiding Question

What can I do through my involvement in a professional learning community to ensure all my students are learning and continuously improving?

Focus on Student Learning & Experiences

The PLC model is based on the core mission that formal education is not simply to ensure students are taught, but to ensure that they learn. The focus is on learning.

Create a Culture of Collaboration

When teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice, they engage in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote learning. The focus on student outcomes and teaching strategies embeds professional development to create a continuous improvement cycle.

Collective Orientation

Collective inquiry asks that educators compare their teaching practices with student achievement data. Teams share knowledge backed by data which can transform the culture of learning in school.

Action Orientation

Once the PLC team has worked through the collective inquiry to determine how to move forward, it's time to put a plan that identifies students' needs and desired outcomes into action.

Continuous Improvement

A PLC is part of a continuous improvement process where educators work together to review data and implement plans to improve student learning outcomes. Time is set aside to engage in the ongoing improvement process.

Focus on Results

Every teacher team participates in an ongoing process of identifying the current level of student achievement, establishing a goal to improve the current level, working together to achieve that goal, and providing periodic evidence of progress. PLCs judge their effectiveness based on results.

Examples of Team Norms

- We will fully engage in discussions throughout each meeting.
- We will maintain a positive tone during our meetings.
- We will listen respectfully and consider matters from another's perspective.
- We will maintain confidentiality.

Additional Resources

- [What Is a "Professional Learning Community"?](#)
- [The Role of PLCs in Education](#)
- [About PLCs](#)