

PLC Share Out 2015

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Filled Wednesday, May 20, 2015

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In which school is this PLC team based?

Student Services

Who is/was in your group? Please provide names of your team members for the purpose of finding peer contacts for future projects. If possible, please include grade or subject each member teaches, separated by commas: (i.e Chris Brown, Gr 8 math, Sue White, LST)

Variable

Response

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Jennie Rankin SLP,
Heather Mary Campbell
Computer Support
Worker

If possible, please provide a key contact person(s) who would be willing to answer questions about your project in the event that another educator or group wants to pursue a similar inquiry.

Variable

Response

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Jennie
Rankin

Professional Learning Communities often take up to three years to fully mature and produce consistent results in student learning. The next 2 questions seek to determine where you feel we are on the spectrum of PLC development. Please consider the STAIRS model and following quote, and choose a category below that best describes where your team/school was situated in relation to the definition at the beginning of the year?

"An effective professional learning community has the capacity to promote and sustain the learning of all professional and other staff in the school community with the collective purpose of enhancing pupil learning." (Creating and Sustaining Effective Professional Learning Communities, Louise Stoll et al, 2005, p 181)

working to re-establish what we had previously achieved as a professional learning community (starting on 2nd cycle from last year's inquiry)

Where do you feel your group fit on this continuum at the end of the year. At the end of the year our team was:

a mature/established professional learning community.

Where would you say your team is currently located on the Action Research wheel? (See Action Research model above:

6. Planning next phase

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PLC INQUIRY

1. Planning: What is/was your Inquiry Question?

Does an intentional, structured and individualized approach to create more opportunities for meaningful connections between students who have communication differences with each other and other students positively affect everyone's school experience?

2. To what student need are/were you responding?

We identified that students with communication differences often experience less opportunities and more isolation than other students. For each of the six students, the lack of a specific communication skill was identified as a barrier to connecting with others.

3. ACTING: What actions/interventions/strategies did you or will you implement or explore?

What actions/interventions/strategies did you or will you implement or explore? Two main themes of need were identified as barriers: greetings and directing others' attention to something of interest. Each student's skill current level was matched with a next-step target. The target was defined for the teams and modeling of both teaching and supporting the student in doing the communication target were done. Materials were provided. Check-ins occurred weekly.

3a. What resources, materials, links, tools, experts, or research did you use?

Please provide details so others may easily access those same resources in their similiar inquiries.

We created our own materials (see below).

3b. Did you co-create any new tools, assessments, resources or materials?

Support for learning was structured using the following components: an initial observation and data collection form, a defined target and demonstration for teaching the target, practice forms to track consistent opportunities and teaching, and final observation and data collections forms. Reflections were shared throughout the process.

Variable	Response
i. If so, for what grade level or subject area are they best suited?	Non-verbal or minimally verbal students.
ii. If they are accessible for other educators to use, where are they located?	Student Services sharepoint folders: SLP and PLC

4. OBSERVING: What are/were the results of your inquiry/implementation/project?

1. Greater number of interaction opportunities for our students = success and satisfaction. 2. EAs and other school adults were more aware of communication needs, as well as current skills and targets and so were more able to support students' growth and learning. 3 Increase of knowledge and excitement in community of EAs and teachers supporting students with communication differences.

5. What types of information/observations/data did you monitor or collect to confirm your intervention is/was working?

All students showed an increase in their communication target, both in frequency and independence.

6. How did your project improve student learning? If you are just starting, in what ways do you anticipate your project will improve student learning?

1. Our students have been creating new communication opportunities with their target skills. 2. An increased ability by EAs to identify and observe specific communicative acts. 3. Peers were shown to have more skills in either initiating communication with the student or responding to the student.

7. REFLECTING: What are/were some of the highlights of your PLC journey so far? What worked well?

1. Increase of communication skills in students leading to more interaction opportunities 2. Enthusiasm of EAs and increased discussion between EAs supporting students with communication differences 3. Individual stories of celebration and/or achievement 4. Increased comfort level; investment and excitement 5. Kids were shining and enjoying the interactions!

8. What are/were some of the challenges? (By sharing this information, we are better able to identify needed resources, guides or solutions)

1. Question who should be taking data? EAs sometimes found it challenging to both support student and track data. Not enough time to do it in their busy week. 2. Absences (one student had a major surgery) 3. Not enough time to complete all work needed during PLC time 4. Conscious of asking EAs to do more 5. Challenge of simplifying data form in order to get the info that was needed without taxing the EAs (EAs all participated cheerfully) 6. The starting point turned out to be different than initially imagined. We still had the same overriding philosophy of increasing meaningful connections but the logistics of the original idea caused us to revise our plan. We are still keen to try to get groups of kids who use different tools for communication together in order to enrich their experience and increase their feeling of community.

9. What might be helpful to have/know/do next time in order to improve results or move forward?

We are in the process of figuring that out now.

10. What are your next steps, moving forward? (i.e. Continue on same project, adapt or expand the project or start on a new focus area/project)

1. Expand (types of targets, number involved students) 2. Figure out a way to bring students using communication devices together to form a community of device users that will support and encourage one another, build on skills, and provide opportunities for friendships.

Thank you for your time and for sharing your insights, resources and learning with your colleagues and the educational community.

What's next? We will keep you informed as to where the collection of responses may be accessed, ideally by late May or Early June. It was asked that we have the results of this form sorted into a key-word searchable format, which requires working with IT to develop an appropriate platform or platforms. Themes will also be pulled from the data and shared district wide. Thank you.