

# Professional Learning Communities

At

Lincolnton Central  
School

# Professional Learning Community (PLC) Defined

- Educators are committed to working **collaboratively** in *ongoing processes* of collective inquiry and action research in order to achieve better **results** for the students they serve.
- **PLCs operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators.** DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many (2006)

# The BIG IDEAS of a PLC

- We accept learning as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine all practices in light of their impact on learning.
- We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a **collaborative culture** through development of high-performing teams.
- We assess our effectiveness on the basis of **results** rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.

**If the purpose of school is truly to ensure high levels of learning for all students, schools will:**

- Clarify what each student is expected to learn
- Monitor each student's learning on a timely basis

## Critical Corollary Questions: If We Believe All Kids Can Learn:

- What is it we expect them to learn?
- How will we know when they have learned it?
- How will we respond when they don't learn?
- How will we respond when they already know it?

# Team Learning Process

- Clarify 8-10 Essential Common Outcomes (skills, concepts, and dispositions) per semester by Course/Content Area
- Develop multiple Common Formative Assessments for each Course/Content Area
- Establish Specific Target/Benchmark so rigorous it will lead to success on high stakes assessments
- Analyze Results
- Identify & Implement Improvement Strategies

# Criteria for Identifying Essential Common Outcomes .

To separate the essential from the peripheral, apply these 3  
criteria to each standard:

- **1. Endurance** - are students expected to retain the skills/knowledge long after the test is completed
- **2. Leverage** - is this skill/knowledge applicable to many academic disciplines
- **3. Readiness for the Next Level of Learning** - is this skill/knowledge preparing the student for success in the next grade/  
COURSE    - Doug Reeves

# Advantages of Team Discussion of Essential Learning

- Greater clarity regarding interpretation of standards
- Greater consistency regarding importance of different standards
- Greater consistency in amount of time devoted to different standards (common pacing)
- Common outcomes and common pacing are essential prerequisites for a team to create common assessments and team interventions
- Greater ownership of and commitment to standards



# How are PLC's Structured at LCS?

- K-2 Teachers, Literacy, K-5 SPED, Title 1A
- 3-5 Teachers, GT, SPED
- 6-8 Teachers, GT, SPED

# When Do PLC Teams Work Together?

- During School (90 mins. per week)
- During Inservice Time
- During Meeting Times
- Before School
- After School

# PLCS Set SMART Goals

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time Bound

# Seven Keys to Effective Teams

- 1. Embed collaboration in routine practices of the school with FOCUS ON LEARNING.
- 2. Schedule time for collaboration into the school day and school calendar.
- 3. Focus teams on critical questions.
- 4. Make products of collaboration explicit.
- 5. Establish team norms to guide collaboration.
- 6. Pursue specific and measurable team performance goals.
- 7. Provide teams with frequent access to relevant information.

# Examples of PLC Projects

- Lesson Study
- Differentiating Instruction
- Developing Interdisciplinary Units
- Integrating Community Resources
- Using Data to Drive Instruction
- Incorporating Instructional Technology
- Using Formative Assessments

# All PLC Work Has in Common...

- Focus on Student Learning.
- Analysis of Student Work/Performance.
- Collaboration/Collective Creativity.
- Teacher Reflection on Practice.