

Improving PLC Implementation

Creating and Implementing a Plan to Improve Our Professional Learning Community Practices

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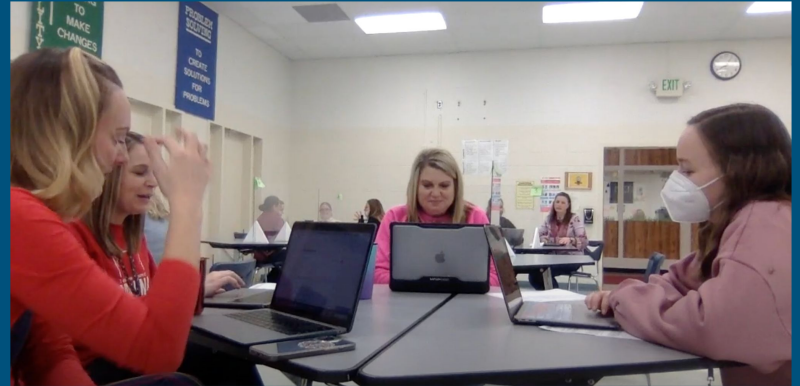
Paul Saylor Elementary
Portage Township Schools

Why PLC's?

In the spring of 2021, I read two books that really resonated with me. The first book, *Arrows a Systems-Based Approach to School Leadership*, outlined the systems Brownsburg schools implemented to improve their learning outcomes. The second book, *Leading a High Reliability School*, supported the importance of Professional Learning Communities. I knew that teacher collective efficacy is one of the best methods for making a positive impact on student learning (Donohoo, et. al 2018), but these two books really inspired me to to improve PLCs at Paul Saylor Elementary.

- During the summer of 2021, I began looking at the PLC data from the 2020-2021 school year. The expectation was that grade-level PLCs meet weekly.
- It didn't take long for me to realize two foundational aspects of PLC's needed help: teachers were not completing the form, and I was not doing a good job of monitoring the completed forms (which were uploaded to a shared drive).
- At the IPLI Summer Seminar, Sarah Pier (Title I Teacher) and I shared our observations of PLC implementation during the 2020-2021 school year and started outlining areas needing improvement.

The purpose of our action research was to improve the overall quality and consistency of grade-level PLC meetings.



With this purpose, we wondered...

- How can we better monitor PLC quality and consistency?
- How can we help teachers understand and internalize the vision, strategy, and importance of PLCs?

Our Actions...

To gain insights into our wonderings, we discussed our concerns and began to plan for new strategies for improvement.

Our first strategy was to create and implement a professional development session for our teachers on PLCs. The training was held before the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. It covered team norms, our guaranteed curriculum, equitable opportunities for all students (what do we want students to know and be able to do), common formative assessments (how do we know that they have learned it), and different types of interventions as well as the scheduling of timely interventions (what do we do if they haven't learned it).

[PLC Training Presentation](#)

Our Second Strategy

A common PLC form was created as an additional strategy, and an expectation for quality and timely completion of the form was communicated to teachers.

SAYLOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL		
Meeting Date	PLC	PLC Leader
3/18/2022	2nd Grade	ginger.stocky@portage.k12.in.us
Attendees		
Emily Meredyk, Ginger Stocky, Kristin Tharp, Abbie Rojek		
Topic of Discussion		
EnVision Topic 12-Measuring Length		
What do we want our students to learn and be able to do? (Curriculum)		
2.M.1 I can describe the relationships between inch, foot, and yard and the relationships between centimeter and meter.		
2.M.2 I can estimate and measure the length of an object using the appropriate tools.		
2.M.3 I can understand that the length of an object does not change regardless of the units used.		
How will we know if they have learned it? (Common Assessments)		
We will be using Envision Topic 12 Assessment as our summative and classroom work activities as our formative assessments. (Quick Checks, supplemental activities using manipulatives, Study Island, and IXL). We will use the information from the assessments above to track student progress. The data will guide our small group instruction.		
What will you do for those who have not learned it? (Remediation)		

For those who have not learned it, we will have them work one-on-one/small group with assistant/teacher to reteach concepts, using manipulatives using non-standard tools along with rulers. We will also have them practice on IXL and Study Island.
What will you do for those who have learned it? (Enrichment)
Students will work on Study Island and IXL and will be asked to measure objects to the nearest half inch, etc. Students will be given the EnVision enrichment worksheets to go along with the lessons.
Upcoming Items for Discussion
Benchmark Unit 8 Week 3
Tasks for Upcoming Meetings
Team members will prepare manipulatives and supplemental activities to be used in small group such as: gather rulers, non-standard measurement tools, and objects to measure, as well as print the enrichment pages. We will assign Quick Checks and follow curriculum map.
Needs, comments, or questions

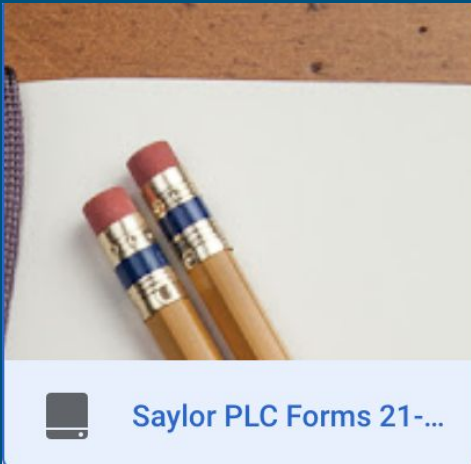
Our Third Strategy...

Since monitoring PLCs was an opportunity to support overall improvement, we decided the meetings needed to be held in a common location at the same time every week. We surveyed the staff regarding a common meeting day and time for our weekly meetings and set Friday mornings in the cafeteria as our PLC time and place.



Our Last Strategy

The PLC form was set up so that upon completion, the form would go to my inbox, and then I would be responsible for reading the form and moving the form to a shared drive organized by grade-level PLC groups.



Data Collection

To gain the best insights into our wonderings, we decided that two ways data could be collected would be through monitoring weekly meetings by checking in with each group as they met and through the analysis of the weekly PLC form. The form would be analyzed for consistency and quality of response in each of the three sub-areas.

Our Data

	Percent of PLC Forms Completed and Submitted 2020-2021	Percent of PLC Forms Completed and Submitted 2021-2022	Increase in Percentage of Form Completion
Kindergarten	15%	82%	65 percentage points
First Grade	6%	91%	85 percentage points
Second Grade	6%	96%	90 percentage points
Third Grade	15%	91%	76 percentage points
Fourth Grade	6%	100%	96 percentage points
Fifth Grade	18%	50%	32 percentage points
School Mean	11%	85%	74 percentage points

Qualitative Data

*A note received from our
Superintendent April, 2022...*

Michelle,

I continue to be impressed w/ your teachers' PLC notes each week. Consistently they include explicit descriptions regarding remediation & enrichment. Your teachers plot out the actual interventions and are inclusive of those providing support services.

Their efforts are clearly reflecting in the assessment results. Please share my gratitude w/ your entire team! Amanda

Our Discoveries

- **Learning Statement One: Professional Development on specific PLC norms is an important part of PLC implementation**

Providing teachers with clear professional development on PLC norms, collective teacher efficacy, a guaranteed and viable curriculum, as well as form completion is important. Do not assume that providing the form and a schedule is enough!

- **Learning Statement Two: Administrators must closely monitor PLCs**

In-person monitoring as well as reading every PLC form, every week, holds everyone accountable. In addition, it helps principals maintain a pulse on curriculum pacing, formative and summative assessments, and Tier I instruction in general.

Bibliography

- Donohoo, Jenni, et al. “The Power of Collective Efficacy.” *Educational Leadership*, Mar. 2018, pp. 1–6., https://educacion.udd.cl/files/2021/01/The-Power-of-Collective-Efficacy_Hattie.pdf. Accessed 12 Apr. 2022.
- Marzano, Robert J. *Leading a High Reliability School*. Solution Tree Press, 2018.
- Rosebrock, C., & Henry, S. *Arrows: A Systems-Based Approach to School Leadership*. Mimi and Todd Press, 2021

Michelle Hellwege]

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Sarah Pier (teacher leader)

Paul Saylor Elementary School

The Purpose of our Year Two Action Research Project:

In the spring of 2021, I read two books that really resonated with me. The first book, *Arrows a Systems-Based Approach to School Leadership*, outlined the systems Brownsburg schools implemented to improve their learning outcomes. The second book, *Leading a High Reliability School*, supported the importance of Professional Learning Communities. I already knew that teacher collective efficacy is one of the best methods for making a positive impact on student learning, but these two books really pushed me to want to improve that area here at Paul Saylor Elementary.

During the summer of 2021, I began looking at the PLC data from the 2020-2021 school year. The expectation was that grade-level PLCs meet weekly. Each group's team leader was to complete a form that would share attendance information along with the topics that were discussed in the format of: *what do we want our students to learn, how will we know if they have learned it, what will we do if they haven't learned it*. It didn't take long for me to realize that teachers did not do a great job completing the form, and I did not do a good job of reading the completed forms (which were uploaded to a shared drive). Therefore, the purpose of our action research was to improve the overall quality and consistency of grade-level PLC meetings.

With this purpose, we wondered...

How can we better monitor PLC quality and consistency?

How can we help teachers understand and internalize the vision, strategy, and importance of PLCs?

Our Methods and Procedures:

To gain insights into our wonderings, we discussed our concerns and began to plan for new strategies for improvement. Our first strategy was to create and implement a professional development session for our teachers on PLCs. The training was held before the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. It covered team norms, our guaranteed curriculum, equitable

opportunities for all students (what do we want students to know and be able to do), common formative assessments (how do we know that they have learned it), and different types of interventions as well as the scheduling of timely interventions (what do we do if they haven't learned it). A common PLC form was created as an additional strategy, and an expectation for quality and timely completion of the form was communicated to teachers. Since monitoring PLCs was an opportunity to support overall improvement, we decided the meetings needed to be held in a common location at the same time every week. We surveyed the staff regarding a common meeting day and time for our weekly meetings and set Friday mornings in the cafeteria as our PLC time and place. Finally, the PLC form was set up so that upon completion, the form would go to my inbox, and then I would be responsible for reading the form and moving the form to a shared drive organized by grade-level PLC groups.

Data Collection:

To gain the *best* insights into our wonderings, we decided that two ways data could be collected would be through monitoring weekly meetings by checking in with each group as they met and through the analysis of the weekly PLC form. The form would be analyzed for consistency and quality of response in each of the three sub-areas.

Timeline:

Our timeline for the project began back in August with the PLC staff training, creation of a common meeting day and location, and creation of a common PLC form. Each month, at our faculty meeting, I would discuss strengths and opportunities for PLC improvement. Additionally, each week I would monitor meetings and read the PLC notes. Data collection of the consistency and quality of the forms would take place in March. This data would then be compared with the consistency and quality of the PLC forms from the 2020-2021 school year.

Data Analysis:

To create a picture of what we have learned, we discussed what is the best indicator of both the quality and consistency of our PLC meetings. Since our PLC forms are completed at our PLC meetings each week and are turned in the day they meet, we decided analyzing the forms would be a good indicator of improvement. We compared the completion rates of PLC meeting forms from the 2020-2021 school year to the 2021-2022 school year for each grade level.

Findings:

As a result of analyzing our data, two essential things we learned include:

1. Learning Statement One: Professional Development on specific PLC norms is an important part of PLC implementation.
2. Learning Statement Two: Administrators must closely monitor PLCs.
- 3.

Providing teachers with clear professional development on PLC norms, collective teacher efficacy, a guaranteed and viable curriculum, as well as quality form completion is important. Do not assume that providing the form is enough!

In-person monitoring of PLC meetings, as well as closely reading every PLC form every week holds everyone accountable. In addition, it helps principals maintain a pulse on curriculum pacing, formative and summative assessments and data, and the quality of tier one instruction in general.

