



THE BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING PLCS:

Tri-Central Middle/High School:

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HOW CAN WE IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND STUDENT GROWTH?

- One of the biggest challenges in education is the fact that teaching naturally lends itself to isolation. Teachers know what goes on in their own rooms, but rarely see or discuss what each other are doing.
- Every time test scores come out, the blame game begins. It is always someone else's problem.
- Would PLCs open up the door for teachers to begin conversations about what is being taught and how?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS INQUIRY WAS TO CREATE A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT LEARNING.

- It was our intent to start “crucial conversations” with our staff.
 1. What students are showing growth on Standardized Assessments?
 2. What are the Critical/Priority Standards?
 3. How do we ensure that they are being taught?
 4. How are we tracking mastery?
 5. What can we do to remediate students?

WILL PLCS OPEN UP THE DOOR FOR TEACHERS TO DISCUSS WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT AND MASTERED?

- As we began to unpack the student data and standards, the discussion began along the lines of how do we as a building work together to help ensure student success?
- Teachers worked in the PLCs to unpack what they were doing currently and brainstormed ways to improve. Teachers also looked at Best Practices identified by research.

OUR ACTIONS

- Following the PLC Meetings, the staff determined that they would work together to provide remediation for students during Activity Period/Homeroom and during electives in the afternoon.
- The English and Math departments sat down and discussed critical standards that needed to be covered and broke down students based on their growth on the 2018 ISTEP + assessment, NWEA, and Renaissance.
- Teachers worked together to provide coverage to ensure that students were provided small group remediation.

OUR DATA HRS LEVEL 1

- Leading Indicator 1.4: Teacher Teams and collaborative groups regularly interact to address common issues regarding curriculum, assessment, instruction, and the achievement of all students.
- According to the Marzano High Reliability Schools Report “A Summary of Administrator, and Staff Perceptions Leading Indicators for Level 1” scale of 1-5.
- Administrators rated TCMS/HS a 2.93
- Teachers rated TCMS/HS a 2.91

OUR DATA HRS LEVEL 2

- Leading Indicator 2.6: Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching.
- According to the Marzano High Reliability Schools Report “A Summary of Administrator, and Staff Perceptions Leading Indicators for Level 2” scale of 1-5.
- Administrators rated TCMS/HS a 3.63
- Teachers rated TCMS/HS a 3.21

OUR DATA HRS 3

- Leading Indicator 3.6 Appropriate school – and classroom – level programs and practices are in place to help students meet individual achievement goals when data indicates interventions are needed.
- According to the Marzano High Reliability Schools Report “A Summary of Administrator, and Staff Perceptions Leading Indicators for Level 3” scale of 1-5.
- Administrators rated TCMS/HS a 3.47
- Teachers rated TCMS/HS a 3.44

OUR DISCOVERIES

- The teachers at Tri-Central found the collaborative time to be beneficial and came up with several strategies to better meet student needs.
- Teachers worked to implement English and Math remediation during homeroom and 7th period to help build on concepts that students were struggling with.
- Teachers looked at ISTEP growth data, NWEA, and Renaissance scores to help identify areas for improvement and student groupings.

WHAT IS NEXT?

- In the 2019-2020 schedule, there will be a daily homeroom period for Math and English remediation to take place.
- The Middle School teachers will have a day each week to continue working in their PLCs.
- The MS/HS English and Math teachers will also have one day per week that they will meet during homeroom.
- These PLC meetings will allow teachers to continue the discussion on what students know and need to continue to work on for mastery.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., & Many, T. (2010). *Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work (2nd Ed.)*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- DuFour, R., & Marzano, R. J. (2011). *Leaders of Learning: How District, School, and Classroom Leaders Improve Student Achievement*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

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Tri-Central Middle/High School is a 1A school set in rural Indiana. It services 393 students 6-12. One of the biggest challenges that we face in education is the fact that teaching naturally lends itself to isolation. Teachers know what goes on in their own rooms, but rarely see or discuss what each other are doing. Every time test scores come out, the blame game begins. It is always someone else's problem. Tri-Central School Corporation also does not have a pre-arranged time each day or week for professional development. Two planned e-Learning days were built into the school calendar. There is a one-hour staff meeting each month. This began the question, "Would PLCs open up the door for teachers to begin conversations about what is being taught and how?"

The purpose of this inquiry was to create a collaborative approach to student learning. It was our intent to start those "crucial conversations" with our staff. There were several questions that we wanted our staff to be able to answer.

- 1) What students are showing growth on Standardized Assessments?
- 2) What are the Critical/Priority Standards that students need to learn?
- 3) How do we ensure that those standards are being taught?
- 4) How are we tracking mastery of those standards?
- 5) What can we do to remediate students?

In the planned e-Learning days for professional development teachers were broken into PLCs by mixed content areas combined Middle and High School. In these PLCs we began to unpack the data and standards. Teachers began the discussion along the lines of, "How do we as a building work together to help ensure student success?" Teachers were also asked to bring copies of what they were currently covering with standards and discuss in their PLCs ways to improve. Teachers were also given articles on best practices to review.

Following the PLC meetings, the staff determined that they would work together to provide remediation for students during Activity/Homeroom period and also during 7th period electives. The English and Math departments sat down and discussed critical standards that needed to be covered and broke down student data based on growth on the ISTEP + assessment, NWEA, and Renaissance STAR. Teachers worked together to provide coverage to ensure that students were granted time for small group remediation.

All of the decisions were based upon the survey results from the Marzano High Reliability Schools Report Level 1, 2, and 3. The three lowest areas were 1.4 Teacher teams and collaborative groups regularly interact to address common issues regarding curriculum, assessment, and the achievement of all students, 2.6 Teachers have opportunities to observe

and discuss effective teaching, and 3.6 Appropriate school – and – classroom – level programs and practices are in place to help students meet individual achievement goals when data indicates interventions are needed.

Throughout the process of implementing PLCs, the teachers at Tri-Central found the collaborative time to be beneficial and came up with several strategies to better meet student needs. Teachers worked to implement English and Math remediation during homeroom and 7th period to help build on concepts that students were struggling with. Teachers looked at ISTEP+ growth data, NWEA, and Renaissance STAR to help identify areas for improvement and to assist with student groupings.

As we move forward, in the 2019-2020 schedule, there will be a daily homeroom period for Math and English remediation to continue taking place. The Middle School teachers will have a day each week to continue working in their PLCs. The Middle/High School English and Math teachers will also have one day per week that they will meet during homeroom in their departments. These PLC meetings will allow teachers to continue the discussion on what students know and need to continue to work on for mastery.

Bibliography

Dana, N. F., & Yendal-Hoppey, D. (2016). *The PLC Book*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Corwin.

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