Improving PLCs at Brownstown Elementary School

Principal Name: Marty Young
School Name: Brownstown Elementary
Team Members' Names: Marty Young, Amanda Terrell, and Denise Stevens/Maria Anderson
Principal's Email Contact: myoung@btownccs.k12.in.us

Background Leading to Our Inquiry (Slide 2)

Outline what led your team to this particular inquiry. Include the following:
Last year, the PLCs at Brownstown Elementary School were not as effective as intended, as they were primarily led by the principal and assistant principal and often functioned more like mini staff meetings or venting sessions rather than focused professional learning communities. With the addition of an instructional coach to our team, we saw the perfect opportunity to revamp the PLC structure and improve its effectiveness. Our goal is to shift PLCs back to their intended purpose—collaborating to analyze data, discuss instructional strategies, and ultimately enhance teaching and learning for our students. This action research project aims to explore how we can refine our PLC process to foster meaningful discussions that directly impact student achievement.

The Purpose of Our Inquiry (Slide 3)
- Different approach
- Literacy Coach leading PLCs
- Administration actively involved/supporting instead of leading
- Data and Standards
- Utilizing Brave Time

Our Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose, Our team is exploring how restructuring PLC meetings by implementing a defined PLC model and template can enhance the overall productivity and effectiveness of the Brownstown Elementary PLC process.

Our Actions (Slide 6)
To improve our PLCs for the 2024-2025 school year, we have implemented several key steps. We are utilizing the DuFour Model to maintain consistency and structure in our PLC meetings, ensuring that discussions remain focused and productive. Our instructional coach, Mrs. Anderson, is leading the PLCs, while administrators provide support and participate as needed. To monitor progress and gather feedback, we have developed PLC surveys, which staff have completed twice this year to assess the effectiveness of the

process. The collected data has been analyzed and discussed as a team to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, team members, including Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Terrell, and Mrs. Stevens, have been observing grade-level PLCs to assess consistency across groups. Periodic team meetings are held to review concerns, successes, and opportunities for further refinement of the PLC process at BES.

Data Collection (Slide 7-12)

At BES, we gathered data throughout the year to inform and improve our PLC process. This included survey and Google Form responses from staff members at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. We also took into account feedback and comments shared by individual staff and PLC team members to ensure a well-rounded perspective.

Our Data (Slides 7-12)

Comments from Staff (Beginning)

- open conversation
- data talks
- focused standards
- structured conversations
- staying on task
- not a vent session

Comments from Staff (Middle)
- I am very happy with the improvement in PLC's. Maria is doing amazing!!
- We are light years ahead of where we have ever been. Maria is doing a great job and the other 4th grade teachers are doing their best to do what is needed for our students.
- I honestly like the way they have been going. No change now.
- I love that we have time to seat down and talk about the differences on how we teach each standard
- I really love digging into the data and seeing what we REALLY need to focus on.

PLC Conversations (Middle/End)
- Teachers use real-time data to make instructional decisions, which allows them to respond to student needs more quickly and effectively. (Brave Time)
- "By looking at data together, we can identify trends and figure out what's working across classrooms—and where students need more support."
- "We're all on the same page with what we're teaching and when. That way, students in every classroom are getting consistent instruction, no matter who their teacher is."
- PLCs provide structured time for teachers to dig into the ILEARN pilot data—looking at strengths, gaps, and trends. This is improving our Brave Time Focus.

Our Discoveries (Slide 13)

- By using ["Performance Level Descriptor" Sorting Activities](#), teacher are realizing they are teaching under the level that is being tested.
- Special education teachers want to be more involved in the PLC talks.
- Multi C Classroom needed time to meet to talk about their students (PLC time)
- ILEARN Checkpoint structure has helped guide some of the conversations in PLCs.
- When PLCs are led the right way, they are very productive.
- Staff members like consistency.
- This time is valuable for our school to continue to improve.

Where We Are Headed Next (Slide 14)

- Consistency
- Implementing Instructional Rounds each semester
- Continued improvement of PLCs
- Utilizing ILEARN Checkpoint Data and Formative Assessment Data
- Improving Brave Time
- Common Language Talks
- Continue to get feedback from staff on PLCs so we know how they are feeling.

Bibliography (Slide 15)

Rosebrock, C., & Henry, S. (2022). *Arrows: A Systems-Based Approach to School Leadership*. Solution Tree Press
Dana, N. F. (2009). *Leading with passion and knowledge: The principal as action researcher* (Foreword by M. Fullan). Corwin Press.

Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

Last year, the PLCs at Brownstown Elementary School were not as effective as intended, as they were primarily led by the principal and assistant principal and often functioned more like mini staff meetings or venting sessions rather than focused professional learning communities. With the addition of an instructional coach to our team, we saw the perfect opportunity to revamp the PLC structure and improve its effectiveness. Our goal is to shift PLCs back to their intended purpose—collaborating to analyze data, discuss instructional strategies, and ultimately enhance teaching and learning for our students. This action research project aims to explore how we can refine our PLC process to foster meaningful discussions that directly impact student achievement.

Changes in Place for 24/25 school year…

- Different approach

- Literacy Coach leading PLCs

- Administration actively involved/supporting instead of leading

- Data and Standards

- Utilizing Brave Time

Statement of Our Wondering:

Our team is exploring how restructuring PLC meetings by implementing a defined PLC model and template can enhance the overall productivity and effectiveness of the Brownstown Elementary PLC process.

PLC Template #1

Professional Learning Community
It is about student and teacher learning
A PLC will answer the following questions:
- What do we want all students to be able to do? (clarify standards and targets of focus)
- How do we know if students have mastered the standards of focus? (Determine proficiency indicators)
- How will we respond to students who have not yet learned? (Discuss interventions)
- How will we respond to students who have already demonstrated mastery or are learning to do more? (Discuss extension and enrichment)

Blank Template
3rd Grade Example Agenda

ACTIONS:

To improve our PLCs for the 2024-2025 school year, we have implemented several key steps. We are utilizing the DuFour Model to maintain consistency and structure in our PLC meetings, ensuring that discussions remain focused and productive. Our instructional coach, Mrs. Anderson, is leading the PLCs, while administrators provide support and participate as needed. To monitor progress and gather feedback, we have developed PLC surveys, which staff have completed twice this year to assess the effectiveness of the process. The collected data has been analyzed and discussed as a team to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, team members, including Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Terrell, and Mrs. Stevens, have been observing grade-level PLCs to assess consistency across groups. Periodic team meetings are held to review concerns, successes, and opportunities for further refinement of the PLC process at BES.

Google Form Sent Out to all Teachers After 1st PLC

[Beginning of the Year Reflections](#)

[Beginning of the year reflections Results](#)

Comments from Staff

- open conversation
- data talks
- focused standards
- structured conversations
- staying on task
- not a vent session

Mid Year PLC Survey

Survey Sent out to all teachers

Results from Mid Year Survey

Comments from Staff

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- I honestly like the way they have been going. No change now.
- I love that we have time to seat down and talk about the differences on how we teach each standard
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PLC Meeting Notes from Team Members Observing

- Teachers use real-time data to make instructional decisions, which allows them to respond to student needs more quickly and effectively. (Brave Time)
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End of the Year PLC Survey

[BES End of the Year Survey](#)

This survey will be sent out to gather information about PLCs for the 25/26 school year.

Our Discoveries

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