



Professional Learning Communities

Beyond Book Clubs

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Objectives

- ◆ **The need for change.**
- ◆ **What are professional learning communities?**
- ◆ **Professional learning communities in action.**





Why Professional Learning Communities

The concerns:

- ◆ In previous years we spent too much time being “reactive” with professional development
- ◆ Book Clubs would be formed but not always completed because of being “fit in” to the schedule
- ◆ Follow-up wasn’t consistent
- ◆ A few people were “bearing the load”
- ◆ Not enough focus on data
- ◆ Teachers not planning/collaborating with each other on a regular basis
- ◆ School climate





Why Professional Learning Communities

Our Goals:

- ◆ Most effective use of planning time
- ◆ Share the load
- ◆ Stronger focus on data driven instruction
- ◆ More personable approach to classroom instruction
- ◆ Positive school climate
- ◆ More support for beginning teachers
- ◆ Focus on the work
- ◆ Empowering teachers



What are Professional Learning Communities?



The professional learning community model is a powerful way of working together that profoundly affects the practices of schooling. But initiating and sustaining the concept requires hard work.

It requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement.

–Dr. Richard DuFour



Think About It!



Successful schools are places where teams of teachers meet regularly to focus on student work through assessment and change their instructional practice accordingly to get better results.



-Michael Fullan, 2000



A collage of educational icons on the left side of the slide. At the top is a blackboard with three apples and a plus sign, representing addition. Below it is a purple abacus with black and red beads. To the left is a blackboard with a list of numbers: 1, 2., 3. Below that is a calculator and a small blackboard with the numbers 3.1 and 2. At the bottom is a red heart and a blue book. A yellow pencil is positioned on the right side, with a horizontal line extending from its tip towards the center of the slide.

Focusing Our Work

*Believing all children
can learn.*



Setting Objectives for PLC

- ◆ **What do we know?**
- ◆ **What do we want to know?**
- ◆ **How can we best use our time?**
- ◆ **Why is it imperative we do this work?**



Reflection Questions

Educators work hard.

- ◆ This past year, did you get the results you expected?
- ◆ How do you know?



Collaboration Definition



A systematic process in which teams work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results.

-Dr. Richard DuFour





On Common Ground

Three Big Ideas

- 1. Ensuring That Students Learn**
- 2. A Culture of Collaboration**
- 3. A Focus on Results**

- Dr. Richard DuFour



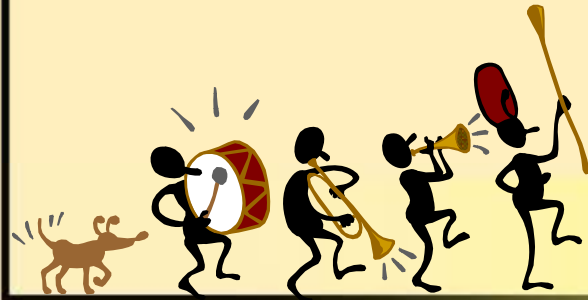
Clarity of Purpose



At the heart of a school's culture are its mission and purpose – the focus of what people do.

Although not easy to define, mission and purpose instill the intangible forces that motivate teachers to teach, school leaders to lead, children to learn, and parents to have confidence in their school.

-Terry Deal and Kent Peterson





All students can learn . . .

If only . . .

- ◆ Everyone was born with an average or above I.Q
- ◆ Students came to school motivated to learn
- ◆ All parents valued and supported the education system
- ◆ Societal issues didn't come with the students





PLC Mission

We believe all children can learn... *and we will establish high standards of learning that we expect all students to achieve.*

We believe that all students can and must learn at relatively high levels of achievement... *and it is our job to create an environment in our classroom that results in this high level of performance.*

We are confident that with our support and help, students can master challenging academic material... *and we expect them to do so.*

We are prepared to work collaboratively with colleagues, students and parents to achieve this growth.





Four Corollary Questions

- ◆ **What do we want our students to know?**
- ◆ **How will we know that they know it?**
- ◆ **What will we do if they don't**
- ◆ **What will we do if they do?**





Collective Commitments

- ◆ **Decide on a commitment you can make as a group that would further these statements.**
- ◆ **Write it down.**
- ◆ **Reflect on it throughout the school year.**
- ◆ **Revisit it and celebrate it at the end of the school year.**



Collective Commitments

The Third Grade Team agrees to the following commitments in order to achieve our common goals :

Writing: *scoring, grading and finding instructional time*

Reading Strategies: *building on summer inservice*

Science: *collaborating for Science Fair, labs and extension activities*

Homework: *collaboration and consensus*

Enrichment Activities: *collaboration and tying hands-on, fun activities to the standards*

Collaborative Culture



“Educators who are building a professional learning community recognize that they must work together to achieve their collective purpose of learning for all. Therefore, they create structures to promote a collaborative culture.”



-Dr. Richard DuFour



Building Relationships



“The nature of relationships among adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school, and on student accomplishments, than anything else.”

~Roland S. Barth





Building Relationships

Roland Barth says there are four types of relationships among faculties:

- ◆ **Parallel Play:** *closed door, isolation*
- ◆ **Adversarial Relationships:**
Competitive, lack of trust
- ◆ **Congenial Relationships:**
friendly but no formal sharing system
- ◆ **Collegial Relationships:** *playing together*





Building Relationships

Evidence of collegiality among teachers and administrators:

- ◆ Educators talking with one another about practice.
- ◆ Educators sharing their craft knowledge.
- ◆ Educators observing one another while they are engaged in practice.
- ◆ Educators rooting for one another's success.



Think About It!



“Without the existence of a collegial culture...no sustained change is possible.”

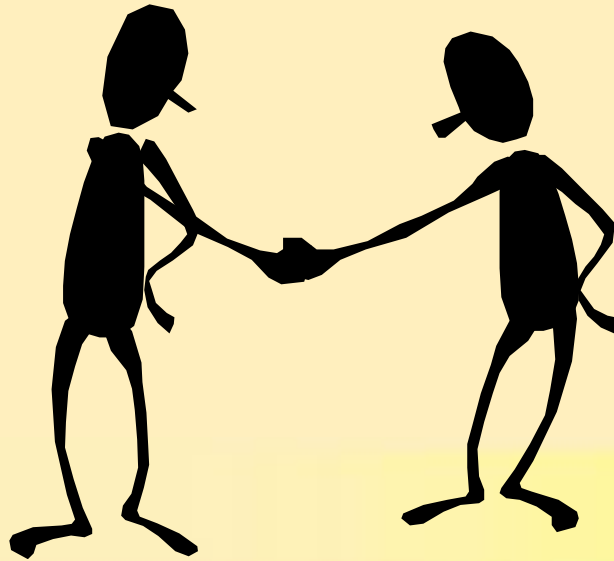
~Roland S. Barth



Reflection Question



What happens when we
expand our resources?



Think About It!



“It starts with a group of teachers who meet regularly as a team to identify essential and valued student learning, develop common formative assessments, analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, share strategies, and then create lessons to improve upon those levels.”

-Dr. Richard DuFour





Stages Of Teams

- ◆ **Stage One: Forming**
- ◆ **Stage Two: Storming**
- ◆ **Stage Three: Norming**
- ◆ **Stage Four: Performing**

Dr. Terrie L. Martin



Stage One: Forming



Team dynamics:

- *Eager*
- *Polite*
- *Watchful*
- *Guarded/
Anxious*
- *Questioning*

Needs of the team:

- *Clarity of
purpose*
- *Goals and
structures*
- *Build trust*
- *Define the group*



Stage Two: Storming



Team dynamics:

- *Conflicts emerge*
- *Confrontations aren't handled well*
- *Feeling stuck*
- *Emotions run high*

Needs of the team:

- *Refocus the work*
- *Break down tasks*
- *Identify team roles*
- *Recognize individual strengths*



Stage Three: Norming



Team dynamics:

- *Structures are well-established and used repeatedly*
- *Comfort with expressing ideas*
- *Risk-free environment*
- *Deeper conversations*
- *Issues confronted appropriately*

Needs of the team:

- *Evaluate process and productivity*
- *Assess goal progress*



Stage Four: Performing



Team dynamics:

- *Resourceful*
- *Free sharing of ideas and opinions*
- *Confidence in self and team*
- *Synergy*

Needs of the team:

- *Celebration of successes*
- *Think “Outside the Box”*
- *Present Challenges*
- *Look for opportunities for growth*





Silent Posting

Post-it Activity

- ◆ Complete 2 Post-its for each of the categories: Concerns and positives about teaming
- ◆ Place Post-its on the chart paper, without talking
- ◆ When directed, as a group, discuss the placement of the Post-its



What they said...

Positives	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Dedicated time to plan / work together-A chance to talk about issues-Focus on student achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Different views won't be accepted-Everyone will be "too nice and not say what's on their mind"-It will take too much time-Something else to "fit in"

Creating Team Norms



- ◆ Identify norms and write them on Post-it notes.
- ◆ Post-its in silence
- ◆ Discuss and prioritize norms
- ◆ Write prioritized norms on chart paper.
- ◆ Post during all PLC meetings



Setting Norms

*What does
our team
need to be
successful?*

Ground Rules

- Stay Positive
- Stay Focused
- Respect all ideas
- Be productive
- Sense of Humor

First Grade



SMART Goals

- ◆ **Specific or Strategic**
- ◆ **Measurable**
- ◆ **Attainable**
- ◆ **Results-Oriented**
- ◆ **Time Bound**





Process vs. Results Oriented Goals

- ◆ *Identify and level expectations for writing an expository paragraph*
- ◆ *Focus staff development in number sense in mathematics*
- ◆ *Increase math achievement of lowest 20% of students in grade 5*
- ◆ *Decrease the number of students below level in reading in grade 2*





Results Oriented

“Professional learning communities judge their effectiveness on the basis of results.”

Working together to improve student achievement becomes the routine work of everyone in the school.

Every teacher team participates in an ongoing process of identifying the current level of student achievement, establishing a goal to improve the current level, working together to achieve that goal, and providing periodic evidence of progress.”

-Dr. Richard DuFour

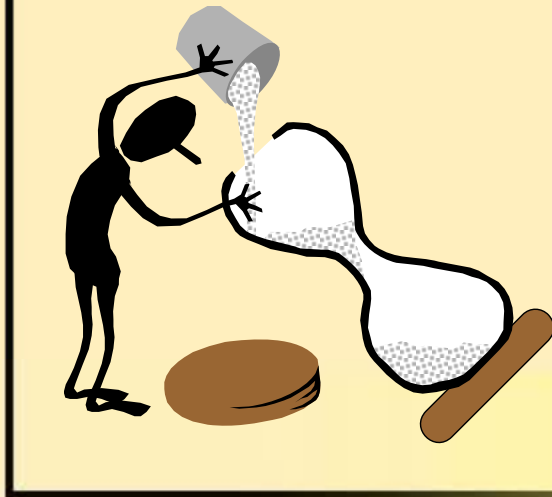


Implementation



It takes time to achieve these goals.

It is important to set goals that can be implemented and measured in stages.



Data Questions



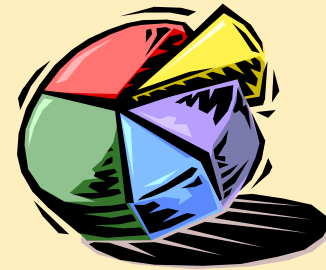
- ◆ **What does the data tell us?**
- ◆ **What doesn't the data tell us?**
- ◆ **What are we going to do about it?**



Data Notebooks



- 1) Classroom Data
- 2) District Data
- 3) State Data
- 4) Intervention Documents
- 5) Professional Learning
Community
- 6) Resources





Data Notebooks

Classroom Data:

- student roster to mark BGL at each interim and 9 week report
- running records
- reading goals (optional)
- grade book (optional)



Data Notebooks



District Data:

- SRI reports
- Core Reading benchmark individual scoring records (with SSS break downs)
- Cum Record Sheet with all district Math, Science, Social Studies scores

State Data:

- Previous year FCAT & DIBELS data
 - Individual students
 - Disaggregated grade level data
- Current scores
 - ECHOS (K)
 - DIBELS/ ORF/ FORF





Data Notebooks

Intervention Documents:

- PMP/504/IEP Accommodations & Strategies
- Targeted Intervention Planning Sheets
- Targeted Intervention Grouping Sheets
- Intervention Logs (who, what, when)



Data Notebooks



Professional Learning Community:

- Training notes
- Collective Commitments
- Planning forms
- Notes from each meeting
- Any support documents from meetings

Resources:

- Non-negotiables, exemplary practices
- Professional Development Plan
- FCAT task cards/questions (comprehension)
- User Name master list
- *PMRN/ A3/ SAM/ Crystal Report*
“Cheat Sheets”



Fourth Grade Writing Data

Category	Percentage of our Level 2 students scoring below the district average
Total MC section	56%
Focus	31%
Organization	50%
Support	37%
Conventions	25%
Essay	87%



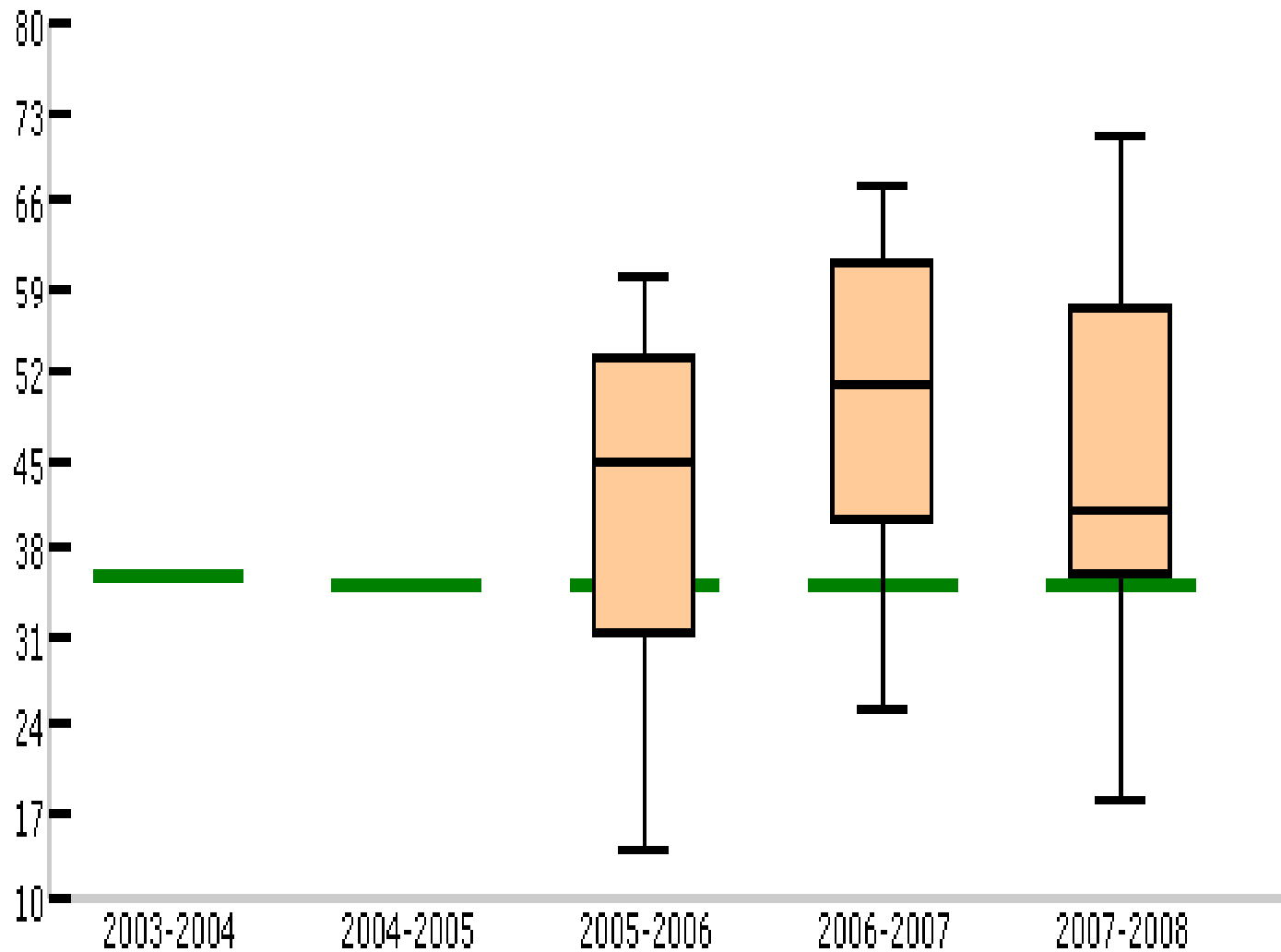
Writing Commitments

- ◆ Based on the writing data, teachers in K-4 all established individual commitments for writing.
- ◆ Our writing contact met with each team to help establish grading rubrics.
- ◆ Teachers in K-2 went to a primary writing inservice and brought materials and information back to share with their teams about pacing, grading, and instructional strategies.



First Grade Data

Phoneme Segmentation Fluency





First Grade

Commitment #1

Address Phonological Awareness

- ◆ Teacher & Reading Coach trained on new district assessment (PASI) and trained remainder of team
- ◆ Team met to share resources for P.A. activities
- ◆ Resource book (activities tied to PASI results) purchased for each teacher



Fifth Grade Science Data

Category	Percentage of our Level 1 & 2 students scoring below the district average
Physical/ Chemical	67%
Earth/Space	71%
Life/ Environmental	100%
Scientific Thinking	79%
Performance Items	100%



Fifth Grade Science Data

- ◆ Of our Level 1 & 2 students, 67% were less than 23 scale score points away from moving up a level
- ◆ Level 1- 1 student- 3 points from Level 2
- ◆ Level 2- 15 students scored between 300 & 322 (Level 3 starts at 323)



Fifth Grade



Commitment #1: Technical writing in Science and Math

- ◆ The team brought in outside speakers to model technical writing
- ◆ Team planned science lab time together, including technical writing after each lab session
- ◆ Teachers planned together to look at FCAT prep materials and plan modeling & practice sessions for technical writing in science & math



Reflection & Evaluation



“Giving teachers time to collaborate is a necessary step on the PLC journey, but it is not sufficient.

Teams must demonstrate the discipline to focus on the issues that actually lead to gains in student achievement if their schools are to function as PLCs.”

Dr. Richard DuFour



Mid-Year Reflection - Third Grade

Accomplishments	Goals for Second Semester	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tested and shared lessons to teach reading strategies learned at inservice.• Worked with Writing Contact to streamline scoring for writing; created rubrics for weekly writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue planning together to teach reading strategies using best practices from inservice• Continue working on grading consistency for writing and working on rubrics to make them more “user friendly”• Collaborate/Plan how to fit in more quality writing instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modeling; Observation of master teachers;• Planning time• Collaborate with 4th grade team to focus instruction

Mid-Year Reflection - Third Grade

Accomplishments	Goals for Second Semester	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in science: planned science fair activities, coordinated science experiments based on standards • Established consistency with homework/grading of projects and assignments <i>(completed)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue planning together for science, share the work • Collaborate to plan enrichment activities that connect to SSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-wide “experiment bank” for additional science resources/ experiments to support SSS • Sharing resources

- Howard Public Schools
- Learning Communities
- Home Page
- Website Menu
- Technology Learning Modules
- Sites/Links
- Lesson Bank
- Online Help
- Other Resources

Professional Learning Communities

Teachers Sharing Resources and Ideas

Home Page



Integrating Technology



And other Instructional Strategies

http://longleaf.es.brevard.k12.fl.us/techmod/


File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Google G Go 4 blocked Check AutoLink AutoFill Send to

Welcome to Longleaf Elementary

Norton™ Fraud monitoring is on

Integrating Technology



Lessons, Ideas and Strategies

Lesson Plan Banks

Science

Experiments and Lessons

Website Links

Math

Learning Communities Home Page

Website Menu

Technology Learning Modules

Websites/Links

Lesson Plan Bank

Edline Help

Other Resources

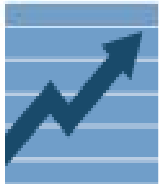
Technology Downloads

School Presentation

Internet 100%

Second Grade Data

Second grade



Proficiency Growth Report



[Time Period:](#) 08/21/07 - 01/22/08

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Grade 2 (97 total students)

Performance Standard	First Test in Time Period		Last Test in Time Period	
	Students	Percentage of Students	Students	Percentage of Students
Level Five	0	0%	0	0%
Level Four	14	14%	21	22%
Level Three	39	40%	46	47%
Level Two	18	19%	14	14%
Level One	26	27%	16	16%



Second Grade

After looking at their Scholastic Reading Inventory trends, 2nd grade determined they needed to put more emphasis on critical thinking & vocabulary:

- ◆ Text-Talk strategies and materials were shared
- ◆ Strategies for “leaving tracks” in text were modeled and shared among team members
- ◆ Materials were shared and the team planned collaboratively for upcoming lessons
- ◆ First grade team was included in the modeling and strategy-sharing





Reflecting on our Goals

- ✓ Most effective use of planning time
- ✓ Share the load
- ✓ Stronger focus on data driven instruction
- ✓ More personable approach to classroom instruction
- ✓ Positive school climate
- ✓ More support for beginning teachers
- ✓ Focus on the work
- ✓ Empowering teachers



Think About It!



“The right kind of continuous, structured teacher collaboration improves the quality of teaching and pays big, often immediate, dividends in student learning and professional morale in virtually any setting.

Our experience with schools across the nation bears this out unequivocally.”

- Mike Schomaker

as quoted in: *ON COMMON GROUND*





Sources

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www.longleaf.brevardschools.org
- ◆ **PLC lesson plan bank link:**
<http://longleaf.es.brevard.k12.fl.us/techmod/>
- ◆ <http://www.allthingsplc.info/>

