

PLC FACILITATOR'S GUIDE MODULE 5 – District-Level PLCs

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

1. What do we need to know in order to create a district Professional Learning Community?
2. What would distributive leadership look like for our PLC district and schools? How do we get there?
3. How do we support and sustain an effective PLC culture throughout our district?

MODULE OUTCOMES:

1. Identify the key structures of collaborative and distributive district and school PLC teams.
2. Understand how to create and sustain effective district-wide structures to support PLC at the district level.
3. Create a viable structure which connects the data-based projected work of districts and schools through the lens of PLC.

PLC INSTITUTE NORMS:

- Listen Actively
- Recognize that everyone is a learner
- Check your assumptions
- Trust the process
- Respect all voices
- Start and end on time

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER:

- We use **norms** to create safe spaces for working together
- We make use of **protocols** to structure discussions and keep the focus on student and teacher work as a means to improving teaching and learning
- We **model** tools and practices for PLC implementation, group activities to promote learning from each other, gradual release of responsibility as we go through the work, and sharing of our learning through presentations and peer critique

Time	Agenda Item	Framing of Activity	Materials	Rationale for Activity	Facilitator
9:00	Welcome, Agenda, Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome, frame the day, & review agenda Overview outcomes & essential questions of module Participants will introduce themselves and share one question they have about work of PLCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas Norms listed on chart paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect and structure the day. Introduce the use of norms. Understand participants initial wonderings about PLCs. 	
9:20	Understanding PLCs - Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview protocols – they are agreed upon guidelines for conducting a focused and effective conversation. They vary depending upon the purpose and desired outcome of the conversation, but often keep the focus on student and teacher work as a means to improving teaching and learning Overview either the “Final Word” or “Text Rendering” protocol Introduce article and a framing question (identified previously). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants read the article with the protocol and framing question in mind. Use “Final Word” protocol (or text rendering protocol) to discuss the reading Ask participants to share out any thoughts on the reading or any thoughts about the use of Protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text Rendering or Final Word protocol (use Text Rendering if group has little experience with protocols) Article: Collaboration through Professional Learning Communities: Sanger Unified School District. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the use of Protocols as a core practice of PLCs. Provides an initial window into PLCs. 	
10:15	Developing Norms & Ground Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group will take the first step in establishing a strong foundation for working together by creating its norms for collaboration. Use the Forming Ground Rules protocol to allow each person to present the norms or conditions of collaborations that are important to him/her. Categorize and combine participants’ lists to generate one final list of norms. It’s important to ensure that everyone agrees to all of the group’s norms, before they can be finalized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colored stickies for each participant Forming Ground Rules Protocol Chart paper to create combined list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norms drive the creation of collaborative trust. Now that the group is starting to form a team and will be working together more frequently, it is important to establish ground rules unique to 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once final list has been created, make sure it appears prominently in the group's meeting space and on any agenda template the group will use for its meetings. Norms support a group's work to the extent that a group makes them an active part of the work. 		the group.	
10:50	STRETCH BREAK				
11:00	Setting a Vision for the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group will now create a vision for what a district PLC would successfully look like, including what the work of the district plc would entail. Facilitate protocol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present the goal of establishing a PLC that takes on the work of the district and works effectively according to the established norms and guidelines. Ask the group to imagine what this looks and feels like in the future. Ask the group to envision both what their work is and how they work together. Chart responses. Then ask the group to better describe where you are currently. Pretend you're in the future reflecting back (talk in the past tense). Facilitate a discussion of how the group "moved from the past situation to the current." Document the future vision and the process by which the group imagined reaching that vision. Debrief the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flipchart paper & markers for each group/participants Future Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares a process to use to establish a vision, goals, and a plan of action for their PLCs For PLCs that lack a coherent vision and plan, this protocol helps people think about the end goals and work backwards. 	
12:00	LUNCH BREAK				
12:45	Understanding our working style preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group will grow their understanding of each other's work style preferences through the compass point activity. Introduce the Compass Point Protocol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a fun/safe way for groups to get to know each other and each other's work style preferences. The richness of the activity lies in the conversation after the activity is done. Some key questions to consider: "What are some implications for us, given the compass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compass Point activity sheet for each participant Compass directions on Flipchart paper set up across the room Markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the group begins to form and create some structures, it's important to know who we are as colleagues and what we bring to the table. Each compass point also help to identify 	

		points that are present or prevalent in our group?" "Are we missing anything?" "What strengths can we observe in our group from this activity?" "What are some weaknesses we need to be aware of?"		some norms that others need to know about working with colleagues.	
1:30	Assessing the District's Culture of Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce the District Culture Survey or the District Culture Questionnaire and the purpose of assessing the current culture and readiness of the district for PLC work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frame the activity as identifying a "from here to there" conversation and what needs to be in place to make PLCs work. ○ Emphasize honesty and transparency in responses as norms that need to be in place to do this work. ○ Have participants break up into pairs or triads (depending on the size of the group) and go through the survey and have a discussion; then, the entire group gets back together to compare answers and get a sense for where we are as a district and where we need to focus our energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Culture survey tool ▪ Make sure to coach groups to answer why they selected their choices and to discuss what is in place and what will need to change at the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This activity is critical to deeper discussion about where districts/schools are and what they need to be thinking about in this work. ▪ This may raise some hard questions usually around time, focus, decision-making and collaboration. ▪ It might be important to chart responses and look at trends, especially as they relate to areas of improvement for the district. 	
2:40	Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the outcomes for the day and make sure that each was achieved. ▪ Participants share how the entire team did as a whole on the norms. ▪ Where are we now in our understanding? What more do we need to know? ▪ Review the next steps and the next meeting dates/times 		We use these end of the day reflections to inform our work and to help us look at how Module 2 will best fit participants' needs	