Principals: The Linchpin of Inclusion in Catholic Schools

The Mustard Seed Project
October 9, 2017

Debbie Sullivan, Ed.D
Assistant Director for Catholic School Leadership
dsullivan2@luc.edu
Loyola University Chicago
School of Education
Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education
www.luc.edu/gcce

Outcomes

• Identify the structural elements necessary for the PLC framework to support the implementation of inclusion in their Catholic school.
• Recognize the role the principal plays in sustaining critical structural elements for effective PLCs.
• Develop an action plan for leveraging PLCs to support inclusion efforts in their school.
6.5 – The leadership team directs the development and continuous improvement of curriculum and instruction, and utilizes school-wide data to plan for continued and sustained academic excellence and growth.

7.6 Classroom instruction is designed to engage and motivate all students, addressing the diverse needs and capabilities of each student, and accommodating students with special needs as fully as possible.

7.7 Faculty collaborate in PLCs to develop, implement and continuously improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement.

8.5 Faculty collaborate in PLCs to monitor individual and class-wide student learning through methods such as common assessments and rubrics.
9.2 Guidance services, wellness programs, behavior management programs and ancillary services provide the necessary support for students to successfully complete the school program.

Getting Started

1. What does your school look like in terms of teacher teams? What is the purpose and function of the teams?
2. What is your vision for these teams?
3. What is the principal’s role in this process?

“Ultimately, what is essential is a commitment to one body, one baptism, one Church, and one God. When persons with disabilities are excluded from catechetical and academic programs, a piece of the Body of Christ is missing.”
- National Catholic Partnership on Disability, 2010
PLCs are NOT . . .

Book Clubs
Another name for Faculty/Department/Team Meetings
A Program
A Fad

PLCs are a specific way of working together

How can we maximize the work of the PLC to ensure that they...

• Focus on the RIGHT work
• Get the work DONE
• GROW PROFESSIONALLY
• Experience SUCCESS and validation
Collaboration is... 
"A systematic process in which we work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results."
- Dalton, Dalton, Dalton & May, 2010, p. 132
- Improves quality and equity of student learning
- Discussions are grounded in evidence and analysis rather than opinion
- Promotes collective responsibility for student outcomes

“The fact that teachers collaborate will do nothing to improve a school... The purpose of collaboration can only be accomplished if the professionals engaged in collaboration are focused on the right work.”
- Dalton, Dalton, Dalton & May, 2010, p. 132

4 Critical Questions for PLCs

What do students need to know and be able to do?
- Clarify essential outcomes
- Ensure vertical and horizontal alignment

How will we know when they have learned it?
- Develop common assessments
- Analyze results

What will we do when they have not learned it?
- Plan for instruction and improvement strategies

The Work of the PLC

What will we do when they already know it?
Essential Structural Elements of PLCs

Protected Time
Norms & Protocols
Collective learning & its application
Shared personal practice & collective responsibility
Celebrating the work

Time
School Schedule that provides for collaborative time
Protected
Job embedded
Focused on the work of meeting the needs of ALL students

NORMS
- Suspect judgment and acknowledge will
- Speak, calmly as a way to move the day forward
- Active, respectful
- Learn and plan

Protocols
-
Collective learning and its application

Shared Personal Practice

“Individual talents get magnified many times over through the collective lens of an effective team.”

Celebrating the work
Continuous Ongoing Process

Perseverance is Key

Key Indicators of Inclusion
- Proportionality
- Community building
- Differentiation
- Support services delivered in the classroom
- Engaging instruction

Proportionality
Let's Talk

What potential for alignment do you see between the essential PLC structures and the inclusion indicators?

Role of the

Principal
Essential Functions

- Establishing a bold, clear vision for the school
- Collaborative planning and implementation with staff
- Develop and support teams of professionals
- Reduce fragmentation of initiatives

1. Establish a bold, clear vision for inclusion at your school

2. Examine the current realities
3. Align school structures and staffing to the inclusion vision

4. Create inclusive teams

5. Use PD to influence changes to instructional practices
6. Commit to ongoing problem solving

I ❤️
FIXING
PROBLEMS

7. Provide support to teachers

8. Foster a Sense of Collective Responsibility
9. Reduce Fragmentation of Initiatives

10. Practice Self-care

Action Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Do</th>
<th>Doing</th>
<th>Done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The linchpin insists on making a difference, on leading, on connecting with others and doing something I call art. The linchpin is the indispensable one, the one the company can’t live without. This is about humanity, not compliance.”
Seth Godin

Closing Challenge
How are YOU going to be the linchpin for inclusion in your school?
References


MacKinnon, B. J., Johnson, T., Dafoe, L., & Gribb, G. (2010). Collaborative teams that transform schools: The work of PLCs in your school. WestEd.