

**Board of Education
Regular Meeting**

Minutes

January 3, 2024

**ELMIRA HEIGHTS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ELMIRA HEIGHTS, NEW YORK**

Call to Order: The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:04 p.m. on January 3, 2024, by President Joseph Sullivan followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Members Present: Jody Buckley, Christopher Callas, Terrance Day, Michael Lepak, Joseph Sullivan, Mikki Yesesky

Member Absent: John Cole

Others Present: Michael Gill, Martha Clark, Megan Molina, Zac Pugh

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Agenda -

A motion was made by Jody Buckley, seconded by Terrance Day, and carried 6-0 to approve the agenda **with additions** for the January 3, 2024 Board of Education Regular meeting.

Minutes –

A motion was made by Mikki Yesesky, seconded Michael Lepak and carried 6-0 to approve the minutes of the following Board of Education Meetings: December 6, 2023 Board of Education Regular Meeting

Order of Business:

A motion was made by Jody Buckley, seconded by Terrance Day and carried 6-0 to suspend the regular order of business to accommodate guests, special discussion topics and presentations in an order of business as deemed appropriate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *see end of meeting*

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

Michael Gill - Superintendent ♦ Welcome 2024! Heads up from Albany, Mayoral Control in NYC. ♦ Lockdown drills are hot topics with parents ♦ Teacher evaluations with APPR, conversations are beneficial, discussions are PD ♦ Push for Regents at the end of January, HS resets in February with new semester.

Megan Molina, Student Services Administrator ♦ Piloting a new curriculum ASD classroom. Focusing on strengthening the high needs gap, social emotional practices for the spectrum. ♦ Sending eight teachers to a training for Autism at Binghamton University on January 30.

Martha Clark – Business Manager ♦ Wrapping up financial reports – grants, education stabilization, risk assessment. ♦ Budget focused on health insurance options, gathering information from department heads on needs for next year. Foundation aid looks ok, but will find out more at the State of the State.

Zac Pugh – Public Comment ♦ Reviewed his company’s procedures for the Active Shooter training, inviting the Board Members to join their next training at Spencer Van Etten CSD.

PERSONNEL - approved

A motion was made by Mikki Yesesky, seconded by Jody Buckley and carried 6-0 to approve the following recommended personnel items F-1a through F-2c, and being further resolved that upon receipt of final clearance from the State Education Department, any conditional appointments shall be changed to regular appointments, reflecting the effective date of said Board meeting.

F-1 Resignation/Termination/Retirements

Resignation

- a. Cynthia Collson, Teacher Aide
The Board accepted, with thanks for 17 years of service, the resignation of Cynthia Collson as teacher aide effective December 13, 2023. Mrs. Collson’s last day with the district was December 12, 2023.
- b. Stacey Putt, Teaching Assistant
The Board accepted the resignation of Stacey Putt as teacher assistant effective February 1, 2024. Mrs. Putt’s last day with the district will be January 31, 2024.
- c. Bobby Roe, Modified Wrestling
The Board accepted the resignation of Bobby Roe as Modified Wrestling coach effective October 2, 2023.

F-2 Appointments

Recommendation to approve the following personnel. Be it further resolved that upon receipt of final clearance from the State Education Department, any conditional appointments shall be changed to regular appointments, reflecting the effective date of said Board meeting.

- a. The Board approved the following substitute(s) for the 2023-2024 school year:
Substitute Teacher: Katelyn Holden Marcia Beecken
Substitute Support Staff: Katelyn Holden Marcia Beecken Melissa Thiel

- b. The Board approved the following non-instructional probationary appointment:
Mia Todzia
Teacher Aide
Effective: January 4, 2024
Probationary Period: January 4, 2024 through January 3, 2025/Civil Service Regulations
Compensation per EHESSA Contract: \$15.55 per hour (Step 1)

- c. Tutoring
The board approved the following tutor for the Cohen Elementary School after school tutoring program at a rate of \$30.00 per hour.
Robert Cavalier

FINANCIAL

G-1 Reports - acknowledged

A motion was made by Christopher Callas, seconded by Mikki Yesesky, and carried 6-0 to acknowledge the following consent financial reports G1a.

- a. Budget Status Report as of December 27, 2023
- b. Revenue Status Report as of December 27, 2023
- c. Budget Transfer Report as of December 27, 2023
- d. Treasurer's Report for November 2023
- e. Claims Auditor Report for November 2023
- f. Extra Classroom Report for November 2023

G-2 Fund Balance Transfers

A Motion was made by Christopher Callas, seconded by Michael Lepak and carried 6-0 to approve the transfer of \$1,925,000 into the Capital Reserve Fund from unassigned fund balance. This transfer will fully fund current Capital Reserve authorization approved by voters on May 16, 2017.

G-3 Fund Balance Transfers

A motion was made by Terrance Day, seconded by Christopher Callas, and carried 6-0 to approve the transfer of \$250,000 into the TRS Contribution Reserve Fund from unassigned fund balance.

FACILITIES

The following updates were reviewed by Superintendent Gill with questions and answers.

- H-1 2024 Capital Outlay Project – state contract: Nurse door replacement, April break – start basketball suspension work
- H-2 Capital Project 2021 / Energy Performance Contract (EPC) Update – Basic abatement MS bathroom stacks. Cohen unit ventilators are slotted over February break, Window in Science wing -testing time it takes for reinstall.

CONSENT

A motion was made by Michael Lepak, seconded by Jody Buckley and carried 6-0 to approve the following consent agenda item K-1 through K-5.

K-1 CSE Recommendations and Funding - approved

The Board approved the student placement determinations from the November 30, December 6, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 19, 2023, CSE/504 meeting(s) and the funds to support such recommendations.

K-2 Health and Welfare/Horseheads - approved

The Board approved approve the Health and Welfare Services contract with the Horseheads Central School District, to provide services to twenty-four (24) Elmira Heights students attending non-public schools located in the Horseheads Central School District, at a rate of \$500.75 per student for the 2023-24 school year, at a cost of \$12,018.00.

K-3 Donations/in memory of Kenneth Erickson - accepted

The Board accepted the following donations and any more yet to be received in memory of Kenneth Erickson for purposes of purchasing supplies for students at "TAE's Comfort Corner":

- \$ 25.00 from Bradley Nicholson
- \$ 25.00 from Deb and Mike Durkee
- \$ 50.00 from Alyssa and Raymon McGoldrick
- \$ 50.00 from Nancy and Sam Balash
- \$100.00 from Kevin and Norma Erickson

K-4 Donation/Wegmans supplies - accepted

The Board accepted the donation of \$250 of Wegmans meal supply items to be purchased for Mr. Wainwright's Health class at Cohen Middle School.

K-5 Donation/Community Foundation - accepted

The Board accepted the grant donation of \$1500 from Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Inc. to be used for outdoor furniture as part of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

N-1 PLC At Work Presentation

Superintendent Gill reviewed slides outlining the PLC at Work program and the 3 Big Ideas, significantly praising the outcomes of the conferences our staff has attended. 1. All students learn at high levels. 2. Collaborative and Collective Effort. 3. Results Oriented.

N-2 2024-25 School Calendar Draft

Superintendent Gill reviewed the preliminary draft of the calendar for 24-25 school year. Answered questions and discussed 1 hour delays, 4 conference days/consecutive and the structure of the calendar.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday	January 17, 2024	Regular BOE Meeting	7:00 pm	Comm Rm
Wednesday	February 7, 2024	Regular BOE Meeting	7:00 pm	Comm Rm
Wednesday	February 28, 2024	BOE Workshop/Retreat	TBD	Comm Rm

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 8:19pm a motion was made by Jody Buckley, seconded by Mikki Yesesky, and carried 6-0 to enter executive session to discuss employment history of a particular persons.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 9:05pm a motion was made by Terrance Day, seconded by Michael Lepak, and carried 6-0 to adjourn executive session.

ADJOURNMENT – At 9:05pm motion was made by Mikki Yesesky, seconded by Jody Buckley, and carried 6-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Clerk

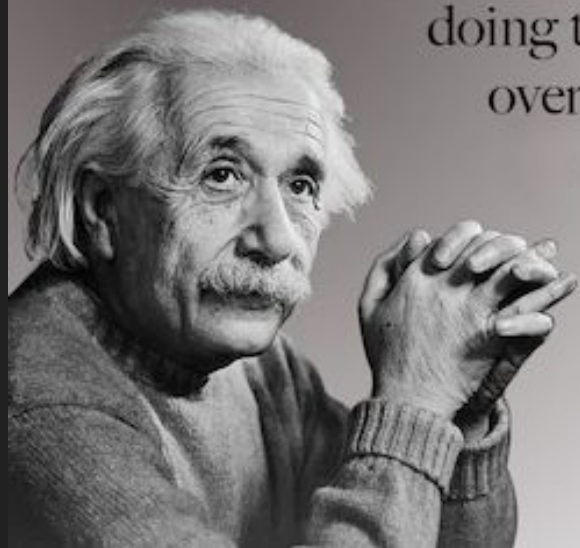
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Updates and insights on our district initiative taken on to meet the challenge of our generation; the COVID comeback.

The challenge of our generation

The COVID comeback.

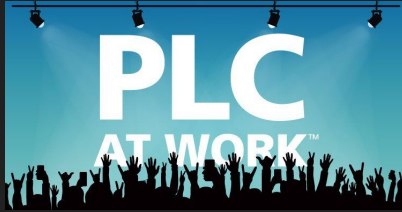
- No student escaped the impact of COVID on their education.
- Social and Emotional development delayed and or impacted.
- Family support systems significantly impacted for those children in the pre-school years.
- Educators tools were not built for this challenge, nor the systems in which we have operated.



INSANITY:

doing the same thing over and
over again and expecting
different results.

~ Albert Einstein



Professional Learning Community

Teams of professionals working together...
TEAMS: Stronger together.

Becoming a **Professional Learning Community**

3 Big Ideas:

Big Idea 1: Ensure all students learn at high levels.

Big Idea 2: Collaborative and Collective Effort.

Big Idea 3: Results Orientated.



**Drive continuous
improvement
in our schools.**

4 Questions of a Professional Learning Community

1. What is it we expect students to learn? (Essential Standards)
2. How will we know when they have learned it? (Assessment data)
3. How will we respond when they haven't learned? (MTSS)
4. How will we respond when they already know it? (MTSS)



Drive continuous
improvement
in our schools.

Teams are the engine that drive student success (and a PLC).

Commitment to Norms

Controllable vs. Uncontrollable.



When we say *“Reach New Heights”*

we mean we



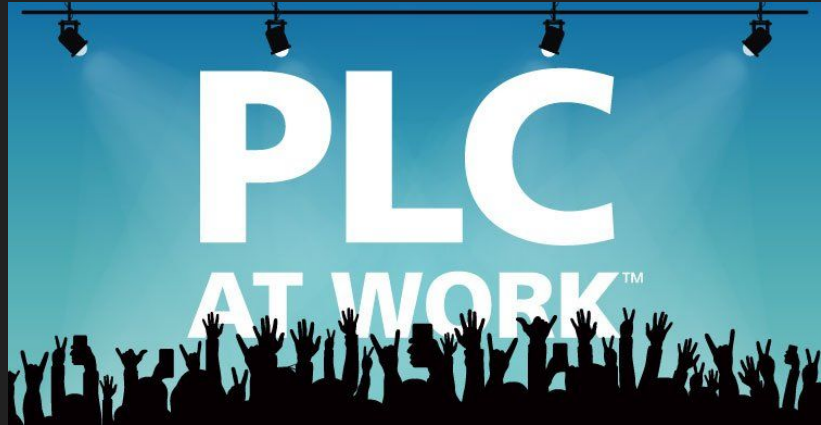
WE can!

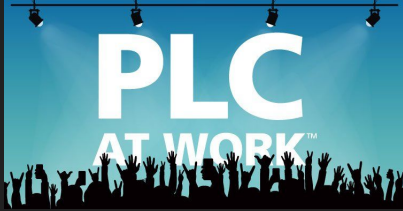


- Individual teachers cannot answer the challenges our students face alone.
- Our circumstances are unlike any that we were trained to address as individuals.
- Doing more of what we've done will in fact do worse under our circumstances.

Professional Learning Communities

TEAM:
Together
Everyone
Achieves
More



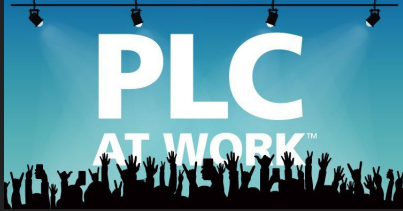


Why *PLCs*?

For the organization is to become more effective in helping all students learn, the adults in the organization must also be continually learning.

The very essence of a *learning community* is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student.

When a school or district functions as a *PLC*, educators within the organization embrace high levels of learning for all students as both the reason the organization exists and the fundamental responsibility of those who work within it.



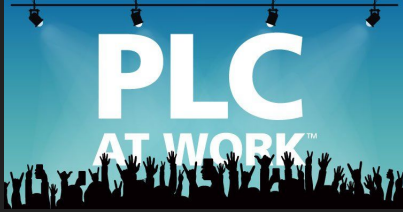
What is a **PLC**?

Professional Learning Community

An ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve.

Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas W. Many, and Mike Mattos www.solutiontree.com/plc-at-work



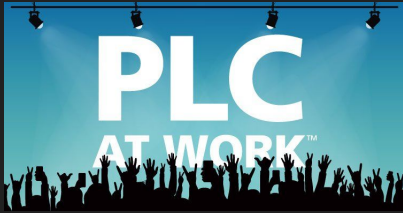
PLC 101

A Collaborative Culture,
with a Focus on Learning for All.

Collaboration is a means to an end, not the end itself. In many schools, staff members are willing to collaborate on a variety of topics as long as the focus of the conversation stops at their classroom door.

In a **PLC**, *collaboration* represents a systematic process in which teachers work together **interdependently** in order to impact their classroom practice in ways that will lead to better results for their students, for their team, and for their school.

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PLC 101

Collective Inquiry Into Best Practice and Current Reality

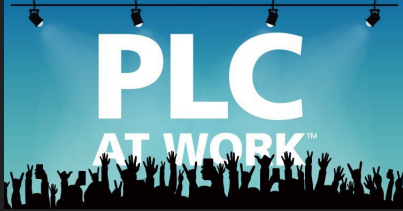
The teams in a **PLC** engage in *collective inquiry* into both best practices in teaching and best practices in learning.

They also inquire about their *current reality* including their present practices and the levels of achievement of their students.

They attempt to *arrive at consensus* on vital questions by building shared knowledge rather than pooling opinions.

They have an acute sense of curiosity and openness to new possibilities.

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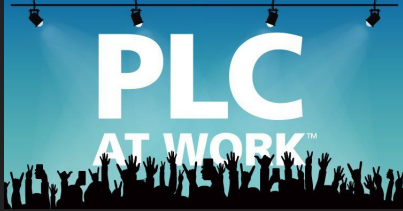
PLC 101

Action Orientation: *Learning by Doing*

Members of PLCs are action oriented: they move quickly to turn aspirations into action and visions into reality.

They understand that the most powerful learning always occurs in a context of taking action, and they value engagement and experience as the most effective teachers.

Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas W. Many, and Mike Mattos www.solutiontree.com/plc-at-work



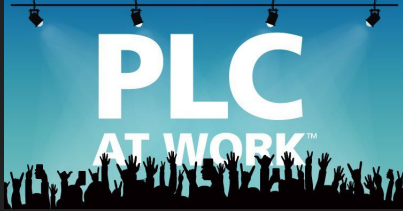
PLC 101

Action Orientation: *Learning by Doing*

Henry Mintzberg's (2005) observation about training leaders applies here: deep learning requires experience, which requires taking action.

It "is as much about doing in order to think as thinking in order to do".

In fact, the very reason that teachers work together in teams and engage in collective inquiry *is to serve as catalysts for action.*



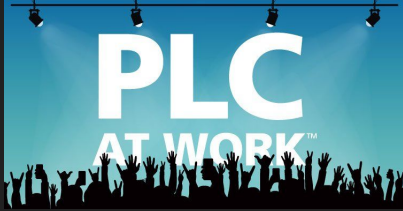
PLC 101

A Commitment to Continuous Improvement.

Inherent to a PLC are a persistent disquiet with the status quo and a constant search for a better way to achieve goals and accomplish the purpose of the organization.

Systematic processes engage each member of the organization in an ongoing cycle of:

- Gathering evidence of current levels of student learning
- Developing strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implementing those strategies and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Applying new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement



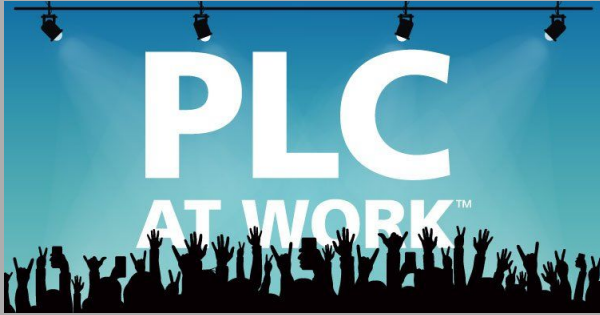
PLC 101

A Commitment to
Continuous Improvement.

The goal is not simply to learn a new strategy, but instead to create conditions for a *perpetual learning environment* in which innovation and experimentation are viewed not as tasks to be accomplished or projects to be completed but as ways of conducting day-to-day business—forever.

Furthermore, participation in this process is not reserved for those designated as leaders; rather, *it is a responsibility of every member of the organization.*

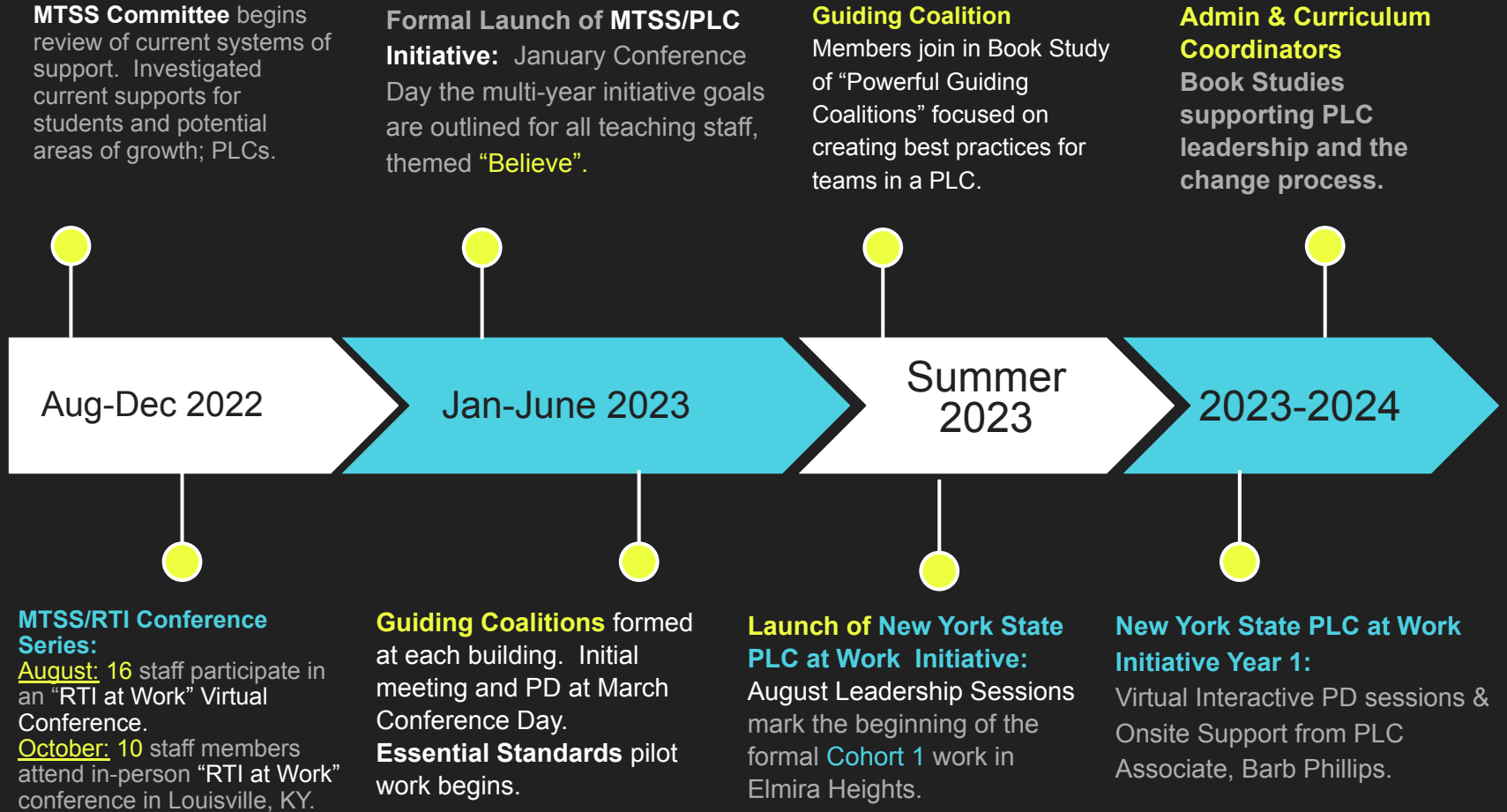
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Sounds like it's a great approach.

What we've done so far...

Timeline of work towards a PLC



Professional Learning Communities: A District-Wide Initiative

Formally joined Cohort 1 of the New York PLC at Work Project starting this school year, 2023-2024.

Budgeted in the 2023-2024 Budget as a contract for Professional Development.

Cohort membership brings a package of professional development learning opportunities to include virtual and in-person sessions with experts over a three-year implementation timeline.



Elmira Heights Central School District

New York PLC at Work® Project

THE COUNCIL of SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
LEADERS • EDUCATORS • ADVOCATES

LEAF
Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation, Inc.
LEAD • EDUCATE • ACHIEVE

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Cohort Work

New York State PLC at Work Initiative Year 1: Virtual Interactive PD sessions & Onsite Support from PLC Associate, Barb Phillips.

Guiding Coalitions: Bi-Monthly meetings - Focus professional development on next steps; on Assessments, Systems and Supports.

Teacher Teams: Teams organized and trained to begin working on *Essential Standards*

Teacher Teams: *Essential Standards*, assessments, and unit planning.

Teacher Teams *Summer PD and PLT sessions TBD*

Summer 2023

Fall 2023

Fall to Spring 2023-24

Winter & Spring: 2024

Summer: 2024

Conferences

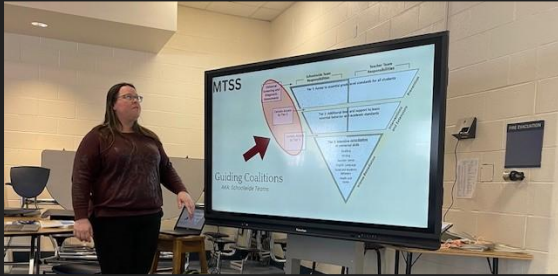
Guiding Coalition Members: 6 attended the three day “PLC at Work” Conference in Charlotte, NC

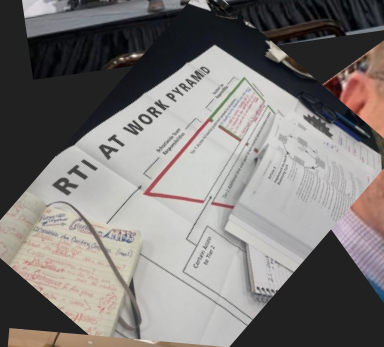
Guiding Coalition Members: 8 attended the two day “TEAMS” in a PLC Workshop, & the “Yes We Can” PLC Workshop on Special Education in a PLC in Syracuse, NY

Guiding Coalition Members: 5 attending the “PLC at Work Institute” in Phoenix, AZ

Guiding Coalitions: Large Group (15) attending the “PLC at Work Conference” in Rochester, NY

Guiding Coalitions





What have we identified, through this work so far, that we need to become a high functioning PLC?

Our BIGGEST NEED... *TIME to meet as teams.*

1. **Weekly Team Time at all levels for PLTs (Professional Learning Teams)**
 - a. Elementary and Middle levels will need to adjust their Team Meetings times to fit the work inside the PLC concept.
 - b. High School will need to establish PLT time as *there is none at this time*. There is no regular weekly time, nor any easily accessible way to pull teachers into their teams.
2. **Time for major Curriculum and Instruction work for teams.**
 - a. Conference Days offer a chunk of time but this will not meet our needs.
 - b. Best practice states we need to establish job-time embedded professional development and curriculum work.
 - i. Getting subs is not possible in our current climate.
3. **Coordination for our singletons**
 - a. Connecting with other small districts to attempt to address this need.



Possible solutions for addressing the need for time.

Professional Development and PLT Curricular work:

- Re-establish half days for curriculum work throughout the school year.
 - Current draft looks to place 5 half days where teachers would work in their PLTs on Essential Standards, Assessments, Unit planning etc...

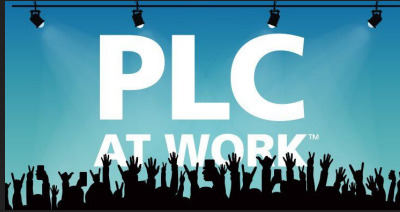
Weekly PLT time so all teachers have blocks of time to meet and collaborate:

- 1 hour delayed start Mondays:
 - Many schools currently use this for their weekly meetings.
 - Canisteo-Greenwood and Windsor use a 1 hour delay Monday for this purpose.
 - Elmira City uses an early release Wednesday for curricular work.

Our BIGGEST NEEDS... *TIME to intervene.*

1. Current Intervention times at the elementary can be adapted to meet the need for intervention with some work.
2. Current Middle School schedule could be adapted to provide for intervention for ALL, with systems created around it to do so (MTSS).
3. The High School level needs to evaluate their schedule and look to implement an intervention period schedule to maximize this initiative.

NOTE: We will be spending time this spring inside **Guiding Coalition** meetings on intervention models (MTSS) in an effort to put into place those things which we can inside our current schedules.



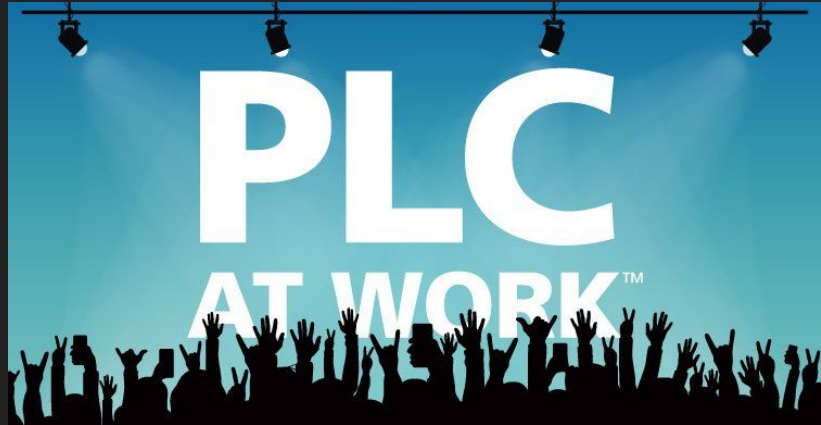
Professional Learning Community

Teams of professionals working together...
TEAMS: Stronger together.

- Individual teachers cannot answer the challenges our students face alone.
- Our circumstances are unlike any that we were trained to address as individuals.
- Doing more of what we've done will in fact do worse under our circumstances.

Professional Learning Communities

TEAM:
Together
Everyone
Achieves
More





When we say *“Reach New Heights”*

we mean we



WE can!

