BLOOMINGTON

Public Schools

Staff Development

PLC HANDBOOK 2006-07

The most promising strategy
for sustained, substantive school improvement is
building the capacity of
school personnel to function as a
professional learning community.
The path to change in the classroom lies
within and through professional learning communities.

Milbry McLaughlin

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STAFF DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR FOR 2006-07

DATE	ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY	SPECIALISTS♦
September	1 hour PLC during month	1 hour PLC during month, utilizing the rubrics from the framework for authentic pedagogy (instruction, assessment, and student performance) see page _____	Virtual PLC time Note: This will be set up during the back to school week, 8/31/06 pm.
October	Building-based data study/CIPs 8am –1 pm, PLCs 1 pm –3 pm		
November	1 hour PLC during month	1/2 day grades / reports 1/2 day building-based staff development Plus 1 hour PLC during month	Virtual PLC time
December	1 hour PLC during month		Virtual PLC time
January	1/2 day literacy and technology integration training 1/2 day grades / reports Plus 1 hour PLC during month	1/2 day grades / reports 1/2 day building-based staff development Plus 1 hour PLC during month 1/2 day secondary social studies teachers – writing across the curriculum	1 hour face-to-face PLC time
February	Curriculum implementation training and PLC time	Curriculum / Authentic pedagogy training and PLC time	Face-to-face PLC time
March	1 hour PLC during month	1/2 day grades / reports 1/2 day building-based staff development Plus 1 hour PLC	Virtual PLC time
April	1 hour PLC during month		Virtual PLC time
May	1 hour PLC during month		Face-to face PLC time

INFORMATION FOR STUDENT SERVICES STAFF WILL BE AVAILABLE MID-SEPTEMBER 2006.

♦ Including, but not limited to K-5 specialists, 6-8 exploratories, and some student service staff.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a great year of learning in the Bloomington Public Schools! We continue our proud history and tradition of offering staff development opportunities that continue your professional growth in many areas including curriculum implementation, curriculum technology integration, diversity, relicensure requirements, to name a few.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in the Bloomington Public Schools are beginning their third year across the district this fall, 2006. PLCs enable teachers to collaboratively examine their practices and procedures, to improve their instruction, and to maintain an unrelenting focus on student learning. PLCs are founded in finding the answers to four complex questions:

1. What do we want students to know and be able to do?
2. How will we know they have learned it?
3. What will we do if they do not learn?
4. What will we do if they know it already?

Just as student achievement data is used to improve instruction, teacher responses on the 05-06 PLC survey help us to know the areas we need to improve our professional learning communities. Based on the results of the survey, we are focusing on the following three areas of improvement. Our goals are:

1. 100% of teachers will report that "looking at student work" was central to their PLC.
2. 100% of teachers will report that their PLCs focused specifically on student achievement.
3. 100% of teachers will report that their instruction was changed as a result of their PLC.

PLCs are the cornerstone of the district as a learning organization while we engage in continuous improvement. Elementary teachers will continue their focus on balanced literacy, specializing in writing. At the secondary level, we will continue to learn about authentic instruction, assessment, and student performance. This year we are also piloting virtual PLC's for K-8 specialists and some staff in student services in response to feedback from teachers who felt they needed more contact with people of like disciplines.
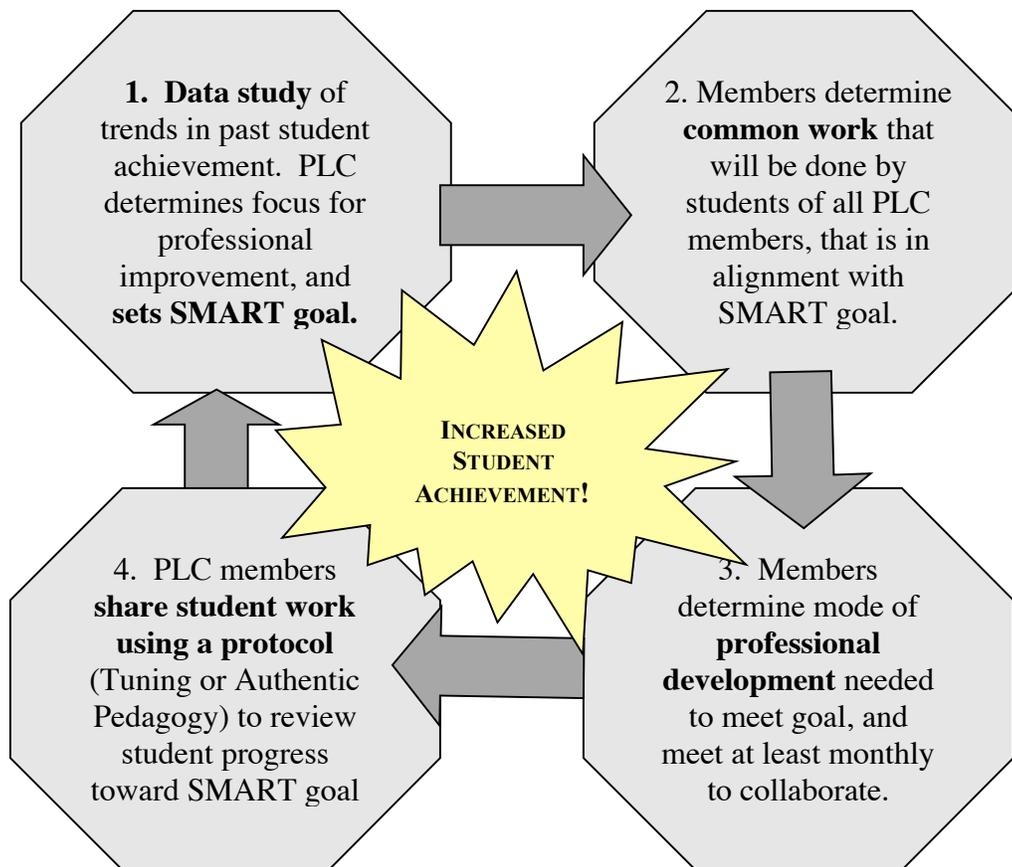
This handbook is intended to be a resource and guide for staff development and Professional learning Community activities this year. In this handbook, you will find a model for improving student achievement, a calendar of district staff development, and PLC dates and plans, and other information that will be helpful for your professional development. In addition, remember the staff development website at
http://www.bloomington.k12.mn.us/departments/staff_development/index.html

Personal
Professional
Goals

PLC Group Goal

Building CIP Goals

District Strategic Plan

1. Classroom Instruction	2. Achievement Gap	3. Interracial Learning Opportunities	4. Personalized Learning Plans	5. Financial Environment	6. Ethical Conduct

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL!

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

MODEL FOR IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH
COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Data study of trends in past student achievement. PLC determines focus for professional improvement, and **sets SMART goal.**

2. Members determine **common work** that will be done by students of all PLC members, that is in alignment with SMART goal.

INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT!

4. PLC members **share student work using a protocol** (Tuning or Authentic Pedagogy) to review student progress toward SMART goal

3. Members determine mode of **professional development** needed to meet goal, and meet at least monthly to collaborate.

1. **DATA STUDY:**
    After building data study and CIP goals are identified, teachers analyze trends in student achievement data in their own PLCs.

    Questions to discuss during data study:
    - How can your PLC contribute to your building's CIP goals?
    - Did your PLC achieve or make progress towards its SMART goal from last year?
    - How has student achievement changed over the last 2-3 years?
    - Are there specific strengths or needs of different demographic groups?
    - Are there any curriculum issues that your PLC will benefit from studying this year?

Determine which building CIP goal your PLC will support. Write a SMART goal for your PLC for 06-07 (see template). SMART goals should be attainable, yet a stretch from what is currently occurring. SMART goals should be driven by a data study of trends in student achievement. **SMART goals must focus on measurable student achievement, and be aligned to a building CIP goal.**

2. STUDENT WORK

Student work is any common work that all students of PLC members participate, as aligned with the SMART goal. By reviewing student work periodically, PLC members have the opportunity to monitor the effect their instruction is having on student achievement prior to the culminating assessment identified by the SMART goal.

In order to facilitate professional dialog, it is important that all PLC members bring common student work to sessions identified for looking at work. Members are given the opportunity to present work, and seek the advice of colleagues to collaboratively improve student achievement.

Student work includes:
Anything that students do that demonstrates **their increased understanding based on your improved instruction**, and allows for meaningful professional dialog.
- Classroom or Unit Assessments
- Projects
- Standards Assessments
- Video tapes (of student skills, demonstrations, presentations, etc.)
- Writing samples

Additional resources for looking at student work, including additional suggestions, can be found at www.lasw.org.

> **"Looking at Student Work"**
> When meeting to share student work, PLCs must determine and follow a structure for professional dialog. Options include using the **"Tuning Protocol"** or "**Protocols from the Framework for Authentic Pedagogy,** particularly the criteria for authentic student performance, criteria for authentic assessment, and criteria for authentic instruction.
>
> **It is imperative to the success of PLCs that all members share student work and participate in the professional dialog to foster collaboration.**
>
> **Student work should be collected and shared 2-4 times annually, as determined by the PLC, to monitor progress toward goal.**

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
The structure of PLCs allows for ownership of professional development for
members.

In addition to meeting monthly to share professional dialog regarding student work,
PLCs may determine to use building staff development resources to seek additional
professional development to improve instruction in alignment with PLC goal.

> Suggestions include:
> Book or Article studies
> Professional Video studies
> Video sharing – demonstrating use of improved instruction
> Peer Observation
> Classroom visits
> Professional Workshops aligned with PLC initiative
> Advanced Curriculum training – best practices

**Reflections on professional development activities become the focus for the PLC
meetings when Looking at Student Work is not on the agenda.**

More information on incorporating professional development activities, including
templates for action plans and reflections can be found on the staff development
website:
http://www.bloomington.k12.mn.us/departments/staff_development/plc.html

SMART GOALS – TEMPLATE

SMART goals help educators on improving student achievement. A SMART goal clarifies exactly what students should learn, the standard of learning expected, and the measures used to determine if students have achieved that standard.

*A **SMART** goal is:*

> **Strategic and Specific** – Linked to building CIP goals. Focuses on specific student learning. Answers the question – Who and What?
>
> **Measurable** – The success toward meeting the goals can be measured in student achievement. It answers the question - How?
>
> **Attainable** – Goal can be achieved in a specific amount of time, with increased teacher effectiveness. It should be a stretch from current achievement data. Now that Bloomington teachers have been creating and evaluating SMART goals, we are asking that teachers shift from identifying percentage gains to trend data. (See example for details).
>
> **Results Oriented / Relevant / Rigorous** – The goals are aligned with a building CIP goal, and focus on increased student achievement in one defined area.
>
> **Time Bound** – Goals have a clearly defined time-frame including a target date. It answers the question – When?

Examples:

> Not a SMART goal:
> - Students will improve their writing skills in English 9.
> *Does not identify a measurement or time frame. The trend" is not measurable.*
>
> SMART goal:
> - The percentage of English 9 students scoring a 3 or better on the writing standards rubric will increase by the end of second term.
> - Data study may have revealed a trend indicating at best 72% of students have received a 3 or higher on the standard. An increasing trend would be anything above 73%, with an ultimate goal towards 100%.

Smart Goal Planning Form

Specific – WHO?

Achieve – WHAT?

Assessment – HOW?

BY

Time of year – WHEN?