Mission
To provide support and guidance for Arkansas educators in developing, leading, and sustaining a statewide Professional Learning Community

Vision
To be a high functioning collaborative team that plays an integral part in Arkansas leading the nation in student-focused education.

Goal
1. Implementing and spreading professional learning communities throughout schools and districts (webinars and conferences)
2. Building collaborative teacher and administrator teams
3. Support in developing and growing professional learning communities through modeling and observations - onsite and visiting other schools
4. Partner Model PLC school with other schools
5. Celebrating Statewide PLC successes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1 - Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture</th>
<th>Level 2 - Effective Teaching in Every Classroom</th>
<th>Level 3 - A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum</th>
<th>Level 4 - Standards-Referenced Reporting</th>
<th>Level 5 - Competency-Based Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 - Teachers have formal roles in the decision-making process regarding school initiatives</td>
<td>2.1 - The school communicates a clear vision as to how teachers should address instruction.</td>
<td>3.1 - The school curriculum and accompanying assessments adhere to state and district standards.</td>
<td>4.1 - The school establishes clear and measurable goals focused on critical needs regarding improving achievement of individual students.</td>
<td>5.2 - The school schedule accommodates students moving at a pace appropriate to their situation and needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 - Collaborative teams regularly interact to address common issues regarding curriculum, assessment, instruction, and the achievement of all students.</td>
<td>2.3. The school is aware of and monitors predominant instructional practices.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction of today’s team:

Lori Griffin - Ballman Elementary, Fort Smith School District, Principal

Rozanna Brown, Ballman Elementary, Fort Smith School District, 4th Grade Teacher

Faith Short, East Pointe Elementary, Greenwood School District, Assistant Principal

Amy King, East Pointe Elementary, Greenwood School District, 2nd Grade Teacher and Guiding Coalition member

Lori Delk, Mills University Studies High School, Pulaski County Special School District, Social Studies Chair and Social Studies Teacher

Duane Clayton, Mills University Studies High School, Pulaski County Special School District, Principal
Purpose of Collaborative Teams

To work together toward a common goal - Ensuring higher levels of learning for ALL!

Clear, compelling purpose to improve!
“None of us is as smart as ALL of us!”
---Ken Blanchard
Characteristics of High Functioning Teams

● Clear, aligned goals, beliefs, and values
● Trust built through relationships: Appreciate and encourage diverse thinking
● Measures success and systematically plans for interventions/ extensions - Brings student work to the table EVERY MEETING
● Use data/research to form decisions
● Learns, shares, collaborates, and celebrates successful lessons
● Views disagreements as an opportunity to learn by creating productive discussions.
What Teams Need From Their Leaders

- Support teams through their collective commitments to each other on how they will work together
- Embed collaboration into routine practices
- Create PROTECTED time for teams during the school day
- Focus on the 18 Critical Issues for Team Consideration
- Monitor the work of the teams through products generated through collective inquiry
- Support teams in identifying SMART goals inside their unit plans.
- Support teams with relevant and timely information on student achievement. (end of unit, interims, summative)
Leaders TRUST and BELIEVE in them-They need to own the work and lead their teams.

Give them permission to take risks.

Support them in failing forward.

CELEBRATE THEIR SUCCESSES!!
Possible Team Structures and Schedules
Elementary Collaborative Team Structures

**Same Course/Grade Level Teams**
- The best team structure for improving student achievement
- This team has a natural common interest revolving around the 4 critical questions
- Best suited for ongoing professional learning

**Vertical Teams**
- Link teachers with those who teach content above and below their students
- Benefit from getting feedback on instruction from two different grade levels

**Electronic Teams**
- Partner with colleagues across town, the state, the country
- Provides opportunity for networking and sharing resources, etc.
One day per week, each grade level collaborative team has a scheduled time from 7:45-8:50.
Individual planning (for all members of the team) is from 8:50-9:30.
Grade level team has the capability to continue their collaborative meeting into their personal planning time, if they choose.
Specialty classes (computer, art, music, PE, media) occur during these times.
# Sample

## 2020-21 TEAM PLANNING

### GRADE LEVEL MEETING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>Day of the Week</th>
<th>Begin Time</th>
<th>End Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Mrs. Doe's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Martinez's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Smith's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2:45 AM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Wilson's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2:45 AM</td>
<td>3:45 AM</td>
<td>McCain's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Robben's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Brown's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Brown's Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Grade</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Brown's Room</td>
</tr>
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</table>
High School Collaborative Team Structures

- Shifting from singletons to true collaborative structures
- Building the capacity of team members to shift roles and understand the value of each team member.
- Interdisciplinary Teams-School Leadership Team or Guiding Coalition
Clarifying the Right Work

Identifying Students Needs
Core instruction, Interventions, extensions, The 4 Questions are Key

Use Process data
Create an action plan and monitor the progress

Norms
How do we work together?

Determine Loose & Tight

SEE HOW WE MANAGE CHANGE
How the teams function

WITHIN THE GROUP
1. Communication is important
2. Trust is key - willingness to be vulnerable
3. Building the culture of collaboration

AS PART OF THE WHOLE
1. Communication is still important.
2. Support the larger group goals.
3. Embracing the change.
Enhancing the Effectiveness of Teams by establishing collective commitments and utilizing tools & resources

- The teams have to be authentically collaborative and not exist in superficial harmony.
- Be absolutely clear about the work and the intended results.
- Become fanatics about results that can be used as process data
- Be a team not just a group.
- Mutual accountability and independence
- Collaborative commitments (like a marriage contract)

Resources:
Agendas with the 4 questions of the PLC being addressed
Mission & vision statements
SMART Goals planning sheets
Essential standards worksheet
Tools for effectiveness

**Agendas**: Keep the focus on the goal

**Collaborative Commitments**: Remind us of our beliefs and goals

**Team Building**: Mutual Trust and Respect are Key

**Norms**: Simple to agree on
Difficult to enforce

**Roles**: Make everyone feel like a part of the team.

**Protected Time**: Must have in order to focus
Are you a GROUP or a TEAM?

Seductive Shortcuts and Dangerous Detours
A TEAM is...

A group of people working interdependently to achieve a common goal for which members are held mutually accountable. **Collaborative teams are the fundamental building blocks of PLCs.**

Learning by Doing
Collaborative TEAMS focus on the Four Critical Questions to drive the work of a PLC

What are the “right things” that a school staff should address if high levels of learning are the focus of their collaborative efforts?

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student has learned?
3. How will we respond when some students do not learn?
4. How can we extend and enrich the learning for students who have demonstrated proficiency?
Collaborative TEAM outcomes

- They are able to create a culture of success in schools
- Teachers learn from one another, leading to teaching improvements and student learning gains
- They plan discussions and make decisions based upon evidence and analysis rather than opinion
- They improve the quality and equity of student learning
- They learn to take collective responsibility for student success
- Collectively, they can meet the needs of all students; individually they cannot
Final Thoughts for Leaders

1. Teams must be interdependent or they are not a team
2. Create meaningful teams -- be aware of “leftover” teams
3. Make time for collaboration
4. Give feedback on team meetings
5. Teams must have clarity on the work and the mission of the team
6. Teams must be “co-laboring” on the right work or they will have no impact upon student achievement
7. SUPPORT and CELEBRATE!
Thanks!

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