**16 Intermediate PLC Team Activities**

**Revised March 18, 2014**

**Adapt to Fit the Readiness of Your Staff**

1. Consider creating norms to govern team behavior (i.e., start on time, stick to PLC work, etc.).
2. Using state/national standards and student learning information (local and state assessments), select essentials—items that are deemed important for success at the next level. Essentials (about 8-15 per semester) are what the team guarantees 90% of its students will learn. The team must be willing to teach and reteach these items. Teams will raise the bar will raise when the goal of 90% achievement on the essentials is met. Begin by focusing on just 1 course/subject area. At some point, check that the essentials are aligned vertically.
3. Sequence the essentials into teaching units.
4. Share ideas on teaching the essentials.
5. Discuss teacher practices that could discourage learning. Should some be abandoned?
6. Teach a unit of instruction. Units will contain knowledge/skills deemed as both essential & nonessential.
7. Since frequent learning feedback is important for teachers to see if students are “getting it.” Teachers should prepare frequent (2-3 per week) informal learning checks – clickers, oral assessments, homework, quizzes, etc.
8. In addition to informal learning checks, teams should create a common formative assessment that occurs prior to each unit test. Planning by units, typically 2-3 week’s work, is highly recommended as the way to begin PLC work. It will take multiple semesters to align units and develop common unit assessments and assessment reports.
9. Establish a common grading system using rubrics for writing and percentages for assessments, homework, class work, etc.
10. Commit to setting student achievement goals for the essentials on the common assessments. Example: *\_\_ % of our students will score \_\_ % or better on the essential portion of our common formative assessment given on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).**Those who fall below this mark will be given extra time and support until they learn these essentials.* The assessment can test other unit items in addition to the essentials, but the goal setting, reteaching, and retesting will be focused on just the essentials.
11. Prepare a team set of interventions for the essentials. These reteaching activities that offer extra time and support should commence quickly when the formative assessments indicate students are struggling. To keep interventions manageable, they should be designed for the essentials only. Focus on reteaching essentials, not entire units. Also consider retaeching using alternative forms of pedagogy.
12. Spiral the learning checks on the essentials throughout the semester, especially those where the formative assessments indicate students are struggling. This means that the assessment for Unit 2 contains questions on the essentials from Unit 1. The second quarter assessment contains first quarter essential work. The number of review questions will generally be less than the questions on the current essentials. Since teachers are ensuring kids will know all essentials, a few review questions on each essential should appear on every assessment.
13. In addition to the end of unit summative assessments, create and give a common summative assessment near the end of each quarter. Ideally, teachers will stagger the assessments so they are not all on the same day. These assessments measure how well students learned all of the essentials plus the other information presented up to that point. Adjust the instructional program according to the strengths and weaknesses shown by the summative results.
14. Prepare a quarterly/semester data report - Format for this report is posted under “Team Activities.”
15. After exhausting the team interventions, help develop a school pyramid to provide more time & support for strugglers while moving forward or providing enrichment for students who have mastered the standard. Assess to measure the effectiveness of the time & support.
16. A high level PLC practice is to validate the rigor of the team assessments is to establish the correlation between student success on the team assessment and high stakes assessments like the state assessment. You don't want kids being successful on the local assessment and failing on the state. (DuFour, 2006).