

Lorenzo de Zavala Middle School

PLC Guidebook

2022-2023



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Our Mission, Vision, Values and Goals

- Mission- Provide an environment that cultivates accountability, responsibility, and lifelong-learning both socially and academically.
- Vision- To be an innovative campus that provides equity for all, closes achievement gaps empowers students to be the best version of themselves.
- Values-
 - value collaboration and interdependence
 - adjusting and adapting are essential for growth
 - engage in conversations centered around learning
 - shifting our focus from teaching to learning
 - cultivating trusting relationships
- Goals (SMART goals based on data)- [Folder](#)

Why Professional Learning Communities at DZ?

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) challenge the practice of isolation.
- **PLCs foster collaboration and the sharing of best practices.**
- By joining together, teachers have the potential to affect great changes in their students and the school.
- High-performing schools embrace collaboration and make it part of their culture.

Why are we investing so much time, effort and resources into PLCs?

- PLCs get everyone rowing the boat in the same direction -- staff members work together toward a common purpose. Research shows a clear correlation between clarity of purpose and effective schools.
- Members of PLCs help one another clarify what students need to learn, plan more effective lessons, assess student work and solve the common problems of teaching and learning. These conversations result in more effective student learning.
- PLCs allow for shared leadership by creating collective decision-making.

How do PLCs benefit students?

The research shows that when the PLC model is used consistently and effectively, schools will see:

- Positive attendance impact
- Increased learning among all students
- Greater academic gains in core subjects
- Smaller gaps in achievement between students from different backgrounds

How do PLCs benefit the teaching process?

- Teachers better understand the content and meaning of the curriculum they are teaching and the role they play in helping all students achieve expectations.
- Staff makes greater use of data to guide instructional decisions to help all learners.
- Teachers mentor each other and challenge each other to use best educational practices.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) Collective Commitments and Non Negotiables

DZ PLC Non-Negotiables:

1. Educators will work in collaborative teams and take collective responsibility for student learning rather than working in isolation.
2. Collaborative teams implement a guaranteed and viable curriculum; unit by unit, and will implement and follow through agreed upon adjustments and plans to the curriculum.
3. Collaborative teams monitor student learning through ongoing assessment process that includes frequent, team developed common formative assessments and using subject specific data protocols**
 - a. [Data and Artifact Protocol](#)
4. Educators use the results of common assessments to:
 - a. improve individual practice
 - b. build the team's capacity to achieve its goals
 - c. intervene/enrich on behalf of the students
5. Provide a systematic process for intervention and enrichment in which teachers plan and implement with their students.

“Common formative assessments are **team-designed, intentional measures used for the purpose of monitoring student attainment of essential learning targets throughout the instructional process. In addition to providing information about which students need additional support or extension, common formative assessments allow teams to examine the effects of their practice, and gain insight as to which instructional strategies yield high levels of learning. Furthermore, the data can be used to provide frequent feedback to students that they can use to adjust their own learning strategies.”

- Qualities of Common **Formative** Assessments:

- Teacher Created
- Intent is to monitor student mastery
- Allows teachers to analyze instructional practices that are the highest yield
- Used to provide feedback to students
- More of a “quiz” than a “test”
- Covers a short amount of material over a shorter time period
- This may be an informal (but **shared**) assessment (quick checks, journal entry, expository paragraph, multiple digital platforms, etc.)

- Qualities of Common **Summative** Assessment:

- Created by the district or state (Semester Exams, STAAR, etc.)
- Given infrequently
- It is often too late to remediate after these tests have been administered

- Cover larger amounts of material
- Usually lengthy

Teachers will commit to:

- Use **best practices** daily in the classroom to stimulate student engagement.
- Provide evidence of lesson planning before coming to PLC.
- Facilitate cooperative learning activities to engage all students.
- Provide interventions for struggling students.
- Provide enrichment for students mastering concepts.
- Be a contributing member of each collaborative team.
- Use assessment results to drive instructional decisions.
- Participate in reflective team activities to strengthen instruction and assessment practices.
- Use re-engagement strategies to provide rich Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions.

Collaborative Teams (PLCs) will commit to:

- Create norms.
- Engage in the PLC cyclical process to continuously focus on learning.
- Use the 4 leading questions to guide PLC time.
- Use student achievement data to establish SMART goals and action steps and then assess, monitor and adjust as needed.
- Support the campus goals.
- Unpack essential standards.
- Set high standards, expectations and differentiate to meet the needs of all students.
- **Create common artifacts** (i.e., plan for success, learning experiences, and assessments) that are implemented consistently by all members of the collaborative team. (See [Common Assessments](#))
- Reflect on students' learning to inform instructional decisions (looking at student work, item analysis, concept analysis, etc.).
- Devote team time to discuss effective instructional strategies that include but are not limited to re-engagement strategies, enrichment opportunities, and differentiation.

PLC Leaders/Instructional Support/[Department Learning Leaders \(DLLs\)](#) will commit to:

- Ensure that team members collaborate and focus discussions answering the [four critical questions](#) of a professional learning community.
- Ensure that PLC time is utilized to address one of the 4 leading questions
- Serve as a liaison between team members and AS or interventionist.
- Establish schedules, agendas, and minutes of team meetings.
- Meet with interventionists if team members are not following through with expectations.
- Collect data and artifacts to document PLC interventions, assessments, student growth, lesson plans and/or instructional strategies implemented.
- Coach and support classroom teachers in effective instruction.
- Celebrate and reward successes.

PLC Leaders:

[Department Learning Leader Job Description](#)

[PLC Lead Job Description](#)

6th Grade Math	Morgan Maschino
7th Grade Math	Taryn Spencer (DLL)
8th Grade Math	Morgan Monson
6th Grade ELAR	William Long
7th Grade ELAR	Diana Morton (DLL)
8th Grade ELAR	Morgan West
Science	Melanie Albright (DLL)
History	Joshua Jarmon (DLL)
Electives	Stephanie Duncan (DLL)
Athletics	Kyle Milliron (DLL)

Administrators will commit to:

- Support the PLC in the development and implementation of mandatory interventions for struggling students.
- Ensure mandatory interventions for struggling students are available and students are held accountable for attending.
- Support team collaborative opportunities with time and structure.
- Communicate with the team (PLC) leaders and Instructional Leaders on an ongoing basis.
- Limit (when possible) the number of preparations to no more than two different courses.
- Work with teachers who are members of multiple PLCs to develop a plan that will honor their time and allow them to participate as members of multiple PLCs.
- Hold each team member accountable for participating and implementing the decisions of the PLC.
- Monitor and ensure all teachers are using best practices in the classroom.
- Celebrate individual and team effort and achievements.
- Contribute to the development and continued success of high performing collaborative teams.
- Model, monitor and enforce student and adult behaviors that contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment while respecting the rights of others within a diverse community.

DZ PLC Big Ideas

Three Big Ideas of a Professional Learning Community Culture:

- Focus on Learning
- Collaborative culture
- Results Orientation (Constantly making decisions based on formal and informal data)

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the <u>FOUR Critical Questions</u>	
What do students need to know and be able to do? (Unpacking the TEKS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What should each student know and be able to do as a result of each unit, grade level or department course? ● Essential standards and targets are identified ● The curriculum is unpacked into learning targets. ● Targets are clearly communicated with students.
How will we know when they have learned it? (Common Assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Common formative assessments aligned with the essential standards and targets are created or agreed upon. ● Data is analyzed to make decisions ● Students track their own data and progress
How will we provide intervention when students have not reached mastery on the standard or target? (Reteach)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time is scheduled during the school day to provide skill specific intervention. ● Students are given multiple opportunities for success. ● During this time, no new instruction takes place in the classroom.
How will we extend the curriculum when students have mastered the standard or target? (Extension)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunities are scheduled each day for extending the curriculum during Tier 2. No new instruction takes place.

6 Essential Characteristics of a PLC (adapted from Learning by Doing)

1. Shared mission, vision, values, goals

Educators in a PLC benefit from clarity regarding their shared purpose, a common understanding of the school they are trying to create, collective communities to help move the school in the desired direction, and specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound (SMART) goals to mark their progress.

2. Collaborative teams focused on learning

In a PLC, educators work together interdependently in collaborative teams to achieve common goals for which they are mutually accountable. The structure of the school is aligned to ensure teams are provided the time and support essential to adult learning. “Collaboration is a systematic process in which we work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results.”

3. Collective inquiry

Teams in a PLC relentlessly question the status quo, seek new methods of teaching and learning, test the methods, and then reflect on the results. Building shared knowledge of both current reality and best practice is an essential part of each team’s decision-making process.

4. Action orientation and experimentation

Members of a PLC constantly turn their learning and insights into action. They recognize the importance of engagement and experience in learning and in testing new ideas. They learn by doing.

5. Commitment to Continuous improvement

Not content with the status quo, members of a PLC constantly seek better ways to achieve mutual goals and accomplish their fundamental purpose of learning for all. All teams engage 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 the strategies and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Applying the new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

6. Results orientation

Educators in a PLC assess their efforts on the basis of tangible results. They are hungry for evidence of student learning and use that evidence to inform and improve their practice. “The success of the PLC concept depends not on the merits of the concept itself, but on the most important element in the improvement of any school—the commitment and persistence of the educators within it.” —Richard DuFour

PLC Timeline

Preparing	Developing	Implementing	Reviewing
August	September	October-April	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Build The Team. □ Team Building Activities □ Discussion of what a PLC is. Its Rationale, Purpose and Structures □ Develop Team Norms. □ Explore the Curriculum and identify the Essential Standards that will frame the entire year. □ Based on early diagnostics and data from previous years, consider the tools that will most closely align to proficiency on these essential standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Create the SMART goals for the semester/year. Base this decision on data and previous conversations in August. □ Further clarify the assessment measures that are most closely aligned to essential standards and determine your SMART goal(s) that will most accurately demonstrate proficiency. □ Working backwards from the SMART goal, determine the actions steps that will build to the goal(s). □ In addition to the assessments included in your SMART goals, determine any other common summative and formative assessment. □ Determine the interventions you will use for areas of concern as revealed in assessments and analysis of student work. Include instructional support for struggling as well as high achieving students in class and outside of class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Share effective strategies <u>and use them</u> in the lesson and unit planning classroom. □ Compare results towards meeting the SMART goals(s) and action steps. □ Formulate Common Assessments □ Look at the data, including using an Analysis of Student Work protocol and look for trends. □ Continually address areas of weakness and strength. □ Implement the intervention and enrichment plan with any adjustments needed to respond to new data. □ Continually Monitor Student Progress. □ Look at the data to identify teachers with strengths in areas of instruction. Share strategies. Coach each other. □ Visit Team members' classrooms to observe best practices. □ Read Norms at each meeting and modify as needed. □ Read Smart Goal and related Action Steps at each meeting and modify as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Record successful practices that you will continue next year. □ Initiate a new Smart Goal as needed.

Developing Norms

What Are Norms And Why Do We Need Them? Norms are the framework from which team members commit to collaborate. Attention to their development and adherence to them ensure the success of the group and facilitate the members' ability to deal with critical issues. Norms consist of several components that clarify team dynamics.

Norm Elements to Address

- **TIME**: When and where will we meet? Will we start on time?
- **LISTENING**: How will we listen to our peers? Are there any bad ideas? How will we discourage verbal interruptions when others are speaking?
- **CONFIDENTIALITY**: What content is to be held in confidence? What can be shared after the meeting?
- **DECISION MAKING**: How will we arrive at a decision? What if everyone doesn't agree with the group decision?
- **PARTICIPATION**: Is participation optional? Will we have an attendance policy? What will we do if a member consistently refuses to engage in the work of the PLC?
- **EXPECTATIONS**: What do we expect from team members? Do we need a method for ensuring each member comes to the meeting prepared with appropriate data or other items?
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**: How will we foster an interdependent culture in which we hold each other mutually accountable?

Norms Development Template

Elements To Consider	Group Proposed Norms
<p><u>Time</u></p> <p>When will we meet? Where will we meet? Will we be on time?</p>	
<p><u>Listening</u></p> <p>How will we listen to our peers? Are there any bad ideas? How will we discourage verbal interruptions when others are speaking?</p>	
<p><u>Confidentiality</u></p> <p>What content is to be held in confidence? What can be shared after the meeting?</p>	
<p><u>Decision Making:</u></p> <p>How will we arrive at a decision? What if everyone doesn't agree with the group's decision?</p>	
<p><u>Participation</u></p> <p>Is participation optional? Will we have an attendance policy? What will we do if a member regularly misses meetings?</p>	
<p><u>Expectations</u></p> <p>What do we expect from team members? Do we need a method for ensuring each member comes to the meeting prepared with appropriate data or other items?</p>	
<p><u>Accountability</u></p> <p>What will we do if a member regularly misses meetings?</p>	

Our Team Norms

Team Name:

Time

Listening

Confidentiality

Decision Making

Participation

Expectations

Accountability

Team Member Signatures

Date: _____

Determining Essential Standards

adapted from allthingsplc.info

What are Essential (Power) Standards?

Priority standards are a carefully selected subset of the total list of the grade-specific and course-specific standards within each content area that students must know and be able to do by the end of each school year in order to be prepared to enter the next grade level or course. (Ainsworth, Rigorous Curriculum Design, 2010)

What will Essential (Power) Standards Look Like at DZ?

Standards that you are guaranteeing ALL students will know and be able to do at the end of the year. These are the standards you will write your common formative assessments around. You will provide “time and support” for students who haven’t mastered them and extension for those who already have.

Essential Standards do not represent all that you are going to teach. They represent the minimum a student must learn to reach high levels of learning.

Process:

1. Unpack depth of standard (To identify concepts and skills embedded in each standard; fosters deep understanding of standard before determining if it is essential). A great tool to start with is the frequency distribution from Lead4ward.
2. Identify essential standards (prioritize)
3. Look at when each essential standard is addressed on your scope and sequence (when will each essential standard be taught)

Essential Standards Criteria:

1. Endurance- Knowledge and skills of value beyond a single test date.
2. Transferability- Knowledge and skills of value in multiple disciplines.
3. Readiness for the next level of learning- Knowledge and skills of value in multiple disciplines.

Essential Standards Are...

- What teachers will spend the majority of instructional time teaching.
- What teachers will assess.
- What teachers will have data-driven discussions about.
- What teachers will intervene on (enrichment or remediation)

SMART Goals

SMART goals are set with the purpose of increasing student achievement. SMART goals are specific in that they clarify precisely what students should learn, the level of the learning (proficiency level), the assessments that will be used to make the proficiency determination and a time frame.

A SMART Goal is

Specific - Linked to the CIP goals. It focuses on specific student learning and answers WHO and WHAT.

Measurable - Student success is measured by assessment. It answers the question – HOW.

Attainable - The goal should be set high but within reason. High goals are not always attained but this does not mean it was a failure.

Results Oriented/Relevant/Rigorous - Supporting the SIP, results tell you who has achieved proficiency. These results determine which students need remediation or enrichment.

Time Bound – All goals are bound by a clearly-defined time frame.

The SMART goal needs to be a goal that makes sense to your team based on your analysis of the essential standards and the best indicator(s) of proficiency of those standards. It is possible to have more than one SMART goal. For example, an academic PLC may decide to include a SMART goal related to Metro Tech's CIP goals around ACT/Aspire scores as well as a SMART goal more directly related to their essential standards. A CTE PLC may have a SMART goal related to improvements in literacy as well as a SMART goal related to the end-of-year assessment.

SMART Goal Examples

1. _____ % of 7th grade math students will increase their _____ scores by _____ % by the end of the second six weeks as measured on the (assessment) _____.
2. Fifty-two percent of my writing students will increase their average writing scores by one point by the end for the first six weeks as measured by the (assessment) _____.

NOT SMART Goals:

1. My students will do better on their math tests.
2. The team's students will increase their understanding of expository writing.
3. My reading students will complete 80% of their homework.

[Additional SMART Goal Template](#)

[Additional Editable SMART Goal Template \(Make a Copy\)](#)

SMART Goal Planning Template

PLC Team _____ SMART Goal for 20__ - 20__					
Which skills are most essential to our curriculum? (What must all students <u>know and be able to do</u> before we can consider them ready for the next level?)					
What methods of assessment or student products/work are most likely to provide the best evidence of mastery? (How will we know if they are able to demonstrate these skills?)					
Analyze and Define Goal					
What Data is currently available as baseline data, e.g., data from last year, early diagnostic assessments?					
What level of mastery will we accept as proficient, e.g. 75%, a score of 3 out of 4, etc.?					
What percentage of our students should reach this level of mastery, e.g., 100% 90%, etc.?					
What is the timeline for meeting this goal, e.g., end of term, semester, or year?					
Combine into a SMART goal statement.					
Check for SMART-ness. Is it ...?	Specific	Measurable	Attainable	Results-Oriented	Time-bound

Action Plan

Action plans make goals happen. A good Action Plan sets the stage for achieving the goal – it maps out the work process with a detailed schedule of key activities needed to accomplish the goal

Action Plans Attributes

- Provide a timetable for activities
- Determine resources required
- Identify who you will need to coordinate with and will rely on to contribute
- Anticipate problems and outline contingency plans

Steps to Writing an Action Plan

Clarify your goal:

- What does the expected outcome look like?
- How will you know if you have reached your destination?
- What makes your goal measurable?
- What constraints do you have such as limits on time, money, or other resources?

Write a list of actions:

- Write down all actions you may need to take to achieve your goal. Write as many different options and ideas as possible.
- Take a sheet of paper and write more and more ideas, just as they come to your mind. While you are doing this, try not to judge or analyze.

Analyze, prioritize, and prune:

- Look at your list of actions. What are the absolutely necessary and effective steps to achieve your goal? Mark them somehow.
- Then determine what action items can be dropped from the plan without significant consequences for the outcome. Cross them out.

Organize your list into a plan:

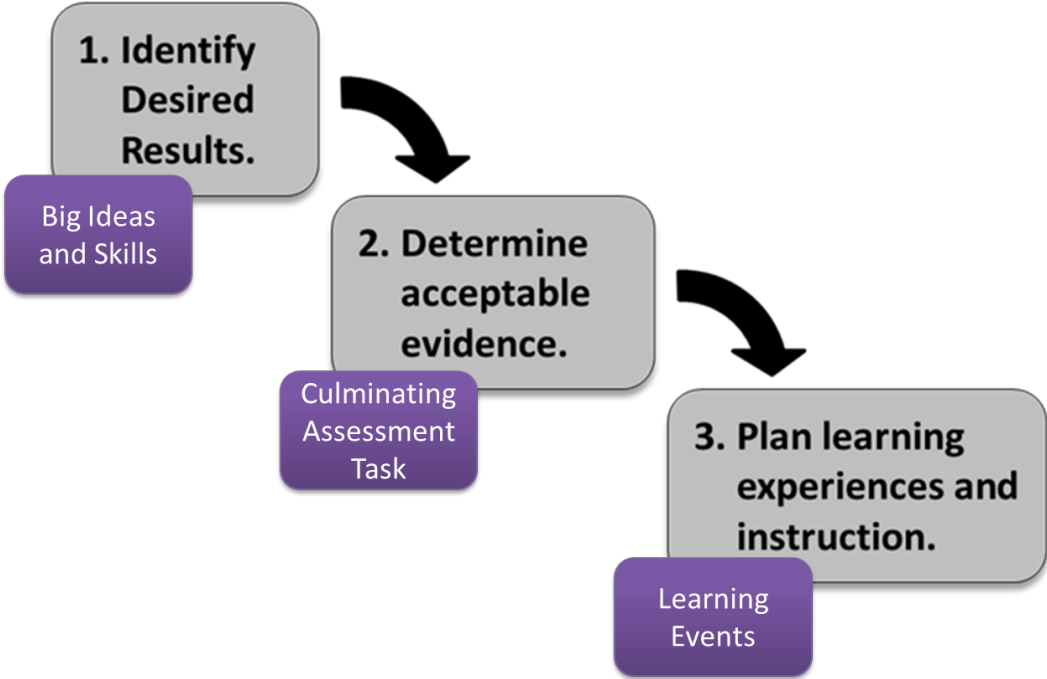
- Decide on the order of your action steps. Start from looking at your marked key actions. For each action, what other steps should be completed before that action? Rearrange your actions and ideas into a sequence of ordered action steps.
- Finally, look at your plan once again. Are there any ways to simplify it even more?

Monitor the execution of your plan to measure for success:

- How much have you progressed towards your goal by now?
- What new information have you got?
- Use this information to further adjust and optimize your plan.

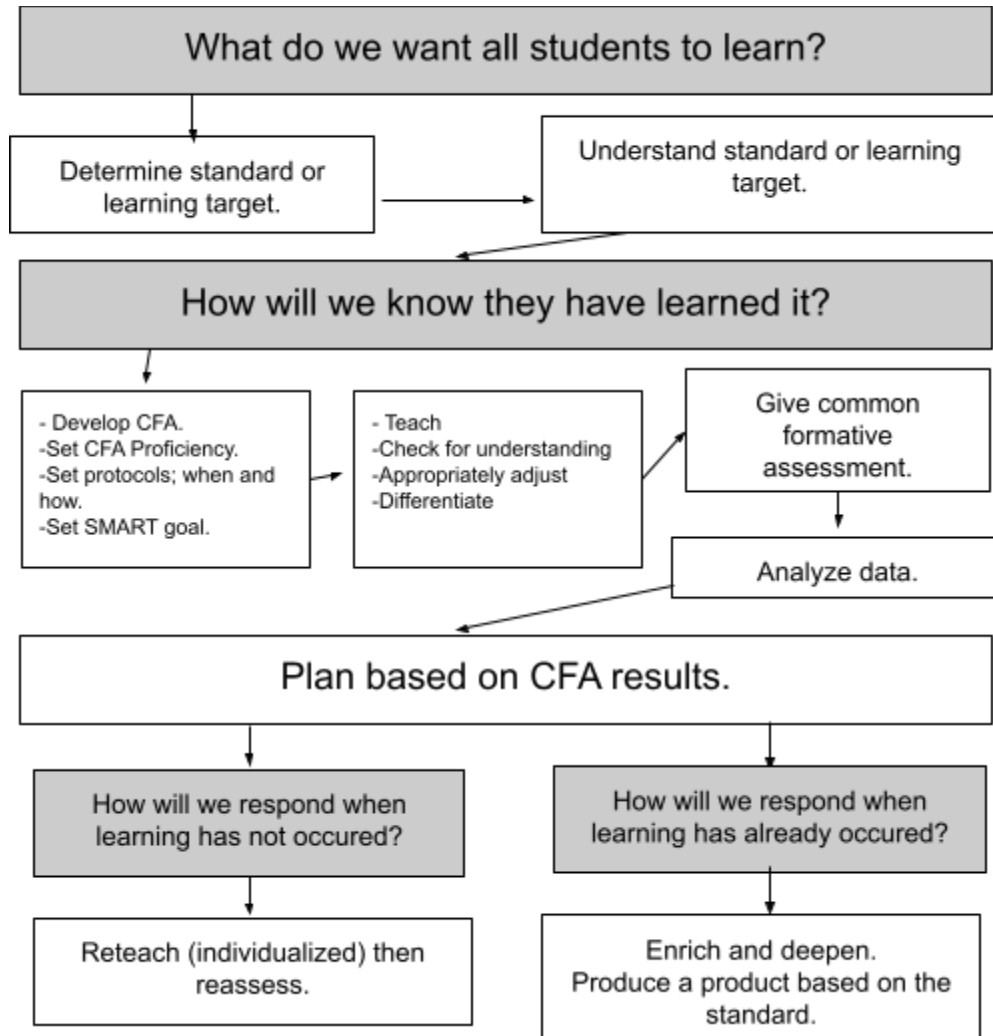
Lesson Plan Development and Fundamentals of Backwards Design

Backward Design



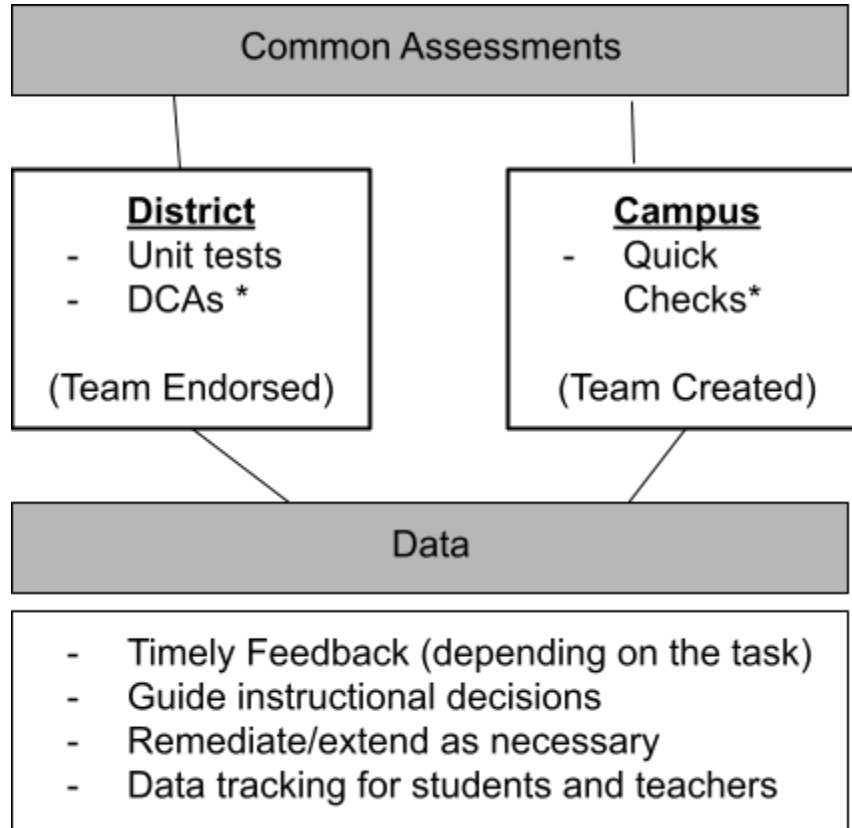
Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Common Assessments



**Gradebooks should reflect collaboration and calibration of grading.

Types of Common Assessments



<u>Formal Common Assessments</u>	<u>Informal Common Assessments</u>
Unit Tests	Quick Checks*
	District Common Assessments*

kj

*should not be taken for a grade

Data Protocol (Solution Tree)

In considering the data set, discuss and record your shared thoughts on the following ...

<p style="text-align: center;">Question 1</p> <p>What do we want all students to know or be able to do? <i>(Clarify standards and targets of focus)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Question 2</p> <p>How will we know if students have mastered the standards of focus? <i>(Determine proficiency indicators)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Question 3</p> <p>How will we respond to students who have not yet learned? <i>(Discuss interventions)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Question 4</p> <p>How will we respond to students who have already demonstrated mastery or are ready to do more? <i>(Discuss extension and enrichment)</i></p>
<p>1. Based on the data, how does data differ classroom to classroom? (Here's what ...)</p>	
<p>2. What are the implications of this information? Which instructional strategies helped students learn? What skills did the proficient students demonstrate in their work that set their work apart? (So what?)</p>	
<p>3. So what's the plan? (Now what? Who? What? When?)</p>	

Data Analysis Protocol

Exploratory Dialogue: Activating and Engaging

(Prediction: What do you predict the data and results will show?)

Exploring and Discovering

(Please avoid because statements or trying to explain WHY the data is what it is, we will do that part next. Just observe and note the patterns, trends, etc. that are emerging)

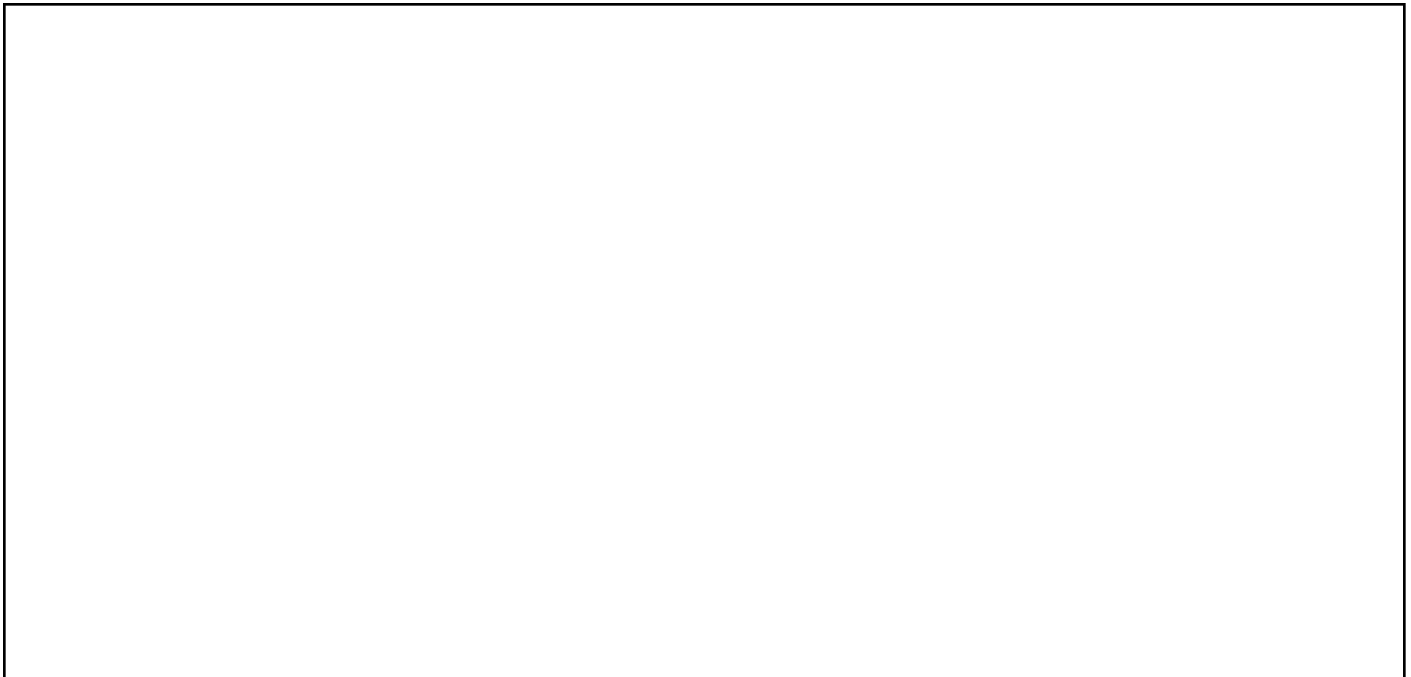
Exploratory Dialogue: Organizing

(What are possible causes for this data and results?)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their responses to the question about possible causes for the data and results.

Exploratory Dialogue: Brainstorming Solutions

(What can we do individually and as a team to address the data issues that we noted above? Keep in mind the Theory of Causation and how your solution will address the data and results)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their brainstormed solutions to the data issues.

Decision Making and Next Steps

(Create an action plan for next steps. What actions will you and your team take? What is the timeline? What criteria will you use to determine success?)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their action plan, timeline, and success criteria.

Analyzing Student Work: FAME Model

Teacher _____

PLC Team _____

Grade Level/Subject Area: _____

Date _____

Student Work Selected for Analysis _____

Standard/Concept _____

1. Expectation for Student Standards/Performance (Skills/Learning Targets)

2. Students' Names

Far Below Standard	Approaching Standard	Meeting Standard	Exceeding Standard
___% of class	___% of class	___% of class	___% of class

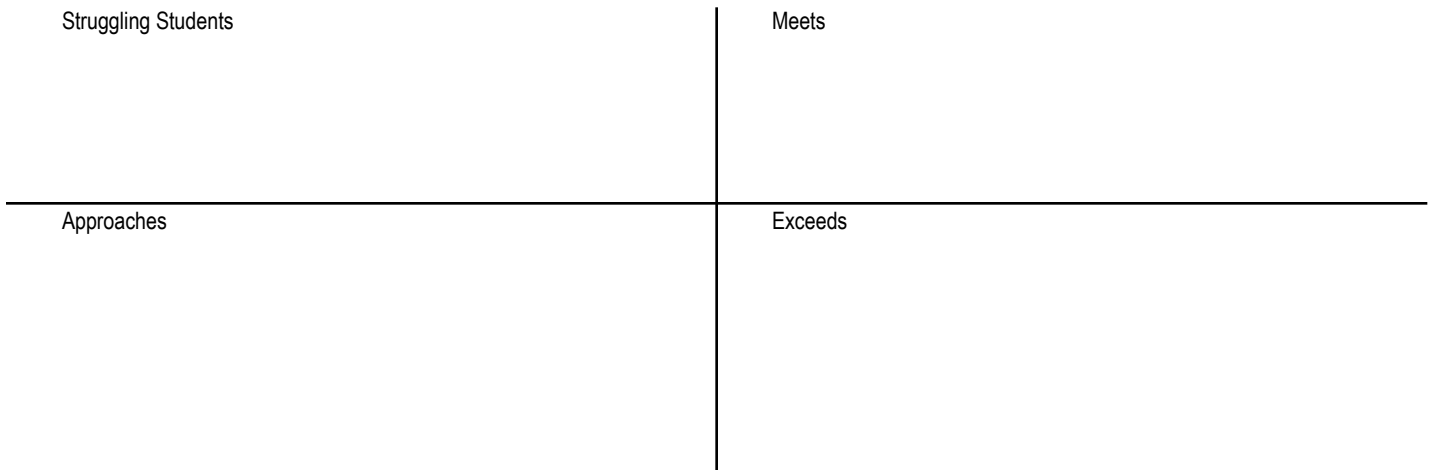
3. Description of Student Performance: What the student does well. (Select and describe one student from each category.)

Far Below Standard	Approaching Standard	Meeting Standard	Exceeding Standard

4. Learning Needs: What the student needs to work on. (Same students from each category.)

Far Below Standard	Approaching Standard	Meeting Standard	Exceeding Standard

5. Differentiated Strategies (Note strategies that will most effectively address the Learning Needs listed above. Consider resources and/or personnel to support you and/or students.)



Interventions and Enrichment

Implementation of Differentiated Learning Continuum

Overview:

- On Tuesdays and Thursdays we will “pause for the cause” and spend part of the 90 minute block on specific interventions (On Level, Honors, GT).
- Based on MAP data
- Planned on co-teach days for extra support

How will it work?

- Instructional support will provide an outline of topics based on the MAP Learning Continuum
- After the first round of MAP, we will group your students for 1st semester and specify the focus for each week for four weeks/7 sessions. For the 2nd semester, the teacher will adjust groups based on up-to-date MAP information.
- We will assist in the planning and implementation of Targeted Tuesdays/Thursdays
- All targeted Tuesday/Thursday documents will be housed in the One Stop Shop/Content/Intervention Folder.

Timeline:

August	September-October	November-December	January-March	March-May
-Initial training on targeted Tuesday/Thursday	-Instructional support team will assist in grouping students based on need	-Interventions address targeted areas based on MAP data	-adjust groups and topics based on winter data	-STAAR interventions
-Co-teachers set to help accommodate interventions in high needs areas.	-Instructional support team will assist in identifying topics based on gap	-Semester exam administration	-continue gap filling through interventions	-Spring administration of MAP
-Initial MAP Administration	-Teams plan for intervention		-Winter administration of MAP	-SSI remediation
	-Interventions begin on Tuesdays and Thursdays in September			

Information from 2020-21: [Presentation](#)

Information from 2021-22: [Presentation](#)

Information from 2022-23: [Presentation](#)

PLC Leader's Handbook 2022-2023



Roles and Responsibilities of a PLC Leader

The educators who serve in this very important role are expected to lead and communicate the work of their team. They will work closely with the administrator aligned to their PLC as well as the Instructional Leaders and the Professional Development Specialist. Team leaders are expected to articulate and communicate to the Instructional Leaders and administration questions, needs, and concerns, while at the same time communicating and explaining the rationale and specifics of the school's plans and initiatives to the team. In short, the team leader serves as the *key communication link* between the administration and the team.

Team leaders are expected to enhance the capacity of their team to work *interdependently* to achieve *common* goals for which team members hold themselves *mutually accountable*. In fulfilling the role of leading their team, team leaders are responsible for such functions as

- leading the team in preparing and utilizing team norms,
- facilitating meetings,
- leading the work of teams in analyzing and improving student learning data,
- Ensure that PLC time is utilized to address one of the 5 leading questions
- leading the collaborative development and attainment of learning improvement goals,
- serving as a direct communications link between the administration and the team,
- planning agendas,
- seeking out and experimenting with best practices,
- and identifying and communicating professional development needs.

Team leaders must work continually to enhance the effectiveness of their team by ensuring that the team focuses on the critical questions and practices associated with improving student learning in a manner that is reflective of the highest quality and employs the tenets of Metro Tech's CIP, including our Promising Practices.

Educators who serve as team leaders must have a *demonstrated record of effectiveness in their own teaching*, and they must have *earned the recognition and respect of their peers*. Team leaders must have excellent planning and organizational skills as well as the ability to work well with others. In order to enhance the leadership capacity and effectiveness of others, team leaders must model a desire and willingness to continually learn and constantly seek ways to first improve themselves so that they can more effectively lead their team.

In the beginning of the year, you will have new members to the team. In fact, you may be a new member as well. It is important to establish a TEAM feeling among the members of the team. Allow time in the early meetings to get to know each other. One way to do that is to have returning members summarize key milestones from the previous year such as the SMART goal, celebrations and challenges, and decisions about this year's focus. New members can share their previous experiences with PLCs or any other collaborative settings. These discussions will lead nicely into the important conversation around setting the group norms for the year.

Impacting Student Learning in a PLC:

Uncontrollable Variables

Children cannot...

- Pick their parents, pick where they live, pick the school they attend, pick their teachers, or pick the high-stakes summative assessments

Controllable Variables

A school culture in which collaborative teams develop...

- Classroom culture of caring & encouragement
- A guaranteed, viable curriculum
- Effective, research-based teaching strategies
- Frequent formative monitoring of student learning
- Additional time, support, and enrichment
- Frequent recognition and celebration of improvement

Leading your team to Develop Norms

How to Lead a Team to Developing Team Norms

1. All team members must be present.
2. Ask members to verbalize things that they have seen, heard or experienced in a team that they did not like. Examples: People interrupting each other, members showing up late, etc. Construct a list of their responses on chart paper.
3. Have each person write on a sticky note (one idea on each note) what is important to them on a team during a given amount of time. After your time has expired, sort the notes into like groups and assign a name/concept to the grouping.
4. From these groups, agree on items to put in the appropriate areas of the Norms Development Template* or create your own.
5. Record the team Norms and determine how to redirect if a team norm is broken (accountability).
6. Ask team members to sign the completed document.
7. Distribute a copy of the finalized document to each member at your next meeting.

Tips to Ensure the Team Norms Are Successful

- Ask a team member to read the Norms at the beginning of each meeting.
- Post the Norms during each meeting or include in your PLC Agenda template.
- Review the Norms monthly, or as needed, to ask members if the norms are effective or if they need revision.
- Don't use the Norms as a rule book. They are guides.
- If a new member joins the team, review the Norms and offer an opportunity for their input.
- If the norms are broken, utilize the team developed accountability protocol to address the issue. If the issue persists or goes beyond accountability, involve an appropriate member of the leadership team.

Dysfunctions of a PLC

Excerpted from Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team*. SF, CA: Jossey-Bass.

From Isolation to Collaboration

As I have watched teachers and administrators make the shift from teaching in isolation to operating as a collaborative team, I have witnessed several commonalities across schools. This article addresses *Five Dysfunctions of a Professional Learning Community*. The purpose of this article is to describe how dysfunctional behavior can interfere with the school's commitment to the learning of each student.

All Teams Are Potentially Dysfunctional

Lencioni (2007) wrote, "Like it or not, all teams are potentially dysfunctional. This is inevitable because they are made up of fallible, imperfect human beings." This is nice to know, because educators frequently struggle with teamwork, sharing resources and working with a co-worker who views teaching and learning from a different lens.

Dysfunction #1: Lack of Norms

Team norms are the foundation of a PLC. Some teams feel like they can operate without norms, but conflict or a dysfunctional team member usually highlights the purpose of norms. When teams operate with norms, each member of the team understands how to communicate, how shared decisions will be handled, when to arrive for meetings and how to professionally disagree. I have observed teams that developed norms five years ago, but they fail to revisit the team norms. When a new teacher moves from a different grade level or from another school district, it is difficult for the teacher to participate in the PLC because the team norms are akin to living and working in a different country or culture.

PLC Team Self-Assessment: Team Norms (Place a check in the appropriate indicator.)			
Fully Defined and Fully Implemented	Fully Defined but Not Yet Fully Implemented	Somewhat Defined but Still Working on Them	Not Defined at All. Need Some Help
Plan for Improvement (If needed)			

Dysfunction #2: Lack of Team Goals

"You must have long term goals to keep you from being frustrated by short term failures" By Charles C. Noble.

"If you're bored with life-you don't get up every morning with a burning desire to do things — you don't have enough goals." By Lou Holtz

Successful teams establish goals and when the team begins to succeed or fail, they return to their established goals. Establishing a school or district-level PLC will not mean that a team will meet its goals any more than a basketball team will go undefeated by having a daily practice. Some teams fail to establish goals because they believe that teaching hard and developing rigorous lessons will support student achievement. Other teams have a lack of trust and they do not wish to share instructional strategies or discuss student misunderstandings. A team without goals will lack purpose, urgency and a destination. It is difficult to celebrate a small win without established goals.

PLC Team Self-Assessment: SMART Goal(s) (Place a check in the appropriate indicator.)			
Fully Defined and Fully Implemented	Fully Defined but Not Yet Fully Implemented	Somewhat Defined but Still Working on Them	Not Defined at All. Need Some Help
Plan for Improvement (If needed)			

Dysfunction # 3: Lack of Trust

According to Lencioni (2007), a lack of trust “occurs when team members are reluctant to be vulnerable with one another and are unwilling to admit their mistakes, weaknesses or needs for help. Without a certain comfort level among team members, a foundation of trust is impossible.”

A PLC that operates with Trust will ask:

- 1) Which students seem to struggle with the key concepts and skills identified by the team?
- 2) Which skills and/or concepts do I struggle teaching?
- 3) If our students do not do well on the state writing test, then what strategies should we incorporate at our grade level? At the grade levels prior to our grade/course?
- 4) Some students are struggling with note taking and organization skills. What can teachers do to support students who are struggling in school, due to a lack of study skills?
- 5) Our students are struggling with Algebra I. Are there areas of the curriculum map that could be revised to support teaching and learning?

PLC Team Self-Assessment: Trust (Place a check in the appropriate indicator.)			
All team Members fully trust each other to ask hard questions and share info.	Most team Members fully trust each other to ask hard questions and share info.	Some team Members fully trust each other to ask hard questions and share info.	Few team Members fully trust each other to ask hard questions and share info. Need Help
Plan for Improvement (If needed)			

Dysfunction #4: Lack of Communication

In the traditional high school, the Department Chair(s) met with the building principal and then returned to the Department Meeting to tell the other teachers what to do. Top-down leadership is drastically different from the shared leadership that occurs in an effective PLC. Communication problems occur when teams operate without established norms or goals. Some communication barriers occur because teachers fail to take advantage of email, discussion threads, web 2.0 tools, blogs, wikis, Google docs and other methods for communicating between meetings.

PLC Team Self-Assessment: Communication v			
All team Members fully communicate with each other.	Most team Members fully communicate with each other.	Some team Members fully communicate with each other.	Few team Members fully communicate with each other. Need Help.
Plan for Improvement (If needed)			

Dysfunction #5: Lack of Essential Learning Outcomes

Effective teams develop and agree to provide all students with Essential Learning Outcomes. In the absence of learning outcomes students receive a disjointed curriculum experience. Why do some teams skip this step if it is such an important part of teaching and learning? From my observations, developing essential learning outcomes involves trust, conflict, debate, time and the ability to come to consensus. If teams lack one or more of the items listed in this article, it will be difficult if not impossible to identify essential learning outcomes. Swan (2010) wrote, “Learning outcomes refer to the skills, knowledge, and attributes students should have upon completion of a particular course or program of study.” For additional resources on developing learning outcomes visit [BYU Center for Teaching and Learning](#).

PLC Team Self-Assessment: Essential Learning Outcomes (Place a check in the appropriate indicator.)			
Our PLC has fully defined and are analyzing data for essential learning outcomes.	Our PLC has fully defined but are not yet analyzing data for essential learning outcomes.	Our PLC has partially defined essential learning outcomes.	Our PLC has not yet begun this process. We need help
Plan for Improvement (If needed)			

PLC Leaders Playbook

The following pages were adapted from Garmston, R. J. & Zimmerman, D. P. (2013) Lemons to lemonade: Resolving problems in meetings, workshops and PLCs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Address the Stress of Conflict

When things go wrong when you're driving, the car's tires lose traction on the pavement and slide into a skid. The smallest adjustment of the wheel or tap on the brakes can bring the vehicle under control—or spin it off into mayhem.

As a facilitator, you must first take care of yourself and maintain personal equilibrium to access your supreme "driving" skills. A teacher's outburst can threaten both the facilitator and the group. A teacher's voice can introduce anger and conflict into the meeting room. Anger exacerbates conflict and triggers a sense of being physically or psychologically endangered. Psychological danger includes threats to self-esteem or dignity, perceived unfairness, insults, the sense of being demeaned, or perceived futility. Perceived danger triggers a limbic surge, and public anger creates the same surge in the facilitator, causing a quick rush of energy (caused by a release of catecholamine) that ripples through the nervous system and creates a general unease that can persist as long as the meeting lasts (Garmston, 1998).

All conflict begins internally, and learning productive ways of working with conflict is a lifelong task. The best teacher is reflection and access to healthy models. While many books outline strategies for conflict resolution, negotiating for success, winning arguments, and building a win-win consensus, the strongest foundation for addressing conflicting energies with dignity and effectiveness is simple but not simplistic, clear but not easy, a starting point but not complete: Take care of yourself.

Don't get too hungry, too tired, or too lonely. Balance your emotional portfolio in work, family, recreational, and spiritual pursuits—and be grounded. Listen with your ears, eyes, and heart. Listening may be your greatest asset as a facilitator. Henry Kissinger used to say that during his shuttle diplomacy periods, he would remember his humanity and remind himself to forget his agenda. Michael Doyle, co-developer of the interaction method of managing meetings, advised declining any invitations to lunch with the group during a difficult facilitation setting. Protect your energy, and gear up for the next round.

Adaptive Schools work teaches us to presume positive Intentions and to maintain generosity of spirit (Garmston & Wellman, 2013). Remind yourself that almost all behaviors are motivated by positive intention—people trying to take care of and protect themselves. Do not overthink others' intentions.

Remember the following:

- ❖ People (even you) are rarely as benevolent as they perceive themselves to be.
- ❖ Others are rarely as evil as their opponents perceive them to be.
- ❖ People rarely spend as much time thinking about the issues as is assumed.
- ❖ Others' behaviors are rarely planned or thought out.
- ❖ Most aspects of conflict are not the result of coldhearted calculation but have spun off from prior events.
- ❖ Previous patterns and past judgments taint present perceptions.
- ❖ Every conflict has a history.
- ❖ Pretend as though even the most outlandish behaviors are simply attempts to take care of one's self.

When you have trouble remembering these positive intentions or find yourself judging others, take a step away from both the group and yourself. We call this act of stepping aside "going to the balcony," because the move is meant to

allow the facilitator to take in the whole picture as if from a balcony, disassociating from the group momentarily to gain a deeper understanding of the interactions and to assess positive intentions.

Ask yourself, "What is your most generous interpretation of the situation?" By taking care of yourself and assuming a larger viewpoint, you will be better able to assess your repertoire of intervention strategies and focus on the group's needs—rather than on protecting yourself.

When interventions are necessary for the efficacy of the PLC, consider two questions: "What is the risk of intervening?" and "How can I strategically minimize the risk with early intervention?"

One way to intervene is by asking questions to clarify perceptions. The table below moves from lowest to highest questions used as interventions.

Perceptions about the following	Sample language
Roles or Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What do you want a recorder to do and not do? ◆ What agreements would you like to make about how you will work today?
Performance (Focusing on results)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What's your degree of satisfaction with getting work done this morning? ◆ May I see a show of fingers—five as a high to one as low—with how OK are with our progress so far?"
Process (Focusing on work behavior and relationships, e.g., meeting standards, norms, and agreements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What's happening here? What are you noticing? ◆ What's the sense of where you are in a decision-making process? ◆ What are some of the decisions you made when and how to participate? What were some of the effects of your decisions on yourself and the group?
Interpersonal (Focusing on honest, constructive expressions of feelings often kept hidden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How do you feel about the group when people are interrupting each other? ◆ How do you feel about your goal of respectful listening?
Intrapersonal (Focusing on raising consciousness about personal behaviors and the effect of behaviors on the group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bubba, what might be some reasons that you end up in conflicts more frequently than other group members? ◆ Betty Sue, can you help the group understand what leads you to fairly consistently take a position opposing what is being talked about?-

COMMON GROUP ISSUES

Getting Attention

Both Grinder (1993) and Zoller (2010) strongly advocate that attention should always be the first order of business. Some suggestions include the following actions:

- Assume a credible stance
- Be still—as in freezing the posture.
- Announce in a credible voice, "Look this way please "
- Hold the posture and freeze a gesture until almost all the members are silent and focused.
- Conclude with "thank you" stated in a credible voice.
- When the group is and still, break eye contact, breathe, and step into another space. Again, with a credible voice, give the next direction.
- If necessary, say, "I am sorry; we keep getting distracted because we have many conversations in the room (pause). We need to make sure everyone is ready to focus on the topic and have one conversation at a time."

Refocusing

Groups may be loud or off track and will require the leader to refocus them.

- ➔ Common Signal: Use a signal or word to indicate that it's time to stop and refocus
- ➔ Physical Proximity: It may be necessary to move your seat or stance closer to someone or between people

- Verbal Proximity: Say, "I am sorry, I cannot hear you, (name) Please wait." Or "When several conversations are occurring at the same time, it is difficult for everyone to hear. Let's hold on until everyone is listening."

MANAGING COMMON CHALLENGES

LOW ENGAGEMENT

- A. Knitters: This person brings quiet, non-disruptive work that may not require their full attention. For some, doing handwork helps them listen. We recommend the following:
- Leave the person alone.
 - Offer a short commercial about respecting cognitive styles if the knitting becomes an issue with others.
- B. Nonparticipants: Often, one group member who is reluctant to take part in the group's activities. The person's reluctance may stem from a range of causes, from personality to personal issues—he may be having an off day.
- ◆ State an abstraction: "It is going to be important to have every voice in the room as this is an important issue."
 - ◆ Change the group structure by using one of the following statements:
"Get up and find someone you haven't talked to today, and . . ."
 - summarize what we have discussed.
 - identify the most important points.
 - generate any unanswered questions.
 - check in to verify that topic has been covered and the group can move on.
 - ◆ Give directions to change seating to create random partnerships. For example, try the following:
 - Lineups Say, "Place yourself in a line by birthday, beginning with those born in January over here and those In December over here."
 - Numbering off.
 - Dealing out matched pairs from a deck of cards and having members pair off.
 - Name a behavior: "I notice that some participants have not spoken up."
 - Inquire: "Can we hear from someone who hasn't had a chance to talk yet?"
 - Inquire specifically: 'Charise, you served on a similar committee last year, Is there anything you'd like to add?"
- C. Daydreamers: This is a person who is giving less than full attention to the group by fidgeting, dozing, appearing distracted, or dividing attention with another full cognitive task, such as reading unrelated text. Try the following:
- ◆ Change interaction to more active stance:
 - Switch the group from listening to talking, either as a whole group or in partners or trios.
 - Shift the meeting focus. Ask, "Given these facts, what actions might you take?"
 - Shift from the abstract to the concrete: "What seems to be the big idea here?"
 - Check in with the group; "What questions do you have?" Or, "Is anything still unclear?"
 - Summarize: "Let's summarize what the group thinks they need to remember."
 - ◆ Change positions. Get participants to stand up:
 - Give the direction: "Stand up, find someone not at your table, check in with them about what they are thinking or feeling about (state topic). I will give us three minutes for this, and when I give the signal, thank your partner, and return to your seats:
 - Give the direction: "For the next set, to get new energy in the room, we are going to switch groups. Pack up your belongings, get up, and find three people you have not talked with yet today."

- ◆ Use a refocusing move.
 - Stop, take a breath, and move toward a visual third point of reference, either a posted agenda, or hold up the paper agenda and point at the agenda item, say, "Right now, we are focusing on . . ."
 - Stop, take a breath, and move your position slightly. Hold up the number of fingers you need to review key points. Say, "We have just covered two important points. Point 1 (with one finger up) Point 2 (With two fingers up) is _____"
- D. Silent Participants: Some group members are naturally more reticent. The skilled facilitator involves all group members to maximize the group's potential to accomplish the best work. Involving silent members is important, but how that is accomplished is even more important.
 - ◆ Use pair-share more often.
 - ◆ Ask for reports of "what your partner said." This guarantees that the quiet voice comes into the room.
 - ◆ Contract outside the meeting for a quiet person who knows a lot about a particular subject to have a specific presentation at the meeting.
 - ◆ Ask for comments from those who have not yet spoken.
 - ◆ Use hand signals to find degrees of agreement. "If you are in agreement give a thumbs up. If you are not sure or could go either way, show thumbs sideways, and if you disagree, show a thumbs down."
- E. Frowners: We know that most of our communication is nonverbal. The facilitator may notice the person who sits frowning with arms crossed, slumping in the chair, and instinctively assume that this is negativity directed either at the topic or the group. Rarely is this true. Humans are wired to presume the negative—it has been an asset to our survival. But more often than not, the person either is in a deep thinking posture or is distracted by a personal agenda that is causing distress. Presume the person is taking care of herself in some way. The facilitator may try the following:
 - ◆ At a break time or when small groups are talking, get on eye level with the participant and offer data and then a question: "I noticed your eyebrows were scrunched, and I wondered if you are okay, Are you all right?" We've learned that we will hear one of four of responses:
 - not feeling well (physical)
 - I don't know if my teenage son found the car keys this morning to get to school (personal emotional).
 - I had to suspend a kid yesterday, and I can't get it off my mind (work emotional).
 - I disagree with what is going on (present situation).

When the present situation is causing the person distress, ask, "Can you tell me what parts of today you disagree with?" The principles at work here are to observe carefully and describe behaviorally, without judgmental words ("you looked upset") and listen deeply, being prepared to respectfully interact with the person's area of disagreement.

- F. Distracted: Occasionally a person's attention is diverted elsewhere: grading papers, scoring tests, working on calendars, or accessing information on the Internet. The facilitator may try the following:
 - ◆ Restructure work using any of the regrouping ideas offered in the examples previously, including structuring movement in the room. Changing physiology often changes a person's internal state, and she is more likely to return to a seat ready to participate.
 - ◆ Use a variation of pair-share, asking partners to report the other person's idea. In one version, mix-freeze-pair--participants mill about the room and at a signal, talk with the nearest person.
 - ◆ Ask if the person would like to add a comment at an appropriate time, framing the question so that the person can say no without being embarrassed.
 - ◆ Invite the person up to record or perform some other service to the group,
 - ◆ Let the group decide if they need to adopt a working agreement. For example, a statement that includes, "This is the part of the meeting where your undivided attention is needed. If you have a

distraction out, it is time to put it away."

DISRUPTIVE GROUP MEMBERS

Disruptive group members often do not want to disturb the order, but respond out of passion, frustration, or anger and are unaware of their impact on the group. They disrupt perhaps because they think others are not listening, are angry because time has been wasted, or sometimes are just bored. When participants vehemently agree or disagree with a point, the intensity of their energy becomes the distraction. Some general strategies can help keep groups working effectively. To raise consciousness and increase the options for responsible participation, try these steps:

- ◆ Organize the talking. "Whoops! Hang on. There are several conversations going on right now. Many people want to comment. Let's line them up. Daphne, you're first; John will be second; Kenya will follow John; then Carlotta is number four, and Sandra is five, Remember your numbers. Okay Daphne. Start us off."
 - ◆ Describe the behavior and ask for a summary. "There are only three people talking right now and everyone else is watching. Can those of you who have been listening describe the various viewpoints?" (Note: This can also be done in a pair share and then reported.)
 - ◆ Stop the discussion. Say, "Hold on, I need to check in with the group. It seems people are repeating themselves. Does the group need any more information? Is the group ready to make a decision? Let's hear some brief advocacies for the various options. One idea at a time. You can advocate as often as you like as long as the advocacies are brief and stated in the positive. No speeches, please.
 - ◆ Agree to disagree. "It seems you are not going to get an agreement today. Let's summarize what you've agreed on, and what has not yet been resolved. Can you live with this for now and agree to disagree agreeably on what has not been settled until we address this again?"
 - ◆ Ask questions. "How is the group doing on its norm of listening to one another? Tell your partner and then let's hear some reports." "What's going on right now?" "Talk to a trio. Is there an elephant in the room that is not being talked about? Decide how we might bring up some of these tough issues."
1. **Broken Records**: This person continues to repeat the same concept or idea and can't be dissuaded from speaking repeatedly. To intervene, the facilitator may try the following:
 - ◆ Restructure and break the pattern of full group participation by asking the group to form pairs, trios, or small groups.
 - ◆ Paraphrase, chart the comment, then give the point emphasis by circling the comment, "Is this what you want the group to know?"
 - ◆ If the comment is made again, go to the chart, underline what you previously recorded, and say, "This is what you want the group to know."
 - ◆ Paraphrase or ask the group to paraphrase. This lets the speaker know she has been heard. "Turn to a partner and summarize the key point you think Samuel has made about . . ."
 - ◆ Acknowledge the behavior, "I notice some voices have been silent. Turn to your partner and check to see if there is anything else need to know about . . ."
 - ◆ Employ satisfy, satisfy, delay. Respond with a comment or a paraphrase if the person persists. Next time, satisfy again with a comment or paraphrase. On the third exchange, briefly acknowledge and then turn to the rest of the room and say, "We need to hear from others in the room." Or pose a question for small groups to consider, breaking the interactive pattern.
 2. **Long-Winded Speakers**: Some people are naturally long-winded. Their verbosity is a manifestation of a cognitive style, and often the talkers are unaware of how the lengthiness of their comments affects the group. Unfortunately, these people can monopolize meeting time and turn off other meeting participants. To facilitate a meeting with long-winded people, remember that a general rule for any intervention is to start with the most subtle or mild redirect cues, and then increase the strength of the intervention as

needed.

- ◆ When the speaker is catching his or her breath, say something like, "Mary, thank you for your ideas (redirect). Brent, do you have any comments about (paraphrase Mary's idea)?"
 - ◆ Try a nonverbal stop sign. A common sign is to hold up a hand, palm outward, toward the speaker. The speaker will receive this better if you accompany the action with a neutral face and an invitation to "Hold on. Let's give others a chance to talk." Don't thrust your hand out too quickly that can be perceived as an aggressive act.
 - ◆ Another nonverbal tactic is the "A-ha sign." The sign is one finger held up and signifies that you are enthusiastic about the speaker's point. Generally, follow this sign with a comment such as, "Jay, your point about (topic) is important to you. Let's hear what Shannon thinks about that idea. She looks like she wants to speak."
 - ◆ Finally, you may have to take a strong stance. For example, interrupt the speaker with, "Fred, the group agreed that it is important to accomplish x, y, and before we leave today I appreciate your comments, but we need to move on. Perhaps if there is time at the end of the meeting, we can come back to this." Then move immediately to the next agenda item. Keep in mind that this approach may result in some ruffled feathers. It may be appropriate to speak privately to the long-winded person after the meeting to explain why you felt this intervention was necessary to accomplish the meeting goals.
3. **Humorists:** Laughter can be a cue that people are nervous and need comic relief. The facilitator must discern if the comedic comments are helpful or are distracting the group from accomplishing its purpose. Sarcasm can get laughter as well, yet it can be hurtful. If this is the case, see the inappropriate humorist. When faced with funny comments the facilitator can try the following:
- ◆ Join the group in laughter and when the laughter subsides, move on. While finishing up your laugh say, "That was funny! Let's refocus on _____."
 - ◆ Find something in the comment that is close to a serious answer, and repeat the rephrased comment in a serious tone to the group. "Yes, that group of parents can truly be challenging. However, we need to know what is within our control."
 - ◆ Confront the directly: "That felt like a put-down. One principle for effective group work is that we go soft on people, but hard on ideas. The idea that needs attention now is _____."
4. **Inappropriate Humorists:** Like misinformation, inappropriate humor can poison the group's thinking. At a minimum, it will distract group members. It is important not to let inappropriate humor go by; the more inappropriate, the more important it is for the facilitator to break roles and intervene with content. Some facilitator options are here:
- ◆ If you think the humorous comment is inappropriate but not offensive to group members, refrain from laughing, break eye contact, and then listen for an opening in the laughter to shift your posture and redirect the group's attention back to the topic at hand, saying, "Our focus needs to be on _____."
 - ◆ If you think the comment is offensive, signal a change in your role by moving to a new spot away from where you were and a voice of authority. In a credible voice, make one of the following statements:
 - "While that remark was probably not intended to cause discomfort, this is a pretty sensitive topic, and that kind of humor makes some people uncomfortable. The group needs to focus on ____."
 - "Personally, I don't find that remark very funny. You may not be aware that some people might find that remark offensive. We need to move on."
 - "Comments that put a person or group down or demean them in some way take away from a group's ability to work together. We need to move on."
5. **Latecomers and Early Leavers:** Those who come in late or leave early can drain energy from the group. To intervene effectively, it's essential to remain neutral to the behavior and never to put the group or its

members in the position of being wrong. To work with this behavior, the skilled facilitator can try the following:

- ◆ Always start on time, and engage the group right away with something that is light, relevant, and useful. Have table groups review the group's working agreements to select several to focus on during the current meeting. Those who are just a few minutes late can fold into the activity unobtrusively.
 - ◆ Start with paired verbal fluency in which pairs designate an A and B partner. Each will take turns responding to a prompt. The prompt might be "Everything you remember from the last meeting." Partner A speaks for 60 seconds, then partner B for the same amount of time without repeating anything Partner A said. Partner A speaks again for 45 seconds, then partner B. If you hold a third round, run it for 30 seconds or less.
 - ◆ On occasions in which there are not enough people in the room to begin the meeting, announce a new start time, and offer a generous interpretation, such as people being held up in traffic.
 - ◆ Assign a greeter to manage latecomers by greeting them as they enter and orienting them to what the group is doing.
 - ◆ Acknowledge the newcomer's presence by briefly greeting the person. For example, "Hi, George. The group is working on _____ today," and then continue the interaction with the group.
 - ◆ When several members are persistently late, acknowledge the situation without assigning blame and ask the group to help solve the problem. Have the group list strategies to make sure they are on time. Set a goal that everyone will be on time.
 - ◆ Move introductions to the end of the meeting. It makes it harder for folks to walk out, and often, people remember each other better after having had some interaction. Point out that introductions were delayed by saying something like, "We've been working hard all day in this room and haven't done introductions yet. Because it's important to all of us to learn who is here, please stand and say your name."
 - ◆ Announce critical information just a break rather than at the beginning or end of a meeting so that everyone is present to hear it.
 - ◆ If the situation involves just one individual who is perpetually late, invite the person to a private meeting and use the following suggestions:
 - "Can you stop by after school today? I'd like to talk about the meeting and the group's working agreements."
 - To give the person time to reflect, insist on meeting a bit later in the day. Many will come already willing to talk about making change.
 - Establish a positive tone: "Thanks for stopping by. What I want to talk to you about is important."
 - State observable data: "You were 10 minutes late to the meeting. Several other days you've arrived late." State thoughts or feelings: "I feel concerned for the group when you are not aligned with the working agreements."
 - Ask, "What seems to be the problem?" Then listen empathetically.
 - Express a need as an implied direction: "The group needs to know that you will be on time to the next meeting. What can you do to assure that this will happen?" If s/he interrupts, ask to let you give the entire message and say that you then will give time to comment.
 - Wait for a response. Most people will respond right away. If s/he does not and the silence becomes uncomfortable, it is appropriate to state again, in a neutral tone, "I need to hear your perspective." followed by silence. Silence also communicates. "I am giving you my full attention, and I am ready to listen," a non defensive and respectful stance from a facilitator.
6. **Resisters:** Sometimes, facilitators face a group of people who may not be interested in being present but are required to be there. Use structures that invite positive intentions or strategies to help members

become conscious of their moods and choices they have about these moods. Facilitators can try the following:

- ◆ Make meetings more engaging and renewing by having a time for socializing and a time for working.
 - ◆ To increase buy-in, have small groups help build the agendas, and try to get at least one of the more negative participants into the planning phase.
 - ◆ REM. Introduce the session with an invitation to be responsible for one's own comfort and learning. Try saying, "I want to introduce you to REM, not the rapid eye movements of sleep, but a tip for you all to get the most value out of today. First, don't sleep. The 'R' stands for 'responsible'—for your own comfort and learning. Move when you have to and monitor your need for liquid intake and output. Speak up when you cannot hear. The E stands for 'experimentation.' Feel free to experiment with new ways of looking at things. The M stands for those of you who were mandated to be here, stands for misery, which, of course, is optional.
 - ◆ Best/worst. Change expectations by saying, early in the meeting, "Turn to a partner and share the worst thing that could happen in the meeting. After each person has shared, ask the pairs to share the best thing that could happen today. Record the ideas. Make an agreement that if any of the worst things happen, members will make a collective groan. This establishes a sense of group control over the events of the session and releases emotional tension.
 - ◆ Pace and lead. Make a statement that parallels the participants' possible experience and then focuses them on the work of the day, "I can imagine that this is a topic that makes some of you cringe because _____. Today we are focusing on _____. My hope for today is _____.
 - ◆ Banned words. Acknowledge the feeling in the room and say, "Sometimes to get things done, groups have to revisit overworked topics. Which words would you like not to hear today?" Make a list of banned words and then say, "I propose we all groan loudly if I or any group member uses any of these words." Rehearsing usually gets a laugh.
 - ◆ Dump and jump: Invite participants to reflect on the day and then to move into the meeting. Allowing a brief reflection helps participants shift their thinking from busy workloads to the task. Try following this outline at the beginning of the meeting:
 - Get people moving. Say, "Get up, find a partner you have not talked to today, and in your pair assign yourselves the letter A or B."
 - Check with the group: "Everyone should be in a pair and have a letter assigned. Raise your hand if you do not have a letter." Create a group of three if necessary.
 - Use lights or a sound to give the group a signal after offering this direction: "When I give a signal, those who are letter A will have 90 seconds to share everything with you right now. When I give the signal again. Bs will have 45 seconds to share."
 - After 90-second cycles, stop the group and say, "Now for the final round, each of you have a minute to answer the question. What do you most want to get out of our meeting today? Start with Partner B. and then when I give the signal, Partner A gets your turn. I give the final signal, thank your partner, and sit down."
7. **Side Talkers:** Side talk is the most common distraction facilitators report to us. These sidebars can lead to greater problems if dealt with proactively. Skilled facilitators master a few simple ways of redirecting energy. The facilitator can try the following:
- ◆ Do not speak until all is quiet. Even skilled facilitators often miss this amazingly simple structure. Skilled facilitators have learned to give a signal and then quietly wait for attention rather than speaking over other voices. For example, with a raised hand say, "Everyone focus here please," and then wait for full attention. Quiet begets quiet.

- ◆ Use physical proximity to quiet the disrupters by moving closer and closer to the offenders while maintaining eye contact with the group member who currently is speaking. Proximity will often quiet down a group. If not, interject a comment such as the following.
 - "Hang on a minute. I'm having trouble hearing because there is more than one voice in the room."
 - "When multiple conversations are occurring at the same time, it is hard for the group to maintain focus."
 - "Oh, did you want to say something? Please tell the group."
 - "How does the group feel about the level of attentiveness right now?"
 - Say to distracted leaders who are talking off task, 'Can I ask you to quietly step out of the room to finish your conversation? When you are ready to come back, I'll help orient you so you can re-engage.'
8. **Know-It-Alls:** The know-it-all's underlying motive may be gaining recognition for her knowledge and contribution. Ironically, the more know-it-alls talk, the less likely the group is to give them the acknowledgment they so crave. Participants who feel listened to most often do not feel the need to repeat ideas. When group members talk over others, facilitators can try the following:
- ◆ Judiciously use paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is the quickest and most neutral intervention. A paraphrase summarizes and makes the message succinct while communicating, listening and understanding.
 - ◆ Ask for clarification: "Can you tell us a bit more about (pick one narrow point)?"
 - ◆ Invite specific evidence: "Can you give us an example of when that happened to you?"
 - ◆ Validate the person: "This seems important. Can you state the key points again so that we can keep them in mind?"
 - ◆ When comments are in conflict with what in the group are saying, say to the group, "Turn to a partner and summarize the two points of view that are in the room."
 - ◆ After a brief time, ask, "What questions does anyone have about the different points of view?"
 - ◆ Monitor comments to be sure that ideas are repeated. Do not give one viewpoint more weight.
 - ◆ Move on as quickly as is feasible toward the productive work at hand.
9. **Monopolizers:** Like the know-it-all, these people often feel unheard. They can dominate a discussion. Sometimes, they are aware of their behavior and might even begin their comments with, "I don't mean to get on my soapbox, but _____." Skilled facilitators can use paraphrasing to help them know their messages have been heard and registered. Succinctly paraphrase their position, and then "Let's hear what the rest of the group has to say. Who else has a comment on this topic?" That may not be enough to stop a dedicated monopolizer. Follow up by trying the following:
- ◆ Succinctly paraphrase again. Then state, "It is important that we have a chance to hear from a number of people." Call on a new speaker.
 - ◆ Next, ask the group to reestablish the working agreement: "We agreed that we wanted all voices in the room, let's hear from someone who has not spoken. What else are we thinking?"
 - ◆ Explain, "I appreciate your comments, and it is important for everyone to have a chance to talk."
 - ◆ Wait for a breath, and interrupt by asking another person to comment: "(Name), can you tell us what you are thinking?"
10. **The Rhetorician:** Often a student or teacher of rhetoric, this person sees conversations as opportunities to argue and enjoy debate. This person will dominate groups with oratory, causing many members to participate less. Over time, this can disillusion the group and render work ineffective. Approaches vary from acknowledging and using this person's skill to inform the group, to helping the group learn to dialogue on some topics and eliminate that rhetoric.
- ◆ Use concise paraphrases to capture a key idea and chart it, thus, slowing the flow of ideas and having them stand still for examination by others.

- ◆ Lead a conversation, one point at a time from the charted material. Insist that others speak before the rhetorician has another turn.
- ◆ If appropriate, ask the rhetorician to reveal his thinking—the forms of logic he is employing as identification for the group.
- ◆ Have people privately assess the meeting, focusing on the standard of balanced participation. At the next meeting, make whatever dissatisfactions with participation balance known to the group. Inquire about solutions.
- ◆ Bring to the group's attention that a member frequently uses rhetoric to approach topics and that this is a valuable skill, yet time consuming. Disclose the distinctions between rhetoric and dialogue (Garmston & Wellman, 2009, 2013), and suggest the group adopt one approach or the other depending on the outcome. Stress that rhetoric is used to win arguments while dialogue is to gain understanding of topics. Based on this awareness, consider the following approaches.
 - Create a chart listing on one side the attributes of rhetoric and on the other the attributes of dialogue. (See Garmston with Von Frank [2012] for distinguishing discussion and dialogue.) Having distinguished between the two, get agreements from the group about which form should apply to which agenda topics.
 - List the positive aspects of rhetoric and the positive aspects of dialogue. Next, list negative aspects of each. Conduct a conversation to choose which forms of conversation will give the best of each while minimizing the negatives of each.
 - Based on the input from the group, create a working agreement about when argument is needed and when the group would be more appropriately served by dialogue.

11. **The Overly Articulate:** This person is highly articulate, often speaking in elaborate and lengthy paragraphs. Members often experience confusion when this person speaks. While good ideas may be embedded in this person's presentation, they are hard to track and isolate. Frequently the result is either over-attention to ferret out meaning or ignoring the contribution and moving on. Here are a few specific interventions to try with this participant type.

- ◆ Concisely paraphrase the clearest part of the message or summarize one or two ideas. "Whew, you have a lot to say. Let me see if I can summarize your main point." A clarifying paraphrase that they shift from talking to listening. Usually, they will respond with an affirmative or short clarification of the paraphrase. The important shift is the move from paragraph speech to concise statements of key points.
- ◆ Use facilitation moves to balance voices in the room as noted throughout this book.

12. **The Pedagogical Isolate:** Occasionally groups encounter a person, often a highly accomplished teacher who seems to hold disdain for those less knowledgeable or skillful. This person might even articulate that she sees group work as irrelevant and that she has no interest in helping other teachers or the group know what has taken this person so long to develop. Retaining knowledge may, to this person, protect her sense of superiority to the others. Setting the attitude dimension aside, it is time that some people perform better alone than in groups (Nesbitt, 2003). However, collaborative tasks make efforts to include this person's information necessary. Here are some possible approaches.

- ◆ When this person speaks, paraphrase with an inquiry for evidence. "Your key point is _____. What is it in your students' learning that is making such a difference?"
- ◆ Paraphrase and inquire for a specific point of evidence, which will often cause shifts in thinking and less verbosity "So you are telling us that the Wonder of Words is the best program you have ever seen. Help us understand a critical element that is different from the program we are now," To respond, they must stop and think, what is it that is really important?
- ◆ Often groups err by trying to do everything as a committee of the whole. Seize opportunities for subgroup members to work on separate tasks and bring the results back to the group.

- ◆ Find small parts of the whole that might be useful information and ask the person to contribute. Try meeting the person in advance with your request. "I know your PLC is scheduled to talk about _____ today. I'm hoping that more students could benefit from your experience. Would you be willing to share some ideas today?"
- ◆ Should you be an administrator in charge of the group, have a conversation with this person, acknowledging her preference to work alone, but insisting that she be a contributing member of the group.

13. **Misinformatants:** It is important not to let misinformation or extreme minority viewpoints stand as they are because silence implies that all agree with what has been said. Silence does not mean that we agree with the speaker; however, it is sometimes misinterpreted as agreement. Contested viewpoints need to be made explicit so that agreement is not assumed. The facilitator might try the following:

- ◆ Paraphrase the statement and ask. "What other information does the group have on this topic?"
- ◆ Reframe the misinformation as a question that moves to the abstract level. For example, "Thelma has stated we should let students choose their own books. She is asking a question of censorship. What other questions should we be asking about censorship?"
- ◆ Ask the group. "Does anyone have another viewpoint?"
- ◆ Poll the group to get a sense of members' views. Say. "Let's see where the group stands. I am going to invite you to go to one of four corners." While pointing at corners, suggest, "Those who strongly agree with the viewpoint, go here. Those who agree, but not strongly, stand here. Those who disagree, stand here, and those who vehemently disagree with the viewpoint stand here. Go ahead and move to your group. Summarize what the data tell us, and when I give the signal, sit down." At this point the facilitator has several options:
 - Does the data warrant more discussion? If so, collect more viewpoints.
 - If the topic is overworked, requiring the group to move on, comment, "It is clear we are not going to agree on this topic today. Let's move on."
 - If the topic is highly contentious, ask for those who have been listening to summarize the different opinions. This helps to neutralize the voice tone and helps the group near the issues. "We have three very different opinions, I am going to ask those of you who have been listening to summarize the viewpoints. Who can summarize _____?" Then ask, "Do we need to do something with this information or should we just agree to disagree?"

14. **Interrupters:** Sometimes in meetings, one participant will constantly interrupt and become a dominant voice. The facilitator may try the following:

- ◆ Insert a structure that sequences turn taking. "Okay, let's hear first from Sarah, then Anthony, and then Maria."
- ◆ Recalibrate the working agreement. "You agreed to have one voice in the room at a time. We need to keep that agreement."
- ◆ Focus on the issue rather than the offender, "Let's remember to have one person talk at a time and to let people finish their statements. "

15. **Subject Changers:** Group members who continually take the group off topic are similar to interrupters. When they change the subject, the effect is that other group members are distracted. The facilitator works with a subject changer by asking for a relevance check.

- ◆ Ask, "Can you help the group understand how your comment relates to the topic?"
- ◆ Comment and ask, "This might be taking us away from our topic. What does the group think? Let's hear from a few of you about where we should go next."
- ◆ Acknowledge the comment and then note the time, saying, "It is (time), and to accomplish our goal today, we really need to move on."
- ◆ Acknowledge the comment and agree to return to the topic later: "I know this is important. Perhaps we can come back to this topic later."

- ◆ Acknowledge the comment, set it aside, and move on by saying, "That's an important dimension. Let's add it to the chart here so we can remember to come back to it. We need to focus on _____ right now." Redirect the group to a tangible third position (such as the agenda) or to a specific topic or speaker who was on topic. Note:

PLC Agenda

<p>Meeting Parameters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each meeting should center around one of the four guiding questions. One meeting per week should address question 2 and involve data analysis of a common assessment. Team-developed norms should be adhered to at all times. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DZ Collaborative Time Agenda</u></p> <p><u>Week of:</u> <u>Members:</u></p> <hr/> <p>PLC 4 Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we want our students to learn? 2. How will we know they have learned it? 3. How will we respond when a student does not meet mastery? 	<p>Important Resources (Linked): Pacing Calendar Unit Resources Learning Framework Power Standards Norms</p> <hr/> <p>Unit # Focus Standards:</p>			
	Topic or PLC?	Action Items (what to bring, general summary of what is addressed)	Results (how have we achieved our goals?)	Follow Up (what will we need to address at our next meeting, what are we doing with the data we have?)	Goals/Timeline
Monday					
Wednesday					

Team Data Protocol: During the Meeting

Option 1-

1. Start with silent predictions. Give each member 1-2 minutes to look at the data and make inferences and predictions.
2. Then look at the data. There should be no judgments and no questions. We are looking for patterns ONLY.
3. Identify the theory of causation. One cause must focus on instruction since that is what we have the most control over.
4. Discuss why the data looks the way it does. Identify the causation.
5. Determine next steps to address the cause.

Option 2-

Introduction (Facilitator):

Establish and clearly articulate the purpose and outcome of the meeting.

Successes:

Each member has the opportunity to provide evidence of student success.

Chief Challenges:

What are the areas where most students performed poorly?

Interventions:

What are the possible interventions for students who performed poorly?

New Strategy:

Lead the group to consensus on agreed upon strategies.

Adjust SMART Goal and debrief:

Establish/adjust SMART goals. How well did the process work?

[Data Protocol](#)

[Artifact Protocol](#)

[Data Dig Questions](#)