

Facilitating a culture of continuous improvement

As collaborative teams continue to grow their knowledge and skills through differentiated PD, each team is modeling continuous improvement. Early release PD days are designed to meet each team where they are to support them in taking their next step. Most days sessions are held in small bands, i.e. k-2, 3-6 & 7-8, to honor where teams are; however, each of the sessions includes common vocabulary and processes, all working towards the same objective, of improving student learning through collaborative practices. Over the course of the 7 PD Days that District PLC trainers have been present, our staff has grown and developed, become more focused on results, and working collaboratively to meet all student needs. Growth mindset is a core aspect of the culture at Anthem School. We focus on celebrating growth through meeting short cycle goals that build up to our larger, year-long goals. Our PLC work is closely aligned to our Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP contains school-wide goals related to continuous improvement of student achievement. During our monthly Content Collaboration meetings, we focus on these school goals in relation to ELA and Math content areas to improve student achievement. Each month, teachers at each grade level attend either ELA or Math meetings and focus on grade-level and school-wide data. Throughout these meetings, teachers identify trends across grade bands and collaborate both horizontally and vertically on best practices for improvement, then make determinations on action steps. Since each grade level is represented in each content meeting, information can be shared within collaborative teams. “Anthem teachers meet in their collaborative teams multiple times per month and not only unwrap standards for clarity, but create assessments that give critical data. The teams use this current data to inform their practice which aids the team the creation of focused RTI groups. It’s exciting to witness how ALL means ALL at Anthem.” Shannon Young, PLC Trainer

Our commitment to continuous improvement is also evidenced by our teachers’ willingness to participate in summer work opportunities provided by our district. These summer work teams commit their time and talent to identifying and unwrapping essential standards, creating common formative assessments, improving the processes we use based on new understandings, and deepening their understanding of the PLC process. As we continue to deepen our knowledge and experiences with the collaborative process, our teams adjust and refine their artifacts, i.e. CFAs, unwrapped standards. All of this time and dedication speaks strongly to the commitment our teachers have to the success of our students and to the continued improvement of their practice and the practice of all teachers at our school. Tessa Williams, 4th grade teacher and member of leadership team shares how professional development opportunities, including summer professional development, has aided her teams ability to impact student achievement, “Time solely dedicated during the summer has been life-changing to my practices. As a new teacher, I was able to collaborate with veteran team members to help better understand the standards to ensure all students learn at high levels. This collective responsibility benefits not only my students but all Anthem students.”