



*Lago Vista*  
Independent School District

**Professional Learning  
Communities  
Handbook**

# Lago Vista Independent School District Professional Learning Communities Handbook

## **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

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## **ADMINISTRATION**

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Michelle Jackson, *Director of Student Support*

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Kerri Walker, *Principal of Lago Vista Elementary School*

Craten Phillips, *Athletic Director*

## **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Lago Vista ISD will equip students for the rigors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by preparing them for a global-based digital economy. Lago Vista ISD will be recognized as a leader in educational innovation through technology, facilities, curriculum, volunteerism, and instruction.

## **DISTRICT VISION**

Lago Vista Independent School District will continue to establish a tradition of excellence by providing engaging curriculum and instruction that encourages collaboration, communication, and critical thinking, by leading educational innovation in technology and facilities, and by fostering community partnerships that create a community of learners dedicated to promoting high expectations and achievement for all students.

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES PHILOSOPHY**

Ongoing professional development and campus-based Professional Learning Communities shall be provided for teachers to ensure a deep understanding of the curriculum expectations, to support for the development and enrichment of these documents well, and to enhance their knowledge and skills in utilizing research-based approaches to teaching and learning.

# Introduction

## What are Professional Learning Communities?

Professional Learning Communities are groups of teachers who meet regularly as a team to analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, identify essential and valued student learning, develop common formative and common summative assessments, share strategies, and research best practices. The expectation is that this collaborative effort will produce ongoing improvement in student achievement.

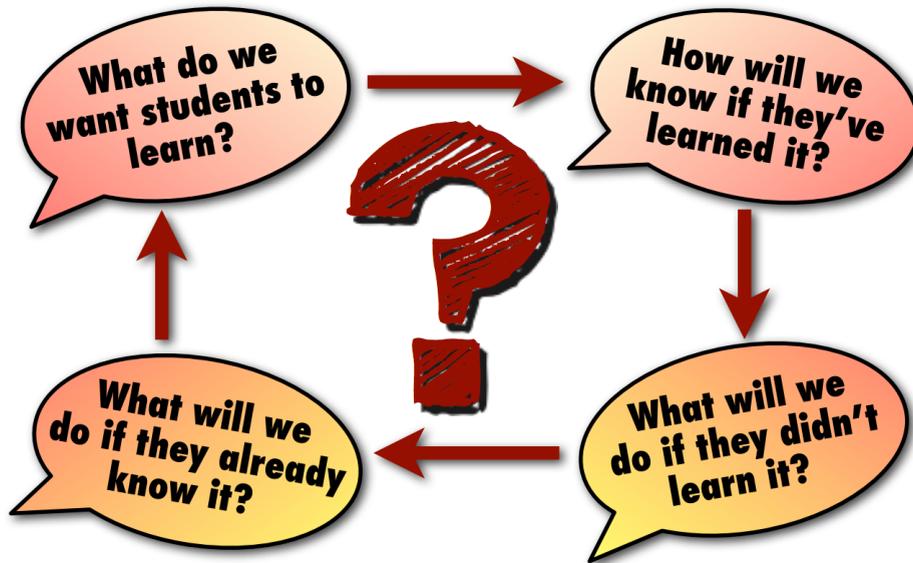
*A professional learning community “is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve”.*

*Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, and Many, Learning by Doing (2010), p. 11*

There are many different PLC groups that can analyze student work such as:

1. Vertical Content Teams (looking for matching academic language, best practice strategies, higher order thinking skills, etc.)
2. Grade Level Teams (looking for rigor and relevance in task design, alignment of taught and tested SE's, specific strengths and weaknesses in instructional delivery, etc.)

## Key Questions for PLCs



DuFour, Eaker, DuFour, "Recurring Themes of Professional Learning Communities and the Assumptions They Challenge."

There are four questions that should be at the heart of every PLC discussion. In order to raise student achievement, Professional Learning Communities must be able to answer all four of these questions.

To answer the four questions in a manageable way, the PLC should begin with a small focus. For example, the PLC may decide it will improve student achievement on a particular benchmark or standard. At first this may seem like a small focus, but in reality there are still many parts that make up the benchmark or standard. Some break the standard or benchmark down even further. Is the PLC interested in whether the students can use the vocabulary of the standard or benchmark? Are they looking to see if the students can apply critical thinking skills? By narrowing the focus, the Professional Learning Community will be able to manage its work and see student results faster.

### **Question 1: What do we want all students to learn?**

The PLC should first review the course/grade level state standards. Using data and vertical alignment, priority standards should be identified and shared. The discussion that occurs in the PLC regarding these standards documents will build shared knowledge and understanding of what the PLC wants all students to learn. As the PLC determines its focus, it is important to answer the focus question based on their area of greatest need.

In a high performing PLC:

- Teachers collaborate to create or review state standards for current courses as well as vertically articulated courses.
- All teachers in PLC are teaching with priority standards in mind and are communicating these learning targets to students.
- All teachers demonstrate high level of commitment to the essential curriculum.

### **Question 2: How will we know if they learn it?**

The PLC collectively creates and aligns assessments to measure student progress. Both formative and summative assessments should be used to measure progress toward the learning goals. The formative assessments inform the teacher of student progress as the learning is happening. The formative assessments also provide students with feedback about their progress toward the goal. The summative assessments give the teacher and students a summary of the student learning.

In a high performing PLC:

- All assessments are entirely aligned with priority standards.
- All assessments administered are consistent in format and rigor with those used by other teachers in the PLC.
- Every teacher regularly uses results from formative assessments to guide real-time instruction.
- Teachers use results from summative assessments to make decisions for future changes in content, instruction, and assessment.

### **Question 3: How do we respond when students experience difficulty?**

The PLC uses the results of the assessments to determine which students need additional time and support in learning the essential skills. Collectively, the team develops a plan to support those students who are not making progress.

In a high performing PLC:

- The PLC identifies & makes plans for students to receive extra support even before they fail.
- Student achievement is monitored on a daily basis. Students who experience difficulty are required, rather than invited, to put in extra time and utilize extra support. If the current level of support is not sufficient, there is an increased amount of time and support provided.
- All students are guaranteed access to integrated interventions.
- Teachers consistently differentiate curriculum components within each unit of study.

#### **Question 4: How do we respond when students already know it?**

The PLC will use results of assessments to determine which students need an extension of the learning. Just as the PLC provides additional time and support for those not learning the material, the PLC needs to engage the top students as well.

In a high performing PLC:

- The PLC identifies and makes plans for students who have already mastered the learning.
- All students are guaranteed access to integrated enrichment.
- Teachers consistently differentiate curriculum components within each unit of study.

## **Criteria for an Effective Professional Learning Community**

### **Shared Norms**

#### ***How must we behave to advance our vision?***

An effective PLC has agreed upon expectations for behaving and operating as a team.

### **Shared Goals**

#### ***Do we know what we are trying to create?***

Staff members collaborate to define goals and use them to guide their daily efforts and decisions.

### **Identified Instructional Priorities**

#### ***Do we know what is important for all students to learn?***

An effective PLC has identified and agreed upon essential outcomes for student learning and strategies to work towards specific student outcomes.

### **Collaboration**

#### ***How do we work together to improve teaching and learning?***

An effective PLC works together to develop a shared understanding of curriculum priorities, to implement best practices in instructional delivery, and to address student needs.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

#### ***How do we know what students have learned?***

An effective PLC routinely engaged in the process of collecting and analyzing data for the purpose of improving practice and student learning.

### **Focus on Continuous Improvement**

#### ***How do we know if our school is getting better?***

An effective PLC participates in an ongoing cycle of systematic gathering and analysis of data to identify discrepancies between actual and desired results, goal setting to reduce the discrepancies, developing strategies to achieve the goals, and tracking improvement indicators.

### **De-Privatization of Practice**

#### ***How can we work together to be better at our craft?***

An effective PLC shares successes and struggles experienced through their own professional practice.

### **Reflective Practice**

#### ***What do we do well and how can we improve?***

An effective PLC regularly engages in individual and group reflection on teaching practice.

# The PLC Implementation Continuum

## PRE-INITIATION

### Stage 1: Pre-Initiation

The school has not yet begun to implement Professional Learning Communities.

## INITIATION

### Stage 2: Initiation

Staff members possess a basic knowledge and use of Professional Learning Community practices. An effort has been made, but the effort has not yet begun to impact a critical mass of staff.

## DEVELOPING

### Stage 3: Developing

A critical mass of staff members has begun to engage in the Professional Learning Community process and staff members are developing the capacity to function as an effective learning community. Group members are applying the learning community criteria and focusing on student achievement. The staff has started to align their thinking, practices, and structures to align with professional collaboration.

## SUSTAINING

### Stage 4: Sustaining

Professional collaboration and learning are deeply embedded in the culture of the school and is a driving force of the daily work of the staff. Staff members are skilled users of the Professional Learning Community process and there is evidence of improving achievement for all students.



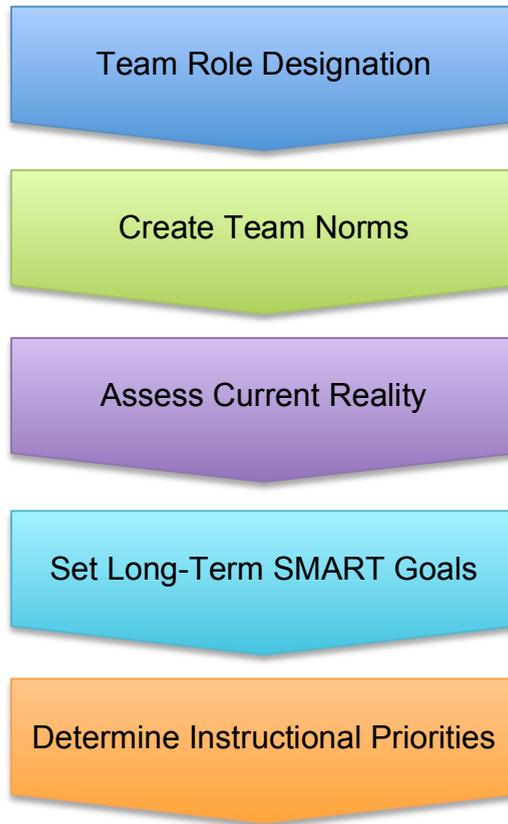
## PLC Implementation Continuum Rubric

PLC teams should review the continuum rubric periodically to determine progress. Keep in mind that the “Sustaining” level is a goal. Teams should not be expected to reach the Sustaining Level on all criteria at the same time.

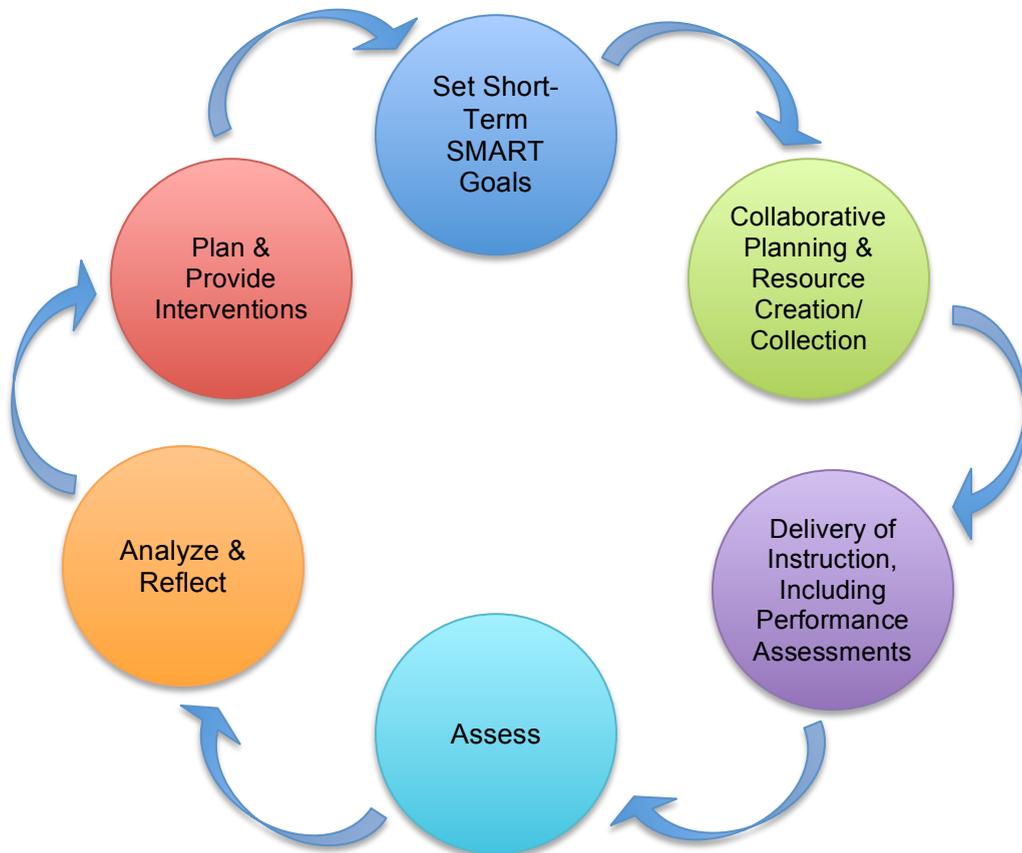
| Criteria                                   | Pre-Initiation  | Initiation  | Developing   | Sustaining   |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Shared Norms</b>                        | Staff members have not yet articulated the attitudes or behaviors they are prepared to demonstrate to advance the mission of learning for all and the vision of what the school might become.   | Teams have articulated statements of attitudes and behaviors expected of each member of the PLC team. These norms are reviewed at meetings, and open to revision by the group.  | Group relationships are developing. Group established norms foster open, respectful conversation, and some risk taking.  | Group relationships are built. Internalized norms are exhibited through the trust, respect, open conversation, and risk taking within the group.   |
| <b>Shared Goals</b>                        | No effort has been made to engage the staff in setting and defining school improvement goals related to student learning. If goals exist, they have been developed by the administration.   | Staff members have participated in a process to establish goals, but the goals are typically stated as projects to be accomplished, or are written so broadly that they are impossible to measure. The goals do not yet influence instructional decisions in a meaningful way.  | Staff members have worked together to establish long- and short-term improvement goals for their school. The goals are clearly communicated. Assessment tools and strategies have been developed and implemented to measure progress toward the goals.   | All staff members pursue measurable performance goals as part of their routine responsibilities. Goals are clearly linked to the school's shared vision. Goal attainment is celebrated and staff members demonstrate willingness to identify and pursue challenging goals.   |
| <b>Identified Instructional Priorities</b> | No effort has been made by the faculty to identify the instructional priorities for a teacher's class, course, or grade level. Teachers teach using the textbook or using their favorite lessons or the units they are most comfortable teaching. | An effort to identify instructional priorities for each teacher's class, course, or grade level has been initiated by the central office but this initiative has not impacted the daily practice of most teachers. A few teachers adhere to the curriculum process, but most teachers still follow the textbook or teach what they are most comfortable teaching. | Teachers are aware of the agreed upon curriculum process and know that priority standards should be identified to prioritize what their students are expected to learn. Most teachers attempt to reflect priority standards and performance assessments in their instructional planning, but there is little discussion of what the essential outcomes represent on a daily basis. Teachers have not fully integrated priority standards and performance assessments into their daily teaching practice. | Essential outcomes are clearly articulated, published, and are fully integrated in the teachers daily lesson plans. Faculty members identify priority standards and essential outcomes and use them to plan instruction. They regularly work together to ensure that the instructional priorities are paced properly, in developmentally appropriate ways, and are sufficiently rigorous to help all students learn to high levels. Teachers work together to ensure that what is taught and what students learn reflects the instructional priorities agreed to by the faculty. There is evidence of student improvement. |
| <b>Collaboration</b>                       | Teachers work in isolation. There is little awareness of what or how colleagues are teaching.   | Teachers recognize and understand the curriculum that each is responsible for teaching, but there is little exchange of ideas. Group engages in a random exchange of ideas related to instructional materials, research-based literature, teaching strategies, and methods of assessment. Some concerns about students are shared.                                | Teachers function in work group that meets periodically to complete certain tasks, such as reviewing intended outcomes. Group engages in the exchange of ideas, instructional materials, research-based literature, teaching strategies, and methods of assessment directly related to the established priorities and goal.  | Teacher function as a team. Based on research and data analysis, group collaborates on curriculum, instruction, and assessment directly related to the established priorities and goal. There is ongoing problem solving on how to address student needs beyond individual classrooms.   |

| Criteria                               | Pre-Initiation   | Initiation  | Developing   | Sustaining  |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Data Collection &amp; Analysis</b>  | No effort has been made by the faculty to engage in a system of regular data collection or analysis for a teacher's class, course, or grade level.   | The faculty participates in annual or semi-annual data retreats organized by the administration to analyze the results of summative assessments, which are used to manage and monitor learning and adjust instruction. Groups collect data from a variety of sources. Members engage in discussions about what could be considered appropriate data and how it might be used. | An attempt has been to create common, formative assessments to monitor student learning but the primary source of data remains the highly summative state and national assessments. Formative assessments are used but are not closely linked to instructional priorities and the idea of using frequent formative assessment to guide instruction has not impacted the practice of most teachers. Group collects data from a variety of sources (triangulation) that could be relevant to the goal and focus. Group examines data and attempts to apply the data to their work. | Each student's attainment of the instructional priorities is carefully monitored. Teachers have developed strategies to assess student mastery of the priority standards. Summative data is reviewed and used to calibrate results of locally developed common assessments. Teachers use data from the locally developed common assessments in formative ways and the results are used to manage and monitor learning, adjust instruction, and as a basis for determining additional time and support for students who are not succeeding. Groups continually use common assessment criteria to collect and analyze relevant data in order to drive decisions and take actions to accomplish the goals. |
| <b>Focus on Continuous Improvement</b> | Little attention is devoted to creating systems that enable either the school or individual teachers to track improvement. The school would have a difficult time answering the question, "Are we becoming more effective in achieving our goals?" | A few people in the school are tracking general indicators of achievement, such as mean scores on state and national tests. Positive trends are celebrated. Negative trends are dismissed or suppressed.  | Individual teachers and teaching teams gather information that enables them to identify and monitor individual and team goals.   | Everyone in the school participates in an ongoing cycle of systematic gathering and analysis of data to identify discrepancies between actual and desired results, goal setting to reduce the discrepancies, developing strategies to achieve the goals, and tracking improvement indicators.   |
| <b>De-Privatization of Practice</b>    | While individual teachers may try improvement activities in their own classrooms, no structures exist to support, assess, or share their experiences related to the improvement of teacher practice.   | Group members engage in limited conversations about their own teaching practices. Some student work is shared.  | Some group members share what they are doing in the classroom seeking feedback from colleagues. Tools, such as protocols, are used to examine student work. Critical feedback is minimal. Some peer coaching is evident.   | Group members examine student work, teacher practice, and classroom data with appropriate tools including protocols and common assessment criteria and data analysis instruments. Modeling, lesson study, and peer coaching are evident. Evidence exists that critical feedback is used to improve teacher practice.  |
| <b>Reflective Practice</b>             | No effort has been made to engage faculty in reflecting on their teaching practice.  | Group, led by a facilitator, engages in written and oral forms of reflection using a variety of strategies, e.g., journaling, triad discussion, chalk talk. The focus is on the mechanical process of reflection. Individual and group reflection may or may not result in action.  | Group engages in written and oral forms of reflection. The focus is on the purpose of reflection that creates new knowledge and understanding. Individual and group reflection prompts action.   | Group engages in continual written and oral forms of reflection that are "critical" in nature. This reflection creates new knowledge and understanding that prompts continuous improvement. The resulting actions are examined in terms of impact on the larger community.  |

## Beginning the PLC Process



## Leads to the PLC Inquiry and Action Cycle



## Getting Started: Checklist for Beginning Your PLC

- ✓ Gather your PLC team members and review roles needed for the PLC. (See *below*.)
- ✓ Determine a facilitator for the PLC, who will type the agenda and facilitate the meetings.
- ✓ Determine a recorder who will type the minutes and send them to the team and administrator after each PLC meeting.
- ✓ Determine other roles, as appropriate.
- ✓ Establish norms for your group. (See *below and Appendix B*.)
- ✓ Submit PLC Planning and PLC Norms to your principal. (See *Appendix A and Appendix C*.)
- ✓ Establish time, date, location, and data to review for first PLC meeting.
  - Consider sources of data that will allow the team to determine overall areas of need and then drill down to determining instructional priorities for each team member's grade-level/content.

## PLC Roles

In order to be productive, it is imperative that the members of the PLC assume responsibility for making the group's time effective. This is accomplished by assigning roles to the group members. A PLC may have as many or as few roles as they would like. Be sure to share the responsibility of the work. It is up to everyone to make the PLC work. Decide how often the group members would like to change roles. This spreads the various responsibilities throughout the group.

Here are a few role descriptions and responsibilities. Your group may develop other roles. Start with what makes sense to the members of your PLC.

1. **Facilitator** - The facilitator makes sure that everyone is participating and understands where the group is in the process. They also assure that everyone understands what the group is working to accomplish at each point of the meeting. The facilitator may or may not be the team leader/department chair. Usually the facilitator is responsible for communicating the group's work and progress to others.
2. **Recorder/Note Taker** - This role documents the group's work. It is essential that the group's thoughts and conversations are visible. If the group's work is recorded, it can hold the group accountable to completing real work. The note taker should be documenting the group's big ideas, stopping to ask the group to further clarify ideas so that they are in a form that may be expressed in writing.
3. **Agenda Keeper or Timekeeper** - This is a great role for the control freak in the group. At the beginning of the meeting, this person will review the agenda and may ask the group to set approximate times it wants to spend on each agenda item. Remember these times are goals, not rules. If a part of the meeting takes longer than the time initially agreed on, the timekeeper will alert the group to this and see if they want to continue or move ahead to the next item. This person makes sure the meeting starts and stops on time and that it moves ahead. Each meeting ends by creating the agenda for the next meeting. Remember to plan the agenda backwards - start with the end in mind.
4. **Nutritional Coordinator or Gastro Engineer** - Aren't all meetings better with a healthy snack? This is an example of a role that your PLC might want to create.

During your debrief after each meeting, look for patterns that the group wants to change. The PLC may create a role to address a specific need of the group. For example, your group may determine that they need a Negativity Eliminator. This person will listen for negative statements and reframe them into positive one. Create any role that will help your PLC function well. Be sure to be clear on what is the purpose and responsibilities for each role. Clarity is essential to a high functioning PLC!

## Norms: Why Are They Important?

Effective teams generally have a set of norms that govern individual behavior, facilitate the work of the group, and enable the group to accomplish its task. Abiding by norms is especially important for PLC teams for various reasons:

- Norms help teams to be productive and effective.
- Norms ensure that all members have the opportunity to contribute to the process.
- Norms help to keep dialogue open and respectful, even when members disagree.

A team should develop the norms as a group to increase the likelihood they will honor the norms created.

### Tips for Creating Norms

1. Each team should create its own norms. Asking a committee to create norms all teams will honor is ineffective. Norms are collective commitments made to each other and should reflect the personal experiences of the team.
2. Norms should be stated as commitments to act or behave in certain ways rather than as beliefs. *We will ...rather than we believe.*
3. Norms should be reviewed at the beginning and end of each meeting for at least six months. Norms are only effective when they are used over and over again until they are internalized as culture for a team.
4. Teams should formally evaluate their effectiveness at least twice a year.
  - Are we adhering to our norms?
  - Do we need a new norm to address a problem or situation?
  - Are all members of the team contributing to the work?
  - Are we all working interdependently to achieve our team goal?
5. Teams should focus on a few essential norms rather than creating an extensive laundry list. People do not need a long list of rules to remember just a few core commitments.
6. Violations of team norms must be respectfully addressed. If the team does not confront violations, it will undermine the workings of the team.

Adapted from *Learning by Doing*

### Sample Norms

- Be on time and be prepared
- Turn off cell phones or switch to vibrate
- Ensure each member's voice is heard
- Start and end on time
- Avoid side conversations
- Disagree agreeably
- Respect others but provide your input
- Keep confidential items confidential
- Operate with trust
- Stay tuned in and on task
- Assume good intentions
- Focus on students first

For help with the process of establishing norms for your PLC, please see Appendix B.

### Norms Review Process

Many groups set time in a meeting agenda to review their norms. Questions that encourage "tending to" group norms include:

- In what ways are our norms helping us "grow" our thinking?
- Should we change our norms in some way to help us better meet our goals?
- What norm(s) are we using well?
- What norm(s) seems difficult for us?
- What norm will I/we work on today?

## Reviewing Student Data

Many questions often arise as a data discussion begins, but one of the biggest is: *What do we do with it?* In the PLC, data will serve three different purposes. The first purpose is to define the greatest area of need for students on the team, which will give the PLC a focus for its work through the development of goals. The second is to identify instructional priorities for grade levels and content areas. The third is to provide immediate feedback on specific needs that will inform real-time instruction and improve student learning.

### 1. Using Data to Determine Goals

First, the PLC should look at overall performance to determine trends, which will be used to define goals. How has student achievement changed over the last 2-3 years? Is student achievement remaining steady? Is there an improvement in student achievement? Is there a decrease in achievement? Is the difference significant?

The PLC should then look at strand data to determine areas of strength or need. In which strands is student performance strongest? In which strands is student performance weakest? Are there any concerning trends within the individual strands? Are there areas of strength or need within the different demographic groups?

As a PLC determines their greatest area of need, teams may consider: STAAR results, benchmark results, PSAT results, and other assessments (DIBELS, AIMSweb, DRA, etc.).

### 2. Using Data to Determine Instructional Priorities

In Lago Vista ISD, instructional priorities are defined by priority standards, which is the very limited set of the most important learning objectives for each grade and subject. It is not the total curriculum, just the 'safety net' that every teacher should ensure that every student learns.

Remember that prioritizing certain standards over others does not mean eliminating those standards that do not make it into the starring roles. Priority standards will inform course snapshot pacing and unit organization and development. As appropriate, these standards should also be spiraled into units where it will fit naturally. Spiraling can be from your own course, from a vertical content-area course, or even from a cross-curricular course.

The criteria used to identify the most essential priority standards include:

**Endurance:** Useful beyond a single test date.

**Readiness:** Preparation for the next level of learning.

**Leverage:** Useful in multiple disciplines.

Understanding performance trends and looking at established goals, priority standards should be determined for each content area. Data that inform these decisions should be looked at vertically to determine alignment. What essential understandings and skills do our students need the most? Are there gaps in essential understandings and skills that appear vertically? What do students need for success—in school, in life, and on current year and future year assessments? Which standards are important enough that we would intervene to ensure ALL students have learned them?

A few things to remember when identifying priority standards:

- Begin with the state standards for one subject and one grade level at a time.
- Identify “essentials” for that subject and grade based on what students need for success – in school, in life, and on state achievement test(s).
- Consider your data!

- Be realistic about the number of priority standards you select. You need to ensure ALL students have mastered these standards – so be realistic.
- Do they meet the criteria? Readiness? Endurance? Leverage?
- What are *all* concepts and skills in selected standards?

### 3. Using Data to Determine Specific Needs

Then, the PLC should look at individual students to identify specific needs to increase student achievement. As a PLC looks to gain feedback that will inform real-time instruction, it will use common formative and common summative assessments, as appropriate.

Some questions to consider while analyzing the results of assessment data:

- What skills did the students do well on?
- With what skills did the students struggle? Is there a need for whole group intervention? If not, which specific students need intervention or enrichment?

#### Formative Assessments

These are assessments for learning aligned to learning standards and are used by teachers and students during instruction. They provide feedback used to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. Examples: exit cards, one minute quick writes, student interview, quick quizzes, homework that provides feedback, classroom observations, classroom questioning, or any other classroom activities that provide feedback to teachers and students about whether they have met a particular learning target, while they are still teaching/learning the content.

#### Performance Assessments

These are assessments that students do to develop their own understanding of concepts and skills found in the standards by DOING what the standard asks either through one task or through a series of tasks. Performance assessments are typically formative, but may be summative. When well-designed, they represent a powerful tool to be used as part of your instruction and assessment system.

Performance assessments should be developed for each identified priority standard.

A few tips to keep in mind when designing performance assessments:

- Using the unwrapped priority standard, what are the desired *end results* for student learning?
- What *evidence* will demonstrate student attainment of those results?
- What *understanding and skills* do students need to successfully provide that evidence?
- By completing the performance assessment, will students be able to demonstrate mastery of all parts of the unwrapped standard?

#### Summative Assessments

These are assessments of learning aligned to the learning standards and are designed to provide a measure to determine if learning goals have been met. Examples: teacher-created achievement tests, final exams, state tests.

## Student Work as a Data Source

Student work is the centerpiece of the PLC discussion. The following guidelines can help in selecting student work that will promote the most interesting and productive group discussions.

Choose assignments that involve lots of thinking and that give students some freedom in how they approach the task. Avoid work that consists primarily of answers with little explanation or that involves the application of well-defined procedure. At times, it may be useful to share several pieces of student work that show different approaches to the same assignment.

Ambiguous or puzzling work tends to stimulate the best discussions. Since it does not readily match expectations, it encourages close attention to details and affords multiple interpretations. If this feels uncomfortable, it may be useful to start by examining anonymous samples of student work collected from within the group or gathered from other sources.

Another approach for selecting student work is for the group to plan a classroom activity jointly, teach it independently, and then bring the student work back to the group for discussion. This approach is a good way to begin examining teaching or assessment practices based on what the group has learned from looking at student work.

### Analyzing Student Work

Discussions of student work sometimes make people feel “on the spot” or exposed, either for themselves or for their students. The use of a structured dialogue format provides an effective technique for managing the discussion and maintaining its focus.

A structured dialogue format is a way of organizing a group conversation by clearly defining who should be talking when and about what. While at first it may seem rigid and artificial, a clearly defined structure frees the group to focus its attention on what is most important. In general, structured dialogue formats allot specified times for the group to discuss various aspects of the work.

Consider the student whose work is being examined to be a silent member of the group. Assume, as for any member, that the student is acting in good faith and has put forth his or her best effort.

For ideas on how to structure discussions regarding student work, please see Appendix I: Sample Protocol for Analyzing Student Work.



# PLC Best Practices

## PLC Curriculum Practices

- Clarify instructional priorities and priority standards for every course at every grade level.
- Develop pacing guides and monitor the implementation of designed curriculum.
- Unwrap standards to determine all content and skills needed for mastery.
- When you have a grade-level content peer, teach at the same pace as much as possible.
- Focus on the identified priorities and be willing to let go of teaching non-curriculum units and content.

## PLC Instructional Practices

- Use a variety of approaches to address different learning styles and abilities.
- Reflect on and share best practices based on results.
- Communicate with colleagues about student learning.
- Use of all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- Focus on opportunities for self-directed learning.
- Differentiate in the classroom.
- Re-teach using different strategies.

## PLC Assessment Practices

- Create and use more formative assessments.
- Develop authentic performance assessments and document in unit organizers.
- Clearly describe expectations for students using rubrics.
- Frequently progress monitor.
- Use data to examine best practices and drive instruction.
- Include variety and choice.
- Align assessment practices to support extended time to learn and intervention strategies.

## PLC Homework Practices

- Provide opportunities for student success.
- Allow for extension of time and support, when needed.
- Ensure homework is meaningful, relevant, and an extension of classroom learning.
- Homework should be varied according to ability.
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on what has been learned.
- Provide opportunities for student to apply learned skills.
- Assign minimal weight in the overall grade - homework is practice.

## PLC Grading Practices

- Provide clear, constructive feedback for students.
- Grade based on mastery, not completion.
- Base grades on learning standards.
- Align grading practices to support interventions and continuous learning.
- Always follow the grading guidelines developed by staff and provided to students and parents.

## PLC Data Practices

- Analyze student's data to:
  - Determine what supports will be in place for struggling students.
  - Determine what enrichments will be in place for advanced students.
  - Determine what instructional practices are effective.

# Suggested PLC Calendar of Activities

## August

School-Wide Session #1: General Meeting to Review PLC Processes/Protocols  
PLC Team Meeting #1: Team Role Designations/ Norm Setting

## September

School Wide Session #2: Strategies for SMART Goal Development  
PLC Team Meeting #2: SMART Goal Development  
PLC Team Meetings #3-4: Priority Standards/ Unwrap Standards/ Curriculum

## October

School Wide Session #3: Vertical Alignment of Instructional Priorities Based on Data  
PLC Team Meetings #5-6: Curriculum/ Instructional Plan/ Assessment Plan

## November

PLC Team Meeting #7: Looking at Student Work/Reflection  
PLC Team Meeting #8: Assessment/Data Analysis/Plan Interventions

## December

PLC Meetings #9-10: Reflection/ Mid-Year Survey

*At this point, it is suggested that the team continue reviewing curriculum when a new unit/module begins and repeat the sequence. The teams should schedule regular PLC meetings each month so the team can continue to monitor the progress of students who are not reaching proficiency on set learning goals. These meetings should complement the Rtl meetings being held on each campus. Data analysis should continue using standardized measures, formative assessment and summative assessment (including regular opportunities to look at student work) Teams should look ahead a few months and plan out their tentative sequence of meetings. Teams should also determine on an on going basis any professional development needs that arise. Regular team progress monitoring should occur involving school and district administrators.*

## January

PLC Meetings #11-12

## February

PLC Meetings #13-14

## March

PLC Meetings #15-16

## April

PLC Meetings #17-18

## May

PLC Meetings #19-20

## Final Thoughts on PLCs

As a member of a Professional Learning Community, you will engage in a process that profoundly impacts the existing culture and structure of your school and our district.

*The PLC journey isn't linear - it is cyclical.* While each campus may be at a different place in the implementation process, they take some essential steps to develop highly effective PLCs. The PLC process is a journey without end, not an event. Learn how to do it by actually doing it. Don't wait for the process to become popular or perfect. This journey is refined, reenergized, renewed each year.

## FAQs about PLCs

### **What are the expectations regarding PLCs?**

We envision the future of Lago Vista ISD as becoming a District-wide PLC. Working collaboratively, teachers are more productive and student learning becomes a building-wide focus. The expectation is that PLC activities are fully implemented on each campus and that PLCs meet regularly to study data, analyze current levels of achievement, identify goals and instructional priorities, develop assessment strategies, share instructional practices, and investigate research-based best practices. Each building team with their campus administrators plan the individual expectations for PLCs. Teams will be created and time will be designated in the teacher's schedules for PLC meetings to take place. The agendas and schedules will be based on your individual campus needs. School-wide professional development activities may be planned, as needed.

### **Do we have to meet during our scheduled PLC time?**

Yes. Other meetings are not allowed during that time. The expectation is that every PLC is meeting for the duration of the planning time provided.

### **Are minutes and agendas required during PLC meetings?**

Yes. The recorder needs to share the agenda and minutes to your administrator, as required.

### **How do we determine the instructional priorities in a PLC?**

In a PLC, collaborative teams work together to build knowledge of essential curriculum and signs of proficiency in that curriculum. They investigate, deeply, the questions "What is it we want our students to learn?" and "How will we know when each student has learned it?" They work together to assess each standard for endurance, leverage, and readiness and to eliminate unessential content from the curriculum.

### **What should a team do with the evidence of student learning that it collects from various assessments?**

Assessment data must be analyzed and the results applied to practice. Using data analysis protocols can build a team's capacity to examine evidence of student learning and apply results effectively. Protocols facilitate open dialogue on successes and failures, and focus team attention on the right work. A variety of protocols exist to help identify which individual students need intervention or enrichment in specific areas as well as which general areas students struggled with in a class or a team as a whole. Protocols also help plan next steps and instructional strategies.

### **What cultural shifts are required to move a traditional school to a PLC?**

Becoming a PLC requires a profound cultural shift in regards to a school's fundamental purpose: a shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. This drives other shifts: in use of assessments, in the response when students don't learn, in the work of teachers, in the focus on results, and more.

## Key Vocabulary for PLCs

**Achievement Gap:** A persistent, pervasive and significant disparity in educational achievement and attainment among groups of students as determined by a standardized measure.

**Collaboration:** A systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results.

**Common Assessments:** Teacher-created, teacher-owned assessments that are collaboratively created and scored.

**Curriculum Compacting:** Eliminating content that is already known by the students which allows more time to be spent on enrichment.

**Curriculum Snapshot:** Document that details the location of required content standards in a given course. It includes the units of study, as well as the sequencing, pacing, major concepts, and priority standards for each unit.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Process of designing lesson plans that meet the needs of the range of learners; such planning includes learning objectives, grouping practices, teaching methods, varied assignments, and varied materials chosen based on student skill levels, interest levels, and learning preferences.

**Formative Assessments:** Formal and informal processes teachers and students use to gather evidence for the purpose of improving learning.

**Intervention:** Short-term or long-term pro-active instructional action(s) taken to improve student learning. These actions are based on on-going assessment so instruction is aligned with the level of learning.

**Level of Complexity:** Determined from higher-order thinking skills. For example knowledge is least complex on Bloom's Taxonomy and evaluation is most complex.

**Norms:** In PLCs norms represent protocols or commitments developed by each team to guide members in working together. Norms help team members clarify expectations regarding how they will work together to achieve their shared goals.

**Performance Assessment:** An activity where students DO what the standard asks. It is a way to assess mastery of content in a way that does not involve a scantron. Also called "authentic assessment". This type of assessment rarely comes from a workbook. Generally, it requires a teacher unwrapping the standard and ensuring not only the content is covered, but that it is done at the level specified by the TEKS. Performance assessments will be designed for each priority standard in a unit.

**Priority Standard:** These are quite simply the main content standards for a unit. Priority Standards are a very limited set of learning objectives organized for each grade and subject. It is not the total curriculum, just the 'safety net' that every teacher should ensure that every student learns.

**Professional Learning Community:** Educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of inquiry to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional Learning Communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

**Remediation:** Instruction intended to remedy a situation; to teach a student something that he or she should have previously learned or be able to demonstrate. Remediation is a reaction to a summative assessment. The goal is to close the academic gap.

**Response to Intervention (Rti):** Integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

**Spiraling, Spiraled:** To take a standard and integrate it into units where it will fit naturally. Spiraling can be from your own course, from a vertical content-area course, or even from a cross-curricular course. Our data says kids are struggling with measurement? Certainly we can have them figure out the surface area of the basketball court in PE, right?

**Summative Assessments:** Assessments that provide evidence of student achievement for the purpose of making a judgment about the student competence or program effectiveness.

**Unwrapping the Standard:** Analyzing the requirements within the standards to determine required content, skills, and level of complexity.

**Vertical Alignment:** K-12 alignment within a content area.

**Appendix A**  
**PLC Planning Form**

*Please return to your campus administrator.*

**PLC Members:**

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**Facilitator:**

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**Recorder/Note Taker:**

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**Other Roles:**

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Norms:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

# Sample Activity for Developing Norms

**Comments to the Facilitator:** *This activity will enable a group to develop a set of operating norms or ground rules. In existing groups, anonymity will help ensure that everyone is able to express their ideas freely. For this reason, it is essential to provide pens or pencils or to ask that everyone use the same type of writing implement.*

**Supplies:** Index cards, pens or pencils, poster paper, display board, tape, tacks

**Time:** 25-45 minutes

### Directions:

1. Explain to the group that effective groups generally have a set of norms that govern individual behavior, facilitate the work of the group, and enable the group to accomplish its task.
2. Provide examples of norms.
3. Recommend to the group that it establish a set of norms:
  - To ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to contribute in the meeting;
  - To increase productivity and effectiveness; and
  - To facilitate the achievement of its goals.
4. Give five index cards and the same kind of writing tool to each person in the group.
5. Ask each person to reflect on and record behaviors they consider ideal behaviors for a group. Ask them to write one idea on each of their cards. Time: 10 minutes.
6. Shuffle all the cards together. Every effort should be made to provide anonymity for individuals, especially if the group has worked together before.
7. Turn cards face up and read each card aloud. Allow time for the group members to discuss each idea. Tape or tack each card to a display board so that all group members can see it. As each card is read aloud, ask the group to determine if it is similar to another idea that already has been expressed. Cards with similar ideas should be grouped together.
8. When all of the cards have been sorted, ask the group to write the norm suggested by each group of cards. Have one group member record these new norms on a large sheet of paper.
9. Review the proposed norms with the group. Determine whether the group can support the norms before the group adopts them.

**Appendix C**  
**PLC Norms Agreement Template**

We, the \_\_\_\_\_ PLC, agree to the following collaborative norms at all of our meetings for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Appendix D**  
**Lago Vista ISD PLC Agenda Template**

Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members Present: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. What do we expect students to learn?**
- 2. How will we know if they learn it?**
- 3. How do we respond when students experience difficulty in learning?**
- 4. How do we respond when students *do* learn?**

**Agenda Items**

|                 |
|-----------------|
| 1. Review Norms |
| 2.              |
| 3.              |
| 4.              |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <u>Successes from Today:</u> | <u>Plan for Next Meeting:</u>              |
| <u>Questions/Concerns:</u>   | <u>Needs from Building Administrators:</u> |

## Appendix E PLC Minutes Template

Meeting Date, Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Location: \_\_\_\_\_

PLC Members Present: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLC Members Absent: \_\_\_\_\_  
(List Reason) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLC Questions**

- 1) What do we expect students to learn?
- 2) How will we know if they learn it?
- 3) How do we respond when students experience difficulty?
- 4) How do we respond when students already know it?

Which of the four critical questions are you focusing on? \_\_\_\_\_

If the team is working on Question 1, are they working on:

- Planning units and reviewing identified priority standards for alignment.
- Reviewing content to be covered (“unpacking” the standards).
- Analyzing pre-assessment or overall student performance data.
- Discussing different instructional strategies/ideas.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If the team is working on Question 2, are they working on:

- Discussing/planning/reviewing performance assessments.
- Discussing/planning/reviewing formative assessments.
- Discussing/planning/reviewing summative assessments.
- Scoring assessments.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If the team is working on Question 3, are they working on:

- Analyzing student work.
- Analyzing student data.
- Discussing instructional strategies that worked well.
- Discussing and planning differentiation strategies.
- Identifying students to discuss in Rtl Tier II Meetings.

If the team is working on Question 4, are they working on:

- Analyzing student work.
- Analyzing student data.
- Discussing instructional strategies that worked well.
- Discussing and planning differentiation strategies.
- Planning enrichment/acceleration activities.

**Reflection:** What questions/needs does the team have?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix F**  
**Team SMART Goal-Setting Plan**

PLC Team: \_\_\_\_\_

What is our team's "current reality"? (Areas of strength and potential areas of focus)

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Based upon our current reality, we have identified the following area of focus to improve student learning...

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We have collectively created the following SMART goal(s) to address this area of focus:

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To achieve this goal....

**Action Steps:** What steps or activities will be initiated to achieve this goal?

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**Designation:** Who will be responsible?

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**Time Frame:** What is a realistic timeframe for each step/activity?

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**Outcomes/Evidence:** What outcomes on student learning do we expect? What evidence will we have to show that we are making progress.

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This goal was created collectively and we are committed to achieving this goal. Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Facilitator Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## Appendix G

### Performance Assessment Planning Guide (“SQUARE”)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>S</b> - Which STANDARD(s) this task target?</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Q</b> - Which Essential QUESTION will this task address?</p> <p>(An essential question takes the main concept from the standard and turns it into a question. It typically cannot be answered with one word or statement.)</p> |  |
| <p><b>U</b> - Which UNWRAPPED content knowledge and skills will this task develop?</p>   |  |
| <p><b>A</b> - What APPLICATION of learning will this task require?</p> <p>(What will the students actually do or produce in this task?)</p>  |  |
| <p><b>R</b> - What instruction, information, and RESOURCES (including technology connections and related URLs) will students need to complete this performance assessment?</p>   |  |
| <p><b>E</b> - What individual EVIDENCE of learning will this task provide? (How will you know by the work students produce what they have learned relative to this task?)</p>  |  |

## Appendix H: Sample Performance Assessment Rubric

|  | <b>Advanced<br/>(93-100)</b>   | <b>Mastery<br/>(85-92)</b>   | <b>Proficient<br/>(77--84)</b>   | <b>Approaching<br/>Proficiency<br/>(70-76)</b>   | <b>Needs<br/>Development<br/>(69 or less)</b>  | <b>N/A</b> |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------|
| <b>Standards Based Skills</b>            | Able to demonstrate advanced skills in a way that others benefit from the demonstration.   | Able to successfully demonstrate proficient application of skills independently.   | Able to demonstrate proficient application of skills, with little or no assistance.  | Able to demonstrate application of basic skills with assistance.   | Unable to demonstrate skills, even with assistance.  |            |
| <b>Standards Based Content Knowledge</b> | Able to demonstrate extensive knowledge in a new way that benefits others; Generates justified opinions; Identifies and expresses a deep understanding of key concepts.                                      | Demonstrates a thorough understanding of grade level standard; Provides a precise explanation of key concepts.   | Demonstrates knowledge of grade level standard; Accurate explanation of key concepts.  | Demonstrates a partial understanding of grade level standard. Provides irrelevant or no support; Explanation of concepts is inaccurate or incomplete.              | Demonstrates comprehension below the grade level standard; Does not provide information to support understanding.      |            |
| <b>Communication</b>                     | Outstanding; communicates a level of insight that enhances the understanding of others; Sophisticated level of vocabulary and/or graphics; Engages others in reflection                                      | Explains independently, clearly, and confidently; Precise vocabulary and/or graphics; Critiques; Develops product/performance with nuances for a specific audience | Explains or discusses in response to questions or prompts; uses some appropriate vocabulary and/or graphics; Shows some consideration of audience. | Explanations are rote or memorized and do not reflect understanding. Vocabulary and/or graphics are inappropriate. Unaware of appropriate delivery given audience. | Terminology and graphics are distracting.  |            |
| <b>Problem Solving</b>                   | Identifies the key elements of the problem and clearly outlines the objectives in an innovative manner with no assistance.   | Identifies the key elements of the problem and clearly outlines the objectives in an effective manner with minimal assistance.                                     | Identifies the key elements of the problem and clearly outlines the objectives in an effective manner with little or no assistance.                | Identifies the key elements of the problem and outlines the objectives and procedures with assistance.   | Identifies the key elements of the problem and outlines the objectives and procedures with a great deal of assistance. |            |
| <b>Self-Direction</b>                    | Efforts and products exceed the parameters of the assignment; Develops systems and habits for effective, efficient learning.   | Self-directed; Functions independently; Frequently initiates own learning; Exceeds the parameters of assignments.  | Follows directions; Requires minimal assistance; Completes the assignment on time.   | Requires multiple redirections; Completes the assignment with assistance   | Unable to complete assignment or completion requires a great deal of assistance.                                       |            |
| <b>Content Depth</b>                     | Forms original generalizations using complex concepts and relationships; Hypothesizes and infers beyond the required information; Unique ideas or responses; Evaluates issues across disciplines and topics. | In-depth; Well supported information; Develops more advanced concepts and relationships; Insightful; Evaluates the issues of the topic.                            | Valid content; Precise information; Accurate facts and details but little depth or elaboration; Conveys a general idea or understanding.           | Provides extra information that doesn't relate or invalid information; Little to no depth; Given a source able to recite information, but lacks understanding.     | Provides incomplete or inaccurate information that reflects a lack of understanding.                                   |            |

## Appendix I

# Sample Protocol for Analyzing Student Work

1. Review norms.
2. The teacher providing the student work gives a very brief statement of the assignment. The teacher should describe only what the student was asked to do and avoid explaining what he or she hoped or expected to see.
  - The teacher providing the work should not give any background information about the student or the student's work. In particular, the teacher should avoid any statements about whether this is a strong or weak student or whether this is a particularly good or poor piece of work from this student.

### **Describing the Student Work**

- The facilitator asks: "What do you see?"
- During this period the group gathers as much information as possible from the student work.
- Group members describe what they see in the student's work, avoiding judgments about quality or interpretations about what the student was doing.
- If judgments or interpretations do arise, the facilitator should ask the person to describe the evidence on which they are based.
- It may be useful to list the group's observations on chart paper. If interpretations come up, they can be listed in another column for later discussion during Step 3.

### **Interpreting the Student Work**

- The facilitator asks: "From the student's perspective, what is the student working on?"
- During this period, the group tries to make sense of what the student was doing and why. The group should try to find as many different interpretations as possible and evaluate them against the kind and quality of evidence.
- From the evidence gathered in the preceding section, try to infer: what the student was thinking and why; what the student does and does not understand; what the student was most interested in; how the student interpreted the assignment.
- Think broadly and creatively. Assume that the work, no matter how confusing, makes sense to the student. Your job is to see what the student sees.
- As you listen to each other's interpretations, ask questions that help you better understand each other's perspectives.

### **Implications for Classroom Practice**

- The facilitator asks: "What are the implications of this work for teaching and assessment?"
- Based on the group's observations and interpretations, discuss any implications this work might have for teaching and assessment in the classroom. In particular, consider the following questions:
  - What steps could the teacher take next with this student?
  - What teaching strategies might be most effective?
  - What else would you like to see in the student work?
  - What kinds of assignments or assessments could provide this information?
  - What does this conversation make you think about in terms of your own practice? About teaching and learning in general?

## Reflecting on the Process

Looking for evidence of student thinking ...

- What did you see in this student's work that was interesting or surprising?
- What did you learn about how this student thinks and learns?
- What about the process helped you to see and learn these things?

Listening to colleagues thinking ...

- What did you learn from listening to your colleagues that was interesting or surprising?
- What new perspectives did your colleagues provide?
- How can you make use of your colleagues' perspectives?

Reflecting on one's own thinking ...

- What questions about teaching and assessment did looking at the students' work raise for you?
- How can you pursue these questions further?
- Are there things you would like to try in your classroom as a result of looking at this student's work?

**Appendix J**  
**Data Analysis Protocol**

1. Which of our students need additional time and support to achieve at or above proficiency on an essential learning?

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2. How will we provide the time and support?

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3. What is our plan to enrich and extend the learning for students who are highly proficient?

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4. What is an area where my students struggled?

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5. What strategies were used by teammates whose students performed well?

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6. What is an area where our team's students struggled?

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7. What do we believe is the cause?

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8. What is our plan for improving the results?

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**Appendix K**  
**Instruction & Assessment Reflection Protocol**

1. What instructional strategies/materials were used effectively resulting in my students scoring high on certain standards/skills?

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2. For standards where my students didn't score well, which instructional strategies/materials were not effective enough?

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3. What might I do differently to address strategies/materials that were not effective enough?

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4. What best practices can I bring to my PLC meeting?

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5. What questions/concerns do I want to bring to my PLC team?

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## Appendix L RtI Tier II Action Plan - Elementary

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Initiated: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning Goal, including Measure of Success:**

*Example: Suzy will meet or exceed her expected growth in Lexile® of 125-185 points by 4/7/2015, as evidenced on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI).*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

| Intervention/ Accommodation | Dates Start/End | Evaluation of Intervention | Recommendation |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Current Baseline:           |                 | Updated Baseline:          |                |
| Current Baseline:           |                 | Updated Baseline:          |                |
| Current Baseline:           |                 | Updated Baseline:          |                |

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix M Rtl Tier II Action Plan - Secondary

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Initiated: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> 9 Week Average: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> 9 Week Average: \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> 9 Week Average: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Parent Contact Date \_\_\_\_\_

Conference

Telephone

Note

E-mail

\*Second Contact Date \_\_\_\_\_

Conference

Telephone

Note

E-mail

| Intervention/Strategy |   | (Circle one)   |                   |                |                     | How Often |        |         |
|-----------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|---------|
|                       |   | Successful (S) | Unsuccessful (US) | Not Tried (NT) | Not Applicable (NA) | Daily     | Weekly | Monthly |
| 1                     | Tutorials<br>(Dates Attended: _____)                              | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 2                     | Small group instruction, in class                                 | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 3                     | Hard copy of text for home use                                    | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 4                     | Break task into smaller steps                                     | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 5                     | Providing outline of class notes                                  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 7                     | Teaching with a different modality                                | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 8                     | Peer tutoring   | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 9                     | Frequent checks for progress                                      | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 10                    | Allow more time (in class)  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 11                    | 1 on 1 tutoring with teacher                                      | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 12                    | Preferential seating  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 13                    | Maintain proximity  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 14                    | Minimize distractions   | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 15                    | Minimize transition time  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 16                    | Frequent, discrete reminders to stay on task                      | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 17                    | Individual instruction/attention                                  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 18                    | Positive reinforcement  | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
|                       | <input type="checkbox"/> verbal <input type="checkbox"/> concrete |                |                   |                |                     |           |        |         |
| 19                    | "Brain Breaks" during class                                       | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |
| 20                    | Planned ignoring of attention-seeking behavior                    | S              | US                | NT             | NA                  |           |        |         |

|    |   |   |    |    |    |  |  |  |
|----|---|---|----|----|----|--|--|--|
| 21 | Behavior Contract/Plan  | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |
|    | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral |   |    |    |    |  |  |  |
| 22 | Loss of privileges  | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |
| 23 | Privileges/Responsibilities   | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |
| 24 | School/Home note system   | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |
| 25 | Direct teach/review of expectations                                   | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |
| 26 | Behavior-specific praise  | S | US | NT | NA |  |  |  |

Adapted from Andrea Ogonosky's *Response to Intervention Handbook* (2008)

**What other activities or strategies have you tried to resolve this problem?**

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**Note to the Teacher:** This form is to document interventions for any student who fails a course for a 9 weeks, or who is experiencing significant difficulty. Once a teacher determines the appropriate Tier II interventions for a student, establish a close-ended time period for interventions to be implemented and monitored. Allow enough time between implementation and review for the intervention to take effect. This will vary from 6-9 weeks. Interventions should occur regularly for at least a 6-week period before a Tier III referral to the Rtl Team is made.

This Tier II Action Plan form should be included with the Tier III referral, if progress monitoring checks and data indicate regression or no progress. This Tier II Action Plan should also be made available, upon request, to the Rtl Team, in the event that a student is identified as needing Tier III interventions.

## Appendix N PLC Midyear Survey

This survey is intended to help the school learn more about they type of work that has occurred in PLC teams so far this year and how to best support the PLC process for the remainder of the year.

Your grade level of course area: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the extent to which each of the statements below is true by circling one of the four numbers using the following scale:

**1: Very True**

**2: True**

**3: Somewhat True**

**4: Not True**

We have an agreed - upon set of meeting norms in our PLC Team (for example, expectations for participating behaviors during meetings).

1    2    3    4

We follow our meeting norms consistently at PLC meetings.

1    2    3    4

Our norms help us to have productive, effective conversations.

1    2    3    4

We have clear tasks to perform at our PLC meetings.

1    2    3    4

Our tasks relate directly to improving student learning.

1    2    3    4

Our tasks are determined by consensus among our team members.

1    2    3    4

The majority of our PLC time (80% or more) is spent on tasks related to student learning goals.

1    2    3    4

During PLC conversations, team members sometimes disagree about ideas or practices.

1    2    3    4

When team members disagree about ideas or practices, we tend to discuss those disagreements in depth.

1    2    3    4

When I disagree with something a member of my PLC has said, I almost always voice that disagreement.

1    2    3    4

I feel a strong sense of commitment to my PLC team.

1    2    3    4

If I were given the option of no longer meeting as a PLC, I would still want to continue the meetings.

1    2    3    4

I have improved as a classroom teacher as a result of the conversations and work we have done in our PLC.

1    2    3    4

I have made changing to my teaching practices as a result of the work we have done as a PLC.

1    2    3    4

My PLC team has helped define the most important student learning standards in our content areas.

1    2    3    4

As a PLC team, we regularly (at least monthly) assess student work samples as a team.

1    2    3    4

As a PLC team, we regularly (at least monthly) analyze data from student assessments.

1    2    3    4

I adjust instructional practices in my classroom based on my students' performance on assessments.

1    2    3    4

Over the course of this year, I have implemented numerous academic interventions in my classroom for struggling students.

1    2    3    4



# Lago Vista Independent School District

**Excellence in ALL We Do!**

8039 Bar-K Ranch Road  
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