

Greater Albany SD 8J Board Policy

Code: **IA-AR**
Revised/Reviewed: 10/22/12

Professional Learning Communities

Professional Learning Communities in Greater Albany Public Schools

All Greater Albany Public Schools operate as professional learning communities that seek to employ best practices to raise the bar for all students and close the achievement gap.

Definition

In a professional learning community (PLC): Educators are committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve.

1. The Greater Albany Public Schools operate under a continuous improvement model in which we believe the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-imbedded learning for educators through PLC work.
2. Schools are composed of collaborative teams.
3. Teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together to seek out best practices, test them in the classroom, continuously improve processes, and focus on results.

Key Actions in a Professional Learning Community:

Learning as our Fundamental Purpose:

1. Schools will build collective knowledge regarding state standards and the Greater Albany School District Instructional Pacing Guides.
2. Schools will develop and deploy frequent team-developed common assessments to monitor the learning of each student on essential outcomes.
3. Schools will dedicate and structure time to implement intervention/enrichment initiatives during the course of the regular school day and academic year.

Building a Collaborative Culture Through High-Performing Teams:

1. Schools will ensure that collaborative teams are given time during the contractual day and year to meet on a regular basis.

2. Schools will work in collaborative teams interdependently to clarify what students must learn, gather evidence of student learning, analyze the evidence, identify the most powerful teaching strategies/best practices, and transfer these strategies across all team members.
3. School collaborative teams will work together interdependently to create and achieve common SMART goals as part of the school improvement process.

A Focus on Results:

1. Schools will analyze data from common assessments to identify students who need additional time and support for learning, discover strengths and weaknesses in their individual and collective teaching, and help measure team progress toward its common student learning goals.
2. Schools will act on information from their data using a cyclical practice of defining learning targets, planning instruction and formative assessment, evaluating results, responding to results.

*Adapted from Fairfax County Public Schools, "Professional Learning Communities Fundamental Elements", 2010; Learning by Doing, 2010; Leaders of learning, 2011



PLC Team Meeting Minutes

This Meeting

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Minute Taker:

Team Leader:

Today's Content Focus:

- Today's Tasks :
1. _____
 2. _____

<u>Next Meeting</u>	<u>Items for Future Work:</u>
Date:	1.
Time:	2.
Facilitator:	3.
Minute Taker:	4.
Team Leader:	5.

Team Members Present: _____, _____,
 _____, _____, _____

Please check the box that relates to today's work.

Big Ideas	Brief Discussion Summary	Next Steps/Action Items
What do we want our students to know and be able to do? <input type="checkbox"/> unwrapping the standards/pacing guides <input type="checkbox"/> describing proficiency levels <input type="checkbox"/> planning instructional units <input type="checkbox"/> identifying learning targets <input type="checkbox"/> writing team SMART goals <input type="checkbox"/> common formative/summative assessment design		
How do we know if they know it? <input type="checkbox"/> common formative/summative assessment analysis <input type="checkbox"/> checks for understanding (quizzes, exit tickets, student work) <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing student work for strengths and weaknesses <input type="checkbox"/> collaborative scoring of student work <input type="checkbox"/> reviewing and revising SMART goals based on data		
How will we respond when they don't? <input type="checkbox"/> adjustments to core instruction <input type="checkbox"/> developing/planning interventions <input type="checkbox"/> selecting instructional best practices to use (e.g. engagement, higher order thinking, structured language development, authentic reading/writing, graphic organizers, compare & contrast)		
How will we respond when they do? <input type="checkbox"/> planning differentiation <input type="checkbox"/> planning extensions (more challenge, different product/process, student directed learning)		

Did we work well as a team today? Yes/No Did we accomplish today's tasks? Yes/No



School Board Visits to Professional Learning Communities, 2012-2013

Purpose:

The purpose of the Board's visits to schools during PLC time is twofold:

1. To demonstrate the Board's commitment and support of Professional Learning Communities.
2. To learn about the work teachers are doing during PLC time, both the challenges and successes.

Key Elements of PLC work:

Teams of teachers in PLCs will be engaged in a variety of activities. PLC work is best described as a cycle of defining what students should know, determining how to teach it, evaluating the level of student learning, and how to respond when students do not master the material and when they do.

Visit Protocol:

1. Principal will greet the school board member.
2. Board member will be introduced by principal to the PLC team.
3. Board member may observe the work of the PLC team or teams.
4. Principal will meet with board member following visit with PLC team.
5. Questions to ask near the end of the visit or after the end of PLC work time:
 - a. What can the board be doing to support this work?
 - b. How has PLC work contributed to your teaching?

