Professional Learning Teams
Whole of partnership model

The purpose of this document is to highlight the effective Professional Learning Community (PLC) approaches reported and summarised in research and occurring in our sites. The implementation of PLCs is not separate, but clearly linked to existing sites' improvement agendas and challenges of practice to activate powerful learning, transform collaborative cultures, and capacity to collectively and self-improve.

What is a Professional Learning Community (PLC)?

It is a process in which a community of people work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry, problem solving and evaluative thinking to achieve improved results. They are focussed on a particular question, outcome or specific line of inquiry to improve learner results. A Professional Learning Team (PLT) is a team within a PLC focussed on a specific inquiry or outcome.

Why collaborate with PLCs?

PLCs can make better decisions, solve more complex problems, and do more to enhance outcomes, creativity and build collective skills than individuals workingalone. PLCs are not just nice to have. They are hard-core units of ongoing job-embedded learning and collective action. PLCs are the best strategy forimproving schools and partnerships. (DuFour, Blanchard)

PLTs are effective when they ...

Clear purpose, crucial characteristics and expectations for effective team collaboration

- PLTs seek clarification about purpose by asking *'How will this PLT be different from other team based learning?' 'Why is it important that I am part of a PLT?' 'What are we specifically trying to accomplish as a team?'*

- Create group norms that promote quality dialogue to enable authentic sharing, support and feedback on one another's practice, beliefs and outcomes; valuing of mistakes.

- Develop expectations about one year's growth for one year's input; accountability of agreed actions, key deliverables, meeting times, and equity of roles and responsibilities.

- Collaboration with at least 3-6 people within/across year levels, learning areas/faculties. Where purposeful, they may involve student support services personnel, external academic or business partners, or student action research teams.

Resources
Anthony Muhammad, Richard Dufour, Gavin Grift resources
solutiontree.com/free-resources/plcatwork

Louise Stoll on Professional Learning Communities video resources
vimeo.com/89495716 & vimeo.com/89495099

Team Norms
Getting things done is better than perfect, We will be frank with each other then rally together. (#John Pirie)

AITSL
aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/a-collaborative-professional-learning-

Use of robust research, evidence and resources

- PLTs seek out, engage with and apply high impact research to better design and deliver effective ways of teaching and learning.

- Selectively gather and analyse lean evidence from available formative assessments, samples of work, task analysis, observations, surveys or focus groups, learning progressions or pre/post tests.

- Use rigorous time saving tools that do well to collaboratively define team learner outcomes, understand root causes, better design teaching and learning and evaluate progress. *(See resources below)*

- Harness support from peers and expert partners to strengthen approaches and success.

Resources
Research: Guidebooks, Best Advice Papers
evidenceforlearning.org.au
visible-learning.org
ACER PAT Teacher Resource Centre

Strategy.Sort.Tool, Jigsaw
Must Do Could Do
learningsprints.com

Evaluation tools package
Accessible via Learn link > Staff groups > Inner West partnership > Leading improvement #

Search: Learning Progressions, Continuums, Achievement Standards
australiancurriculum.edu.au

Taking action to trial new approaches in a disciplined way

- Timely, targeted and evidence informed research cycles are implemented in a disciplined way.

- Trial new approaches, interventions and rapidly build precision in pedagogy systematically by allowing at least 1-4 weeks of deliberate practice.

- Identify the highly specific group learner outcome focus or research questions by asking *'What outcomes do we want to deliberately improve and for whom?' 'What exactly do we need to do or learn to achieve this?'*

- Time is scheduled and supported by site leadership.

Resources
Learning sprints cycle
learningsprints.org (Prepare/Sprint Tools)
Sustaining TLCs, Dylan Wiliam (pg 15)
dylanwiliamcenter.com/files/pdf/Sustaining-TLCs-20140829.pdf?aliId=89372614
Commitment to Action Template #

PLT case study/worked example
Partnership resource Accessible via Learn link > Staff groups > Inner West partnership > Leading collaborative cultures #

Results are evaluated for impact, shared and used

- PLTs discuss and evaluate the impact of learner progress and teaching practices by reflecting on *'Which learners have made the desired progress? If not, why?' 'How did our actions contribute to this?'*

- Findings are documented and shared through ongoing processes and presentations to team members, leadership and staff.

- Transfer any learning into future practices, programs, resources. Where practices are consistently identified as achieving more than one year's growth after several cycles, these are used to steer whole site improvement. *(Amplify/engage other staff, strengthen existing whole site agreements, include new SIP/QIP actions)*

- Determine the reset for the next cycle.

Resources
Review/Reset Tool
learningsprints.com/review-and-reset-tool

Student Heat Map
learningsprints.com/student-heat-map

Collaborative Culture Protocols Sharing Rounds #

Research & Evidence Table Template #

Case Study Template #

Effect Size Calculator #

Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Collaborative work undertaken by teachers and leaders in the Inner West and Torrens Partnership.
For further information contact the Inner West & Torrens Partnership, email daniel.balacco@sa.gov.au

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Strategies to Enhance Team Culture & Professional Learning Talk

PROTECTING TIME & SPACE FOR LEARNING TALK
What meeting places, spaces and processes do we have to engage in quality conversation?

ATTENTION TO WHAT WE TALK ABOUT
What language are we using to talk about learning? What are the different ways of talking and asking questions to seriously challenge? and support?

COMMITMENT TO CRUCIAL CHARACTERISTICS & TEAM BEHAVIOURS
What crucial characteristics, team behaviours or values, mantras and mottos have we established and regularly revisit?

BUILD TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS
Have we defined what trust is? Have we explored actions that would engender higher levels of trust in our team?