

THROUGH THE EYES OF NOVICE TEACHERS: PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT WORK

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative collective case study explored how novice teachers with three years of experience or less perceive working within a Professional Learning Community (PLC). From a social constructivist and pragmatist point of view, this collective case study focused on how novice teachers described working within a PLC team. The study considered what types of responsibilities novice teachers were asked to perform within their PLC teams and their perceptions of the experience. Novice teachers with three years or less experience in the classroom were interviewed and observed in order to learn more about their experiences working within a PLC team. In addition, the researcher conducted a focus group, maintained a field journal, and collected relevant PLC artifacts. From this study, school leaders may consider how novice teachers perceive PLCs while navigating the first years of teaching.

The primary themes from this study relate to the topics of improving self-efficacy, accountability of instruction, the development and use of assessment, increasing autonomy within the PLC team, and the careful implementation of PLCs (Figure 14). Throughout the study, teachers valued and appreciated having a team to provide support and share ideas with. The novice teachers in this study seemed to naturally seek collegial support and were open to collaborating with their peers. They valued the experience of their colleagues and wanted to improve their craft. PLCs can provide structure to the collaborative efforts that occur among teachers so that they can lead to positive improvements in student learning. However, the study found that careful implementation of PLCs is pivotal to their success, especially for novice teachers.

Keywords: novice teachers, Professional Learning Communities, collaboration

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Educational practices in America over the last century have shifted in response to the cultural and political climate in the country across each decade (Ravitch, 2000). Concerns about the quality of education in America have been present since the early part of the 20th century. Beginning in the 1900s, education underwent an early reform effort which became known as the “factory model” to more efficiently and consistently educate children while emulating the shift to mass production in the nation’s economy (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2011). Between 1920 and 1950, advocates of constructivism such John Dewey (1916) and others called for a more child-centered and individualized approach to instruction in an effort to move away from the “factory model” from just a few decades prior. Concerns about the quality of American schools persisted in the 1950s and 1960s, as communicated through works such as *Why Johnny Can’t Read* (Flesch, 1965) and “Crisis in Education” (Arendt, 1958). These persistent concerns throughout the early part of the 20th century led to the identification of a potential national problem related to the quality of education being provided to children across the country. This, in turn, led to an increase in the involvement of the federal government in both policy and funding, even though education has traditionally been a responsibility that fell primarily to the individual states (Thomas & Brady, 2005). Beginning with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, the federal government began to increase accountability, raise standards, and provide funding for a variety of

programs (Thomas & Brady, 2005; National Committee on Excellence in Education, 1983; Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1988). Beginning in the 1980s, scholars responded to the call for increased accountability by searching for models upon which schools and school districts could build their improvement efforts (Edmonds, 1982; Lezotte, 1991; DuFour et al., 2011). Two such models that came out of these efforts were the correlates of effective schools and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs are the focus of this study, however, as the researcher seeks to identify, understand, and establish meaning regarding the voice of novice teachers within the PLC structure and to better understand their perceptions of their PLC teams.

In today's school climate, novice teachers entering the profession are expected to step in and be effective immediately. Regardless of their background, education, and prior experience, novice teachers have much to learn within their first years in the classroom. Life for beginning teachers has traditionally been described as a "sink or swim proposition"; this is concerning because the statistics on the retention of novice teachers are not encouraging (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 32). According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), as many as 39% of novice teachers leave the profession within the first five years, reporting that they left because of a lack of support from their administration and/or general job dissatisfaction (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Novice teachers report struggling with basic job requirements including what and how to teach, getting collegial support, and classroom management (Goodwin, 2012). Well-articulated induction programs have the potential to address some of these concerns and support novice teachers as they learn the culture and expectations of the

school and adjust to their new jobs (Horn, Sterling, & Subhan, 2002). The importance of induction is brought to light by Anthony Muhammad (2009) who believes novice teachers are searching to “find stability within the organization and understand how he or she fits within the cultural and political goals of the organization” (p. 43). Mentoring is typically a component of induction programs for novice teachers (Moir, 2009). Developing an induction program is one option for school leaders as they assist novice teachers with finding stability. Another structure that may assist novice teachers in their quest to find stability is the PLC model.

To address the national call for school reform, schools across the country have implemented PLCs in an effort to improve student achievement results. Novice teachers may find themselves in schools that have previously established PLCs, in schools that are beginning to develop PLCs, or in schools where the development of PLCs is likely in the near future. No matter the situation, novice teachers must determine and/or accept their role in the PLC, develop collegial relationships with their co-workers, work interdependently, and complete the work required within their team (DuFour et al., 2011). This study explored PLCs through the eyes of novice teachers.

Problem Statement

Supporting novice teachers and keeping them in schools is critical to the future of education. School systems have addressed new teacher induction through a myriad of mentoring programs with varying levels of success (Horn et al., 2002). These programs differ in their scope, implementation, and effectiveness, and for many school systems, it is a costly endeavor (Horn et al., 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Moir, 2009; National

Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). Ingersoll and others have studied teacher retention and some of the underlying reasons why novice teachers are leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001; NCTAF, 1996). Strong induction programs and structured mentoring opportunities can provide the support novice teachers require and, according to Ingersoll, Merrill, and May (2012), can potentially reduce attrition; however, they found that retention is not improving despite the efforts of school leaders.

Today's schools may try a host of reform efforts and instructional strategies, but the collegial culture that develops from the incorporation of PLC teams within a school has the potential, as articulated by DuFour et al. (2011), to impact student achievement and provide the support novice teachers need. According to Sparks (2005), "well-implemented professional learning communities are a powerful means of seamlessly blending teaching and professional learning in ways that produce complex, intelligent behavior in all teachers" (p. 156). Therefore, in theory and according to the research, PLCs should help all teachers, especially novices, to grow professionally. Within the literature, one can find considerable evidence supporting the work of PLCs, but there is little information on how novice teachers perceive these environments, which may be relevant given the concerns about teacher retention (Hord, 1997; DuFour et al, 2011; Schmoker 2004a, 2004b). This study sought to identify, understand, and hear the voice and perceptions of novice teachers as they assimilated into a PLC at their respective school.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative collective case study was to explore how novice teachers perceived PLCs and how they described their experiences within this collaborative structure. Using the collective case study framework, the researcher hoped to discover what novice teachers found helpful in their PLC and what challenges they faced. For this study, a novice teacher was defined as someone who has three years of experience or less working within a public school setting, and each teacher was considered as a “case.” Data collection included focused or semistructured interviews, direct observations, field notes, a focus group session, and the collection of relevant artifacts. The researcher intended to develop a rich description of the experiences of the participants in this study and the school in which they worked. This study contributes to the body of literature for school leaders searching for ideas around the topics of structured collaboration, supporting novice teachers, teacher induction, retention, and school improvement.

Research Questions

The primary purpose of this study was to identify, understand, and establish meaning with regard to the voice of novice teachers while addressing the following research questions:

1. How are professional learning communities (PLCs) perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?
2. How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a professional learning community (PLC) team?

Significance of the Study

When PLCs are developed, schools can increase their capacity to improve student achievement and improve the quality of collaborative efforts among teachers as a result of implementation (DuFour et al., 2011). Many educational researchers, such as DuFour et al. (2011) and Shirley Hord (1997), believe that PLCs are the key to sustainable and significant school improvement. Roland Barth (2006), in particular, describes:

a precondition for doing anything to strengthen our practice and improve a school is the existence of a collegial culture in which professionals talk about practice, share their craft knowledge, and observe and root for the success of one another. Without these in place, no meaningful improvement—no staff or curriculum development, no teacher leadership, no student appraisal, no team teaching, no parent involvement, and no sustained change—is possible. (p. 13)

Within a high fidelity PLC, teachers are expected to clearly define what their students will be learning, how they will determine if learning has occurred, what they will do if learning has not occurred, and what will be done if a student has already mastered the content. All of the work done within a PLC team is centered around these four components or questions. In addition, actions within a PLC are reflective as teachers work collaboratively to develop common formative assessments and review the results together in their PLC teams (DuFour et al., 2011). To support such work, school leaders must “pull interested, willing people together, engage them in constructing a shared vision, develop trust and relationships, and nurture a program of continuous learning”

(Hord, 1997, p. 40). The development and support for a shared vision, with adequate time and resource allocations, is critical to the success of a PLC because it supports the foundation or the “why” behind their efforts (Hord, 1997).

Evidence supports the effectiveness of PLCs in schools seeking to make improvements in both student achievement and school climate (DuFour et al., 2011; Hord, 1997). There is limited research, however, on how teachers in various stages of their careers perceive these systemic changes. This study was significant in its attempt to explore how novice teachers functioned within a PLC and to describe their experiences and perceptions within the context of PLCs. The study examined this dynamic among a variety of novice teachers.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

This study assumed that novice teachers had relatively similar teacher preparation programs prior to their first years in the classroom. The researcher focused on the experience of novice teachers once they began teaching in a new school, which may be viewed as a limitation. Teacher preparation was not explored because the researcher intended to narrow the scope of the study to how novice teachers adapt to their school environments once they have been hired and became a member of a PLC team.

The researcher also assumed that the implementation of the PLC structure within the research location was focused around the four key components or questions of a PLC based upon conversations with the principal of the identified school. In other words, the school required their PLC teams to meet every week to plan instruction collaboratively,

to develop common formative assessments on a consistent basis, and to analyze the results of these assessments together to make instructional decisions as recommended by Hord (1997), DuFour et al. (2011), Schmoker (2004), and others. An initial conversation with the principal confirmed that the school had functioning PLC teams prior to the start of the study.

The researcher was not in a position of authority at the selected research location. The researcher had an established relationship with the principal, but the participants met the researcher for the first time at the start of the data collection phase. The researcher intended to establish a relationship of trust with the participants through multiple contacts prior to the start of the study and throughout the interviews, observations, and the focus group session. Establishing professional relationships and the promise of anonymity allowed the novice teachers to speak openly about their experiences. Through a collective case study, the researcher explored the unique experiences of each participant and the research location while minimizing personal bias and prior experiences.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions of terms will assist the reader in understanding the related literature and methodology for this study:

1. *Case study*: A qualitative research framework typically used to answer “how” or “why” questions in which the researcher has no control over the context of the study.

2. *Coding*: The process of reviewing qualitative data for key words and phrases that can be organized into categories and emergent themes.
3. *Collective case study*: A case study incorporating multiple cases or research locations.
4. *Constructivism*: A belief that knowledge is constructed over time by the learner through discovery and carefully planned learning experiences.
5. *Construct validity*: The degree to which the collected data answers the questions that they were intended to answer.
6. *Field journal*: A record of notes and reflections kept by the researcher throughout the course of a research study.
7. *Focus group*: A qualitative research method through which participants are asked about their beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of an identified topic. Participants are encouraged to interact with each other throughout the session.
8. *High fidelity PLCs*: Teams of teachers focused on the four key questions asked within a PLC. Student achievement data is at the center of all decisions made within the team. The four key questions include: What do we want our students to know and be able to do? How will we assess student learning? What will do when students are not learning? What will we do when students already know the content?
9. *Mentoring*: A novice teacher is paired with a more experienced teacher to provide structured support and guidance. The mentor and mentee may engage

in activities such as direct observations, analysis of student work, and collaborative planning.

10. *Novice teacher*: An educator with less than three years of experience in the classroom.
11. *Pragmatism*: A belief that knowledge should be useful and helpful to the learner.
12. *Professional Learning Communities*: A collaborative framework implemented by schools in an effort to improve student achievement. Teachers meet regularly in teams to determine what to teach, how they will assess student learning, what they will do when students are not learning, and what they will do when students already know the content.
13. *Protocol*: An instrument created by the researcher to guide the data collection process.
14. *Purposeful sampling*: Participants and/or research locations within a study have been selected to serve a particular purpose.
15. *Qualitative research*: An in-depth data gathering process through which the researcher seeks to understand the experiences of the participants and their perception of their experiences.
16. *Teacher induction*: The supports that school leaders provide for novice teachers as they acclimate to the profession which may include activities such as professional development or mentoring.

17. Teacher retention: The percentage of teachers that stay in the profession.

18. Triangulation: The process of using multiple data sources to thoroughly and thoughtfully answer research questions.

Chapter Summary

Teachers strive each day to provide a high quality education for children. School leaders are charged with establishing a school climate that supports teachers, whether novice or veteran, in their daily efforts. The PLC structure is one approach that many school leaders adopt to address the needs of their students and teachers. This structure has the potential to provide novice teachers with the collaborative support they need to be effective teachers (DuFour et al., 2011).

The purpose of this qualitative collective case study was to explore how novice teachers perceive PLCs and how they describe their experiences within this collaborative structure. The researcher attempted to identify, understand, and hear the voice of novice teachers as a result of this study. Through the data collection phase, the researcher intended to determine the perceptions of the participants within their PLC team and to better understand how novice teachers describe their work within these teams. The study included one research location or school with eight participants who fit the criteria set forth. The researcher explored the identified research questions through focused interviews, direct observations, a focus group, field notes, and the collection of the relevant artifacts. Throughout the data collection phase, the researcher kept a field journal to record notes and reflections throughout the course of the study.

Chapter One provided an overview of the review of literature, as well as the purpose of the study and a very brief description of the research methods. A discussion of the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations were also included. Chapter Two will provide an extensive review of the topics related to the research questions, which were used to inform the design of the study. Chapter Three outlines the specifics of the research methods and the researcher's theoretical framework. It also includes information about the selection of participants, the various protocols that were used in the data collection phase, and the researcher's plans for data analysis. Chapter Four provides a description of the results of the study, both within and cross-case analysis. Chapter Five synthesizes the results and explores the themes that emerged from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

To address the research questions for this study, a connection between the literature on PLCs and the needs and concerns of novice teachers was explored. PLC literature is grounded in the history of school reform in the United States, effective schools research, and the business world's exploration of "learning organizations" (Senge, 2006). For decades, schools across the country have been striving to make improvements and to meet ever-increasing demands placed on schools by politicians and the American public. The PLC model was created to assist schools in their reform efforts, and the early literature on PLCs comes from Shirley Hord (1997). The effective schools research began with Ron Edmonds (1979, 1982) and his description of the characteristics of an effective school, which later became known as the correlates of effective schools. Larry Lezotte and Kathleen McKee Snyder expanded Edmonds' work in the 90's, and their most recent work (2011) remains relevant to the school reform movement.

Connecting PLC literature to novice teachers, the unique needs and concerns of novice teachers was pertinent to this study. Therefore, a review of new teacher retention rates and new teacher induction models was essential. The focus of this literature review, therefore, was on the topics relevant to and preceding the PLC literature and concerns surrounding novice teachers.

This chapter begins with a description of the history of school reform. Next, the research regarding effective schools is expounded with teacher induction and retention following. Finally, current research related to PLCs is presented.

History of School Reform

Schools in America in the late 1900s and early 1920s followed a “factory model.” The focus was on process rather than results and many believed that what worked in business and factories could be applied to schools. The emphasis was on “uniformity, standardization, and bureaucracy” and students were sorted and selected (DuFour et al., 2011, p. 32-33). The next period (1916-1950) in the history of education in America was marked by John Dewey’s (1916) call for more child-centered schools in his book *Democracy and Education*, and during this time advocates with similar views as Dewey’s called for a “progressive education” or “a new education.” Dewey (1916) encouraged educators to focus on student interests when developing the curriculum and called for education to not be “an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process” (p. 38). According to Dewey (1916), for children “growth is not something done to them; it is something they do,” and he believed the purpose of education was for students to “progressively realize present possibilities, and thus make individuals better fitted to cope with later requirements” (p.42 & p. 56). Education needed to shift to better serve individual children so that they might become successful members of society (Dewey, 1916).

Another shift occurred in the 1950s with Sputnik, “Crisis in Education,” and *Why Johnny Can’t Read*. Essays and books such as these about the failure of American

schools were prevalent during this time period. In *Why Johnny Can't Read*, Flesch (1955) boldly shared his concern that the reason one particular child was struggling to read was because he had been “unfortunately exposed to an ordinary American school” and that no one had properly ever taught him how to read (p. 2). Flesch (1955) called on parents and educators to closely examine reading instruction in America and how it was consistently failing American children.

In the essay “Crisis in Education,” Hannah Arendt (1958) shared her concern that “standards of the average American school lag so far behind the average standards in actually all the countries in Europe” (p. 498). In her view, American schools were failing to truly educate children. This failure would in turn cause them to not take responsibility for “the renewing of the common world” (Arendt, 1958, p. 513). Furthermore, the author said, “an education without learning is empty” and “one can easily teach without educating, and one can go on learning to the end of one’s days without for that reason becoming educated” (Arendt, 1958, p. 513).

In 1965, the development of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) ushered in a more intense focus on accountability with the goal of offering “equitable educational opportunities to the nation’s disadvantaged” (Thomas & Brady, 2005, p. 51). ESEA emphasized equal access to education for all children, set high standards for academic performance, and initiated a new age of accountability in American schools because of the federal money that arrived in schools as a result of ESEA (Thomas & Brady, 2005).

The 1980s marked the beginning of what became known as the “Excellence Movement” (DuFour et al., 2011, 34). *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 highlighted the mediocrity of American schools and insisted that improving them was a matter of “national security” (National Committee on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report highlighted what was referred to as “disturbing inadequacies” around the areas of content, expectations, time, and teaching (NCEE, 1983, p. 18). It explained to the American people that the content in schools needed to be strengthened, and that expectations were too low across the board (NCEE, 1983). Furthermore, the report argued that not enough time was spent on schoolwork, and that the time that was spent in school was being used ineffectively. Their final concern was that the profession of teaching was not attracting, creating, or retaining the best and the brightest (NCEE, 1983). During this time period, schools began to “do more” – more hours, more days, more credits, more homework, more tests, etc. (DuFour et al., 2011, p.34). Following the recommendations listed in *A Nation at Risk* (1983), the goal of the additional work was to make improvements in student achievement and in turn, compete globally (NCEE, 1983). School reform at this time was marked by the “intensification of existing practices” and more of a “top-down” approach (DuFour et al., 2011, p. 34-35).

The “Restructuring Movement” began in the 1990s with the development of national goals in education and an effort to increase autonomy at the school level with the development of more site based decision-making (DuFour et al., 2011, p.35). Ron Edmonds (1979, 1982) and Larry Lezotte’s (1991) effective schools model emerged in the 1990s and was tied to this new movement. In addition, Linda Darling-Hammond’s

(1993, 1996a) work called for schools to reorganize and influenced what would become the PLC structure along with the research on professionalism conducted by Louis, Marks, and Kruse (1996). Also in the 90s, *Goals 2000* included goals for schools to achieve by the year 2000. The report called for “standards-based education reform” with the goal of improving teaching and learning and the expectation of high student performance (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1988, p. 1). From here, school reform shifted to more a bottom-up approach because states were asked to develop comprehensive reform plans and individual schools and school districts were tasked with making specific improvements (OESE, 1988).

Beginning in 2001, school reform was very clearly defined by the development of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), also known as the reauthorization of the ESEA (1965) (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011). Mandates from the law included annual testing, academic progress, annual state report cards, teacher qualifications, Reading First, and other funding changes (EPERC, 2011). This legislation stated that schools must make “Adequate Yearly Progress” on state tests in each subgroup. A deadline of all students proficient by the 2013-2014 school year was set. This law required that teachers be “Highly Qualified” and stressed the importance of parent involvement (EPERC, 2011).

Today, school reform is directly tied to better preparing students for college, career, and life so that they may compete with their peers both in the United States and abroad (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2015). The development of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2009 was born out of this need. Beginning in 2007, the

National Governors' Association (NGA) called for greater accountability in schools and through their efforts along with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) the Common Core State Standards were created (CCSSI, 2015). The goal was to better prepare children for college and future careers to improve the work force, and compete globally. Governors within the NGA believed that higher quality schools result in a higher quality work force thereby strengthening the economy in their individual states and across the country. By 2015, forty-three out of fifty states have adopted the CCSS, and the drive to improve schools across the nation has continued (CCSSI, 2015). School leaders are charged with creating structures and supports within their schools that will lead to marked improvements.

Moving through to the start of the 21st century, Douglas Reeves (2000, 2004) and Richard Elmore (2006) were two researchers calling for school reform through improved practices within the school. Reeves' (2004) work focused on "student-centered accountability" and the importance of improving schools through elevated teaching and learning practices (p. 6). His "tools of teaching" or key components for increased accountability included:

1. specific information on prior student performance,
2. well-articulated curriculum,
3. ongoing assessments to monitor student progress, and
4. clear communication on student progress to all stakeholders (Reeves, 2000, p. 49-57).

He encouraged school leaders and teachers to look at the progress of individual students rather than the school as a whole (Reeves, 2004). In his work, Reeves (2004) advocated for teachers to analyze their own practices and compare those with student performance. Teacher leadership, collaboration, reflection, high quality professional development, and a holistic approach were critical components in his research. Reeves (2004) called on teachers to administer common assessments, to review them collaboratively, and to provide feedback to students to make improvements to instruction just like the PLC structure. Schools should recognize success, recognize error, and stay focused on the “continuous improvement of teaching and learning” according to Reeves (2004, p. 116).

In Elmore’s (2006) book *School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice, Performance*, he stated “knowing the right thing to do is the central problem of school improvement” (p. 9). Years and years of school reform in America and schools still struggle to improve the quality of education because they do not know the “right thing” to do (Elmore, 2006, p. 9). In addition, Elmore (2006) also believed that in this age of accountability, it was critical to have leaders in schools with the knowledge, skills, and good judgment to make improvements that impact achievement. DuFour et al. (2011) referenced Elmore’s idea of the “right things” when they stated, “the key to effective collaboration is to ensure that educators collaborate, or co-labor, on the ‘right’ things--the things that actually impact student learning” (p. 183). Another concern of Elmore’s (2006) was that struggling schools do not have “internal accountability” or a “lack of agreement and coherence around expectations for student learning” (p. 234). Structured collaboration among teachers can increase coherence around learning expectations and

ensure that new teachers know what to teach as well (Elmore, 2006). In addition, according to Elmore (2006), struggling schools were weak in utilizing specific strategies proven to get results. In schools where the leadership and teachers developed a “high internal accountability,” Elmore (2006) advocated it would “lead directly to observable gains in student learning” (p. 234-235). Through PLCs, schools can possibly develop this “high internal accountability” that Elmore (2006) referred to because within a PLC teachers have to be clear about their expectations for teaching practice and student learning.

With a clear message about the need for school reform, researchers in the 1980s, 1990s, and early part of the 21st century searched for a structure or model any school could institute to make improvements. The effective schools research provided one such structure or model upon which schools build their efforts for school improvement. Many of the correlates identified in the effective schools research have connections to the critical components of a PLC.

Effective Schools Research

The effective schools research has its roots in the work done by Ron Edmonds (1979, 1982), and then it shifted to Lezotte and Snyder (2011) in the 1990s and early 2000s. In our nation’s quest to create high quality schools, education researchers in the latter part of the 20th century searched for a way to prove that schools could be “important determinants of academic achievement” (Edmonds, 1982, p. 4). Up to this point, those concerned about the future of schools believed that a student’s family and background would determine their level of success in school (Edmonds, 1982). Edmonds

(1979) believed, “we can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us” (p. 23). His work identified the characteristics of effective schools, which later became known as the correlates of effective schools (Edmonds, 1982). These characteristics included:

1. the principal’s leadership and attention to the quality of instruction,
 2. a pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus,
 3. an orderly, safe climate conducive to teaching and learning,
 4. teacher behaviors that convey the expectation that all students are expected to obtain at least minimum mastery, and
 5. the use of measure of pupil achievement as the basis for program evaluation
- (Edmonds, 1982, p. 4).

As a researcher, Edmonds (1982) felt strongly that a school could be successful in educating any child regardless of his or her background if the school worked to refine and establish these characteristics. He knew the principal was key, and that his/her role as an instructional leader rather than a manager was critical. According to Edmonds (1982), instruction needed a clear focus, and the climate of the classroom supported the learning process. In his work, he articulated the importance of teachers maintaining the expectation that all students can learn. Achievement results should be closely monitored and were a direct reflection upon the school (Edmonds, 1982).

The correlates. Lezotte had several publications in the early 1990s that carried on the work of Edmonds (1982). In one of his most recent publications, Lezotte and Snyder (2011) reiterated Edmonds’s (1982) correlates and explored the definition of an

“effective school” in their book *What Effective Schools Do: Re-envisioning the Correlates*. In their view, an “effective school is characterized by high overall student achievement with no significant gaps in that achievement across the major subgroups in the student population” (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011, p. 15). Students in these successful schools perform well on standardized tests regardless of their socio-economic status, disabilities, race, or ethnic background. Stemming from Edmonds’s (1982) original work, Lezotte and Snyder’s (2011) correlates included:

1. high expectations for success,
2. strong instructional leadership,
3. clear and focused mission,
4. opportunity to learn,
5. frequent monitoring of student progress, and
6. safe and orderly environment (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011, p. 23).

By implementing and using these correlates, schools could improve their effectiveness (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011). In addition, according to Lezotte and Snyder (2011), schools with high expectations for success pushed their students to achieve at higher levels every day and believed that each child was capable to learning. The expectations for learning must be clearly defined by teachers across the school. Maintaining strong instructional leadership, principals and other school leaders closely monitor classroom instruction, stay current on research-based strategies, and work with teachers to improve their practices. Lezotte and Snyder (2011) advocated that a school with a clear and focused mission should spend time reviewing the mission collectively as a staff, and all decisions

made within the school should support the mission. Providing students with the opportunity to learn means that regardless of their backgrounds all students are provided with a highly structured classroom to maximize learning time throughout the day. Reviewing individual student assessment data on a consistent basis to determine academic progress is critical for a school that wants to ensure frequent monitoring of student progress. Finally, creating a safe and orderly environment in which students and teachers work and learn is the foundation upon which school improvement could be built.

Lezotte and Snyder (2011) believed that implementing these correlates throughout the school would allow teachers the “ability to add value to student learning that is beyond what a single teacher can do working alone” (p. 33). Applying these correlates requires school leaders to create a structure through which each component can be addressed and evaluated. In view of the researchers, a school leadership team was critical to oversee the use of correlates, and school leaders could also consider creating committees that would monitor, evaluate, and implement strategies to ensure each correlate was in place. Collaboration among all stakeholders was also a component of their effective schools plan (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011).

Lezotte and Snyder (2011) also believed an “effective school is built on a foundation of high expectations, strong leadership, unwavering commitment to learning for all, collaboration, differentiated instruction, and frequent monitoring of student progress” (p. 15). These schools maintained high expectations for the academic success of all of their students, and all teachers were invested in meeting these expectations.

School leaders in effective schools had a clear vision for their school, and they operated with a “learning for all” mission (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011, p. 15). In other words, these schools had a strong focus on results, and provided quality and equity for their students (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011).

Collaboration among teachers was a key component of an effective school according to Lezotte and Snyder (2011), and for novice teachers structured collaboration may be critical for their success. Highly effective schools, first, identify their problem areas through a careful study of their student data so that they can provide differentiated instruction while closely monitoring progress. Examining trends in their state mandated annual assessment is a place to start. With time, however, Lezotte and Snyder (2011) suggested the school should review more ongoing data throughout the year on each child’s progress not merely the school wide data.

The PLC model incorporates many of the characteristics that these researchers would expect to see in an effective school and confirm what DuFour et al. (2011) believed PLC teams should focus on which includes what to teach, evidence of student learning, and how to address either deficiencies or enrichment needs (Edmonds, 1982; Lezotte & Snyder, 2011).

The change process. Lezotte and Snyder (2011) also recognized the importance of understanding the change process when determining a school’s plan for improvement. For a school to make improvements, the teachers and school leaders first understand the need for change and then must embrace change. Lezotte and Snyder (2011) emphasized that change takes time and viewing change as a process, not as a singular event, was

important. Sustainable change required commitment by everyone: teacher and leaders. Within the effective school structure, Lezotte and Snyder (2011) encouraged school leaders to involve those affected by the change in the actual change process. They believed this would build a sense of ownership in the process and increase the chance of sustained commitment (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011). Collaboratively determining next steps as a school community and understanding the need for change was critical to the change process and school improvement. Leadership must provide both the vision and the support for the changes that are needed, and finally, effective leadership was a necessary, but not sufficient, condition (Lezotte & Snyder, 2011).

The effective schools research was born out of the work of Edmonds (1979, 1982) in the late 70s and early 80s. He believed that regardless of a student's socio-economic background or family situation he/she could be successful in school when the school incorporated certain characteristics or correlates school-wide. Lezotte and Snyder (2011) continued his work throughout the 90s and the beginning of the 21st century. They carried through with this same belief and provided practical strategies for schools as they developed school improvement plans. There are strong connections to this work in the PLC literature, from Hord (1997) to DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2011) in the latter part of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Another relevant concern during this same time period in the field of education was the retention of novice teachers. Addressing these concerns was relevant to answering the research questions in this study.

Teacher Retention

Relevant to novice teachers, the teacher retention rates in the latter part of the 20th century and early 21st century are concerning. Examining teacher retention, Marseth (1992), Karge (1993), Haselkorn (1994) and Ingersoll (2002) found that “one-third to one-half of all new teachers leave the profession within the first five years” and “40% of new teachers resign during the first two years of teaching” (Hope, 1999, p. 54).

According to evidence found by Ingersoll and Smith (2003), the roots of the teacher retention issue “largely reside in the working conditions within schools and districts” (p. 32). They found that 29% of new teachers left because of dissatisfaction with teaching as a career (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Among those leaving, 26% cited poor administrative support as a reason for leaving the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Why novice teachers leave. Horn, Sterling, and Subhan (2002) also explored why novice teachers leave. They shared some information from the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) document drafted in 1996 which offered “five possible reasons that lead teachers to leave the profession:

1. being assigned to teach the most difficult students,
2. inundation with extracurricular duties,
3. placement outside their fields of expertise,
4. no support from administration; and
5. isolation from colleagues” (Horn et al., 2002, p. 2; NCTAF, 1996).

Today, novice teachers in some schools are given the most difficult students with behavior or social issues because the old “sink or swim” mentality still exists among veteran teachers and administrators (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 32). Some educators view it as a “rite of passage” that they experienced as a novice teacher, and they feel that everyone should have this same experience. Novice teachers tend to be less likely to complain or ask for help because they are concerned about keeping their new jobs. Furthermore, novice teachers frequently take on the extracurricular duties because they are in need of the additional financial benefits. Many novice teachers also struggle because they may be placed outside of their field of expertise in a hard to fill position that the administration needs covered, and they are often eager for a job, so they may be willing to take on these roles. Many times, administrators do not provide the support novice teachers need because they do not have any induction or mentoring practices in place (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Finally, novice teachers can feel isolated from their colleagues because of the way schools are physically designed or the structure of the school community (Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

Continuing to explore teacher retention, Ingersoll, Merrill and May (2012) assert that “beginning teachers’ education and preparation were significantly associated with their attrition” (p. 32). Novice teachers coming out of strong collegiate programs were more likely to stay in the profession. Ingersoll (2001) also determined that “inadequate support from school administration, student discipline problems, limited faculty input into school decision-making, and to a lesser extent, low salaries, are all associated with higher rates of turnover” (p. 501). To address these concerns, Ingersoll (2001)

recommended that school leaders have structures in place to support the novice teachers such mentoring models and induction programs. The PLC model could provide support for novice teachers and give them a voice in school decision-making.

Novice teacher isolation. In examining teacher isolation, Feiman-Nemser (2012) found “the early years of teaching are undeniably a time of intense learning, and they are often a time of intense loneliness” (p. 10). However, novice teachers are not the only ones in need of support. Veteran teachers can also benefit from positive collegial interactions focused on student learning. Feiman-Nemser (2012) also stated “all teachers need to learn throughout their careers; the problem is that schools are not organized to support teacher learning” (p. 12). As articulated by DuFour et al. (2011), PLC teams have the potential to encourage teacher learning for both novice and veteran teachers as they collaboratively solve problems and make decisions. Teachers do not need to continue to feel isolated. In a document entitled the *Induction into Learning Communities* written in 2005, the NCTAF clearly stated that:

It is time to end the practice of solo teaching in isolated classrooms. Teacher induction and professional development in 21st century schools must move beyond honing one’s craft and personal repertoire of skills. Today’s teachers must transform their personal knowledge into a collectively built, widely shared, and cohesive professional knowledge base (p. 4).

According to Feiman-Nemser (2012), all teachers benefit from a collaborative culture because novice “teachers get support and guidance, experienced teacher get recognition and renewal, and everyone focuses on student learning and school improvement” (p. 14).

Collaborative culture. Low attrition schools foster a collaborative school climate in which “principals allowed time for collaboration and common planning, held teachers accountable to one another for quality teaching to impact student achievement, worked to establish relationships among faculty and staff inside and outside of school, allowed for some degree of teacher autonomy, and involved teachers in making decisions” (Massey, 2013 p. 66). These characteristics that Massey (2013) described align with the components of researched-based PLCs as described by Shirley Hord (2008). According to Hord (2008), schools with PLCs must maintain shared beliefs, values, and a vision for student success. PLC schools foster a climate of shared leadership among the staff members, with strong, supportive administrators at the helm. The conditions, both structural and relational, support teachers in a PLC school, and teachers engage in collective intentional learning (Hord, 2008).

Other researchers interested in the value of collaboration, Hoaglund, Birkenfeld, Box (2014), shared that the schools can become effective through the PLC process and that “the basis for the skills needed to function within a collegial PLC must be developed through intentional, scaffolded experiences in an effort to overcome teacher isolation that leads to the attrition of first year teachers” (p. 521). The PLC structure can provide an opportunity for novice teachers to admit their mistakes and share their concerns with veteran teachers who can provide support and brainstorm solutions with them (Hoaglund et al., 2014). Ingersoll (2001) explicated that recruitment would not solve the retention problem; instead, schools should promote teacher retention “through improvements in organizational conditions” (p. 525). Improved administrative support, a reduction in

discipline concerns, and an increase of faculty input into school decision-making will improve retention and in turn, school performance (Ingersoll, 2001).

With one-third to one-half of novice teachers leaving the profession within the first five years, school leaders are faced with staff turnover in their schools each year (Hope, 1999). Novice teachers reported that their reasons for leaving range from a lack of support from their administration and colleagues to general dissatisfaction with their jobs (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). To address the teacher retention problem, school leaders may build a collaborative culture or they may select teacher induction models that will support novice teachers (Ingersoll, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

Teacher Induction

Teacher induction is one way that school leaders can help novice teachers acclimate to their new environments and increase retention according to Horn et al. (2002). Induction includes all of the activities and resources that school leaders design and plan that help new teachers adjust. Most induction programs include similar elements such as new teacher orientation before school starts, a structured mentoring program, and any professional development opportunities planned specifically for teachers that are either new to the school district or new to the classroom. Horn et al. (2002) identified nine common elements of induction programs:

1. orientation,
2. mentoring,
3. adjustment to working conditions,
4. release time,

5. professional development,
6. opportunities for collegial collaboration,
7. teacher assessment,
8. program evaluation, and
9. follow-up on the second year (Horn et al., 2002, p. 6).

In their work, they also advised that high quality teacher induction programs that include all nine elements can improve teacher retention, teaching practice, and student achievement. According to these authors, “induction is designed to aid teachers in meeting professional needs and reducing the likelihood of encountering problems as beginning teachers” (Horn et al., p. 6). In their research, they determined that school districts across the state of Arizona had a wide range of understanding about induction and what it encompasses and that most school districts did not have any plans for induction. They asserted that if school districts would adopt these nine common elements and create a structured induction plan then school leaders could better meet the needs of new teachers.

Induction as professional development. Teacher induction has changed over the years. It evolved from a “temporary bridge” designed to “ease entry into teaching” to “individualized professional development,” and finally, today, it is a “process of incorporating new teachers into collaborative professional learning communities” (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 12). When implemented appropriately, today’s model of induction has great potential. At the school level, according to Warren Hope (1999), orienting new teachers to the school and the expectations of the administration should be

“systematic contact with the intention of assisting in the new teacher’s professional growth and development and of engaging in collegial conversations about the work of teaching” (p. 54). Hope (1999) recommended that principals minimize isolation, facilitate mentoring and collegial relationships, carefully plan teaching assignments and workload, offer ample opportunities for professional development, be available and accessible, and explain the evaluation process thoroughly. Principals who take the time to develop and support their novice teachers are more likely to retain these teachers and encourage their effectiveness. With so many teachers leaving because of a lack of administrative support, this is an area that school leaders should address to encourage retention (Hope, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

Mentoring. Mentoring is a key piece in the induction process. Moir’s (2009) work encouraged district leaders to develop a system-wide mentoring plan that assigns full time mentors to novice teachers. Schools typically chose either school-based mentors or full-release district mentors. For these mentors, their only job is to support and encourage the growth of new teachers in their assigned schools. Matching novice teachers to appropriate mentors is critical; ideally, they need a mentor with experience in the same grade level and/or subject matter (Moir, 2009). Nevertheless, simply having a mentor may not solve all the problems a novice teacher faces.

Kardos and Johnson’s (2010) study of school-based mentors who are also full time classroom teachers found that “unwilling mentors and negative professional cultures within the schools may make mentoring assignments burdensome and even counter-productive” (p. 26). Carefully matching mentors and mentees and the nature and

quality of the interactions between them impact the novice teacher-mentor experience (Kardos & Johnson, 2010). The interactions need to be centered on classroom instruction, curriculum and lesson planning, and classroom management and student discipline (Kardos & Johnson, 2010).

In contrast to school-based mentors, Moir's (2009) New Teacher Center (NTC) induction model utilizes full release mentors and includes a thorough list of key elements. According to this researcher, novice teachers should have a carefully selected mentor. Mentors should either receive full or substantial release time to conduct their duties. All first and second year teachers should participate in the mentoring program, and mentors should receive formal orientation and training. Mentors need ongoing professional development, and professional standards should be developed to articulate best practices. In this model, mentors are encouraged to use a Formative Assessment System (FAS) through which novice teachers are observed and receive ongoing feedback from their mentors. The mentor completes a FAS form while observing the new teacher and then shares the findings from the observation in a follow-up meeting. The mentoring should focus on classroom instruction and content. Moir (2009) also encouraged school leaders to place novice teachers in a beginning teacher network for professional development. Another component of this mentoring model includes a clear role for and communication with site administrators. Novice teachers also need to see linkages to pre-service programs, and they benefit from beginning teacher advocacy. This model is thorough and comprehensive, and the NTC recommends that school districts hire full time mentors whose only job is to mentor new teachers. The NTC

supports mentoring programs in school districts across the country, but not all school systems have the resources to implement all of the components of their model. Budgeting for full release mentors who work across various school settings is a challenge for many districts (Moir, 2009).

It is important to note, however, some of the lessons learned from Moir's work. This researcher articulated that an induction program requires a system-wide commitment to teacher development. They are "most effective when all stakeholder groups are represented in the program design," and it is part of a "district-wide initiative to improve teaching and learning" (Moir, 2009, p. 16). Induction programs can also accelerate novice teacher effectiveness by "fast-tracking their progress to exemplary teachers with the ability positively impact student achievement" (Moir, 2009, p. 16).

The induction model also uses the Formative Assessment System (FAS) to encourage a focus on student learning through the use of an observation template. The FAS "tailors the mentoring experience by identifying teacher strengths and challenges, clarifying student achievement needs, and providing a context for improvement based on specific student needs and the capabilities of the teacher" (Moir, 2009, p. 16). Effective induction programs work in conjunction with existing professional learning communities (PLCs) in a school. With the support a PLC team, a novice teacher can "collaborate to design powerful lessons, observe each other teach when possible, and analyze student data to ensure students are learning" (Moir, 2009, p. 17). This is essentially a double-dose of strategic and structured support for a novice teacher and could potentially lead to higher rates of teacher retention and increased student achievement. Ideally, a novice

teacher would have both a dedicated and trained mentor and a community of teachers within their grade level and subject area, or a PLC team, to help them grow into a highly effective and positive member of a school community (Moir, 2009).

Whether the school district uses full time mentors or school based mentors, it is critical that the school district have a well-articulated plan for mentoring. Structures focused on student learning should be established that encourage positive interactions among teachers. Roland Barth (2006) believed that the “nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school and on student accomplishments than anything else”; therefore, the relationships developed between novice teachers and mentors needs to be collegial and positive (p. 9). According to DuFour et al. (2011), the PLC structure could potentially encourage the types of relationships Barth (2006) referred to and foster collaborative and productive relationships among teachers.

Professional Learning Communities

The early years of PLCs. Hord’s (1997) research on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provided much of the early foundation for the literature related to PLCs. She defined a PLC as a:

professional community of learners, in which the teachers in a school and its administrators continuously see and share learning, and act on their learning. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals for the students’ benefit; thus, this arrangement may also be termed *communities of continuous inquiry and improvement* (Hord, 1997, p. 6).

Her description of PLCs connected to her work with Gene Hall (1984) on the Concerns Based Adoption Model and their research on facilitating change (Hord & Hall, 1987). They believed that for change to occur and for it to be sustainable, school leaders must work to change individuals first, and over time the organization should follow suit (Hord & Hall, 1987). They also believed the “most significant way to improve schools is through improving the instructional performance of each teacher” (Hord & Hall, 1987, p. 4). The PLC structure affords teachers the opportunity to work collaboratively reviewing their student assessment data and examining their instructional practices. As a result, they make individual improvements as a teacher which results in school wide change over time as more and more teachers improve their practices. Hord (1997) believed that success depended on the collective efforts of teachers and staff, and the PLC model requires teachers to work collectively towards a common goal.

Foundation of PLC literature. Hord’s (1997) description of PLCs had roots in the work of Linda Darling-Hammond (1993, 1996) and a study conducted by Louis, Marks and Kruse in 1996. Darling-Hammond (1996) addressed the shift occurring in schools during this time period. Schools were expected to ensure that all students were learning, not just offering the opportunity for an education to students. She advocated for bridging the gap between the needs of the learner and their learning goals and suggested that schools be structured so that this bridging could occur. Like Reeves (2000, 2004), she encouraged teachers to evaluate and study their own practices and to collaboratively make decisions that impacted individual student achievement. In addition, she saw the value in making structural changes rather than symbolic ones to make a difference in the

lives of individual students (Darling-Hammond, 1996a). Darling-Hammond (1993) also called for a “shift from designing controls” to “developing capacity that enables schools and teachers to be responsible for student learning and responsive to student and community needs, interests, and concerns” (p. 3). In her work, she described “genuine accountability” which required schools to organize themselves to urge student achievement, teachers to work collectively to solve problems to help students succeed, and faculty and staff to responsibly make decisions while working towards change. This precisely reflects the work of a PLC team and a school striving to develop a strong school community. Finally, her statement that the nation needed a “new paradigm for school reform” that seeks to “develop communities of learning, grounded in democratic discourse” corresponds with Hord’s (1997) ideas about how PLCs should be structured to promote school reform (Darling-Hammond, 1993, p. 24).

Another study conducted by Louis, Marks, and Kruse in 1996 had an impact on Hord’s (1997) work. Their study explored how the professional community among teachers impacted schools undergoing the restructuring process. They examined “how teachers interacted when they were not in their classrooms” because they believed it “may be critical to the future of school restructuring” or school reform (Louis et al., 1996, p. 758). Similar to Reeves (2004), Elmore (2006), and Darling-Hammond (1996a), they felt strongly that teacher practices and “professionalism must increase if education is to improve” as they reviewed the elements of a “school wide professional community” (Louis et al., 1996, p. 758 & p. 760-761). As researchers they determined that within a professional community, teachers must conduct themselves as professionals, have

similar values, and maintain agreed upon norms in their work. Also, teachers must remain focused on student learning as a collective group, work together collaboratively to improve practices, conduct peer reviews through observations, and spend time in reflective dialogue with each other. These same elements were observed in Hord's (1997) literature on PLCs. The results of the study uncovered a "strong positive link between teachers' collective responsibility for student learning" and "student outcomes" (Louis et al., 1996, p. 764).

PLC components. The PLC structure that Hord (1997) described engages individual teachers in the challenge of school improvement as they worked in collaborative teams. In her summary of the research on PLCs, she wrote that academically successful PLCs had the following characteristics:

1. the collegial and facilitative participation of the principal who shares leadership—and thus power and authority—through inviting staff input in decision making,
2. a shared vision that is developed from an unswerving commitment on the part of staff to students' learning and that is consistently articulated and reference for the staff's work,
3. collective learning among staff and application of the learning to solutions that address students' needs,
4. the visitation and review of each teacher's classroom behavior by peers as a feedback and assistance activity to support individual and community improvement, and

5. physical conditions and human capacities that support such an operation (Hord, 1997, p. 24).

This researcher also advocated for “continuous inquiry and improvement” within schools through the PLC structure. She realized that in successful schools “problems with teaching and learning were brought before the whole groups of teachers for discussion and problem solving” and “this strategy enhanced the individual teacher’s growth in teaching competency and reinforced the community’s responsibility for teaching and for each other” (Hord, 1997, p. 42). Ideas such as collegiality, shared vision, collective learning, peer reviews, and building capacity are seen throughout the work of Hord (1997), Darling-Hammond (1996a), Reeves (2004), Elmore (2006), and Louis et al. (1996).

Influence of learning organizations. While examining effective and research-based PLCs, a review of Peter Senge’s (2006) ideas is relevant because his work within the business world influenced the research and development of PLCs in the field of education. Hord (1997) and DuFour et al. (2011) referenced his work and noted the influence it had on their own. In his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Senge (2006) described a “learning organization” as an “organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (p. 3). To be successful in this age of accountability, Hord (1997) and DuFour et al. (2001) believed our schools needed to develop “learning organizations” where teachers

were supported and encouraged to learn which will consequently lead to student success (Senge, 2006, p. 3).

Senge (2006) explored the perspective of being a member of a high functioning and successful team. He believed that after experiencing this type of collaboration many would seek out opportunities to be a part of a powerful team again. Senge (2006) emphasized that “the team that became great didn’t start off great- it learned how to produce extraordinary results” (p. 4). The five disciplines that Senge (2006) discussed in his book include: (a) system thinking, (b) personal mastery, (c) mental models, (d) building shared vision, and (e) team learning; and they strongly connect to the implementation and development of PLCs.

Learning organizations and PLCs. DuFour et al. (2011) promoted the need for teachers to understand the “big picture” and how all the pieces of the puzzle fit and work together which related to Senge’s (2006) ideas of system thinking. Within a PLC team, these authors believed that teachers needed to be proficient at their craft and know how to implement the various components of a PLC, which tied to personal mastery. In addition, they needed to have strong mental images of how the school and classroom should be functioning which related to Senge’s (2006) concept of mental models. Building a shared vision, though, was the most important of the disciplines for a school according to DuFour et al. (2011). Sharing a vision would “foster genuine commitment and enrollment” from teachers (Senge, 2006, p. 9). Holding a “shared picture of the future we seek to create” was critical for schools working to make improvements (Senge, 2006, p.9).

Other relevant literature. The work of Reynolds, Murrill and Whitt (2006) was also relevant to the PLC research because they discussed the best conditions for adult learning. The researchers believed that in order to learn “people must be at a certain readiness level, be open to learning, responsive to teaching, feel empowered and appropriately challenged, and know a sense of safety and trust” (Reynolds et al., 2006, p. 126). Reynolds et al. (2006) also expressed that “by giving them a voice, giving them power of control, and creating an environment which welcomes their opinions and understanding of their practice” schools were more likely to reach the goals set for teacher learning (p. 130). A school with effective PLCs incorporates shared decision making into their daily practices (DuFour et al., 2011).

Saphier, King, and D’Auria (2006) also supported the development of a positive and productive school culture when they conveyed that “strong cultures work because they produce teachers who constantly improve teaching and learning throughout the school” (p. 52). They believed that “nothing is as important for student learning as the individual teacher and what that person knows, believes and can do. Schools with strong cultures produce more teaching expertise and better decision making by more teachers more of the time” (p. 52).

The definition of a professional as described by Richard Sagor in his book *Collaborative Action Research for Professional Learning Communities* (2010) had two parts. He viewed a professional as someone who has “mastery of their field’s knowledge base” and the “ability to craft creative solutions to non-routine problems,” but teachers struggle to solve these “non-routine problems” (Sagor, 2010, p. 1). PLCs can potentially

give teachers a structure and the support to work collaboratively and solve these types of problems. Unfortunately, teachers have traditionally worked in isolation.

Most recent PLC literature. After Hord's work, Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour and Robert Eaker emerged as the premier educators defining Professional Learning Communities and how to implement them to impact student achievement. In one of their more recent books, *Revisiting Learning Communities at Work: New Insights for Improving Schools* (2011) DuFour et al. described how "restructuring classrooms to function as learning communities can provide the structure and climate for enhanced student learning, more effective teaching, and more positive relationships" (p. 28). This text listed three "Big Ideas" and six "Essential Characteristics of a PLC". According to DuFour et al., (2011) the three big ideas of a PLC were:

1. a focus on learning,
2. to build a collaborative culture, and
3. a focus on results (p. 18).

They also identified the essential characteristics of a PLC which included:

1. shared mission, vision, values and goals,
2. collaborative teams focused on learning,
3. collective inquiry,
4. action orientation and experimentation,
5. commitment to continuous improvement, and
6. results orientation (DuFour et al., 2011, p. 15-16).

Certainly Hord (1997) and DuFour et al's (2011) work overlapped, but the connection between them was solidified in 2008 when Hord wrote about the "five components of a research based learning community" (Hord, 2008, p. 12-13). These included:

1. shared beliefs, values and vision,
2. shared and supportive leadership,
3. supportive conditions, both structural and relational,
4. collective intentional learning and its application, and
5. shared personal practice (Hord, 2008, p. 12-13).

According to Hord, "the most successful schools actively supported a culture of inquiry through constant scanning and bringing in of new ideas and people to help teachers reflect on their teaching practice and develop increased skills" (Hord, 1997, p. 43). DuFour et al. (2011) promoted a similar learning environment for teachers when they encouraged gathering and sharing "relevant information on their respective strengths" otherwise "teacher conversations regarding the most effective ways to help student learn a concept will deteriorate into a sharing of uninformed opinions" (p. 27). These conversations about both student learning and the strategies used by teachers to reach the desired goals, according to all of these authors, were most productive when fostered on a foundation of trust and shared purpose. Additionally, collaborative conversation should be centered around student data. In fact, "the more powerful conversations regarding best practices occur when people have shared access to the evidence of effectiveness of various instructional strategies" (DuFour et al., 2011, p. 189). In her research, Hord (1997) recognized that in successful schools "problems with

teaching and learning were brought before the whole groups of teachers for discussion and problem solving” and “this strategy enhanced the individual teacher’s growth in teaching competency and reinforced the community’s responsibility for teaching and for each other” (p. 42). Therefore, these conversations should begin with student learning data so that teachers search for evidence of progress or they are aware when progress is not being made. These authors recommended that teachers be given specific guidelines or protocols for their collaborative efforts to encourage productivity and eventually impact student achievement.

The concept and purpose of a PLC is further developed by DuFour et al. (2011) when they explore how “educators create an environment that fosters shared understanding, a sense of identity, high levels of involvement, mutual cooperation, collective responsibility, emotional support, and a strong sense of belonging as they work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone” (p. 20). This is a re-emphasis of what other researchers investigated: teachers should not be working in isolation and are more effective when they work together. This idea of interdependency occurs:

only when educators need each other, rely on each other, and depend on each other to achieve the shared goal of helping more students learn at higher levels that they are operating as a team. At that point, the success of every member of the team, and equally important, the success of every student served by the team, become the concern of the entire team (DuFour et al., p. 180).

They encouraged teachers to develop into interdependent teams that share the workload and have a collective sense of responsibility for every student within their team.

Collaboration in a PLC was defined as “co-laboring” or “working together interdependently in systematic processes to analyze and impact professional practice to improve individual and collective results” (p. 183). This highly structured process could benefit novice teachers struggling with the expectations of the job.

Benefits of PLCs. Through the development of PLCs, schools recognize benefits for both students and teachers (DuFour et al., 2011). Hord’s (1997) work clearly articulated the positive outcomes for staff. Her review of research revealed the outcomes for staff organized into professional learning communities, and a few of these outcomes are especially relevant to novice teachers. These include:

1. reduction in the isolation of teachers,
2. shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective, responsibility for students’ success,
3. powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice, that creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners,
4. higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professional renewed, and inspired to inspire students,
5. more satisfaction and higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism, and
6. significant advances into making teaching adaptations for students, and changes for learners made more quickly than in traditional schools (Hord, 1997, p. 33).

Furthermore, these outcomes should lead to improved student achievement and job satisfaction. A sense of community could help teachers invest in their jobs and gives them trusted colleagues to rely on for guidance (Hord, 1997).

Becoming a PLC is important work, and this type of collaboration happens in schools across the country to help students learn at higher levels. In 2009, Saunders, Goldenberg, and Gallimore conducted research in schools and found that “significant achievement gains were achieved when grade level teams were provided with consistent meeting times, school wide instructional leadership, and explicit protocols that focused meeting time on students’ academic needs and how they might be instructionally addressed” (p. 1007). Their study emphasized the importance of specific protocols reviewing student data and on-site support for principals and teams as they made decisions and adjustments based upon assessment results. This study also described PLCs in which teachers are “nurturing shared values and commitments” and “focusing on student learning instead of teaching strategies” (p. 1008). This is important for novice teachers as they develop their values and beliefs about teaching and learning. They also receive support as they make instructional decisions based on student assessment data. In their research, Saunders, Goldenberg, and Gallimore identified that “reflective dialogue” and the “joint analysis of assessments and planning of instruction” within a PLC team led to higher levels of learning for students (p. 1008). Their work emphasized that collaboration alone is not enough with “the right conditions, leadership, and protocol, teachers will make use of collaborative time in ways that will improve achievement” (p. 1028). Anfara (2012) also supported their research when he described “while structures

can vary according to the school context, the role of leadership is to create conditions that support continuous professional learning that results in improved classroom practice” (p. 62). According to all of these researchers, without strong leadership, collaboration lacks the structure to make an impact on student achievement.

Four key PLC questions. Referring back to Darling-Hammond (1996b), recommended “that schools be restructured to become genuine learning organizations for both students and teachers; organizations that respect learning, honor teaching, and teach for understanding” (p. 198). This structure could be created through PLCs, and the culture of the school should centralize around the four key questions of a PLC as defined by DuFour et al. (2011). These four questions included:

1. What do we want our students to know and be able to do?
2. How will we know if they are learning?
3. What will we do if they are not learning?
4. What will we do if they already know the content? (p. 183-184)

The first question regarding content and standards was strongly supported by John Hattie’s (2009) research in his book *Visible Learning*. He identified clear learning expectations for students or “teacher clarity” (p.126) as one of the most important strategies for improving student achievement. According to Hattie (2009), teachers need to be crystal clear about the intentions of the lesson to manifest success. Coming to a consensus as a school community as to what exactly students need to know and be able to do and then gearing the work done in each classroom towards these stated expectations can lead to improvements in student achievement.

Working through the second question is critical for teachers as they prioritize their students' needs. Effectively designing, implementing, and analyzing assessment allows teachers to concentrate on what students need to know and be able to do. In a PLC, the use of assessment to monitor student progress is key. Teachers work collaboratively to create assessments with the intention of analyzing the results together (DuFour et al., 2011).

Questions three and four are answered through the analysis of the assessments administered by the PLC team. By answering these questions, teachers determine whether they should intervene, remediate, and/or enrich contingent upon the results they obtained from their assessments. The primary focus of PLCs according to DuFour et al. (2011), is for teams of teachers to clarify the essential student learning outcomes, create common formative assessments aligned with these outcomes, establish a proficiency target for each skill on the assessments, and then collectively analyze the results “identifying, skill by skill, the individual students... whose scores exceeded, met or fell before the team’s proficiency target” (p. 192). Structured collaboration is the crux of an effective PLC team.

Building shared knowledge. In Robert Eaker and Janel Keating’s book *Every School, Every Team, Every Classroom* (2012), they discussed building shared knowledge to establish PLCs within a school. They believed “the first step is always to learn together to gain shared knowledge about topics such as effective leadership, organizational practice, collaborative teaming, and effective teaching strategies—to name a few” (p.49). Eaker and Keating (2012) emphasized the importance of providing

teachers and staff with “high-quality, relevant resources” (p. 49). Moreover, they described how teachers should develop a common vocabulary in the early stages. From there, teachers noticed the interconnectedness of the critical components within PLCs. Most importantly, however, the authors suggested that teachers must be given time to do this work. Much like the other researchers, they addressed the concern over the ineffectiveness of teachers working in isolation when they discussed how “teams of teachers can more effectively do the work associated with the critical questions of learning than individual teachers working in isolation. Collaborative teams of teachers, doing the right work, can achieve what individual teachers cannot achieve by working alone” (p. 18). They emphasized a focus on the four key questions of a PLC through a reminder that:

being a teacher in a professional learning community means being part of a collaborative team that recognizes students are more apt to perform on high-stakes summative assessments if the quality of their learning is regularly monitored along the way-especially when the results of the assessments are used to provide students with additional time, support or enrichment (Eaker & Keating, 2012, p. 20).

Other researchers, like Schmoker (2004b) continued to provide support for the work of PLCs when he emphasized that there are “proven structures and practices that make an immediate difference in achievement” and PLCs were one of these “proven structures” (p. 48-49). This structure

begins when a group of teachers meets regularly as a team to identify essential and valued learning, develop common formative assessments, analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, and then share and create lessons and strategies to improve upon those results (Schmoker, 2004b, p. 48).

The days of teachers working in isolation are over and novice teachers can benefit from this shift.

Chapter Summary

Starting in the 1920s, America has searched for ways to improve the nation's schools. With each new decade, schools were pushed to make adjustments to meet the ever-changing needs of the nation. Over time, accountability increased and the desire to educate every child regardless of socio-economic background or family situation became a priority (Thomas & Brady, 2005). Educational researchers worked to provide answers for school leaders as they searched for models and structures to improve. The correlates of effective schools developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a potential resource for school improvement (Lezotte, 1991). On the heels of the effective schools research, the value of PLCs emerged strongly in the literature coming out in the late 1990s and early 2000s. There are similar components found in both the effective schools correlates and the characteristics of PLCs within the literature on these topics. Along with the call for school reform in the late 20th and early 21st century, school leaders also noticed that novice teachers were leaving the profession at alarming rates with approximately 40% leaving within the first five years (Ingersoll, 2002). The research revealed that novice teachers left because of a lack of support from their administrators and fellow colleagues

(Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Goodwin, 2012). To address these retention rates, teacher induction programs and mentoring emerged with varying degrees of success depending upon the implementation plans adopted by the school or school district (Moir, 2009). Given all of these concerns, implementing PLCs has the potential to answer the call for school reform and to address the needs of novice teachers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

With novice teachers leaving the profession at staggering rates and the national call for school reform, school leaders are searching for ways to improve student achievement and retain and support their novice teachers. Many schools have adopted the PLC model to provide a structure to their school improvements efforts. This qualitative collective case study explored the perception of the PLC model in one school through the eyes of novice teachers from different grade levels teaching a variety subjects. The purpose of the study was to identify, understand, and establish meaning with regard to the voice of the novice teachers within the context of their PLC teams by addressing the following research questions:

1. How are professional learning communities (PLCs) perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?
2. How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a professional learning community (PLC) team?

Research Design

Marshall and Rossman (2011) offered that qualitative research is typically conducted in “naturalistic settings” (p. 2). It “draws on multiple methods that respect the humanity of the participants” and has a focus on context (p. 2). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) emphasized that the primary purpose or shared goal of qualitative research is to understand the world from the point of view of those who live it. As Brinkmann and

Kvale (2015) articulated, the purpose of qualitative research is “understanding social phenomena from the actors’ own perspectives and describing the world as experienced by the subjects, with the assumption that the important reality is what people perceive it to be” (p. 30).

Beginning with a question, qualitative researchers seek to educate, inform, and provide insight through their inquiry. The researcher must determine if the research is feasible, if it has the potential to make a contribution to the larger community, if it can be conducted ethically, and if the researcher cares enough about the topic to complete the inquiry (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Because qualitative research focuses on text and/or the spoken word rather than numbers, it does not always receive the respect it deserves, but when conducted ethically and thoughtfully, it has the potential to provide great insight. Understanding the “distinctions for conducting good research” as described by Schnelker (2006), “provides the framework for understanding why researchers do what they do, resulting in more critical researchers and consumers of research” (p. 43). In the field of education, qualitative research can help school leaders and educators take on a new perspective or a different approach that should benefit both students and the school as a whole. Thus, the qualitative researcher serves as “interpretive bricoleur” and pieces together a bricolage or “pieced together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4).

Purpose. The purpose of this qualitative collective case study was to explore how novice teachers perceive PLCs and how they describe their experiences within this collaborative model. Using a collective case study framework, the researcher intended to

identify, understand, and establish meaning with regard to the voice of novice teachers through interviews, observations, focus group session, and the review of relevant artifacts such as PLC meeting agendas and notes. The primary aim of this inquiry was creating meaning and establishing understanding to provide insight to school leaders which could guide informed decisions that support their novice teachers and the work they conduct in their PLC teams. The researcher selected a qualitative framework to generate what Geertz (1973) called a “thick description” of the experience of being a part of a PLC team from the perspective of the participants (as cited in Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 65). According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), what was generated can be “thickened” through providing the context and expanding the narrative with particular examples and through consultation with the community. Moreover, if the purpose is to provide a “thick description,” then it is important to ensure that: (a) the process is “holistic,” (b) that it includes “triangulated, descriptive data”, (c) that it provides “accurate knowledge of daily life” and (d) that it includes member checking all of the participants’ data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 43). The researcher intended to incorporate all of these components into the framework of the study.

Collective case study. Case studies are frequently used when the researcher wants to take a close, in-depth look at a contemporary subject of study or a case within its own context. According to Yin (2014), “a case study allows investigators to focus on a ‘case’ and retain a holistic and real world perspective” (p. 4). Researchers may explore or describe a single subject or multiple subjects depending on the focus of their inquiry. A multiple case study or collective case study may incorporate several cases in one

location or across different locations (Yin, 2014). In a collective case study, “one issue or concern is selected, but the inquirer selects multiple cases to illustrate the issue” and to show different perspectives on the issue (Creswell, 2013, p. 99).

For this study, the primary goal was to describe and understand the experiences of the participants. According to Stake (1998), the approach helps to maximize what can be learned. It is considered a collective case study because the researcher examined the experiences of multiple teachers or “cases.” The researcher attempted to select key informants or a purposeful sample within the single research location so that a rich description could be generated. The number of participants depended on how many novice teachers fit the criteria at the selected school setting and consented to be participants. Merriam (1998) articulated that a “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 59). Thus, participants in this study made up a purposeful sample because each teacher had three years of experience or less and willingly offered a unique, in-depth perspective on how they navigated their PLC team. The research location was purposefully selected based upon its geographic location, surrounding community, and number of novice teachers so that each case could serve a specific purpose within the overall scope of the study.

Through this collective case study, the researcher explored and described “different interpretations of the same world” through the lens of novice teachers (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 126) and moved “from describing separate phenomena to searching for their common essence” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 31). For this study, the “same

world” as described by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) was the PLC structure, and the researcher gathered data through various techniques to describe how each novice teacher experienced working within a PLC team. Yin (2014) identified three types of case studies:

1. exploratory,
2. descriptive, or
3. explanatory (p. 8).

This study took a descriptive approach because the researcher collected data and attempted to describe the participants’ experiences in their real world context (Yin, 2014). In addition, a descriptive case study approach was selected because the researcher had little or no control over the environment and situational milieu being explored, participant experiences were examined in context, and the goal was to answer the “how” and “why” questions related to novice teachers and their work in PLCs (Tight, 2010; Yin, 2003).

Data collection for case studies may include six types of data or evidence. Researchers should select from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts when designing a case study. One of Yin’s (2014) principles of data collection incorporated multiple sources of data to encourage the construct validity of the study.

For this study, the researcher conducted interviews, performed direct observations of PLC meetings, conducted a focus group session, and collected relevant PLC artifacts such as meeting agendas and notes. Interview protocols were used as an

“instrument.” Data gathered as a result of the interviews provided “descriptions, narratives, text, which the researcher then interprets and reports according to his or her research interests” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005, p. 164). The direct observations and collection of relevant artifacts served to corroborate, triangulate, and augment the evidence from the interviews (Yin, 2014). Finally, the focus group session strengthened the evidence gathered throughout the data collection phase, assisted with the cross-case analysis portion of the study, and provided one final glimpse into the world of PLCs for novice teachers. The researcher intended to “discover patterns which emerge after close observation, careful documentation, and thoughtful analysis” and generate “contextual findings” through the analysis process (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 21)

In case studies, the analysis of the data “can be a holistic analysis of the entire case or an embedded analysis of specific aspects of the case” (Creswell, 2013, p. 100; Yin, 2014, p. 55). This study explored each participant’s experience holistically within the school site along with a close, embedded review of each participant’s viewpoint as identified within the data. As recommended by Creswell (2013) and Yin (2014), the analysis incorporated both a within-case analysis of each participant and a cross-case analysis between the different teachers. Exploring the characteristics of the research location or school was also important in establishing the context of the study.

Theoretical Framework

Constructivism. As a constructivist researcher, the goal was to “rely as much as possible on the participants’ view of the situation” and “develop subjective meanings of their experiences” (Creswell, 2013, p. 25). The epistemological position was guided by

the “relationship between the knower....and what can be known” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). Therefore, the relationship that developed with the participants was critical to the knowledge obtained during the inquiry. Professional relationships were established with the participants through introductory conversations, the consent process, multiple interviews, observations, and a focus group. Within the constructivist framework, the participants and the researcher were “interactively linked so that the ‘findings’ are literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). During the interviews and observations, it was important for the researcher to listen closely and ensure that any responses, both verbal and nonverbal, showed respect to the voice of the participant and their interpretation of their experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). For this study, the interviews and the focus group were interactive, but during the observations the researcher fulfilled a passive role.

In this type of research, ontological realities were “dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Multiple realities can be constructed through the data collection process when considering ontological beliefs as a social constructivist (Creswell, 2013). Axiologically, the values of both the researcher and the participants were honored and respected and ultimately helped to shape the creation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). As a social constructivist, the research tasks within this approach and framework hinged upon the interactions with the participants during the interviews, observations, and focus group. Following an interview protocol, the researcher took advantage of opportunities during the interviews to encourage the respondents to expand or explore their ideas

further or more in-depth. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) suggested “seeking to clarify and extend interview statements” with unscripted follow-up questions and statements which means that the researcher may ask additional questions when needed that were explicitly identified in the protocol (p. 10). The direct observations and collection of relevant PLC artifacts provided support and context to the content of the interviews, as they were not interactive. Culminating with the focus group, the researcher had the opportunity to shore up any remaining questions that arose during the study, and the focus group allowed the participants to interact openly around the topic of PLCs.

Pragmatism. In addition to constructivism, the researcher also established a pragmatic approach in this study. Pragmatism suggests that “good research is research that works” and is helpful to those reading it (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 65). With pragmatism, the focus is on the “outcomes of the research—the actions, situations, and consequences of inquiry” (Creswell, 2013, p. 28). Furthermore, the work should be worthwhile, meaningful and practical, and in the end, others should benefit from the inquiry. Pragmatism “emphasizes the primacy of practice and the use-value of the ideas and theories produced by the researchers” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 60).

Ontologically, the ideas generated should “derive their legitimacy from enabling us to cope with the world in which we find ourselves” and help us understand the nature of our reality (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 65). Epistemologically, reality should be discovered through the research tools, which in this study included interviews, observations, a focus group, a field journal, and artifacts. In addition, the relationships developed with participants should be appropriate to the focus of the study. In other

words, the process helped participants feel comfortable answering questions, but the professional relationships forged during the course of the study minimally influenced their responses. The researcher made every effort to establish a relationship of trust through multiple interactions with the participants beginning with introductory conversations and the review of the consent process. These relationships continued to evolve through multiple interviews and direct observations. Axiologically, in this research, values were honored and “discussed because of the way that knowledge reflects both the researchers’ and the participants’ views” (Creswell, 2013, p. 37).

For a pragmatist, research is significant when it facilitates change and provides useful information; therefore, the study was designed to achieve these goals (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 345). Chenail (2011) recommended taking a “pragmatic posture to creating studies that marry the most fitting design and methodology choices with the focus of your research curiosity” (p. 1714). The primary purpose of this study was to explore how novice teachers perceived the work they were doing within their PLC teams and to provide useful insight from their experiences that may in turn benefit future educators. Some implications for PLC implementation were uncovered during this research, but the focus was on supporting novice teachers within this context.

Research Plan

For this study, the researcher identified one school located within the southern United States that implemented PLCs throughout the school and had functioning PLC teams at every grade level. A school site with a sufficient number of novice teachers for the study was purposefully selected by the researcher. The number of novice teachers at

this school was influenced by the school's location and surrounding community. As previously stated, this school was identified as having functioning PLC teams because the school required their PLC teams to meet every week to plan instruction collaboratively, to develop common formative assessments on a consistent basis, and to analyze the results of these assessments together to make instructional decisions as recommended by Hord (1997), DuFour et al. (2011), Schmoker (2004), and others. A brief conversation was conducted with the principal to determine whether the school had functioning PLCs with the criteria listed above. Each participant was considered to be a "case" in this study, and the researcher planned to establish meaning and identify common themes from each and across all of the participants. According to Creswell (2013), "a key to understanding analysis is that good case study research involves a description of the case" (p. 99). The researcher incorporated a thick description of each "case" or participant into the report.

As the design of the collective case study took shape, the researcher ensured that the axiological assumptions or values of the participants were honored and that the methodology allowed the research questions to be answered without bias or influence from the researcher. To hear the voice of the novice teacher and understand their experiences, the data sets for this study included on-site interviews, direct observations, a focus group session, a field journal, and the collection relevant artifacts. According to Maykut and Morehouse, (1994) "qualitative research must be organized around those meaning-making activities that connect a person to a culture" and in this study the observations showed this connection and how they perceived their PLC teams (p. 38).

Before the data collection phase began, participants were identified. With approval from the school district, the researcher invited teachers to be a part of this study based upon their years of experience in the classroom (three years or less). The principal assisted with the identification of teachers with three years of experience or less, but she was not privy to the names of the actual participants who consented to participate. In addition to the principal, the teachers' identities were not shared with any other school district employees, and their anonymity was protected through the use of numbers rather than names when referenced in the report. To further ensure anonymity and protect the identity of all participants, only a description of the school was used in the report. Using a numbering system and providing only a description of the school increased the probability that the participants felt comfortable when answering the interview questions, participating in the direct observations and the focus group session, and sharing relevant artifacts.

The participants for this study were made aware of the purpose of the study and the potential risks and benefits through the Consent Form. They agreed to be interviewed multiple times, to have the interviews recorded, and to have the results of the interviews shared with others in the report. The teachers understood the level of commitment involved before agreeing to be a part of the study. The researcher built trust early on through the establishment of a professional relationship during the introductory phase of the study which was critical to the level of quality of the data collected in this study. Participant involvement included two interviews, two direct observations of their PLC meetings, a focus group session, and the sharing of relevant PLC artifacts such as

meeting agendas and notes. The researcher kept a field journal throughout the data collection process. The participants were given an Informed Consent Form to review prior to the start of the data collection, and they were given the opportunity to ask questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

Established protocols used throughout the study allowed the researcher to create consistency in the content of the interviews and served as a reminder regarding the “information that needs to be collected and why” (Yin, 2014, p. 90). Conducting this study with multiple participants allowed the researcher to develop a broader understanding which enabled the description of the experiences of novice teachers working within a PLC team. Multiple forms of data increased the construct validity and allowed the researcher to triangulate the data.

Qualitative studies typically involve ongoing analysis throughout the data collection phase. Throughout the research cycle, data was transcribed, carefully reviewed, and initial coding was conducted. A field journal was maintained throughout the entire cycle as well. No adjustments were made to the research plan as a result of this ongoing analysis. Figure 1 provides a research cycle that shares the steps in the data collection phase of the study and the ongoing analysis process.

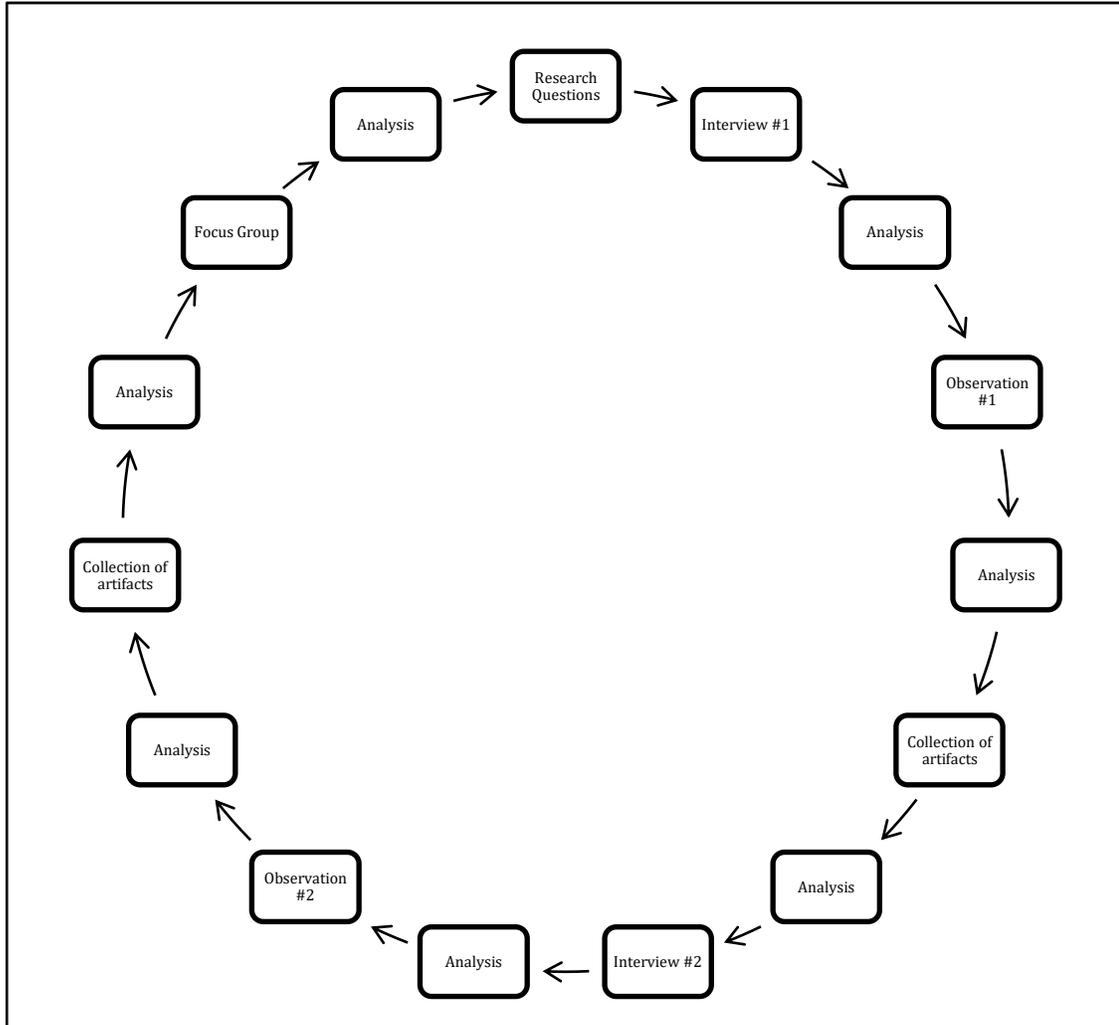


Figure 1. Research Cycle

To ensure that the data collected during this research study provided a fair and unbiased view of PLCs through the eyes of novice teachers, multiple forms of data were collected to answer each of the research questions using the method of triangulation. Triangulation assured the validity of the research because the research captured a variety of views of the same phenomenon. Figure 2 contains a Triangulation Matrix outlining how the different forms of data answered the research questions within this study.

Research Questions	Data	Data	Data
How are PLCs perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?	1.Interview #1 2.Field Journal	1.Observations 2.Field Journal	1. Artifacts 2. Focus Group 3. Field Journal
How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a PLC team?	1.Interview #2 2.Field Journal	1.Observations 2.Field Journal	1. Artifacts 2. Focus Group 3. Field Journal

Figure 2. Triangulation Matrix

Qualitative interviews. Case study interviews fall on a continuum from the most unstructured interview or an open-ended interview, to an interview that falls on middle ground which is called a focused interview, and finally, the most strict and on-script interview or structured interview according to Yin (2014). For this study, the researcher conducted focused interviews, or what Merriam (1998) called a “semi-structured” interview, following an interview protocol prepared in advance with a “mix of more and less structured questions” allowing for the researcher to provide clarifying questions when needed (p. 73). By conducting a focused interview, the researcher proceeded from a protocol and had the opportunity to ask unscripted clarifying or follow up questions when further exploration or explanation was needed (Yin, 2014). From a pragmatist and slightly post positivist standpoint, the researcher stayed on script for most of the questions and used the interview protocol as written to ensure that the knowledge constructed during this process was fair, impartial, and true.

The questions in the first interview protocol were focused on determining each participant's perception of PLCs to address the first research question (Figure 3). When necessary, follow up or clarifying question were asked that were not specifically included in the protocol, and the interviews were recorded using an audio recorder to ensure an accurate collection of data. During each research visit, the researcher conducted an interview or performed a direct observation, and throughout the research cycle, the researcher collected relevant artifacts from the participants such as meeting agendas and notes. Artifacts were collected during site visits and/or via email throughout the course of the study. During the observations, the researcher did not provide any input or ask any questions but simply listened and took field notes. The content of the observations was recorded so that a complete transcription of the conversations could be documented after the observation.

Interview Protocol #1

1. How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?
2. Describe how PLCs work at your school.
3. What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?
 - a. What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?
 - b. What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?
4. What types of meetings did you attend?
 - a. Relevancy?
 - b. Mandatory?
5. What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?
6. What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings?
 - a. Topics?
 - b. Issues, Initiatives, Concerns?
7. What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?
 - a. Planning?
 - b. Instruction?
 - c. Assessment?

Figure 3. Interview Protocol #1: Perceptions of PLCs

An Observation Protocol (Figure 4) was used to guide the note taking process, but the teachers determined the content of their meetings. The researcher attended two PLC team meetings for each participant within the research cycle. At this research location, these meetings were held once a week during their common planning time. The entire team consented to the researcher's presence and allowed field notes to be taken because not all of the team members were actual participants. Team members were also asked if the meeting could be recorded using an audio recorder. The researcher noted what occurred prior to the start of the meeting and at the end to establish context.

<p><u>Observation Protocol</u></p> <p>Date: _____ Case # _____ Time: _____</p> <p>Members Present: _____</p> <p><i>Events occurring prior to the start of the script</i></p> <p><i>Script of conversation</i></p> <p><i>Meeting closure</i></p>

Figure 4. Observation Protocol for PLC Meetings

Data Analysis

Immediately following each interview or observation, the researcher listened to the recordings of the interviews and observations and transcribed the participants' responses. The researcher member checked each interview and observation by sending the transcriptions to each participant. Participants were asked to review the transcriptions to confirm content. Once the transcriptions were approved by the participants, the researcher conducted a round of pre-coding using Saldana's (2013) method of coding with categories and themes. During the pre-coding process, the researcher carefully read and re-read the transcripts. Analysis started with "discovery" or "beginning to search for meanings in what people have said to you in interviews or what you have observed in the field, in documents, etc." (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 132). Reading and re-reading the data collected up to that point allowed the researcher to become familiar with the data and ideas as analysis began and the coding process started. Then, continuing the

pre-coding process, the researcher identified and underlined prominent key words and phrases. In the observations, key words and phrases were also underlined, and broad topics were examined along with the actual words and phrases being used. Notations regarding the topics were made in the margins of the transcripts. The observations corroborated what actually occurred in the PLC meetings with what the participants said they did with their PLC teams in the interviews. After the pre-coding was complete, the researcher scheduled the second round of interviews and observations. The second interview (Figure 5) followed the same structure as the first, but different questions were asked to concentrate more on the second research question related to personal experiences.

Interview Protocol #2

1. How do you use the various tasks you complete in your PLC teams within your daily work?
 - a. Planning?
 - b. Instruction?
 - c. Assessment?
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?
 - a. Professional goals and development?
 - b. Personal goals and development?
 - c. Efficacy?
3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?
4. What do you struggle with or what challenges did you face in your work within your PLC team this past school year?
5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?

Figure 5. Interview Protocol #2: Personal Experience with PLCs.

In addition, the second observation followed the same Observation Protocol (Figure 4) as the first. Another round of pre-coding occurred after the second interviews and observations and before the focus group session. Key words and phrases were underlined in both the interviews and observations to identify patterns and themes. The topics of discussion were noted in the margins of the observations.

After the second observation, a focus group session was scheduled with all of the participants. The focus group session followed a protocol (Figure 6) and was recorded by the researcher. Participants in the focus group session were the teachers who were interviewed and met the criteria of three years of experience or less within the school site. The researcher encouraged interaction between the participants during the focus group session and recorded field notes throughout. After the session was complete, the audio recording was transcribed and pre-coded by the researcher. Data from the focus group session was used mainly in the cross-case analysis as the researcher attempted to find patterns and themes emerging from all of the cases.

<p><u>Focus Group Session</u></p> <p>Date: _____</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does your involvement in your PLC or collaborative team assisted with your personal efficacy? 2. How does your the involvement in your PLC team assist with student success? 3. As a new teacher, how has the PLC structure shaped your decision-making processes? 4. How has the PLC structure influenced your instruction and assessment practices? 5. When you think about your preparation as a teacher, what components of the PLC structure do you think you would use if you were in a school that did not have this structure already in place? 6. What recommendations would you offer to administrators and/or other new teachers based on your personal experiences with PLCs? 7. Are there any aspects of the PLC process that you will like to learn more about?

Figure 6. Focus Group Session Protocol

After completing the interviews, observations, and the focus group session, the researcher ensured that the research data had been properly transcribed, member checked, and pre-coded. At this point, the first cycle of initial coding began. According to Merriam (1998), “coding is nothing more than assigning some sort of short-hand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of data” (p. 164). Yin (2014) recommended creating word tables for each participant to display their data using a uniform framework to identify these codes and patterns. The researcher created word tables for each participant to assist with the pattern identification. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) recommended asking a series of questions to help with initial coding process. These questions included:

1. What are the recurring words, phrases, and topics in the data?
2. What are the concepts that the interviews use to capture what they say or do?
3. Can you identify any emerging themes in your data, expressed as a phrase, proposition or question?
4. Do you see patterns? (p. 133)

The answers to these questions became “units” or initial codes “as each new unit of meaning is selected for analysis, it is compared to all the other units of meaning and subsequently grouped (categorized and coded) with similar units of meaning” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 134). During this first cycle of coding, the researcher developed initial or open codes from the interviews. The initial codes were actual words and phrases from the content of the interviews. From the observations and artifacts, some of the initial codes were actual words and phrases as well, but the codes also included the broad topics that were discussed by the team. For each participant, the researcher developed a table of initial codes from their data. Codes that occurred multiple times were combined, and their frequency was noted.

As these “units” or initial codes were refined for each participant, the axial codes were then developed by reviewing the frequency data from the interviews, observations, and artifacts and by combining and reassembling the initial codes (Saldana, 2013). Initial codes were changed, merged, or omitted as new axial codes were generated and new relationships were discovered within the data. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Table 1 shows how each participant’s data was organized.

Table 1

Initial and Axial Code Table Template

Participant # _____

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes

The researcher also referenced the field journal throughout the coding process to determine if any areas of need emerged. All of the data from the interviews, observations, and artifacts were reviewed one final time to ensure that the axial codes for each participant reflected their perceptions and experiences within their PLCs.

One last review of the field journal was conducted to ensure validity and triangulation of the data collected. Then, the axial codes from each participant were merged, adjusted, and combined into broad categories for each case. These categories should “come from at least three sources: the researcher, the participants, or sources outside the study such as literature” (Merriam, 1998, p. 182). The categories should reflect the purpose of the research, be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitizing, and conceptually congruent (Merriam, 1998). The researcher again reviewed the relevant artifacts and the transcriptions from the direct observations to corroborate the content of the interviews and assist with the finalization of the categories. Through these repeated

cycles of analysis across all of the data, the researcher developed a strong description of each case. The axial codes from each participant were then combined into a table of categories and themes for each case for the purpose of beginning the cross-case analysis portion of the study. Table 2 reveals how the axial codes were used to develop the categories and themes.

Table 2

Category Table Template

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes

Using the categories and themes, the researcher began the cross-case analysis by searching for patterns and repeated words across all of the participants and from the content of the focus group and field journal (Yin, 2014). Table 3 outlines the data from the focus group which includes key words, phrases, and topics. The researcher looked for similarities and differences between the categories and themes for each case and across the focus group data (Table 3). Patterns were drawn from the within-case analysis and cross-case analysis (Creswell, 2013). The observations from the field journal also

shaped the cross-case analysis. Creswell (2013) recommended that the case study “end with conclusions about the overall meaning derived” from the study (p. 99). The patterns will lead to implications and recommendations for school leaders. Table 3 outlines how the focus group content, categories, and themes were merged to find the patterns.

Table 3

Cross-Case Analysis Table Template

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns

Case Study Report

The final step in the case study process was to draft the report. For this study, the report began with a description of the research location to establish context. The report was organized by case or participant with a description of each participant incorporated into the results. The goal of the report was to weave together the participants’ words, observations, and artifacts into a descriptive narrative providing a complete within-case analysis of each participant. Then, a portion of the report was devoted to the cross-case analysis where similarities, patterns, and attributes were reviewed between the cases. The researcher then attempted to address the two research questions through the

presentation of the data collected and the identified themes. Implications for schools and recommendations for school leaders were identified in the final portion of the report.

Chapter Summary

Through this inquiry, the researcher desired to achieve Stake's (1998) goal of "particularization, not generalization" and honor the voice of the individual teacher (p. 8). Stake (1998) believed that qualitative researchers using the case study framework should "sharpen the search for understanding by perceiving what is happening in key episodes, or testimonies, and represent happenings with their own direct interpretation and stories" (p. 40). Using the recommendations of both Yin (2014) and Stake (1998), the researcher provided a rich description of the experiences of the participants and explored their perceptions as novice teachers as they shared their work within their PLC teams.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

This qualitative collective case study explored the perception of the PLC model through the eyes of novice teachers. Participants were identified from the selected research site (public school) representing different grade levels and content areas. At the time of the study, each participant was considered a novice because they had three years of experience or less in the classroom. The purpose of the study was to identify, understand, and establish meaning regarding the voice of the novice teacher within the context of their PLC teams by addressing the following research questions:

1. How are professional learning communities (PLCs) perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?
2. How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a professional learning community (PLC) team?

Demographic Information

For this study, the researcher identified one school in the southern United States that implemented the PLC model school wide and had functioning PLC teams. At this school, PLC teams were comprised of teachers from the same grade level and content area and each participant in the study was a part of one of these teams. Within the study, a variety of grade levels and subjects were represented among the participants. The administration required the PLC teams to meet every week to plan instruction collaboratively, to develop common formative assessments on a consistent basis, and to

analyze the results of these assessments together to make instructional decisions as recommended by Hord (1997), DuFour et al. (2011), Schmoker (2004), and others. A brief conversation was conducted with the principal to determine whether the school had functioning PLCs with the criteria listed above. This was a face-to-face conversation that occurred two months prior to the start of the data collection phase of this study. The researcher asked the principal about the PLC requirements at the research site. In addition, the structure of the PLC teams was confirmed with the participants during introductory conversations. The researcher intentionally selected a school that had a sufficient number of novice teachers. This school is located near a military base; therefore, the staff has frequent turnover as teachers move in and out of the area. As a result, the administration hires on average about five to eight teachers each fall with varying years of experience.

Eleven potential participants were identified by the principal, and their names were given to the researcher through an email exchange. All potential participants were then emailed by the researcher to determine if they were willing to participate in the study. From this initial list, eight participants agreed to become a part of the study. Of these eleven potential participants, nine were females and two were males. After consent, looking at the actual participants, seven were female and one was male. In these introductory email exchanges, the participants were asked to confirm their years of experience and to share what subjects and grade levels they were currently teaching. The experience level of the participants ranged from one to three years in the classroom prior to the commencement of the study. All four major content areas were represented among

the participants: English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. By chance, some of the participants were on the same PLC team within the school, meaning they taught the same grade level and subject. The researcher did not intend to have members of the same teams as participants, but it should be noted. Most of the participants received a traditional undergraduate or graduate degree in education prior to beginning their work in the classroom. One participant began teaching on an alternative license with an undergraduate degree in another field. Each participant was considered to be a “case” in this study, and the researcher planned to establish meaning and identify common themes from each case as well as across all of the participants making this a collective case study.

Data Collection

The data collection phase of the study spanned over a four-month period beginning with initial interviews, two observations, a final interview, and a culminating focus group session. A field journal was maintained throughout the course of the study on the researcher’s laptop. All of the interviews, observations, and the focus group session were scheduled at a convenient time for the participants during their scheduled planning time or after school. The interviews followed the protocols identified in Chapter Three and were conducted between the researcher and the participant. An audio recorder was used during the interviews to record the content, and a laptop was used to take notes while the participant responded to questions. Each interview was carefully transcribed by the researcher and then reviewed or member checked by the participant. After the first interview, the researcher began emailing the participants each week to

collect their weekly meeting agendas and notes. These items became artifacts and a part of the data. Observations of their PLC meetings were conducted twice during the research cycle. Each participant was asked to obtain verbal permission from their fellow team members so that the researcher could attend and record two of their PLC meetings during the data collection phase of the study. The agenda and discussion were developed and guided by the participant and his/her team members. Again, an audio recorder and laptop were used for transcription purposes. Towards the end of the data collection phase, a focus group session was scheduled with the participants. All eight participants agreed upon a date that they could attend the focus group after school, and their attendance was confirmed in advance and again on the day of the focus group. Seven out of eight participants attended the focus group. An audio recorder was used to record the session, and a laptop was used take notes during the discussion. The last of the relevant PLC artifacts were collected as the data collection phase came to a close. Participants were asked to share their remaining meeting agendas and notes after the final observation and focus group session.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis of data was conducted on an ongoing basis and spanned the data collection period. Throughout the data collection phase, the researcher completed all of the necessary transcriptions and asked participants to review or member check each document. Memos were added to the field journal on the researcher's laptop throughout the data collection phase of the study as the researcher noticed emerging themes and ideas. Pre-coding began as soon as the transcriptions were complete as the researcher

identified key words and phrases within the various pieces of data that pointed to patterns and themes. Each transcription was examined several times as the researcher became familiar with the content of the data during the pre-coding process. Notes were made in the margins of the transcriptions of the interviews, observations, artifacts, and the focus group. These notes identified the topics being discussed by the participants and/or team members. Additional memos were made in the field journal throughout the pre-coding process. Once data were collected, the researcher completed pre-coding and created data tables for each participant. The data tables for each participant contained the relevant words and phrases from the interviews that emerged during pre-coding and content collected from the observations and artifacts. In the tables, direct quotes from the data were written in italics while topics were listed in regular format. The frequency of the content was carefully noted as the researcher identified repeated references to the same topics and/or use of phrases. From this content, initial codes emerged.

The initial codes were actual words and phrases referenced in the data and the topics being discussed by the participants. The codes were organized for cross-analysis; the codes were divided into words and phrases heard from all or some of the participants and into those unique to each participant. In Tables 4.1 through 4.8, the codes were organized into sections including shared or unique. Codes shared by two or more participants were listed under shared, and the codes coming from a singular participant were listed under unique. The initial codes were then combined into fewer axial codes in an effort to streamline the message from each participant. The axial codes were used to develop the emerging categories and finally the themes for each participant.

The presentation of findings begins with a description of each individual participant and their experiences. Each participant has a table listing their initial and axial codes that have been generated from the data from their interviews, observations, and artifacts. When a code was found more than once in the data, a number was listed next to the code to indicate the frequency. Direct quotes are in italics and topics are in regular print. Codes are designated as shared or unique. Shared codes were found in the data of more than one participant and were evident in each particular participant's data. The word, unique, indicates that a code was only identified for that participant.

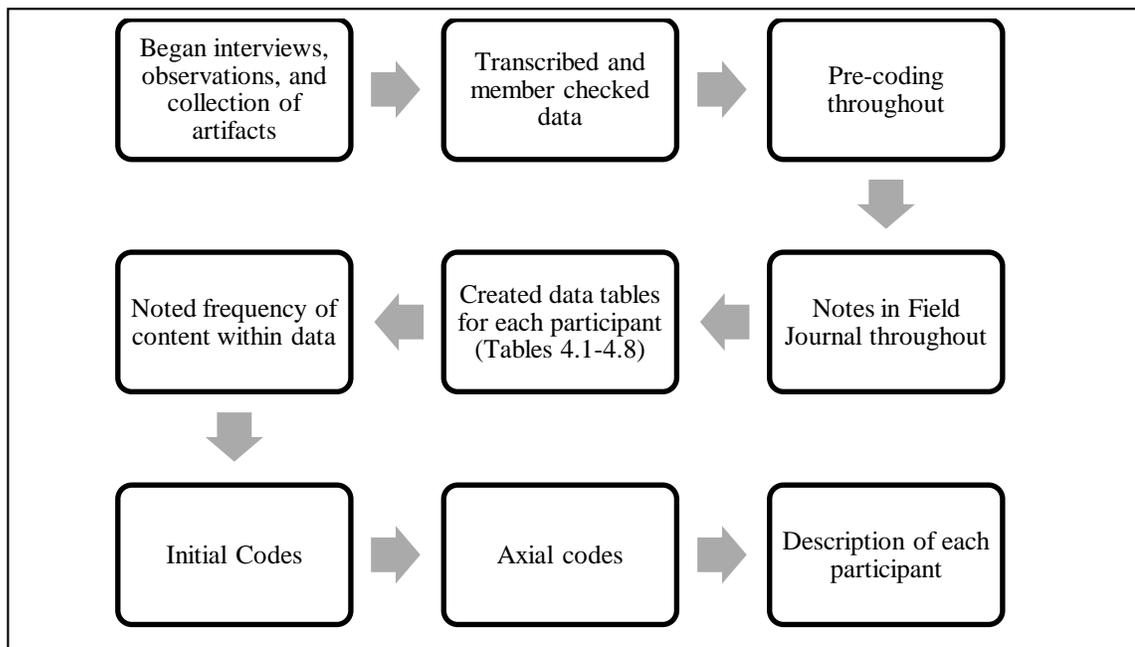


Figure 7. Within Case Analysis

After the description of each participant and their corresponding Table (Tables 4.1-4.8), the researcher began the cross-case analysis portion of the study and developed a description of the experiences that were shared by all of the participants in the study. The codes shared by all participants are located in the first Category Table (Table 5.1). In addition, the findings included descriptions of those experiences shared by more than one participant but not all participants. These descriptions also reference a Category Table (Table 5.2). The following sections present a detailed, rich narrative of each participant's experiences within their PLC teams.

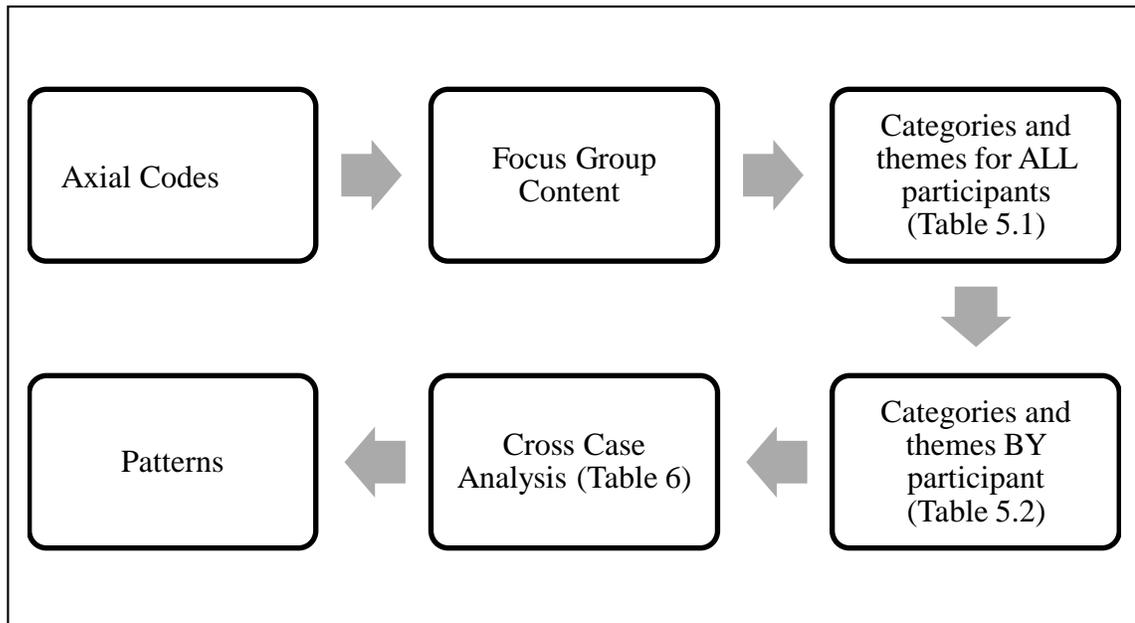


Figure 8. Cross- Case Analysis

Individual Findings

Participant one. Participant One had two years of experience as a classroom teacher prior to the start of this research study. Her PLC team was highly focused and collaborated on all types of tasks across a variety of settings and mediums. She portrayed a strong focus on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration and explained that her team paced their standards based content together (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015, Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). The participant said within the team they actively share lesson plans, resources, and instructional strategies, and the data revealed a focus on what and how to teach especially in the observations (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Together the team developed common assessments and analyzed student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans for their students. This particular team developed and implemented common lesson plans and consistent grading practices (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015, Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

The participant found the PLC work to be relevant and helpful. In fact, three times in her interviews she referenced that her PLC work “made me successful” (Int. #1, August 28, 2015; Int. #2, November 19, 2015). She believed the work encouraged her growth as a teacher, and at least four times in her interviews, she stated that she wanted to share with others and help other teachers as much as possible (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). Her team sought opportunities to collaborate more

than mandated by the administration of the school. Sharing the workload was highly valued as it was referenced at least ten times in the interviews (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). In reviewing her data, she obviously valued the development of relationships with her students; and saw the importance of differentiation and rigor within the classroom. This was evident in statements such as “it’s what’s best for the students” and “make my questioning rigorous” along with references to differentiation (Int #2, November 19, 2015).

Participant One was concerned about balancing home and work life and having enough time to collaborate with her team and to provide quality feedback (Int #2, November 19, 2015). In addition, she expressed the desire to develop more than just the academic skills of her students and to foster positive relationships with her students (Int #2, November 19, 2015). All of the data associated with this participant revealed her strong commitment to continually evaluating the effectiveness of her instruction for the benefit of her students (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015).

Table 4.1 contains the content from Participant One’s interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant One.

Table 4.1

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # <u> 1 </u>				
Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 8/28/15 -Willing to be open (4) -Can trust one another -Ideas about different concepts -Made me successful (3) -Community -I can grow from others is crucial -Teach other teachers what you've learned -why teachers need PLCs -broadening your understanding of just students in general -discussing different skills or ways that teachers deal with certain issues -discuss (2) -what did you learn -encourage/help other teachers (4) -how to engage (motivate) students -collaborate more	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -relevant -helpful -self-reflection -scaffolding for student understanding -need for more time to collaborate -motivating and engaging students -rigor of instruction -growth of the teacher -balance home and work life -ease of workload -differentiation -collective effort	Observation #1 9/29/15 -test organization -what to teach -content of class work is consistent across team -pacing (11) -scaffolding -throwing stuff out there -figured out a way -standards -sharing ideas for consideration -how are you doing that? -how to teach (8) -my kids did really well -I don't think -scaffolding students (3) -this is the problem I'm having -I agree -flow together -student	-reteaching -retesting -summative assessments -performance task -retaking the unit test -create a letter and send it to parents -parent communication -when assessments will be given -pacing (2) -upcoming interactive lesson -collaboration across disciplines -integration of content areas -resource -planning -using technology to collaborate -plan the rest of the unit	SHARED -shared workload to ease the burden -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant and helpful -encourages self-reflection -scaffolding for student understanding -need for more time to collaborate -motivating and engaging students -increase rigor of instruction -growth of the teacher -balance home and work life -differentiation of instruction

Table 4.1 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>than that</i> <i>-talk to each other on email</i> <i>-we're one unit</i> <i>-my scores have gone up</i> <i>-very relevant to me</i> <i>-we really meet everyday</i> <i>-view it as a need not a want</i> <i>-never felt like I was wasting my time</i> <i>-naturally/ constantly get together</i> <i>-help them (the students) be successful</i> <i>-most important things they need to know</i> <i>-how can we make different lessons engaging</i> <i>-are we pacing okay (2)</i> <i>-how do we feel like the lessons are going from week to week (2)</i> <i>-how all your kids are doing</i> <i>-felt like I was really blessed to be placed on this team</i> <i>-divide out the work</i>	UNIQUE -willing and open -application of learning (teacher and student) -encouraging team members -evaluate effectiveness of instruction -content focused -importance of student-teacher relationships	understanding (3) -what to teach (4) -rigor -how to teach <i>-to be quite honest</i> <i>-just for me to remember</i> <i>-pretest (2)</i> -test content (6) <i>-I didn't have anyone that stood out as knowing anything</i> -student performance (8) <i>-we'll build up to that</i> <i>-need to be able to understand</i> <i>-they should be able to do that</i> <i>-lay some foundations</i> <i>-when you see kids can't do that</i> <i>-I want to see them be successful</i> <i>-they are struggling with these basics</i> -reinforcement -motivation <i>-figure it out on</i>	<i>-grading a performance task</i> <i>-instructional strategies</i> <i>-benefit 7th grade math (students)</i> -grading practices (2) -standardized test preparation -test development (3) -what to teach -student data -PLC questions #3 -RTI <i>-type of questions do we want to review</i> -what and how to teach -standards -pretest -test content	-collective effort UNIQUE -willing and open -encouraging team members -evaluate effectiveness of instruction -content focused -importance of student-teacher relationships

Table 4.1 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p>tasks (5)</p> <p>-we are able take criticism very well</p> <p>-divy out the days</p> <p>-edit the whole thing together</p> <p>-doing the same thing (plans) has helped me out tremendously</p> <p>-look at each other as a team</p> <p>-critique it, edit it, tell me what you do and don't like</p> <p>Interview #2</p> <p>11/19/15</p> <p>-it's what's best for the students</p> <p>-construct lessons that will be successful</p> <p>-differentiated</p> <p>-assist the students with the final assessments</p> <p>-goal is what will help our team to be the most successful</p> <p>-we are honest</p> <p>-look for things that could be taught differently</p> <p>-anything that can assist students</p> <p>-want your lessons to be engaging</p> <p>-self-reflect(ion) (4)</p>		<p>your own (the students)</p> <p>-student learning process</p> <p>-formative assessments</p> <p>-student prior knowledge</p> <p>-biggest thing we want to see</p> <p>-assess student understanding</p> <p>-test content based upon student understanding</p> <p>-I'm making the assumption</p> <p>-how to design the problems on the pretest</p> <p>-give us an idea of what they know</p> <p>-we are all going to teach this the same or we all have the same idea of how we are teaching it</p> <p>-consistency</p> <p>Observation #2</p> <p>12/8/15</p> <p>-grading practices (4)</p> <p>-student use of resources while</p>		

Table 4.1 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-what worked or what didn't work (2)</i> <i>-they (students) are prepared</i> <i>-make our days easier</i> <i>-make my questioning rigorous</i> <i>-balance home life...I do struggle with that</i> <i>-put boundaries</i> <i>-allow myself to have family time -so they (students) understand</i> <i>-wants students to be confident</i> <i>-great relationship with my students</i> <i>-learning more than just math</i> <i>-love sharing</i> <i>-make someone's life easier</i> <i>-I want to be better</i> <i>-does get stressful because there are time constraints</i> <i>-we are a team</i> <i>-they are there to help me</i> <i>-unification in your team is crucial</i> <i>-you can learn from someone else</i></p>		<p>taking a test -PLC question #3 (3) -needs of the community -resources (3) -test administration consistency -completing administrative tasks -RTI groups -<i>we need to look at data</i> -student grouping -shared workload -<i>we can collaborate</i></p>		

Table 4.1 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>/mistakes -you are able to change, and it's for the better -it's for the students -never have enough time(to collaborate) -(admin) give us as much time to plan -we want them (the students) to grow</i>				

Participant two. Participant Two had one year of experience as a classroom teacher prior to the start of this research study. Through the relevant collected data, Participant Two shared her team's focus on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration. Her team distributed the workload by developing common lesson plans and consistent grading practices (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). As a team, Participant Two and team members also shared resources and instructional ideas and collaborated more than was mandated by the administration. This was evident in statements such as "we meet more than we have to" (Int #1, September 4, 2015). Participant Two and her team members carefully paced their standards based content. They developed common assessments and analyzed student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans (Int #1, September 4,

2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Participant Two revealed in her interviews that she felt work done within her PLC team was relevant and helpful, and that it has helped to build her confidence as a teacher (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). In fact, she contributed her success as a teacher her first year to her team and their collaborative efforts. In addition, she conveyed that the work completed within her team ensures an accountability of instruction and the development of high quality assessments for her students (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). She felt encouraged to self-reflect and review her effectiveness as a teacher.

As a novice teacher, however, she was concerned because she wanted her individual work and the contributions she made to the team to be valued by her peers (Int #2, November 19, 2015). Within her interviews, this participant explained her team members were resistant to new ideas, and she wished her PLC meetings would be more “solution focused” (Int #2, November 19, 2015). She also expressed an interest in improving her assessment development skills.

Table 4.2 contains the content from Participant Two’s interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Two.

Table 4.2

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # <u>2</u>				
Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 9/4/15 <i>-share ideas</i> <i>-main goal is to improve student learning and our own effectiveness</i> <i>-meet more than we have to</i> <i>-plan/discuss everything together (4)</i> <i>-very relevant/helpful</i> <i>-didn't really know what I was doing</i> <i>-really don't think I would have done as well as what I did do, especially when it came to content</i> <i>-knowing which students were really getting it</i> <i>-plan assessments</i> <i>-talk about how to improve student achievement</i> <i>-compare data</i> <i>-why maybe a certain question was missed (2)</i> <i>-how we could go back and reteach it</i>	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -relevant -helpful -builds confidence -level of rigor of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -self-reflection -analyzing quality of assessment questions UNIQUE -importance of quality relationships -teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team	Observation #1 9/29/15 -test development (7) -how to teach (4) <i>-extending their thinking (2)</i> <i>-what we know and applying it to a different problem</i> -administrative task <i>-our collaboration dates have been focused on RTI</i> -resources students can use during test -test administration consistency -student performance (2) -test administration -what to teach (4) -shared workload (3) -scaffolding student	<i>-looked at unit test</i> -made revisions to assessment <i>-pretest</i> -test development (4) -pacing (2) <i>-data from unit 3</i> <i>-item analysis</i> -resources -student performance data <i>-universal screener</i> <i>-benchmark</i> <i>-testing outline</i> <i>-performance task</i> -test administration <i>-went over data</i> <i>-results from performance task</i> -student performance	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant and helpful -builds confidence -level of rigor of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -encouraging self-reflection -analyzing quality of assessment questions UNIQUE -importance of quality relationships -encourage teacher effectiveness

Table 4.2 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>better (2)</i> <i>-get more kids to their goal</i> <i>-met that standard</i> <i>-have pretty good working relationships</i> <i>-whoever's day it is to plan that lesson</i> <i>-we all teach that same lesson</i> Interview #2 11/19/15 <i>-common assessments</i> <i>-use all of that (assessments) as feedback everyday</i> <i>-data chat over an assessment/ individual data</i> <i>-talk about maybe why my students didn't do as well</i> <i>-use that in my planning</i> <i>-things that they talk about are the things I would use in my classroom</i> <i>-make sure I'm not forgetting anything</i> <i>-improve students' understanding/ interaction</i> <i>-improve quality of education as a whole</i></p>	<p>-improve assessment development skills -desire for team to be more solution focused -contributes success as a teacher to her team</p>	<p>understanding -level of rigor of assessment (2) -pacing (5) <i>-pretest</i> -practice 6th grade standards -internet resource -resources (5) Observation #2 12/8/15 -test prep (2) -student performance -content of test (4) -PLC question #3 (2) <i>-we need to make a decision</i> <i>-if we like the results we get we can use them</i> -available technology <i>-performance task</i> <i>-pull up questions on the standards we've done</i> -administrative task <i>-collaborate</i> <i>-looking at next semester</i></p>	<p>and it's impact on planning -reteaching <i>-pick questions</i> -RTI <i>-went over questions</i> <i>-choosing questions</i> -rigor of test questions</p>	<p>-wants to feel work is valued by team -improve assessment development skills -desire for team to be more solution focused -contributes success as a teacher to her team</p>

Table 4.2 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-seeing how my kids are doing</i> <i>-self-reflection</i> <i>-(goal) writing assessments (for the team)</i> <i>-could build some confidence (in assessment writing)</i> <i>-(PLCs) it does help build my confidence</i> <i>-know I haven't forgotten anything</i> <i>-know my kids are getting the same type of instruction</i> <i>-the same kind of thought provoking questions/rigor</i> <i>-able to identify strengths and weaknesses of my students</i> <i>-(concern) feeling like what you are doing is being valued (by team)</i> <i>-resistance to new things (from team members)</i> <i>-suggestions (to team) to be taken more seriously</i> <i>-(wants team to be more) solution focused</i></p>		<p><i>-prioritizing (standards)</i> <i>-road map</i> <i>-RTI groups</i></p>		

Participant three. The third participant in this study had three years of experience as a classroom teacher prior to the start of the study and also conveyed the same focus on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration that was expressed by other participants. Her team shared lesson plan ideas, resources, and instructional ideas and developed a consistent pacing of their standards based content (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). In her case though, each teacher individualized their lesson plans based upon their agreed upon standards (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). According to Participant Three, her PLC team members had more autonomy in their instructional decisions within the classroom when planning lessons. Together the team members shared the workload by developing common assessments, and they analyzed student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans for students (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

With at least seven references to test development in the observations, the data collected revealed that the majority of Participant Three's time working within the PLC team is spent on assessment development (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015). Based upon the district level instructional expectations, this PLC worked to develop consistent grading practices and expectations for student writing (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015). The data showed that the level of rigor and quality of the questions on Participant Three and the team's assessments were

valued among the team members along with the overall quality of their instruction (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015). Through collaboration, the participant felt a sense of accountability of instruction, meaning that she knew she was covering what she was supposed to with her students. In addition, she conveyed that she felt supported by her peers and was often able to contribute to the group (Int #2, November 19, 2015).

Participant Three was concerned, however, about having enough time to fit everything into their curriculum, balancing the expectations of various team members, and meeting district level instructional expectations. As she moved forward, she wanted to provide more useful feedback to her students, to continue to work on being more effective, and to help other teachers as they have helped her (Int #2, November 19, 2015).

Table 4.3 contains the content from Participant Three's interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Three.

Table 4.3

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # <u>3</u>				
Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 9/4/15 <i>-working together</i> <i>-consistent ways of doing lessons, tests, assessments</i> <i>-common assessments (4)</i> <i>-create goals</i> <i>-interact with them more online</i> <i>-get on the same page</i> <i>-even if you have different styles</i> <i>-got to be willing to collaborate even across disciplines</i> <i>-you can get support/ learn new things</i> <i>-made up of people and people clash (concern of mine)</i> <i>-very useful</i> <i>-group that I am in is very focused</i> <i>-talk about what we are experiencing</i> <i>-accomplish tasks</i> <i>-feels rewarding</i> <i>-divide up the standards</i> <i>-come up with</i>	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -level of rigor of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -rigor of instruction -analyzing quality of assessment questions UNIQUE -consistent but still autonomous -support -contribute -integration -consistent expectations for student work -having enough time to fit everything in -district level expectations	Observation #1 9/29/15 -scheduling of assessments <i>-looking at the unit 3 test</i> -sharing workload -consistent grading practices (3) -test development (7) -test content (3) -test scheduling -pacing (2) -scaffolding and supporting student understanding (2) -student writing expectations (4) -how to teach (5) <i>-standards</i> <i>-that is what I'm teaching my students</i> -brainstorming with peer support -providing	<i>-characteristics of PLCs</i> <i>-purpose of PLCs</i> <i>-norms and commitments</i> <i>-goals for the year</i> -what to teach (2) -pacing -grading practices <i>-review strategies</i> -test development (4) -PLC question #3 (2) <i>-discuss unit 2 assessment</i> <i>-enrichment strategies</i> <i>-discussing unit 2 test</i> -strategies -how to teach -resources <i>-discussed unit 3 assessment</i> -test content -pacing <i>-finalized unit 3 assessment</i>	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -rigor of instruction UNIQUE -consistent but still autonomous -supported by peers -able to contribute -value integration of subjects -consistent expectations for student work -having enough time to fit everything in -district level expectations -

Table 4.3 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>Questions</i> <i>-good questions or not</i> <i>-creating strategies</i> <i>-little stress (over district writing tasks)</i> <i>-figure out how we can fit everything in</i> <i>-how stressful that is...have to take time away from teaching other standards (for district writing tasks)...very challenging</i> <i>-analyze data (2)</i> <i>-creating “look fors” that our district supervisor asked us to create (to use when grading district writing tasks)</i> <i>-get on the same page in terms of grading</i> <i>-share projects and other assignments and powerpoints</i> <i>-have very different teaching styles</i> <i>-same goals ...but we present it in different ways</i> <i>-end up modifying things to suit how</i></p>	<p>- individualization of teaching style -develop individual lesson plans based upon agreed upon standards on upcoming assessment -give more useful feedback to her students</p>	<p>student feedback Observation #2 12/8/15 -day to day logistics -supporting peers <i>-won’t remember anything</i> <i>-haven’t started to map that out yet</i> -giving advice on how to handle a parent and student situation -sharing prior experience -student understanding <i>-demonstrate that he’s learning anything</i> -logistics -reviewing assessment -what to teach -understanding content -understanding test content -rigor of questions</p>	<p>-what to assess (standards) -cross-curricular planning -integrate subjects <i>-strategies</i> <i>-clear targets</i> <i>-reteaching</i> <i>-looking at data</i> <i>-creating a plan</i> <i>-finalize unit 3 assessment</i> <i>-what went well</i> <i>-what we need to review with students</i> -data review <i>-discuss data for unit 3 assessment</i> <i>-reteaching strategies</i> <i>-analyzed data from writing assessments</i> <i>-focus more on content</i> -what and how to teach based upon student results <i>-strategies</i> <i>-reviewed and finalized unit 6 test</i> <i>-discussed</i></p>	<p>individualization of teaching style -develop individual lesson plans based upon agreed upon standards on upcoming assessment -give more useful feedback</p>

Table 4.3 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>our classroom runs</i></p> <p>Interview #2 11/19/15</p> <p><i>-allows us to see and compare...if our teaching methods are consistent</i></p> <p><i>-every teacher has different strengths</i></p> <p><i>-we all know if we are being effective</i></p> <p><i>-decide what standards they had the most difficulty with</i></p> <p><i>-influences our reteaching</i></p> <p><i>-make sure those questions that we are looking at in a standard end up somewhere in my lesson</i></p> <p><i>-prepare them for what they'll be tested over</i></p> <p><i>-stay on pace with the other teachers</i></p> <p><i>-always trying to keep it at the same rigor or even up a little bit</i></p> <p><i>-want to really push them (the students)</i></p> <p><i>-my teaching style is different</i></p> <p><i>-need to make sure</i></p>			<p><i>struggling student issues and strategies -discussed... lesson</i></p> <p><i>-finalized unit 6.2 test</i></p>	

Table 4.3 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>that I'm assessing whether they are reaching or getting the same material -consistent across the board -keep each other accountable -(my goal) is to give more useful feedback -taking the time to learn from my collaborative group -always to become a more effective teacher -be able to help other teachers -gone out of their way (for me) -my content knowledge is not as much as theirs yet -I contribute activities and ideas towards assessments</i>				

Participant four. Participant Four was the only male participant in the study. He had one year of experience as a classroom teacher when the study began. He disclosed that his team stayed focused on student learning and achievement through structured

collaboration among team members. Participant Four and his team shared lesson plan ideas, resources, and instructional strategies. However, each PLC team member maintained their individual teaching style as they developed the specifics of their own lesson plans (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). The team worked together to pace their standards and content, and they began the development of common clear targets (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Participant Four expressed that sharing resources and materials caused them to not teach everything on the exact same day (Int #1, August 28, 2015). The PLC members, however, agreed upon a set of standards to complete before their common assessments which they developed together.

As a team, the members analyzed student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans for their students (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Participant Four and PLC members often used technology to collaborate outside of their weekly meetings (Int #1, August 28, 2015). Furthermore, these PLC members were mindful of the level of rigor and quality of questions on their common assessments (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015). As a novice teacher, Participant Four appreciated having an accountability of instruction and the experience of his team members to help him in the decision making process; he valued their experience as teachers (Int #2, November 13, 2015). In addition, he

conveyed the importance of his own growth as a teacher through the PLC process.

Participant Four was concerned, however, about the emphasis on data rather than instruction and expressed his desire to have more autonomy in determining the agendas for their PLC meetings (Int #2, November 13, 2015).

Table 4.4 contains the content from Participant Fours's interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Four.

Table 4.4

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # <u>4</u>				
Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 8/28/15 <i>-ideas and knowledge are shared between professionals</i> <i>-open to listening</i> <i>-help other teachers</i> <i>-constantly sharing of ideas</i> <i>-everyone is willing to share and bring in their experiences from wherever</i> <i>-weekly collaboration meetings/very</i>	SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -level of rigor of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -analyzing quality of assessment questions -experience based decision making -growth of the	Observation #1 9/29/15 -pacing (7) <i>-strategies and the test</i> -resources -strategies (2) -standardized test data review (admin task) -identifying teacher strengths and weaknesses -how to teach (2) -what to teach	<i>-post assessment data (4)</i> -most missed questions (2) -PLC question #3 (3) <i>-teaching strategies</i> -what to teach (3) <i>-finalized post assessment</i> -pacing -test development (3)	SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -experience based decision making -growth of the teacher -discuss most missed

Table 4.4 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>topical</i> <i>-common assessments (4)</i> <i>-we don't lock step (2)</i> <i>-not everyone does exactly the same thing</i> <i>-definitely sharing ideas</i> <i>-sharing Dropbox</i> <i>-we are constantly in each other's rooms</i> <i>-make sure we are all on track</i> <i>-instruction, testing and data</i> <i>-where we are going</i> <i>-pretest and posttests</i> <i>-use Google docs</i> <i>-sharing data (3)</i> <i>-levels of students</i> <i>-data, assessments or clear targets</i> <i>-we have different teaching styles</i> <i>-clear targets are the same, but they may be in a different order (primarily because of resources)</i> Interview #2 11/13/15 <i>-guide what I'm</i></p>	<p>teacher -most missed questions UNIQUE -common clear targets -individualize instruction as needed -adjusts instruction according to the needs of students and based upon PLC team discussions</p>	<p>(7) -test content (2) -reteaching -PLC question #3 <i>-data</i> <i>-strategies</i> Observation #2 12/8/15 -team not on the same page <i>-common assessments</i> -test development (2) -use of technology to collaborate -assessment draft created by the participant being reviewed -content of questions -test prep -differentiation -rigor of questions -clarifying content <i>-clear targets</i> <i>-back peddling</i> <i>-inquiry as a hook</i> -engage students</p>	<p>-cross-curricular planning <i>-integration of math/science standards</i> <i>-strategies</i> <i>-worked on unit 5 post assessment</i> <i>-discussed plans</i> -how to teach (2) <i>-discussed benchmark data</i> -student weaknesses -reason for student struggles -what to reteach based upon data -test development -reteach -what to teach based upon data <i>-teaching strategies</i> -resources</p>	<p>questions UNIQUE -common clear targets -individualize instruction as needed -adjusts instruction according to the needs of students and based upon PLC team discussions</p>

Table 4.4 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>going to be teaching</i> <i>-remind myself of the important things...we were going to cover</i> <i>-tool to make sure I'm asking the right type of questions</i> <i>-covering the same material (2)</i> <i>-better than me working in a vacuum</i> <i>-come together to formulate plans</i> <i>-share activities</i> <i>-each use our own style to present it according to our personalities</i> <i>-core goals and achievements</i> <i>-common pre and post tests (for units)</i> <i>-look how they did by standard</i> <i>-see if each of us are in the same area, or if somebody did a little better</i> <i>-go and ask that person how did you do this</i> <i>-use that to revise our plans/ improve instruction</i></p>				

Table 4.4 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-always want to improve our instruction</i></p> <p><i>-growing us as teachers and educators</i></p> <p><i>-improving myself</i></p> <p><i>-want to be better</i></p> <p><i>-discussion of how each of us are doing</i></p> <p><i>-finding other approaches</i></p> <p><i>-brainstorming, the sharing of ideas with peers</i></p> <p><i>-very cohesive/open</i></p> <p><i>-we have to be understanding of each other</i></p> <p><i>-come to a consensus</i></p> <p><i>-more focus on the instruction portion</i></p> <p><i>-data is important and we need it to drive our instruction</i></p> <p><i>-sometimes data is overemphasized at the expense of other things</i></p> <p><i>-little bit of autonomy (in deciding their agenda for their meetings)</i></p>				

Participant five. Prior to the start of this study, Participant Five had two years of experience as a classroom teacher. She began working as a teacher on an alternative license with an undergraduate degree in another field. This participant commented that her team stayed focused on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration within their team. Within Participant Five's PLC team, each member shared the workload and developed common lesson plans, assessments, and consistent grading practices (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015 Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Resources and instructional ideas were also shared during their weekly meetings and throughout the week. A strong focus on how to teach was evident across all of the data for this participant but especially in the observations because she made seven references to this topic (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

The PLC team's content was carefully paced so all members were teaching standards around the same time in preparation for their common assessments. Pacing was referenced at least ten times in the data from the observations conducted with Participant Five (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015). Using the assessment results, the PLC team analyzed student progress to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans for their classes (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015 Obs #2, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

This participant felt that the PLC work was relevant, and she recognized the value of cohesiveness within the team when completing their various tasks (Int #1, August 28, 2015). As a team, the members closely monitored the level of rigor of their assessment questions and collaborated more than is mandated by their administration (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). In fact, this participant shared that because she taught two grade levels she and another novice teacher were meeting on their own time to collaborate since they did not have a common planning (Int #2, November 13, 2015). In addition, this participant remarked that she appreciated the accountability of instruction from her team and the motivation to complete tasks in a timely manner. Data revealed that Participant Five was committed to motivating and engaging students through carefully planned instruction and scaffolding for student understanding (Int #1, August 28, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015).

This participant's main concern was having enough time to fit everything in from their content and having enough time to collaborate (Int #2, November 13, 2015). Participant Five acknowledged that she appreciated the lesson plan exemplars, the experience base of her team, and the shared notes and examples to be used during instruction. This allowed her to better anticipate student responses to instruction and to be more prepared for class (Int #2, November 13, 2015). Moving forward as an educator, she is hopeful that she will develop the skills to plan further in advance and not be preparing day to day for instruction (Int #2, November 13, 2015).

Table 4.5 contains the content from Participant Five's interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Five.

Table 4.5

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # <u>5</u>				
Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 8/28/15 <i>-group of individuals</i> <i>-opportunity to bounce ideas off of each other (2)</i> <i>-cohesive community (3)</i> <i>-everyone being on the same page</i> <i>-plan anywhere, wherever, all the time</i> <i>-very relevant</i> <i>-meet about everything (1)</i> <i>-gotten on the same page</i> <i>-creating a test</i> <i>-creating plans for the unit, pretests</i> <i>-how a quiz/ activity...just went</i> <i>-how we're...going</i>	SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -relevant -level of rigor of assessment questions -accountability of instruction -experience based decision making -motivating and engaging students -scaffolding for student	Observation #1 9/29/15 -test organization -pacing (10) -what to teach (4) -content of class work is consistent across team -scaffolding for student understanding (4) <i>-throwing stuff out there</i> <i>-figured out a way</i> -standards -sharing ideas for consideration <i>-how are you doing that?</i>	<i>-reteaching</i> <i>-retesting</i> <i>-summative assessments</i> <i>-performance task</i> <i>-retaking the unit test</i> <i>-create a letter and send it to parents</i> -parent communication -when assessments will be given -pacing <i>-upcoming interactive lesson</i> -collaboration across disciplines -integration of content areas	SHARED -shared workload to ease burden -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant -level of rigor of assessment questions -accountability of instruction -experience based decision making -motivating and engaging students

Table 4.5 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>to grade</i> <i>-we have something that we feel like is not our strong suit, to explain or teach, we meet about how you would explain it</i> <i>-(plan) tests, notes, lessons plans (together)</i> <i>-plan what we are going to do</i> <i>-you plan this day, (etc.)</i> <i>-what that activity should look like</i> <i>-we'll say...mine was similar or yours was way off</i> <i>-preassessment..we look at it together</i> <i>-starting to look...analyzing them</i> <i>-deciding what we want to do together</i> Interview #2 11/13/15 <i>-create...notes for students</i> <i>-use those as a guideline</i> <i>-want my students to have the same examples</i> <i>-no matter which teacher they go to,</i></p>	<p>understanding -ease of workload -anticipate student response UNIQUE -importance of cohesiveness -overplanning -lesson plans as exemplars for novice -able to plan in advance more often -accountability of task completion -shared notes and examples to be used during instruction -initiaties collaboration on her own time</p>	<p>-explaining how to teach something <i>-my kids did really well</i> <i>-I don't think scaffolding students</i> <i>-this is the problem I'm having</i> <i>-I agree</i> <i>-flow together</i> -encouraging student understanding -rigor -how to teach (7) <i>-to be quite honest</i> <i>-just for me to remember</i> <i>-pretest (2)</i> -i test content (3) <i>-I didn't have anyone that stood out as knowing anything</i> -student performance (8) <i>-we'll build up to that</i> <i>-need to be able to understand</i> <i>-they should be able to do that</i></p>	<p><i>-resource</i> -<i>planning</i> -<i>using technology to collaborate</i> <i>-plan the rest of the unit</i> <i>-grading a performance task</i> <i>-instructional strategies</i> <i>-benefit 7th grade math (students)</i> -<i>grading practices (2)</i> -<i>pacing</i> -<i>standardized test preparation</i> -<i>test development (3)</i> -<i>what to teach</i> -<i>student data</i> -<i>PLC question #3</i> -<i>RTI</i> <i>-type of questions do we want to review</i> -<i>what and how to teach</i> -<i>standards</i> -<i>pretest</i> -<i>test content</i></p>	<p>-scaffolding for student understanding -anticipate student response UNIQUE -importance of cohesiveness within the team -often overplanning -lesson plans as exemplars for novice -wants to be able to plan in advance more often -accountability of task completion -shared notes and examples to be used during instruction -initiaties collaboration on her own time</p>

Table 4.5 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>they are able to help them</i> <i>-give all the same tests -everyone pulls their own weight</i> <i>-create assessment and then we do checks and balance</i> <i>-make sure there's enough rigor</i> <i>-answers are correct</i> <i>-problems will make sense</i> <i>-pick a day and plan a day</i> <i>-making sure I'm covering what needs to</i> <i>-covering every aspect of a lesson</i> <i>-teach it in my own style</i> <i>-shoot for the same day</i> <i>-where we need to go</i> <i>-Miss W and I have been trying to get on the same page</i> <i>-more than one mind thinking about how a test should look</i> <i>-balance of what you need in a test</i> <i>-make our life</i></p>		<p><i>-lay some foundations</i> <i>-when you see kids can't do that</i> <i>-I want to see them be successful</i> <i>-they are struggling with these basics</i> <i>-reinforcement</i> <i>-motivation</i> <i>-figure it out on your own (the students)</i> <i>-student learning process</i> <i>-formative assessments</i> <i>-test development (3)</i> <i>-student prior knowledge</i> <i>-biggest thing we want to see</i> <i>-assess student understanding</i> <i>-test content based upon student understanding</i> <i>-I'm making the assumption</i> <i>-how to design the problems on the pretest</i> <i>-give us an idea</i></p>		

Table 4.5 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>easier (3)</i> <i>-decrease the workload</i> <i>-having me on the same page in terms of information that we are going to get</i> <i>-doesn't matter with teacher I move to, you are going to get the same information</i> <i>-create the test first</i> <i>-(personal goal) get more ahead</i> <i>-keep me on my toes</i> <i>-knowing exactly what I'm going to do</i> <i>-already been through my examples</i> <i>-students feel like she knows whats going on</i> <i>-anticipate their (student) questions</i> <i>-probably be planning day to day (without their PLC team)</i> <i>-(without their PLC they would just hope for the best</i> <i>-how would you explain</i> <i>-before trying it</i></p>		<p><i>of what they know</i> <i>-we are all going to teach this the same or we all have the same idea of how we are teaching it</i> Observation #2 12/8//15 <i>-consistency</i> <i>-student understanding - grading practices (4)</i> <i>-student use of resources while taking a test</i> <i>-PLC question #3 (3)</i> <i>-needs of the community</i> <i>-analyzing student understanding through assessment results</i> <i>-resources (2)</i> <i>-test administration consistency</i> <i>-completing administrative tasks</i> <i>-RTI groups</i> <i>-we need to look</i></p>		

Table 4.5 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>with students</i> <i>-being able to say this is what my lesson plan should look like definitely has been a plus</i> <i>-been able to take from her, to be able to write a decent lesson plan</i> <i>-over plan...then that leads to frustration</i> <i>-anticipate more of what the pace would look like</i> <i>-standard across the board</i>		<i>at data</i> <i>-student grouping</i> <i>-how to use a resource</i> <i>-shared workload</i> <i>-we can collaborate</i>		

Participant six. Participant Six had three years of prior experience as a classroom teacher when this study commenced. Through the collected data, this participant reviewed her team's focus on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration. The PLC team shared lesson plans, developed common assessments, shared resources, and discussed instructional strategies during weekly meetings and throughout the week (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 15, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Participant Six and her team members' content was paced so that each

class was ready for the common assessments at the same time. As a team, the members analyzed student data to make instructional decisions, developed reteaching plans for students, and worked to differentiate instruction (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Participant Six expressed that she found the PLC work to be helpful and felt it supported her growth as a teacher (Int #1, September 4, 2015). Like many of the other participants' PLC teams, this team focused a great deal on what and how to teach as evident in the frequency of references in their observations (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

This participant shared concerns that were similar to some of the other participants, but some were unique to her content area. She explained that she was struggling to balance home and work life and often felt overwhelmed by administrative expectations and tasks (Int #2, November 13, 2015). In addition, Participant Six said that the team did not have enough time to complete all assigned tasks and to teach all of the content that is required. She also felt the emphasis on the annual state standardized test was leading to these additional administrative expectations and as a result causing great stress (Int #2, November 13, 2015).

This case was unique in her concern regarding administrative expectations. Data revealed that the expectations from the administration for her content area were greater than that of the other participants. In fact, the PLC collaborative meetings were typically run by the administration rather than the teachers which was unique to this participant and her PLC team (Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/

Meeting Notes, 2015). Last, data revealed that one final aspect of the PLC that was unique to this participant: the members were not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings. The members were expected to do this on a day other than their designated collaboration day (Int #1, September 4, 2015). No other participant conveyed this aspect of the PLC. Participant Six did, however, reveal her desire to continue to grow as a teacher and to learn new strategies and ways of instructing (Int #2, November 13, 2015). Despite the additional stress within her content area and team, Participant Six noted that she appreciated having her team as a support.

Table 4.6 contains the content from Participant Six's interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Six.

Table 4.6

*Initial and Axial Code Table*Participant # 6

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 9/4/15 <i>-group of individuals</i> <i>-common goal</i> <i>-student success/achievement</i>	SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -helpful -analyzing quality of	Observation #1 9/29/15 -admin task (5) -resource (3) <i>-design our common assessment</i>	<i>-differentiation strategies (2)</i> <i>-strategies for instruction</i> <i>-small groups</i> <i>-data chats</i> <i>-track data</i>	SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -work is helpful -analyzing quality of

Table 4.6 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-been other times we've gotten together -pretty relevant -we meet several times a week -analyze student data -common assessments (5) -looking at data in a common way -using that data together -to make plans, or differentiate -come back to something -talk about issues -we have a lot to do and really not enough time -building those assessments -fine tuning the ones we used last year, adding and taking away -analyze data together -work on everything together -lesson planning..that needs to be done on our own time -curriculum has been designed by</i></p>	<p>assessment questions -growth as a teacher - balance home and work life -differentiation UNIQUE -administrative tasks -overwhelmed -administrative expectations -pressure to perform on state standardized assessments -connecting student demographic data to assessment data -not enough time to teach all the necessary content -not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings -not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team</p>	<p>-what to teach based on assessment <i>-language standards</i> -admin quizzing teachers on knowledge of standards on standardized test -developing shared understanding of new standardized test -teachers understanding the test -resource for test development -test prep -content of test <i>-focusing on these reading standards</i> <i>-clear targets</i> -data review <i>-areas of reteaching</i> <i>-which students missed</i> <i>-students that need enrichment</i> <i>-students that</i></p>	<p><i>better</i> <i>-monitor student growth</i> <i>-better drive instruction</i> -how to teach (16) -strategies (16) <i>-feedback will be individualized</i> <i>-differentiation strategies</i> <i>-ideas and strategies (2)</i> <i>-data chats (2)</i> -RTI <i>-revise lesson plans</i> <i>-match writing task expectations</i> -what to teach (15) -student data review (9) <i>-areas to reteach</i> <i>-model thinking for those who are struggling</i> <i>-master</i> -PLC question #3 (5) <i>-reteaching (2)</i> <i>-revisited clear targets</i> <i>-preassessment</i></p>	<p>assessment questions -growth as a teacher -balance home and work life -differentiation of instruction UNIQUE -administrative tasks -feeling overwhelmed -administrative expectations -pressure to perform on state standardized assessments -connecting student demographic data to assessment data -not enough time to teach all the necessary content -not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings -not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team</p>

Table 4.6 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>our district in modules</i> <i>-some formative assessments (are common) (2)</i> <i>-same bell work</i> Interview #2 11/13/15 <i>-come back and analyze the data (3)</i> <i>-where we need to go back in instruction</i> <i>-students were still struggling</i> <i>-have mastered and then we can move on</i> <i>-framework from the district</i> <i>-struggling with the same standards</i> <i>-incorporate those into my plans, activities, different strategies</i> <i>-what strategies my team members use</i> <i>-awesome new ideas and ways</i> <i>-impacted my instruction</i> <i>-has been helpful (2)</i> <i>-sit down together and see....what they are struggling with, what they've</i></p>		<p><i>need remediation</i> <i>-focus on students specifically</i> <i>-PLC question #3 (2)</i> <i>-identifying struggling students using data</i> <i>-cross-reference student demographic data</i> <i>-identify patterns of concern between student achievement data and student demographic data</i> <i>-we don't have enough cultural awareness</i> <i>-start paying attention more</i> <i>-review of student data (2)</i> <i>-preassessment data</i> <i>-struggling with (standards)</i> <i>-what to teach (7)</i> <i>-how to teach (6)</i></p>	<p><i>data helped us in planning</i> <i>-common assessment - standard-specific questions</i> <i>-common assessments</i> <i>-pacing (2)</i> <i>-resource (6)</i> <i>-integrate the standards</i> <i>-improve student learning</i> <i>-PLC question #2</i> <i>-lesson plans (4)</i> <i>-integration of standards (2)</i> <i>-test development (4)</i> <i>-practice assessment</i> <i>-reviewing items as a collaborative group</i> <i>-questions are appropriate</i> <i>-graphic organizers</i> <i>-emphasize</i> <i>-test prep (2)</i> <i>-most missed questions</i> <i>-reviewed data</i></p>	

Table 4.6 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>needed</i> <i>-pretty open about sharing data</i> <i>-better at writing assessments</i> <i>-continue the growth</i> <i>-(personal goal) continuing to learn new strategies and ways for instruction</i> <i>-growing as a teacher</i> <i>-need to spend more time with my family...big challenge</i> <i>-feel I've neglected my family a lot</i> <i>-standards state wide and the curriculum.....shift in education</i> <i>-felt like I'm not as effective or a good educator</i> <i>-had to pep myself up</i> <i>-I'm getting to that new direction of what they want</i> <i>-I am growing my confidence</i> <i>-I don't agree with the shift of education</i> <i>-work well as a team</i></p>		<p>-planning based on data <i>-provided a keen awareness that this needed to be taught</i> <i>-pretest</i> <i>-item analysis</i> <i>-focus on (standards)</i> <i>-reteach and add to our instruction</i> <i>-strategies (3)</i> <i>-good teaching practice</i> <i>-take a different perspective</i> <i>-one of my high achievers</i> <i>-good strategy</i> <i>-pacing</i> <i>-design your questions</i> <i>-check for understanding</i> <i>-strategies</i> <i>-looking at the standards</i> <i>-clear targets</i> <i>-what to assess</i> <i>-rigor of questions</i> <i>-standard</i> <i>-texts</i> Observation #2 12/15/15 <i>-test</i></p>	<p><i>-lowest performing standards</i> <i>-standards being assessed</i> <i>-pre-assessment questions</i> <i>-student understanding</i> <i>-deconstruction of standards</i> <i>-corrections on....post assessment</i> <i>-pre and post assessment</i> <i>-question revisions</i> <i>-post assessment data</i> <i>-reteach standards</i> <i>-reteaching strategies</i> <i>-pre assessment</i> <i>-what to teach based on data (2)</i> <i>-demographics for post common assessments</i> <i>-slightly lower performance</i> <i>-reading standards</i> <i>-highest priority</i> <i>-pretest</i></p>	

Table 4.6 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-kept me motivated</i> <i>trying new things</i> <i>-not giving up</i> <i>-changes that have gone on within testing</i> <i>-feeling really overwhelmed (2)</i> <i>-just not ever going to get ahead</i> <i>-no light at the end of the tunnel</i> <i>-(not enough) time in the day to do all of those things</i> <i>-love...that we plan together</i> <i>-does benefit the students</i> <i>-the detailed lesson plans that we have to submit (concern)</i> <i>-by the book lesson plans rather than taking the time to work on materials and feedback</i> <i>-with all that is put on our plate</i> <i>-with our content area</i> <i>-analyzing pages and pages of data--</i> <i>-writing these extremely detailed 3 and 4 page lesson plans</i></p>		<p>development (3) -number of questions per standard -design of standardized test -developing the assessment in MICA during the meeting</p>	<p><i>-integrating standards</i> <i>-areas of need for improvement</i> <i>-student data</i> <i>-strategy</i> <i>-pretest data</i> <i>-standards of concentration based on data</i> <i>-strategy</i> <i>-what to teach based on data</i> <i>-how to teach</i> <i>-citing evidence to support</i> <i>-ideas on incorporating... into lessons</i> <i>-test prep (2)</i> <i>-student understanding</i> <i>-student understanding</i> <i>-share workload</i> <i>-differentiated</i> <i>-standards and assessment review</i> <i>-divide up tasks</i> <i>-standards to teach</i> <i>-assessment revisions</i></p>	

Table 4.6 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>-what all needs to be included in them (lesson plans)</i>				

Participant seven. Participant Seven had three years of experience as a classroom teacher when this study was initiated. For this participant, much like the others, she conveyed a strong focus on student learning and achievement within her team. Collectively, this PLC collaborated each week to share ideas and strategies and develop common pre and post assessments for their students (Int #1, September 11, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). As a team, the members paced their standards based content so that students are prepared for these common assessments around the same time. This team, like the others, frequently used technology to collaborate outside of their weekly meetings (Int #1, August 11, 2015). As a group, the members analyzed student performance data to make instructional decisions and to plan for reteaching within their classrooms. Discussion of the most missed questions on common assessments occurred frequently (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, November 19, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). The PLC members shared lesson plans, resources, and instructional ideas (Int #1, September 11, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2,

December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Preparation for the state standardized test each spring was an area of focus for them. Like some of the other participants, the level of rigor and quality of assessment questions was closely monitored in addition to the level of rigor of daily instruction (Int #1, September 11, 2015; Obs #1, September 2, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). This participant felt that her work within her PLC was relevant, and it helped her to grow as a professional (Int #1, September 11, 2015; Int #2, November 19, 2015). The sense that the work done within a PLC should be collective effort was revealed within the data.

However, Participant Seven expressed a desire to improve her PLC team's outcomes and to increase her team's buy-in to PLC process (Int #2, November 19, 2015). Unlike many the other teams in the study, Participant Seven's group was not sharing the workload across all members of the team, and she would like to see this change (Int #2, November 19, 2015). She saw the value of working together and how important that is for the success of a PLC team; however, Participant Seven's team did not maintain this sentiment across all of its members (Int #2, November 19, 2015). Another participant in this study was on Participant Seven's team, but that participant did not share the same concerns. Also, Participant Seven was the only novice teacher and participant serving as PLC team leader. These concerns were unique to this participant. She believed strongly that she was responsible for student success both within and outside of the classroom, and she was committed to growing as a professional (Int #2, November 19, 2015). Actually, Participant Seven explicitly stated that she wanted her students to "succeed and meet their goals in life" and for herself, she wanted

to “grow more professionally” and “be the best teacher” (Int #2, November 19, 2015).

Table 4.7 contains the content from Participant Seven’s interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Seven.

Table 4.7

Initial and Axial Code Table

Participant # 7

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 9/10/15 <i>-people who work with students on a daily basis, come together for the common good</i> <i>-students being successful both in the classroom and outside of the classroom</i> <i>-make sure the students are getting what they are needing (2)</i> <i>-use Google docs to share ideas</i> <i>-focus on getting common assessments (4)</i>	SHARED -level of rigor of assessment questions -analyzing the quality of the assessment questions -level of rigor of instruction -collective effort -most missed questions -relevant UNIQUE -grow as a professional -improve PLC team outcomes -increase team	Observation #1 9/29/15 -pacing (6) <i>-strategies and the test</i> -resources -strategies (3) -standardized test data review (admin task) -identifying teacher strengths and weaknesses -how to teach (4) -what to teach (5) -test content (2) -reteaching -PLC question	<i>-post assessment data</i> -most missed questions (2) -PLC question #3 (3) <i>-teaching strategies</i> -what to teach <i>-finalized post assessment</i> <i>-post assessment data (2)</i> -pacing -test development (3) -cross-curricular	SHARED -level of rigor and quality of assessment questions -level of rigor of instruction -collective effort -discussed most missed questions -work is relevant UNIQUE -grow as a professional -improve PLC team outcomes -increase team buy-in to PLC

Table 4.7 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-talk about data</i> <i>-see if there's a group of my students that are weak</i> <i>-find more rigorous (questions) (2)</i> <i>-us as a team</i> <i>-works really well</i> <i>-it's for the students</i> <i>-it's why we're here</i> <i>-come together and collaborate on the pros and cons</i> <i>-students benefit</i> <i>-learning different things from your colleagues</i> <i>-still in the place of getting everyone on board</i> <i>-very relevant</i> <i>-puts it on Google docs and then we can comment...on it</i> <i>-data review (2)</i> <i>-look at the questions and brainstorm what could have been (why students may have missed problems)</i> <i>-what was a good question/ needed to be improved</i> <i>-help students to be successful</i></p>	<p>buy-in to PLC process -student success beyond the classroom -wants team to share workload</p>	<p>#3 Observation #2 12/8/15 <i>-data</i> -team not on the same page <i>-common assessments</i> -test development (2) -use of technology to collaborate - assessment draft created by the participant being reviewed -content of questions -test prep -differentiation -rigor of questions -rigor of questions -clarifying content <i>-clear targets</i> -what to teach <i>-back peddling</i> <i>-inquiry as a hook</i> -engage students</p>	<p>planning <i>-integration of math/science standards</i> <i>-strategies</i> <i>-worked on unit 5 post assessment</i> <i>-discussed plans</i> -what to teach (2) -how to teach (2) <i>-discussed benchmark data</i> <i>-post test data</i> -student weaknesses -reason for student struggles -what to reteach based upon data -test development -reteach -student weaknesses -what to teach based upon data <i>-teaching strategies</i> -resources</p>	<p>process -student success beyond the classroom -wants team to share workload -wants administration to be more involved in team meetings</p>

Table 4.7 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>-what we need to cover (standards)</i> <i>-what strategies</i> <i>-so that our teaching is as rigorous as the test</i> <i>-what needs to happen for improvement</i> Interview #2 11/19/15 <i>-not at the point of having the same clear targets and formative assessments</i> <i>-I'd like to start going there</i> <i>-seen how PLCs work/ how effective</i> <i>-growth that they have</i> <i>-ready to get to the next part...so we reach our goals</i> <i>-how I'm going to assess them</i> <i>-teaching is starting to get a little more in depth</i> <i>-ability to apply basic knowledge to a higher ended question</i> <i>-doing the best I can as a professional</i> <i>-strategies that are</i></p>				

Table 4.7 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>effective</i> <i>-(goal for the group) work together..(share workload)</i> <i>-feel like...it's two of us doing all the work</i> <i>-grow more professionally</i> <i>-want to be the best teacher</i> <i>-let my students see my passion</i> <i>-here for them 100%</i> <i>-want everyone in my group...to see that as well</i> <i>-(develop) same desire and determination (within group)</i> <i>-see students succeed and meet their goals in life</i> <i>-not everybody is on the same page</i> <i>-don't believe in it</i> <i>-(would like for an) administrator to stay for the meeting</i> <i>-want to learn how to effectively use that (data) and help my students</i> <i>-lot of things that I've grown to know</i></p>				

Table 4.7 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>about myself and my teaching strategies</i> <i>-everybody on board</i> <i>-have a team that sees the results and sees how effective PLCs can be</i>				

Participant eight. Participant Eight had two years of prior experience as a classroom teacher when the study began. Her team’s focus on student learning and achievement was evident in the data collected from this participant. The team collaborated weekly to share ideas, instructional strategies, and to establish the pacing of their content (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Together, the PLC team members developed common assessments to be administered across the grade level to all students. The members frequently used technology to collaborate outside of weekly meetings (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Student assessment data was closely reviewed during the meetings to determine next steps instructionally and to tailor reteaching plans. Within Participant Eight’s team, the members shared resources and

instructional ideas and focused on preparation for the annual state standardized tests (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015). Similar to other participants in the study, Participant Eight and her team shared the workload by creating common lesson plans that were used across each classroom (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015; Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015; Artifacts/ Meeting Notes, 2015).

This participant felt that the work done within her PLC is relevant and helpful which was also heard from other participants in this study (Int #1, September 4, 2015). In addition, Participant Eight remarked that the collective work done within her PLC built her confidence as a teacher and increases her accountability of instruction. She explained that she knows that she is teaching what she should be each day (Int #1, September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015). Similar to some of her colleagues, Participant Eight valued the experience of her fellow team members, appreciated their support in the decision making process, and hoped to continue to learn more from them (Int #2, November 13, 2015). Data revealed that Participant Seven and her PLC team members worked hard to scaffold instruction to increase student understanding and to try to anticipate the students' response to instruction (Obs #1, September 29, 2015; Obs #2, December 8, 2015).

Looking at her concerns, like some of the other participants, the need for more time to collaborate with her peers was conveyed in her interviews along with the desire to have more autonomy in their development of their weekly agendas as a team (Int #1,

September 4, 2015; Int #2, November 13, 2015). Unique to Participant Eight, she mentioned that she appreciated the problem solving focus of the team as a novice teacher; however, at times it was difficult to find consensus within the team because of the varying personalities (Int #2, November 13, 2015).

Table 4.8 contains the content from Participant Eight's interviews, observations, and artifacts along with the resulting initial and axial codes. Codes shared by other participants are noted along with those that were unique to Participant Eight.

Table 4.8

*Initial and Axial Code Table*Participant # 8

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
Interview #1 9/4/15 <i>-teach the same material</i> <i>-work together on lesson plans and assessments</i> <i>-talk about how they are going</i> <i>-collecting data</i> <i>-analyzing data</i> <i>-aligning everything to the state standards</i> <i>-making the assessment</i> <i>-who is going to</i>	ALL -student learning and achievement -share ideas and strategies -collaborate during weekly meetings -pacing of content -standards based -what to teach -how to teach -use technology to	Observation #1 9/29/15 <i>-look at the test</i> -test development (7) -test content (6) <i>-looking at last year's test</i> <i>-only thing our test is missing is triangles</i> <i>-it matches the standards</i> -resources -rigor of test questions (3) <i>-not</i>	<i>-sample questions</i> -test content (2) -pacing (3) <i>-test for these standards</i> <i>-good with a few adjustments</i> <i>-good questions</i> -test development (6) -test preparation	ALL -focus on student learning and achievement -collaborate weekly to share ideas and strategies and develop common pre and post assessments -pacing of standards based content -use technology

Table 4.8 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>plan what part of the unit</i> <i>-looking at the new state test</i> <i>-very relevant</i> <i>-very helpful (2)</i> <i>-appreciate them</i> <i>-good problem solving</i> <i>-lot of us have the same problems</i> <i>-we work together to solve it</i> <i>-what works best for our kids</i> <i>-(talk about) students and how they are responding</i> <i>-how they are responding to our teaching</i> <i>-how we anticipate they will respond</i> <i>-plan accordingly</i> <i>-collaborative assessments</i> <i>-work on lesson plans</i> <i>-sit down together</i> <i>-figure out how many days</i> <i>-how many days to spend on each one</i> <i>-how long the unit is going to last</i> <i>-who will plan which days</i> <i>-understand their</i></p>	<p>collaborate -develop common pre and post assessments collaboratively -test development -reteaching based upon student assessment data -share lesson plans and instructional ideas - preparation for state standardized tests -shared resources -test content -analyze student data to make decisions SHARED -shared workload -common lesson plans -relevant -helpful -builds confidence -accountability of instruction</p>	<p><i>demonstrating any knowledge whatsoever of the concept</i> -student understanding -questioning content of the questions <i>-don't want to put that question</i> -teacher understanding of connection between standard and question -test prep -how to teach (11) -student weakness -pacing (8) <i>-would they be able to put it in a graph?</i> <i>-will they be able to...</i> <i>-don't think they'll be ready for...</i> -what to teach (2) -student understanding <i>-I don't understand</i></p>	<p>(2) -student understanding (2) <i>-create a test</i> -resource <i>-standard</i> -shared workload <i>-combine the information and create an assessment</i> <i>-universal screener</i> <i>-benchmark</i> -RTI -test planning <i>-formative assessment questions</i> <i>-tasks from (resource)</i> -resource (2) <i>-this group of students has no concept of slope</i> <i>-want to memorize something rather than think</i> <i>-standards for unit 3</i> -what to teach <i>-unit 3 test</i> <i>-plan units</i></p>	<p>to collaborate outside of weekly meetings -reteaching based upon student assessment data -share lesson plans, resources, and instructional ideas -preparation for state standardized test -analyze student data to make decisions SHARED -shared workload -common lesson plans -work is relevant and helpful -builds confidence -accountability of instruction -experienced based decision making -need more time to collaborate -scaffolding for student</p>

Table 4.8 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>lesson plans</i> <i>-we've covered everything</i> <i>-a lot of us do the same lesson plans</i> <i>-depending on what's going on in our individual classrooms</i> <i>-similar things every day</i> <i>-main focus is on the end of the unit assessment</i> <i>-little bit of time looking at quizzes</i> Interview #211/13/15 <i>-whatever we design in our PLC will be the main focus of one of my classes</i> <i>-design as many tasks</i> <i>-focus on the test</i> <i>-task would be my lesson plan for the day</i> <i>-discuss are they going to do it in pairs, or on their own, things like that</i> <i>-talk about instruction</i> <i>-in a Google doc</i> <i>-lesson plan for</i></p>	<p>-experienced based decision making -need more time to collaborate -scaffolding for student understanding -anticipate student response UNIQUE -problem solving -difficulty finding consensus at times within team</p>	<p><i>-I'm struggling to write the lesson plans</i> <i>-I don't know how deep to go into it</i> -strategies <i>-where do you focus</i> -student readiness for content on test -resources (10) <i>-good question</i> -review of test content <i>-we know how to each and assess the standards</i> Observation #2 12/8/15 -test prep -understanding of the standard and how it will be assessed -student weakness <i>-looking through the standards</i> <i>-all of it aligned</i> <i>-changed my intro lesson</i> <i>-discover the (content)</i> <i>-looked at the</i></p>	<p>-planning -data -reteach -shared workload -test content -differentiate -PLC question #3 <i>-strategies</i> <i>-review</i> <i>-unit 4 test questions from last year's test</i> <i>-what does it mean?-create a task for the real world standard</i> <i>-rubric</i> <i>-score it separately</i> -grading practices -training on a new resource for teachers</p>	<p>understanding -anticipate student response UNIQUE -problem solving focus of the team -difficulty finding consensus at times within team -wished she had been on a PLC her first year in the classroom</p>

Table 4.8 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<p><i>each day</i> <i>-one person who is in charge of doing the lesson plan for each day</i> <i>-successful on the test</i> <i>-we are all on the same page with teaching of standards</i> <i>-getting the same understanding of what students are supposed to learn</i> <i>-share ideas</i> <i>-learn from the two who have been teaching 20+ years</i> <i>-they use some of my ideas too</i> <i>-my confidence has grown</i> <i>-my first year we didn't have it at all, so I was really lost</i> <i>-a lot of support</i> <i>-past two years it's been a lot better</i> <i>-helped my confidence</i> <i>-I know I'm on the same page</i> <i>-their students have struggled</i> <i>-everyone contributes how they have taught it</i></p>		<p><i>lesson</i> <i>-our kids could do that</i> <i>-don't think they could do...</i> <i>-use of and sharing manipulatives</i> <i>-start doing assessments on...</i> <i>-sharing ideas</i> <i>-student data</i> <i>-create your question</i> <i>-standards</i> <i>-question was a disaster</i> <i>-need to review a lot</i> <i>-know immediately what areas you need to work on</i> <i>-enrichment people</i> <i>-(students) find it difficult</i> <i>-would like to do stations</i> <i>-PLC question #3</i> <i>-student understanding</i> <i>-manipulatives</i> <i>-student understanding</i> <i>-real world</i></p>		

Table 4.8 cont.

Words/ Phrases from Interviews	Initial Codes	Content from Direct Observations	Content from relevant PLC artifacts	Axial Codes
<i>-get a lot of good ideas</i> <i>-how they have taught it</i> <i>-realize I can explain it in different ways</i> <i>-help my students understand</i> <i>-we are four different people</i> <i>-we work differently</i> <i>-hard to be on the same page</i> <i>-see more time for it (PLCs)</i> <i>-independence within our PLC</i> <i>-not always what we think would be the most beneficial for us to talk about</i>		relevance of content -standards/ expectations -teacher understanding of test -real life -regular students -can monitor -they need to understand that -got to fully understand what happens -students who struggled -come up with it themselves		

Categories and Themes

Reviewing the data across all eight cases, the researcher found categories and themes emerging. Table 5.1 compiles the initial and axial codes that were found in all of the interviews, observations, artifacts, and within the field journal. Throughout the interviews, observations, and artifacts, it was clear from all of the participants that they shared a focus on student learning and achievement in their PLC teams. Statements such

as “our main goal is to improve student learning and our effectiveness” (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #1, 2015) and “make sure the students are getting what they are needing” (Table 4.7, Participant 7, Int #1, 2015) were made during the interviews. Data collected for each participant involved in the study indicated that the PLC teams collaborate weekly to share ideas and strategies. The participants and fellow team members developed common pre and post assessments as team. As an example of this evidence, Participant Four referenced these “common assessments” four times in her first interview (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #1, 2015). Data collected showed that each team spent time pacing their standards based content so that students were ready at the same time for the common assessments. In fact, one participant even referenced that “no matter which teacher they go to, they are able to help them” as they attempted to create consistency across the grade level in pacing and content (Table 4.5, Participant 5, Int #2, 2015).

The data indicated that participants and their PLCs regularly analyze student assessment results to make instructional decisions as they prepared for reteaching, future lesson plans, and assessments. Statements such as “using that data together...to make plans or differentiate” were found throughout the interviews along with notations of this in their artifacts (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #1, 2015; Artifacts, 2015). Lesson plan ideas, resources, and instructional strategies were shared among all of the participants with a strong emphasis on preparing for the annual state standardized test. Evidence of this can be found in their interviews with statements referencing that they “share projects, other assignments and powerpoints” (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #1, 2015) and

that “everyone is willing to share and bring their experiences from wherever” (Table 4.4, Participant 4, Int #1, 2015). Figure 9 depicts the primary categories and themes within the study that emerged from all participants in Table 5.1.

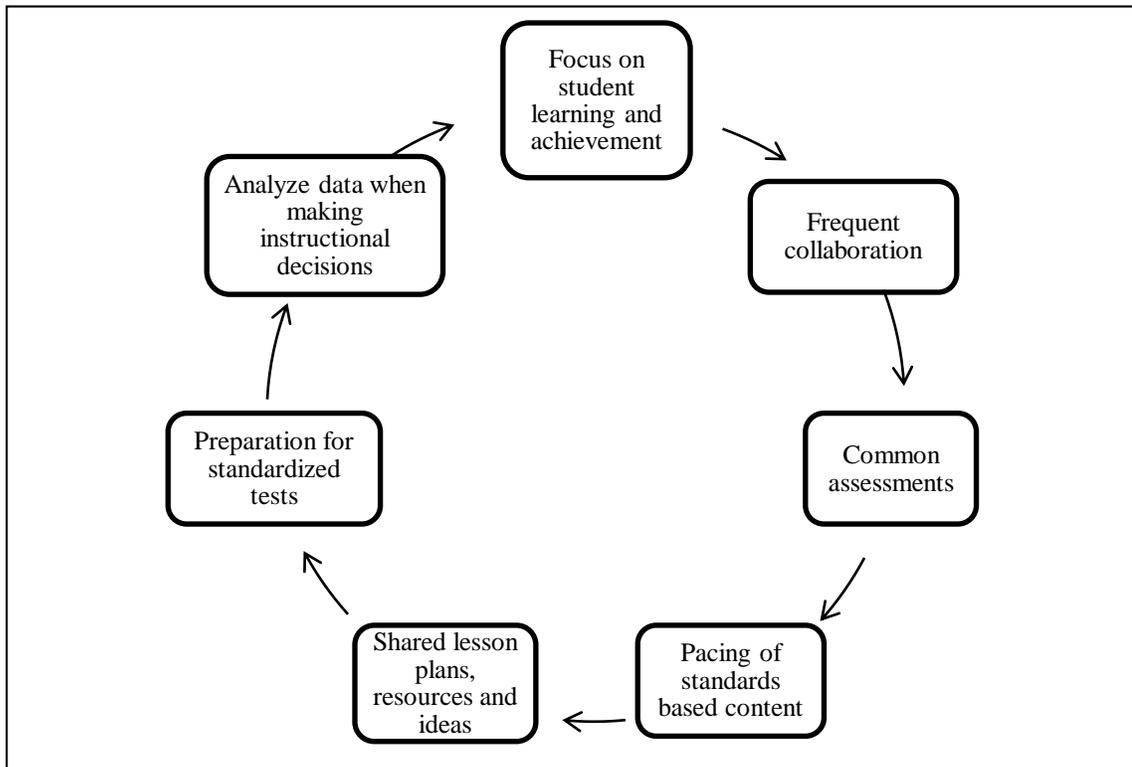


Figure 9. Categories and Themes, All Participants

Table 5.1

Category Table, All Participants

Initial Codes	Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
ALL DATA -student learning and achievement -share ideas and strategies -collaborate during weekly meetings -pacing of content -standards based -what to teach -how to teach -use technology to collaborate -develop common pre and post assessments collaboratively -test development -reteaching based upon student assessment data -share lesson plans and instructional ideas -preparation	ALL DATA -focus on student learning and achievement -collaborate weekly to share ideas and strategies and develop common pre and post assessments -pacing of standards based content -use technology to collaborate outside of weekly meetings -reteaching based upon student assessment data -share lesson plans, resources, and instructional ideas -preparation for state standardized	ALL	ALL -focus on student learning and achievement -collaborate frequently to share ideas and strategies and develop common pre and post assessments -pacing of standards based content -share lesson plans, resources, and instructional ideas -prepare for state standardized tests -analyze student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plan	ALL -focus on student learning and achievement through structured collaboration -consistent pacing of standards based content -share lesson plans, resources, and instructional ideas during weekly meetings -analyze student data to make decisions and to develop reteaching plans

Table 5.1 cont.

Initial Codes	Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
for state standardized tests -shared resources -test content -analyze student data to make decisions	test -analyze student data to make decisions			

During the analysis of the data, categories and themes emerged that were consistent across all of the participants (Table 5.1). Still, upon reviewing the data tables for each participant, the researcher found that there were categories and themes that were shared among two or more participants and some that were unique to individual participants. To highlight these differences, the axial codes from each participant in Tables 4.1 through 4.8 were compiled into a Category Table (5.2) that is organized by participant. Categories and themes were identified for each participant in Table 5.2.

One of the shared themes included that many of the participants shared the workload from week to week (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, & 8, 2015). Participant One referenced “divide out the work tasks” or a similar phrase five times in her first interview (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015). Another participant said the PLC team members “divide up the standards” and “come up with questions” for the common assessments as they collaborate the develop their unit tests (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #1, 2015). Another common theme that emerged from the data was that several of the

teams drafted common lesson plans (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 5, & 8, 2015). One example of this comes from data collected on Participant Eight who said that her team “works together on lesson plans and assessments,” they decided “who is going to plan what part of the unit,” and that “a lot of us do the same lesson plans” all in her first interview (Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #1, 2015). In addition, half of the participants revealed that their team developed consistent grading practices through their observation data (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 3, & 5, 2015).

Five of the eight participants shared that their team collaborated more than is mandated by the administration (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, & 6, 2015) making statements such as “we really meet everyday” and we “constantly get together” (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015). Also evident, many of the participants appreciated the accountability developed within their team as they ensured that the necessary content was being taught from week to week as five of them reported throughout the data collection phase (FJ, Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, & 8, 2015) through comments like “make sure I’m not forgetting anything” (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #2, 2015). Half of the participants revealed that they used technology to collaborate outside of their weekly meetings through such tools as email, Dropbox, and Google Docs (FJ, Participants 1, 4, 7, & 8, Int #1, Int #2, Artifacts, 2015). As novice teachers, just over half of the participants found the PLC work to be relevant (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 5, 7, & 8, Int #1, 2015) and helpful in their practice (FJ, Participant 1, 2, 6, & 8, Int #1, 2015). Participant One conveyed that she viewed her PLC work as a “need not a want” (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015). In addition, Participant Two said she did not “think I would

have done as well as what I did do, especially when it came to content” because of the support of her team (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #1, 2015). Their PLC work helped to build their confidence as educators (FJ, Participants 2 & 8, Int #2, 2015).

Assessment development is a large part of their PLC work and many of the participants conveyed that they spent considerable time analyzing the development of questions and the level of rigor in their assessments (FJ, Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, & 7, Obs #1, Obs #2, Artifacts, 2015). Working collectively to scaffold student understanding (FJ, Participants 1, 5, & 8, Obs #1, Obs #2, 2015) and to increase the level of rigor in their classroom was also evident in the data for more than one of the participants (FJ, Participants 1, 3, & 7, Int #1, Int #2, 2015). Statements such as “always trying to keep it at the same rigor or even up a little bit” supported this theme (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #2, 2015). The novice teachers in this study revealed that they appreciated the experience level of their peers and that they valued this when making decisions as a team (FJ, Participants 4, 5, & 8, Int #2, 2015). Participant Eight referenced learning “from the two who have been teaching twenty plus years” and how her “confidence has grown” as a result of this support (Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #2, 2015). Moreover, the importance of professional growth as a teacher and continuing to evaluate and improve their effectiveness was revealed across the data from several participants (FJ, Participants 1, 4, & 6, Int #2, 2015).

In terms of concerns, a few participants expressed the need for more time for collaboration (FJ, Participants 1, 5, & 8, Int #2, 2015) and their struggle to balance work and home life (FJ, Participants 1 & 6, Int #2, 2015). More than one participant also

conveyed the desire to have a “little bit of autonomy” in determining the agenda for their own meetings (Table 4.4, Participant 4, Int #2, 2015) and referenced that discussions are “not always what we think would be the most beneficial for us to talk about” (Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #2, 2015).

Some of the themes that were unique to individual participants included that as novice teachers one participant appreciated having lesson plan exemplars from her more experienced colleagues as a reference (Table 4.5, Participant 5, Int #2, 2015). However, most of the unique individual findings were concerns such as wanting to feel their work is valued by the team (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #2, 2015) and, as two participants emphasized, maintaining their own teaching styles (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #2, 2015). One of the participants in particular, expressed a strong concern about the disparity of administrative expectations based upon content area and how this had affected her team’s work and her sense of efficacy (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #2, 2015). She referenced the “detailed lesson plans that we have to submit” and “with all that is put on our plate...with our content area” in her second interview (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #2, 2015). This particular concern included the desire to see less involvement from the administration which was in contrast to the desire from a different participant who wanted more involvement from the administration (Table 4.7, Participant 7, Int #2, 2015).

Participant Seven said she would like an “administrator to stay for the meeting” because “not everybody is on the same page” (Table 4.7, Participant 7, Int #2, 2015). This particular concern was paired with her desire to increase the participation and

engagement level of the rest of her team members as their leader. This participant was the only novice teacher in the study who was the leader of their PLC team. She valued the work done within her PLC, and she wanted her team to have her “same desire and determination,” but she was struggling to get her team on board (Table, 4.7, Participant 7, Int #2, 2015). Her fellow team member, also a participant, did not share this same concern. Finally, only one participant disclosed that developing consensus was hard among the varying personalities within her team (Participant 8, Int #2, 2015). Participant Eight discussed that her team was comprised of “four different people” who “work differently” and at times it was “hard to be on the same page” (Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #2, 2015). Figure 10 summarizes the shared and unique categories and themes from the study with Table 5.2 providing additional details.

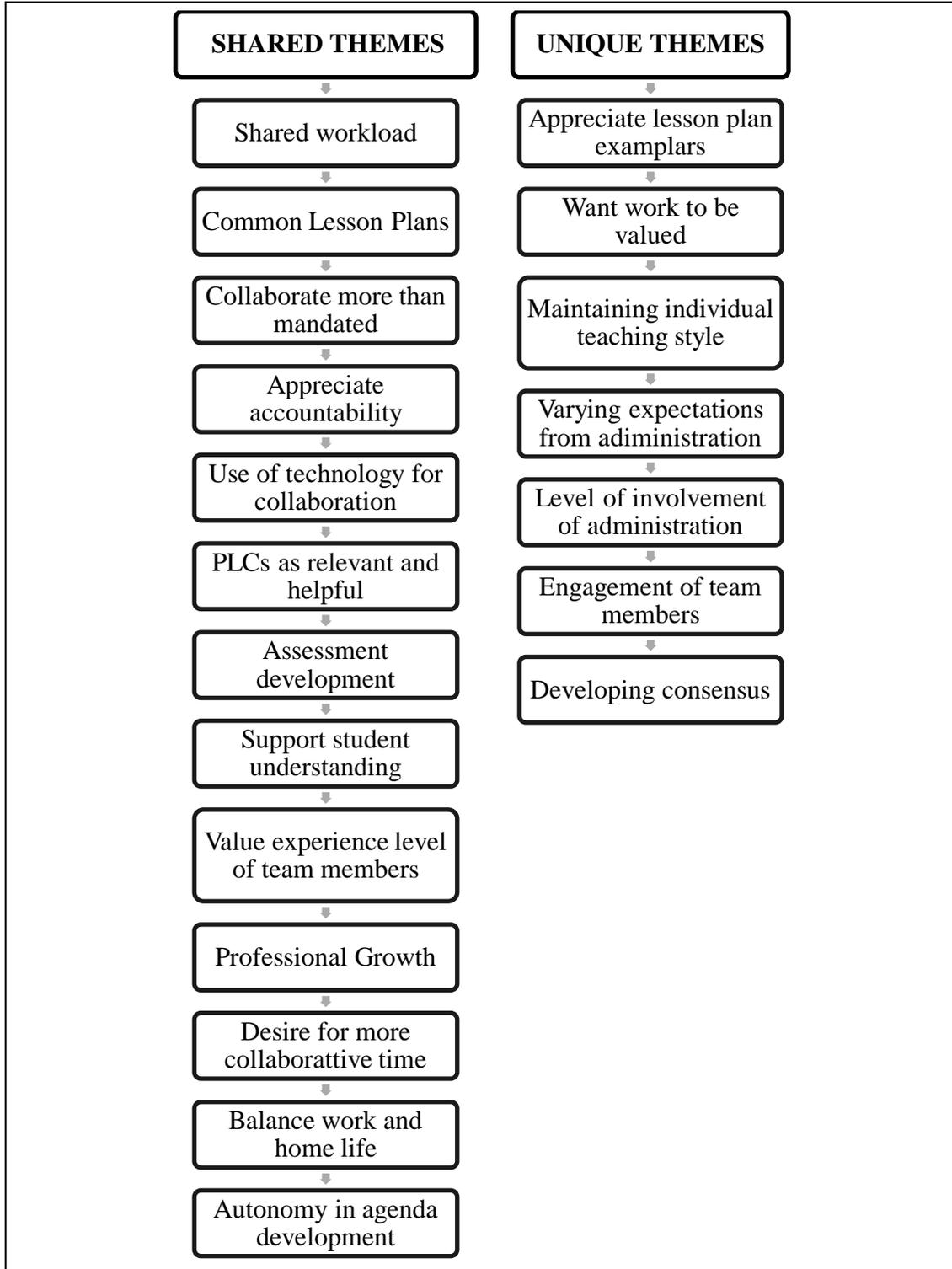


Figure 10. Categories and Themes, Shared and Unique

Table 5.2

Category Table, By Participant

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
<p>SHARED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -shared workload to ease the burden -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant and helpful -encourages self-reflection -scaffolding for student understanding -need for more time to collaborate -motivating and engaging students -increase rigor of instruction -growth of the teacher -balance home and work life -differentiation of instruction -collective effort <p>UNIQUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -willing and open -application of learning (teacher and student) -encouraging team 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -develop and implement common lesson plans to share the workload and ease the burden -develop consistent grading practices -work is relevant and helpful and encourages growth as a teacher -scaffolding for student understanding -seeks out opportunities to collaborate more than mandated by administration -interested in motivating, engaging, and challenging students through the development of relationships, differentiation, and rigor -concerned about balancing home and work life -found team members to be willing and open to sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -develop and implement common lesson plans and consistent grading practices -work is relevant and helpful, encourages growth as a teacher, and wants to share with others -seeks out opportunities to collaborate more than mandated by administration -values the development of relationships, differentiation, and rigor -concerned about balancing home and work life -continually evaluating the effectiveness of instruction

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
members -evaluate effectiveness of instruction -content focused -importance of student-teacher relationships	1	do the same for others -continually evaluating the effectiveness of instruction	
SHARED -shared workload -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant and helpful -builds confidence -level of rigor of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -encouraging self-reflection -analyzing quality of assessment questions UNIQUE -importance of quality relationships -encourage teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team -improve assessment	2	-work is relevant and helpful and builds confidence as a teacher -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -work ensures accountability of instruction -encouraging self-reflection and teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team and to improve assessment development skills	-work is relevant and helpful and builds confidence as a teacher -work ensures accountability of instruction and development of high quality assessments -encouraging self-reflection and review of teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team and to improve assessment development skills

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
<p>SHARED development skills -shared workload -consistent grading practices -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accoutability of instruction -rigor of instruction</p> <p>UNIQUE -consistent but still autonomous -supported by peers -able to contribute -value integration of subjects -consistent expectations for student work -having enough time to fit everything in -district level expectations -individualization of teaching style -develop individual lesson plans based upon agreed upon standards on upcoming assessment</p>	3	-shared workload on assessments -consistent grading practices and expectations for writing -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments and instruction -accoutability of instruction -develop individual lesson plans based upon agreed upon standards on upcoming assessment -feels supported by peers and able to contribute to the group -having enough time to fit everything in -meeting district level expectations	-shared workload in assessment development -consistent grading practices and expectations for writing -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments and instruction -accoutability of instruction -feels supported by peers and able to contribute to the group -concerned about having enough time to fit everything in and meeting district level expectations
<p>SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -level of rigor and quality of questions</p>	4	-level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction	-level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction and

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
on assessments - accountability of instruction -experience based decision making -growth of the teacher -discuss most missed questions UNIQUE -common clear targets -individualize instruction as needed -adjusts instruction according to the needs of students and based upon PLC team discussions	4	-experience based decision making -growth of the teacher -individualize instruction as needed	experience based decision making -growth of the teacher
	5	-shared workload when developing common lesson plans to ease burden -developed consistent grading practices -work is relevant -level of rigor of assessment questions -appreciates accountability of instruction and task completion -experience based decision making	-share the workload and develop common lesson plans, assessments, resources, consistent grading practices, and instructional ideas during weekly meetings and throughout the week -work is relevant and recognizes value of cohesiveness within team -level of rigor of

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
<p>SHARED -shared workload to ease burden -consistent grading practices -common lesson plans -collaborate more than mandated -work is relevant -level of rigor of assessment questions -accountability of instruction -experience based decision making -motivating and engaging students</p>	5	<p>-motivating and engaging students - scaffolding for student understanding -able to anticipate student responses -importance of cohesiveness within the team -appreciates lesson plan exemplars and shared notes and examples to be used during instruction</p>	<p>assessment questions - appreciates accountability of instruction and task completion -motivating and engaging students -scaffolding for student understanding -able to anticipate student responses -appreciates lesson plan exemplars, experience base of team, and shared notes and examples to be used during instruction</p>
<p>SHARED -collaborate more than mandated -work is helpful -analyzing quality of assessment questions -growth as a teacher -balance home and work life -differentiation of instruction UNIQUE -administrative tasks -feeling overwhelmed -administrative expectations</p>	6	<p>-collaborate more than mandated -work is helpful and supports growth as a teacher -analyzing quality of assessment questions -struggling to balance home and work life -feeling overwhelmed by administrative expectations and tasks -pressure to perform on state</p>	<p>-work is helpful and supports growth as a teacher -struggling to balance home and work life -feeling overwhelmed by administrative expectations and tasks and lack of time to cover standards -not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings -not enough time to</p>

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
<p>-pressure to perform on state standardized assessments</p> <p>-connecting student demographic data to assessment data</p> <p>-not enough time to teach all the necessary content</p> <p>-not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings</p> <p>-not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team</p>	6	<p>standardized assessments</p> <p>-connecting student demographic data to assessment data</p> <p>-not enough time to teach all the necessary content</p> <p>-not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings</p> <p>-not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team</p>	complete the tasks expected of the team
<p>SHARED</p> <p>-level of rigor and quality of assessment questions</p> <p>-level of rigor of instruction</p> <p>-collective effort</p> <p>-discussed most missed questions</p> <p>-work is relevant</p> <p>UNIQUE</p> <p>-grow as a professional</p> <p>-improve PLC team outcomes</p> <p>-increase team buy-in to PLC process</p> <p>-student success beyond the classroom</p>	7	<p>-level of rigor of both instruction and assessment</p> <p>-work should be a collective effort and wants team to view it that way and share workload</p> <p>-work is relevant</p> <p>-wants grow as a professional</p> <p>-improve PLC team outcomes and increase team buy-in to PLC process</p> <p>-student success beyond the classroom</p>	<p>evaluate rigor of instruction and assessments</p> <p>-desire for work to be collective effort and for team to share more of the workload</p> <p>-sees value of work and wants to continue to grow as a educator</p> <p>-wants PLC team to grow</p> <p>-help students succeed in every way</p>

Table 5.2 cont.

Axial Codes	Participant #	Categories	Themes
-wants team to share workload	7		
<p>SHARED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -shared workload -common lesson plans -work is relevant and helpful -builds confidence -accountability of instruction -experienced based decision making -need more time to collaborate -scaffolding for student understanding -anticipate student response <p>UNIQUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -problem solving focus of the team -difficulty finding consensus at times within team 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -share workload and develop common assessments -views work as relevant, helpful, and feels it builds confidence -appreciates accountability of instruction and experience based decision making -feels need for more time for collaboration -focused on scaffolding instruction for student understanding -values problem solving focus of time -finding consensus difficult at times -wished she had been on a PLC team her first year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -share workload and develop common assessments -views work as relevant, helpful, and feels it builds confidence -appreciates accountability of instruction and experience based decision making -feels need for more time for collaboration -values problem solving focus of time -finding consensus difficult at times -wished she had been on a PLC team her first year

Cross Case Analysis

Moving forward, the researcher then began the cross case analysis portion of the study to identify patterns across all eight cases. The most helpful source of data for this portion of the analysis phase came from the focus group session (Table 6) and a review of both the shared and unique codes, categories, and themes in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Table 3 includes the content from the focus group session and the categories and themes coming out of all of the participants which revealed the patterns across the entire study.

Looking at the patterns across all of the participants, most of these teachers value and appreciate having a team to share ideas and the daily workload with (FJ, Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, & 8, Int #1, Int #2, Artifacts, 2015). Statements such as it is “nice to have a collaborative group” and “have team members to rely on” came out of the focus group session (Table 6, FGS, 2015). The words “thankful” or “grateful” were referenced five times during the focus group session (Table 6, FGS, 2015). Two participants shared that their experience without a PLC team as a novice teacher was “very difficult” and that they had “no idea what to teach” when they were not a part of a PLC team (Table 6, FGS, 2015).

All of the participants completed similar tasks within their groups, namely the development of common assessments; the word “accountability” was used more than once in the focus group session as the participants discussed how their PLC work had assisted with their sense of self-efficacy (Table 6, FGS, 2015). A focus on the quality of assessments and the specific questions to be addressed was seen in all of the data collected throughout the study but was especially evident in the observations. Within the

focus group, participants reported that they had “gotten better at writing assessments” and that they felt their PLC work had “prepared them to be successful” on the state standardized test (Table 6, FGS, 2015).

An emphasis on what and how to teach came out of all of the data across the study along with an appreciation for accountability of instruction and task completion fostered within their groups. During the focus group, two participants emphasized that this work “keeps us focused on what we need to teach” (Table 6, FGS, 2015). Participants in all of the cases shared different ideas, strategies, and resources for the benefit of students. Not all of the participants followed the exact same lesson plans, but they all had access to lesson plan ideas which they valued across the board. In the focus group, the words “help” or “helpful” were used three times during the session along with phrases like “I love my collaboration group” and “good experience” (Table 6, FGS, 2015). Clearly, they would seek collaboration of some kind if they did not have a PLC team or the expectation of collaboration from their administration (Table 6, FGS, 2015). Evidence of analyzing data to make instructional decisions was more prevalent in their interviews than in the observations or the focus group. Their references to the use of technology to collaborate and other direct references to collaborating frequently indicated the majority of the participants collaborate more than is mandated by their administration.

Another pattern that emerged across the data and from the focus group in particular was the desire for the administration to provide consistent support, encouragement and guidance. This was mentioned at least seven times in the focus group alone and also emerged from two of the individual cases’ interviews (Table 6, FGS, 2015; Table 4.6,

Participant 6, Int #2, 2015; Table 4.7, Participant 7, Int #2, 2015). In the focus group session, participants suggested they would “like the balance” and for “administrative expectations to be clear” (Table 6, FGS, 2015). The desire for autonomy of instruction and freedom to be an individual was highly emphasized in the focus group with at least nine references while only one participant discussed this in her interview (Table 6, FGS, 2015; Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #2, 2015).

Identifying outliers within the data, the researcher found many of the unique pieces of data to either be concerns or expressions of appreciation. When looking at what they appreciate about their PLC work, one participant felt strongly that she was successful as a teacher her first year because of PLC team (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015). From a different case, another participant was thankful for the available exemplars of high quality lesson plans along with notes and examples coming from her team each week (Table 4.5, Participant 5, Int #2, 2015). Reviewing concerns, one unique piece of data was the desire to feel their work is valued by the rest of their team members (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #2, 2015). This particular participant wanted her team to be more “solution focused,” and this theme also emerged in the focus group (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #2, 2015; Table 3, FGS, 2015). In contrast to the desire to be more “solution focused,” a different participant explained that she appreciated the problem solving focus of her team (Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #2, 2015). Another participant revealed that she wanted to maintain her individuality while still relying on her team members in terms of agreed upon content (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #2, 2015). This stood out on its own in the interviews and observations but was heard from other

participants in the focus group as well (Table 3, FGS, 2015). A large discrepancy in administrative expectations between content areas was revealed by one participant in the interviews and observations, and this topic was thoroughly discussed in the focus group (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #2, 2015; Table 3, FGS, 2015). Participants expressed varying opinions about the level of support they would like to receive from the administration, but this participant in particular revealed a great deal of stress related to the work her PLC was asked to do each week. Within the focus group, one participant shared that the expectations from the administration should be “somewhere in the middle” (Table 3, FGS, 2015). A final outlier from the data came from one participant who conveyed a strong desire to grow as a professional through her PLC work and to improve her team’s outcomes and buy-in of the process (Table 4.7, Participant 7, Int #2, 2015).

Overall, the participants had a positive view of PLCs and conveyed that the work was “helpful” and assisted with their professional growth. Many used the words “thankful” and “grateful” in the focus group when they talked about having support from peers and the access to lesson plans, ideas, and strategies. Participants expressed that they felt better prepared for their annual state standardized assessments as a result of their PLC work and a connection between classroom practice and standardized test outcomes developed from the data. They shared that they would seek collaboration regardless of structured expectations at their school (Table 6, FGS, 2015).

Given the data and analysis, these participants would prefer to see clear and consistent expectations and support from the administration with minimal irrelevant or

redundant information or tasks. The participants suggested that the administration should allow the PLC teams some independence and autonomy as they developed their weekly agendas and created a collaborative culture within their team using phrases like “more independence” during the focus group (Table 6, FGS, 2015). According to the participants in the focus group, the administration should assist in directing the weekly meetings on problem solving and help them to be more “solution focused” overall (Table 6, FGS, 2015). Also, in the focus group, the participants said that they hoped other novice teachers would continue to develop confidence from their PLC teams and share their opinions and ideas more often when it was stated that novice teachers should “figure out how to make your group work” (Table 6, FGS, 2015). In these cases, the participants felt they had a voice on their teams, and they believed maintaining their voice and encouraging it in others was important. Overall, developing a balanced approach to PLC implementation emerged from the data. Figure 11 summarizes the patterns that emerged during the cross case analysis.

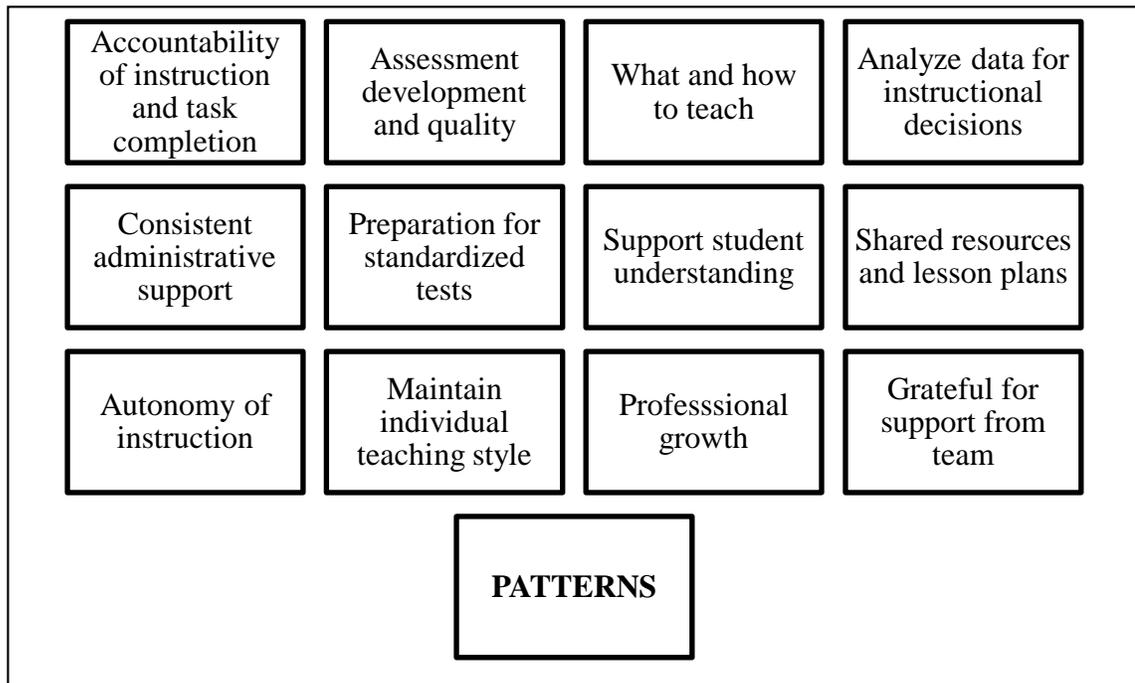


Figure 11. Cross Case Analysis Patterns

To analyze the data across each case, the researcher merged the content from the focus group session with the categories and themes that were identified for all participants, shared by a few participants, and unique to individuals. Table 6 was developed by compiling the data from the focus group session and the categories and themes that emerged throughout the analysis phase of the study. Patterns were then recognized that crossed both the focus group content and the categories and themes.

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
<i>compromise (3)</i> <i>-can't all teach the same way</i> <i>-gotten better at writing assessments</i> <i>-prepared them to be successful on the (state standardized test)</i> <i>-keeps us focused on what we need to teach (2)</i> <i>-would seek collaboration in some form (4)</i> <i>-how you are going to teach it</i> <i>-consistent involvement, attendance, support and expectations from administration (7)</i> <i>-more independence</i> <i>-letting us decide what we need to talk about</i> <i>-minimize</i>	the workload and ease the burden -develop consistent grading practices -work is relevant and helpful and encourages growth as a teacher -scaffolding for student understanding -seeks out opportunities to collaborate more than mandated by administration -interested in motivating, engaging, and challenging students through the development of relationships, differentiation, and rigor -concerned about balancing home and work life -found team members to be	consistent grading practices -work is relevant and helpful, encourages growth as a teacher, and wants to share with others -seeks out opportunities to collaborate more than mandated by administration -values the development of relationships, differentiation, and rigor -concerned about balancing home and work life -continually evaluating the effectiveness of instruction		and ideas are available -desire for autonomy of instruction and freedom to be an individual (9) -work is helpful and assists with professional growth -thankful and grateful for support from peers -better prepared for annual state standardized assessments -would seek collaboration regardless of structured expectations -desire for clear and consistent expectations from admin with minimal irrelevant or redundant information -allow teams some independence and autonomy as they develop -focus teams on problem solving

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
irrelevant and/or redundant information (4)- <i>admin expectations are clear</i> <i>-thankful/grateful</i> (5) (shared lesson plans, assessments and support) <i>-love my collaboration group</i> (2) <i>-good experience</i> <i>-have team members to rely on</i> <i>-need the next step</i> <i>-every group is going to be different</i> <i>-figure out how to make your group work</i> <i>-be open to compromising</i> <i>-support each other</i> <i>-stressful</i> <i>-high pressure</i> <i>-somewhere in the middle</i> <i>-need a balance</i>	willing and open to sharing and wants to do the same for others -continually evaluating the effectiveness of instruction			and become more solution focused -continue to develop confidence and share more opinions and ideas as a novice
	-work is relevant and helpful and builds confidence as a teacher -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -work ensures accountability of instruction -encouraging self-reflection and teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team and to improve assessment development skills	-work is relevant and helpful and builds confidence as a teacher -work ensures accountability of instruction and development of high quality assessments -encouraging self-reflection and review of teacher effectiveness -wants to feel work is valued by team and to improve assessment development skills	2	-develop a balanced approach to implementation
	-shared workload on assessments -consistent	-shared workload in assessment development	3	

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
<p><i>-guidance but not too much</i> <i>-wouldn't want to go back to that school where I didn't have any support</i> <i>-work towards being more solution focused</i> <i>-trying to have an opinion</i> <i>-make it my own plan</i> <i>-strict framework</i> <i>-been really hard</i> <i>-don't get that freedom</i></p>	<p>grading practices and expectations for writing -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments and instruction -accountability of instruction -develop individual lesson plans based upon agreed upon standards on upcoming assessment -feels supported by peers and able to contribute to the group -having enough time to fit everything in -meeting district level expectations</p>	<p>-consistent grading practices and expectations for writing -level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments and instruction -accountability of instruction -feels supported by peers and able to contribute to the group -concerned about having enough time to fit everything in and meeting district level expectations</p>		
	<p>-level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction -experience based decision making</p>	<p>-level of rigor and quality of questions on assessments -accountability of instruction and experience based decision making</p>	4	

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
	-growth of the teacher -individualize instruction as needed -shared workload when developing common lesson plans to ease burden -developed consistent grading practices -work is relevant -level of rigor of assessment questions -appreciates accountability of instruction and task completion -experience based decision making -motivating and engaging students -scaffolding for student understanding -able to anticipate student responses -importance of	-growth of the teacher -share the workload and develop common lesson plans, assessments, resources, consistent grading practices, and instructional ideas during weekly meetings and throughout the week -work is relevant and recognizes value of cohesiveness within team -level of rigor of assessment questions -appreciates accountability of instruction and task completion -motivating and engaging students -scaffolding for student understanding -appreciates	5	

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
	cohesiveness within the team -appreciates lesson plan exemplars and shared notes and examples to be used during instruction -collaborate more than mandated -work is helpful and supports growth as a teacher -analyzing quality of assessment questions -struggling to balance home and work life -feeling overwhelmed by administrative expectations and tasks -pressure to perform on state standardized assessments -connecting student demographic	lesson plan exemplars, experience base of team, and shared notes and examples to be used during instruction - collaborate more than mandated -work is helpful and supports growth as a teacher -struggling to balance home and work life -feeling overwhelmed by administrative expectations and tasks and lack of time to cover standards -not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings -not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team	6	

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
	data to assessment data -not enough time to teach all the necessary content -not allowed to develop lesson plans during PLC meetings -not enough time to complete the tasks expected of the team - level of rigor of both instruction and assessment -work should be a collective effort and wants team to view it that way and share workload -work is relevant -wants grow as a professional -improve PLC team outcomes and increase team buy-in to PLC process -student success beyond	-evaluate rigor of instruction and assessments -desire for work to be collective effort and for team to share more of the workload -sees value of work and wants to continue to grow as a educator -wants PLC team to grow -help students succeed in every way	7	

Table 6 cont.

Content from Focus Group	Categories	Themes	Case #	Patterns
	the classroom -share workload and develop common assessments -views work as relevant, helpful, and feels it builds confidence -appreciates accountability of instruction and experience based decision making -feels need for more time for collaboration -scaffolding instruction for student understanding -values problem solving focus of team -consensus difficult at times -wished she had been on a PLC team her first year	-share workload and develop common assessments -views work as relevant, helpful, and feels it builds confidence -appreciates accountability of instruction and experience based decision making -feels need for more time for collaboration -values problem solving focus of time -finding consensus difficult at times -wished she had been on a PLC team her first year	8	

Returning to the Research Questions: Answers and Explanations

As with any study, the researcher now returns to the overarching questions and considers the data collected as well as the analysis to offer answers and explanations. Figure 12 displays a concise picture of the themes revealed within the data. As a result, the commonalities across data reveal that the participants held a positive view of the PLC and their work within the PLC. This positive view provided insight regarding question #1.

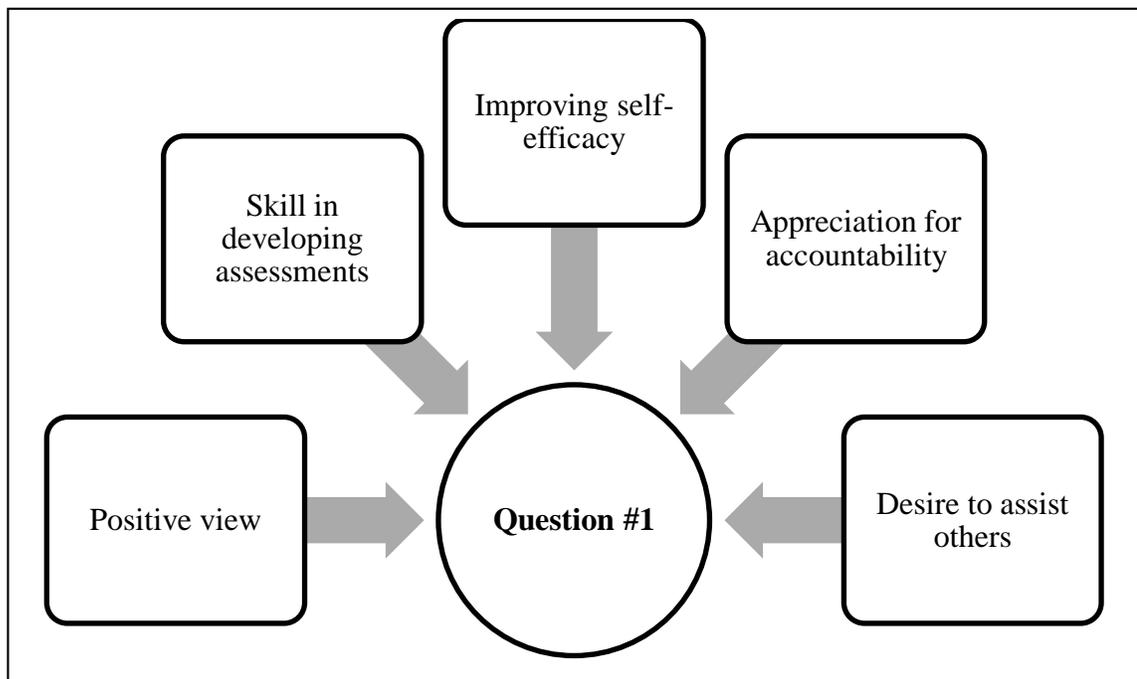


Figure 12. Answering Question #1

Question #1:

How are professional learning communities (PLCs) perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?

The participants in this study had an overall positive view of PLCs (All Participants, Interviews, FGS, 2015). Many felt that they were more successful teachers because of their involvement, and words like “helpful”, “thankful”, “grateful”, and “support” were found across all of the data collected (Table 4.2, Participant 2, Int #2, 2015; Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #1, 2015; Table 6, FGS, 2015). They indicated their development of assessments was improved through this work, and more than one case revealed an increase in confidence and sense of self-efficacy. Several cases referenced an appreciation for the level of accountability as it related to instruction, and many valued the experience base of their fellow team members concerning decision making. The fact that some of the participants wanted to be able to help other teachers as they had been helped also speaks to their positive perception of PLCs (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015; Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #1, 2015).

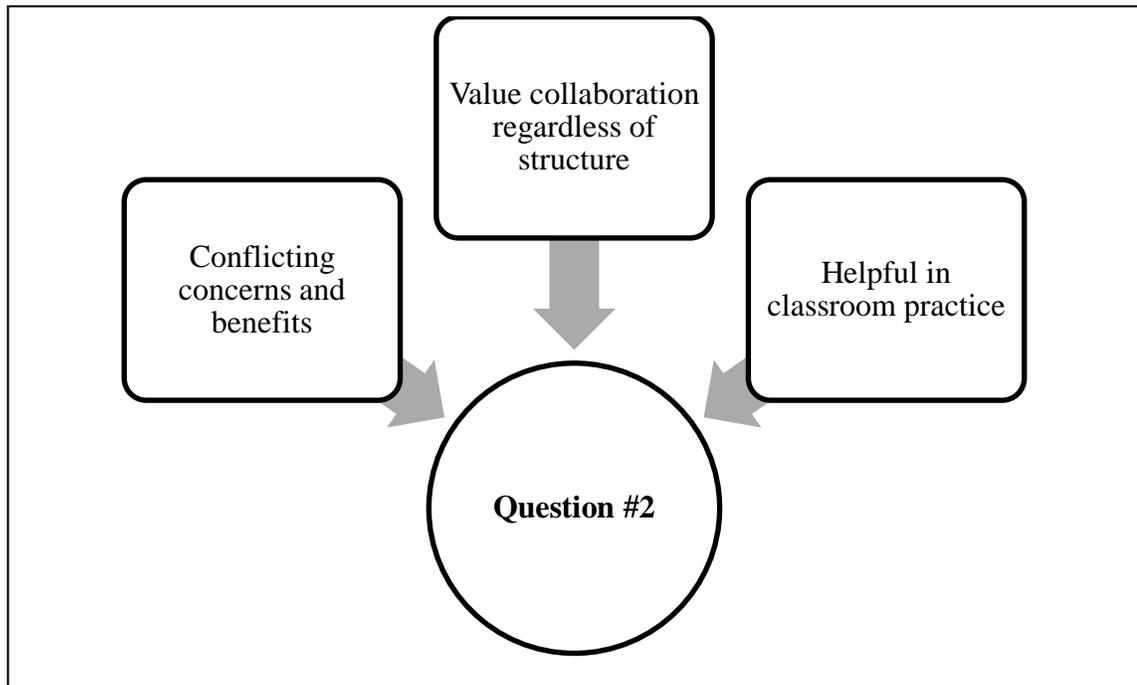


Figure 13. Answering Question #2

Question #2:

How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a professional learning community (PLC) team?

When examining their concerns, the participants used words like “stressful”, “overwhelming”, and “hard”; however, these were contradicted with words like “successful,” “confidence,” and “relevant.” They revealed that they would collaborate with their peers even if it was not mandated by their administration, so they valued the work done within their teams. Phrases like “made me successful” and “make our life easier” were also found in the data, which supported the theme found throughout the

study that their PLC teams were helpful to their classroom practice (Table 4.1, Participant 1, Int #1, 2015; Table 4.5, Participant 5, Int #2, 2015).

Further Examination of Themes and Patterns

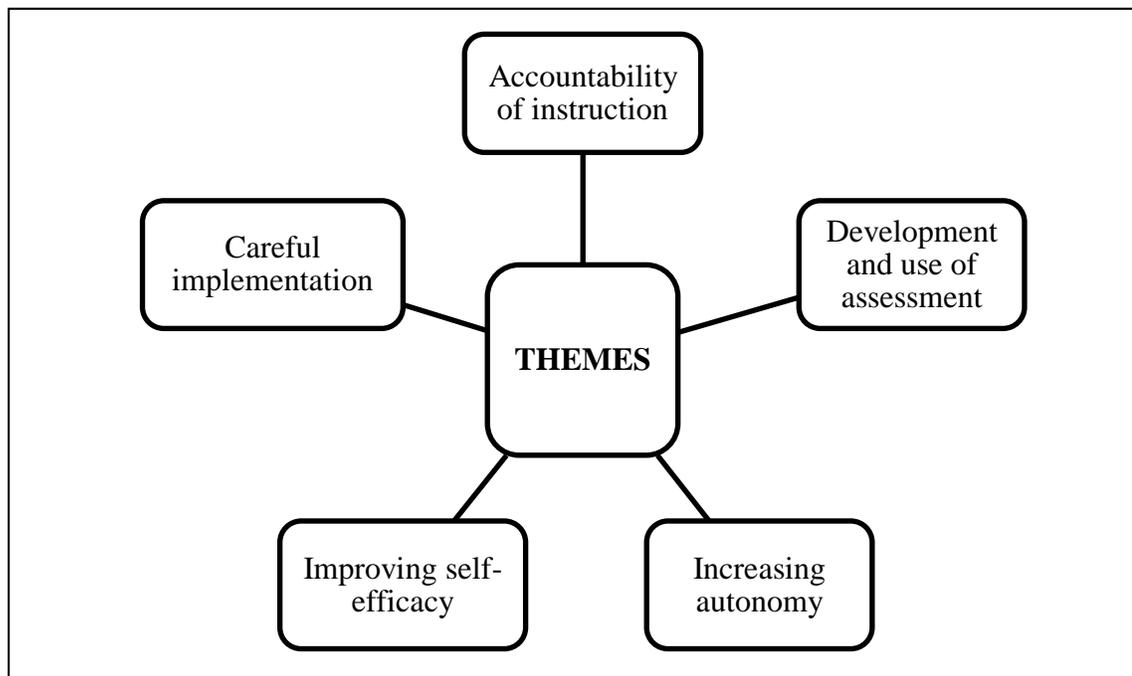


Figure 14. Themes

The primary themes from this study relate to the topics of improving self-efficacy, accountability of instruction, the development and use of assessment, increasing autonomy within the PLC team, and the careful implementation of PLCs (Figure 14). Throughout the study, teachers valued and appreciated having a team to provide support and share ideas with. This theme emerged from the data collected from both interviews and the focus group session. Most of the participants found the work to be helpful and relevant to their classroom practice which in turn improved their sense of

self-efficacy. Many of the cases effectively shared the workload among their team members and collaborated more than was mandated. They valued the accountability of instruction developed within their team, meaning that they knew they are teaching the right content (FJ, Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, & 8, Int #2, 2015). As novice teachers, they relied on the experience base of their team members when making instructional decisions. The primary focus of their work was the development of common assessments and the pacing of their content. Emphasis was placed on the quality of their assessments and the rigor of classroom instruction. From the observations conducted on September 29, 2015 and December 8, 2015, undoubtedly, the majority of their time was spent on deciding what and how to teach. Participants in all of the cases discussed different ideas, strategies, and resources for the benefit of students. Not all of the participants followed the same lesson plans, but they all had access to lesson plan ideas which they valued across the board.

A strong desire for the administration to provide consistent support, encouragement and guidance came out of the data from the study (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #2, 2015; Table 4.7, Participant 7, Interview #2, 2015; Table 6, FGS, 2015). The participants also expressed a need for autonomy of instruction and the freedom to be an individual within the PLC structure (Table 4.3, Participant 3, Int #2, 2015; Table 4.4, Participant 4, Int #2, 2015; Table 6, FGS, 2015). Several of them determined that the administration should allow the PLC teams some independence and autonomy as they developed their weekly agendas and created a collaborative culture within their team (Table 4.4, Participant 4, Int #2, 2015; Table 4.8, Participant 8, Int #2, 2015; Table 6,

FGS, 2015). Overall, developing a balanced approach to PLC implementation is critical for school teams.

Chapter Summary

The primary themes and patterns from this study are centered around the topics of accountability, assessment, self-efficacy, autonomy, and implementation and can be connected back to the four key questions of PLCs. The first question that PLC teams are charged with addressing is “What do we want students to learn?” and this related directly to the theme of accountability (DuFour, et al., 2011). Accountability emerged as they discussed what specifically to teach from their standards, how to teach using specific strategies and ideas, when to teach their content, resources that they would be using, and lesson plans. The second question for PLC teams is “How will we know if students are learning?” and this, of course, relates to assessment (DuFour, et al., 2011). Participants in this study spent a large portion of their collaboration time developing high quality assessments and reviewing the results of these assessments. They answered the third question, “What will we do if they are not learning?” when they reviewed the assessments results, made instructional decisions, and brainstormed effective strategies together (DuFour, et al., 2011). In addition, the participants discussed their sense of self-efficacy as novice teachers as they explored the impact that being a part of a PLC team had on their practice and level of success in the classroom. Because of their PLC teams, they knew what to teach, how to teach, and when to teach their standards, and this helped them to feel confident again addressing the first three questions asked in a PLC

team. The fourth question, “What will we do if they already know it?” was not referenced very often in this study.

The remaining themes point to the implications for practice that were revealed through the study. Both autonomy and consistent implementation relate to areas of improvement that were highlighted in this study. From the interviews and the focus group, the participants appreciated the structure and support of their team, but they wanted to maintain some level of autonomy in their decision making as it related to lesson planning and PLC meeting agenda development. With an increased sense of autonomy, PLC teams are able to function in more meaningful and authentic way. The final theme from this study relates to implementation. The inconsistencies that emerged across the different content areas in this study points to the need for school leaders to ensure that their implementation of PLCs is balanced and consistent across all contexts within the school and that teams should be focused on problem solving. If the primary purpose of the work done within PLCs is to improve student learning, then both autonomy and consistent implementation are critical.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Novice teachers and their experiences within a PLC were the focus of this collective case study. This study had one primary research location, and the participants or cases ranged in age, grade level taught, and content areas. All of the participants had three years of experience or less in the classroom. Through interviews, observations, a focus group session, and a field journal, the researcher collected data to identify, understand, and establish meaning regarding the voice of the novice teacher within the context of their PLC teams. All of the protocols for the study focused around answering the following research questions:

1. How are professional learning communities (PLCs) perceived through the eyes of a novice teacher?
2. How do novice teachers describe the experience of working within a professional learning community (PLC) team?

There were five themes that emerged from this study: accountability of instruction, the development and use of assessment, increasing autonomy, improving self-efficacy, and the careful implementation of school based initiatives such as PLCs. The summary of findings will explore how these themes connect to the literature related to PLCs. The primary authors with literature connected to the findings include Hord (2008) and DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2011); however, Hord's (2008) work has the strongest connection to the findings.

Summary of Findings

In the summary of findings, the researcher will connect the themes from the study to a selection of PLC literature from Hord (2008). To share the PLC model with school leaders, Hord (2008) drafted a list of the primary components of PLCs. Hord (2008) compiled her “five components of a research based learning community,” and these include:

1. shared beliefs, values and vision,
2. shared and supportive leadership,
3. supportive conditions, both structural and relational,
4. collective intentional learning and its application, and
5. shared personal practice (p. 12-13).

Reviewing each of these components from Hord (2008), the researcher will explore the connections to the emerging themes of this study.

Hord’s (2008) first component “shared beliefs, values and vision” fits best with the ideas related to accountability of instruction highlighted in this study. The participants appreciated knowing exactly what to teach and having a consistent plan across their grade level and content area. As a PLC team, the participants and their team members implemented a shared vision for student learning through their weekly meetings and other collaborative efforts as they answered the first key PLC question (What do want our students to learn?). The participants through the data collected conveyed that they felt more prepared as a result of their PLC work. Because of the

similar values and goals for students, the participants' work was productive and consistent across team members.

Related to Hord's (2008) second component, "shared and supportive leadership," some participants expressed the need for autonomy within the participants' teams that came out of the study (Hord, 2008, p. 12). The participants wanted some guidance and consistent expectations from the administration. However, they also wanted some freedom to determine the topics for their weekly meetings. For PLCs to thrive, they must rely on the outlined structure of what a PLC team should do from week to week, but they also need to develop their own authentic and meaningful culture of collaboration. Ideas about autonomy were revealed, and participants expressed the desire to maintain their own teaching style while still working within the guidelines of the administration and the typical expectations within a PLC team.

Hord's (2008) third component, fostering successful "supportive conditions, both structural and relational," is another critical component that leads to effective implementation of PLCs (p. 12). This component is reflected in the theme of consistent implementation voiced throughout the data collected the study, and it was emphasized as an area of need primarily in the focus group session. One participant articulated her concerns about the administration's inconsistent expectations between content areas and how this impacted her perception of the work (Table 4.6, Participant 6, Int #2, 2015). During the focus group session, the participant explained that she had been at a school without PLCs and that she did not know what to teach. She preferred having a PLC team to not having one, but she wished the expectations from the administration were the

same for all PLC teams (Table 6, FGS, 2015). As this was vocalized in the focus group session, other participants concurred that this was a need for their school and, therefore, is an important consideration when developing PLCs.

Hord's (2008) fourth component, "collective intentional learning and its application," relates best to the focus on assessment revealed by participants in this study (p. 12). The development of high-quality assessments was evident across all forms of data collected, especially during the observations. All of the participants referenced their development of common assessments and their use of the results in their interviews. This is clearly a high priority for PLC teams as they work to answer the second and third key PLC questions: how will we know if they are learning? and what will we do if they are not learning? Their weekly collaborative meetings were the primary location for their "learning" as teachers, but collaboration for the purpose of "learning" occurred through technology and other informal gatherings. Their assessments helped the participants to learn about student progress and make decisions related to lesson planning that lead to improvements, which is what Hord (2008) would describe as "application" (p. 12).

The fifth and final component outlined by Hord (2008) is "shared personal practice," and for novice teachers, this leads directly to their sense of self-efficacy (p. 13). Hord (2008) described this component as "peers helping peers" which is exactly what novice teachers need the most when they are new to practice. During the focus group session, participants expressed that they appreciated having a team to go to each week for "new ideas and teaching strategies" (Table 6, FGS, 2015), and this sentiment was present throughout all of the interviews and observations.

Hord's (2008) five components of research based PLCs connect well to the themes and patterns that emerged in this collective case study. The topics of accountability of instruction, the development and use of assessment, increasing autonomy, improving self-efficacy, and the careful implementation of school-based initiatives such as PLCs were explored. Revisiting the primary research questions that this study attempted to answer makes important connections between the themes, and the research questions will be addressed in the next section.

Implications for Practice

As school leaders consider the delicate topics of both supporting their novice teachers and the implementation of PLCs, they must take a balanced approach. Novice teachers appreciate the structure that PLCs provide, but consistent expectations from the school's administration are important. When PLC teams and/or content areas have different guidelines or expectations, unnecessary stress and anxiety may emerge. Effective PLC teams need guidance to complete the critical tasks that produce positive student results, but they also need some freedom to develop some components of their weekly agendas and to determine their teams' next steps on their own at times.

Given the statistics on the retention of novice teachers, it is imperative that school leaders afford structured support for novice teachers. The PLC model has the potential to provide some of this necessary support because it helps novice teachers know what to teach, how to teach, and how to assess student progress as the four key questions are answered within the team. The participants in this study valued the

experience level of their fellow team members. Therefore, if PLCs are not a part of the school's culture, then a strong mentoring program should be developed.

Finally, returning to the theme of implementation and Hord's (2006) fourth component of "collective intentional learning and its application," school leaders must focus the work of their PLC teams on problem solving for the benefit of students. Participant Two said it best when she shared her desire for her team to be more "solution focused" in her second interview. PLC teams can lose sight of their primary purpose: to improve student learning. Thus, teams must adeptly identify the problems and work together to find solutions. Teachers should be focused on learning together within their teams and then applying what they learn so that students might reap the benefits.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study primarily focused on identifying, understanding, and establishing meaning regarding the voice of the novice teacher within the context of their PLC teams. Given the limitations of this study, not all aspects related to novice teachers and PLCs were explored. Comparing the perception of the PLC structure between both novice and veteran teachers could be interesting for future research. While novice teachers appreciate the support that they receive while working within this type of team, a veteran teacher with more experience and working knowledge of practice might have a different perception of the structure. Another suggestion for a study related to this one would be to closely examine the self-efficacy of novice teachers with and without the availability of a PLC team. During the focus group in this study, two teachers described their experience without a PLC team which sparked the question of how would their

experiences be different in their early years in the classroom had they not been on a PLC team. One final recommendation for further study related to the topics that emerged in this study would be to explore how teacher education programs prepare novice teachers for the development of assessments. Assessment development and the use of results were such an integral part of their weekly work that exploring their preparation for this work would be interesting.

Summary and Conclusion

Reflecting back to the four key questions that are asked in PLCs, this collective case study revealed a tendency for school teams to focus on the first three questions in their efforts to improve student learning.

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How will know if they are learning?
3. What will we do if they are not learning?

The data has clear connections to these three questions and very few references to the fourth question (What will we do if they already know it?). This study, however, focused on novice teachers and their description and perception of PLCs. Assisting novice teachers in answering all four of these questions would be ideal, but in this study, evidence of all four questions were not present in the data collected. The participants did, however, appreciate the support they were receiving even if some may view it as incomplete. Novice teachers report that they are struggling with seemingly basic skills and knowledge, including what and how to teach, getting collegial support, and

classroom management (Goodwin, 2012); this study highlighted novice teachers receiving two of these three basic components.

The themes and patterns that emerged from this study stress the topics of accountability of instruction, the development and use of assessment, increasing autonomy, improving self-efficacy, and the careful implementation of school based initiatives such as PLCs. The emphasis on accountability, assessment, and self-efficacy in the study help novice teachers to answer the first three key questions in a PLC. While the themes of autonomy and implementation led to the implications for practice and recommendations for school leaders that were addressed.

Novice teachers naturally seek collegial support and are open to collaborating with their peers. They value the experience of their colleagues and want to improve their craft. PLCs can provide structure to the collaborative efforts that occur among teachers so that they can lead to positive improvements in student learning. For novice teachers to stay in the profession their needs must be met, and collaboration focused on positive student outcomes through PLCs can help to fulfill their needs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEWS

Interview #1: Participant 1

<p>How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?</p>	<p>for me I feel that it has to be with colleagues that are willing to be open, and you can trust one another, where sharing your thoughts and ideas about different concepts, where they are willing to observe or possibly take students of yours, you are not connecting with them, maybe they can, umm.... definitely collaboration, I feel like that's what has made me successful as a teacher just being able to ask several questions even if it's the silliest question and them not even thinking twice and explaining, so for me to be able to have a community like that where I can grow from others is crucial to me as a teacher</p>
<p>Describe how PLCs work at your school.</p>	<p>most PLCs for me are where sometimes administration asks specific people to go to different training, and we ...you know..it's very specific people, I think I asked to go I think a couple of times, and then on the PLC days, some days it's like this where i'm talking about where you go in a class and teach other teachers what you learned, umm...for the most part PLCs can be about any kind of training, I know that for us we able to decide which training we want to go to, it's not like we are forced to go to specific training so I do like the thought of that, staff development is different so like when I think of PLCs, I think of us learning something completely different than our concept or what we're teaching, it could be classroom management, it could be Google docs, it could be umm... you know how do you deal with inclusion students, how do deal with struggling learners, just various topics that are very broad and could be applied to any content, if that makes sense</p>
<p>What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?</p>	<p>well the university I graduated from, Austin Peay, I think they did a really excellent job with their students, especially education department because if I would have just graduated with a mathematics degree I think I would have struggled a lot more, so having a minor in education really opened my eyes to why teachers need PLCs and umm.... how it can, how do I explain it? where you can grow more than you would than if you were just learning your content, I do have a 7th through 12th mathematics degree, so I could have just gotten just a straight mathematics degree, but I chose to one have an</p>

	<p>education minor, so if I'm dealing with students and children, I need to have that other half to educate me, so I don't know.... I feel like if I didn't have that, I think I would have.... I've seen this in teachers though, I've seen this, I've seen in teachers where they just get the degree in the content, and they don't have the education background, so with Austin Peay just building that in me I already knew what PLCs were about, if that makes sense, whereas other teachers that just get a biology degree and really don't have any kind of education minor, and I think that's why I think nowadays they are trying to push the teachers to go to possibly these trainings, where it is education based to help them, you know, in that area, so I was pretty well versed in that area before I came in here</p>
<p><i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i></p>	<p>PLCs for us was kind of like web based, we could learn off of various different websites, because it wasn't like as if we could go to different conferences, most of my conferences I went to were mathematical based, so if I presented at a mathematics conference, I was presenting my thoughts and ideas and theories so the education department basically introduced us to a lot of webinars, ummm... you know they would always encourage us to go to different conferences if we could but that was...you know what I'm saying...that was the limit of it, but I realized when they started doing the PLCs here they kind of did the same thing, they would pick specific teachers to have them go to those conferences you know so we can come back and teach others, even though I didn't come back and teach others as a student, I still was able to go to different conferences and be encouraged to look at webinars (BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH A TEACHER THAT POPPED IN)</p>
<p><i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i></p>	<p>basically broadening your understanding of just students in general, not really, I mean they focused in on specific things but it didn't deal with your content unless you wanted it to deal with your content, because the first conference I went to, it was so many things we could have gone to, so it was just neat, I thought it was the coolest thing in the world so when we came back we were able to decide whatever you went to you could teach that,so I mean...we have collaborative planning every Tuesday, but I don't really consider that a PLC because we are really just talking about our content, if that makes sense, to me a PLC is discussing about different skills or ways that teachers deal with certain issues, I should say, you know..how did they go about it? and how are they successful and how can I become successful, that's what I think a PLC is about, umm...even in the</p>

	<p>summer, they encourage us to be a part of the book club, because then we come back together and that's like a PLC where we discuss about the book, what did you learn from this book? and what did you take away? how can you encourage other teachers? they do that also here, so I consider that also a PLC too, because you are kind of like reading on your own, and you are trying to see where can I apply this in my classroom, and that goes from engaging, how to engage students, how to motivate them, so just the very generic, I guess you could say broad thing that could apply to anything but it so crucial to teachers I don't know how to explain it</p>
<p>What types of meetings did you attend?</p>	<p>we have two that we attend to, one is for my 7th grade team and then the other one that we kind of meet with is the STEM which is just science and math, and that could be once a month, just depending on if we are able to meet, umm...we do staff development days but just depends upon what the admin wants us to learn that day, umm...I know that after Christmas we come back and there will be a PLC and one of the...depending upon if someone went to a conferencem, like I was asked to a conference on middle school just middle school and I picked something, I picked struggling learners to encourage other teachers of different methods to help them, and then the year before I went to the TN Core training, being able to see how are we going to apply these new standards to our classrooms and how can I help out other teachers and encourage them that even though the standards may change drastically you still need to try to apply them as best as possible, so... but yeah the regular ones are just 7th grade math and STEM right now</p>
<p><i>Relevancy?</i></p>	<p>we have two that we attend to, one is for my 7th grade team and then the other one that we kind of meet with is the STEM which is just science and math, and that could be once a month, just depending on if we are able to meet, umm...we do staff development days but just depends upon what the admin wants us to learn that day, umm...I know that after Christmas we come back and there will be a PLC and one of the...depending upon if someone went to a conferencem, like I was asked to a conference on middle school just middle school and I picked something, I picked struggling learners to encourage other teachers of different methods to help them, and then the year before I went to the TN Core training, being able to see how are we going to apply these new standards to our classrooms and how can I help out other teachers and encourage them that even though the standards may change drastically you still need to try</p>

	to apply them as best as possible, so... but yeah the regular ones are just 7th grade math and STEM right now
<i>Mandatory?</i>	Tuesdays only but the other days we just naturally get together and say "Hey, I had a thought..." or "Hey, what do you think about this?" we constantly get together, you know...discussing different ideas that we possibly might have seen or all of it is for the students, all of it is to help the be successful.... you know...
What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?	the Tuesday meetings are predominantly focused on the units we are going in to, how to we feel, what are the most important things that they need to know, what are going to be their misconceptions, how can we make different lessons engaging, and not just taking notes, how can we help them with organizational skills, umm...how can be bring back the foundation like just basic math, because we know they aren't going to get to use the calculator anymore, so even though the meetings are only 40 minutes lone, we are there until like the 40th minute....you know...so it can be anything but predominantly we are always looking at our plan, are we pacing ok, how do we feel like the lessons are going from week to week, do we think we need another day to practice, how to do feel about how all your kids are doing, umm...and now because I did this last year they are opening their eyes to it, umm...but they are willing to try this out I really voiced my opinion that they are a lot of students that parents that either work or parents that don't know how to help them with their homework, I did this last year and I felt like it was successful as well, opening my door at lunch, and letting them come in and we're able to tutor, umm.... I felt like it was just crucial, so they are motivated enough to see...wow her students want to come in and see her, and she doesn't have to force them, they want to come in, so they're doing that too, ummm... so it's just little things we are trying, nothing was ever...how should I say...being with the two women nothing was ever set in stone, they are always willing and more than open enough to try new things, as they have years behind their back teaching, which most people are like that's unheard of, I felt like I was really blessed to be placed on this team, really blessed
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues,	last year we started teaching...it's called study interventions, and I did notice that we started discussing...they give us about... last year it was about 8-10 students with math skills way below 7th grade, and last year we kind of didn't know what do with them, becuase last the district was floating...we were all floating

initiatives or concerns?	last year, this year is a little bit more structured, we started discussing what else can we do with them that can build up that foundation that they had so many gaps in, so they call it study interventions for students, but really teachers know it as RTI, so that's another topic that do discuss
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	we like to kind of divide out the work so tasks as either creating quizzes or powerpoints, or whether it could be okay printing, such we need to print it all out tomorrow and cut up, we divy up tasks I think pretty much evenly, no one has ever said "I can't" we just always like that trust of knowing that it's going to get done, the work is going to get done, so I feel like the tasks that we kind of divide amongst each other can be various different things
<i>Planning?</i>	divy out the days, we will look on the Google Doc together and say I can take this day and I can take this day, it's never really all on one person and even though we do take that day, we all meet together or collaborate, all look through it together, what we put in that plan and we edit, so how should I say? we havewe are able to take criticism very well, we are able to be corrected, if we have a better idea we are open minded enough to say okay that's cool, let's try it this way, and I think you need that, we desperately need that in a collaboration group or a team that you have because if you are stubborn, that's just not going to work, when we do get together we do divy out the days and get back together and edit the whole thing together and then we send it to our administration SO YOU ALL HAVE THE SAME PLANS FOR EVERYDAY? everybody, we've been doing that, this is my third year, I think that doing the same thing as helped me out tremendously because I'm not creating my own unit, she's not creating her own unit, we are creating a unit together, which is very collaboration, and we are dividing out the days, dividing out who does the quizzes, who prints off this, who does that, so we look at each other as team, not as, it's just very different compared to what I've seen, what I've heard of other departments
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	all of them, even if I create a quiz or test, I send it to all of them, they will, I tell them to critique it, edit it, tell me what you do and don't like, we'll rework it, it's a team, we have that understanding, your feelings need to be set aside when you create these things, does that make sense? no matter how long it took your feelings need to be set aside, and there are times

	where a suggestion may happen, and the other person will say, okay I see that, but let's try it this way, and if it doesn't work then we'll reedit it for next year, and none of us get our feelings hurt, it's not about how good that teacher is or I'm better it's what's best for the students, if that makes sense?
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Interview #1: Participant 2

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	where we all sit together and share ideas and the main goal is to improve student learning and our own effectiveness in the classroom
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	at our school we meet every Tuesday, we meet more than we have to, but that is the required day, Tuesdays, we have certain things that we address, we come up with notes beforehand, like what we'll be talking about, so we're prepared for that, so we plan everything together
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	none
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	not really, there was like one we had to do, I got my degree was online, so I had a little bit of uniqueness, so we had this one assignment where we had to go to online to a community board, and part of our class assignment for one class was to answer one question, sort of, I guess it was to create a discussion with the teacher, we answered one question and kind of talked about it, that was it, very basic
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	no perceptions, in terms of coming into it here, no
What types of collaborative meetings do you attend?	we have our math collaboration, and we also have a STEM collaboration, so that's all science and math teachers for grade level
<i>Relevancy?</i>	I found them to be very relevant, very helpful, especially in math, WHY IS THAT? Especially last year as a new teacher, I didn't really know what I was doing, and without their help, guidance and support, I really don't think I would not have done as well as what I did do, especially when it came to content, and

	knowing which students were really getting it, I could stand up and teach, but having that knowledge to assess the learning would be, (hey, there she is...brief interruption to ask her teammate about observing their PLC)
<i>Mandatory?</i>	Tuesdays are but we plan a lot of times not on Tuesdays, like other times, we have Google docs that we use also
What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?	well the agendas change, but we plan assessments, we plan lessons, we talk about misconceptions, we talk about how to improve student achievement, we talk about after a test is given we compare data, and then we talk about why maybe a certain question was missed most often and how we could go back and reteach it better, so that we get more kids to their goal and then we go back and retest certain things later throughout the year to make we've met that standard
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	we discuss everything really, if we have a concern we'll discuss it, but we have... all of us have pretty good working relationships, we have norms for the group, so if we needed to discuss things we'd use those norms to discuss them
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	I don't know, we do everything together,(laughing) I mean some times we'll take and assign out different days in terms of that lesson but we always plan out every single assessment together, and then whoever's day it is to plan that lesson, we all teach that same lesson
<i>Planning?</i>	always teaching the same thing, we may be one or two days behind each other, depending on our own students, you know...what they need...so if somebody is behind then we try really hard if we can...they'll go and review an extra day if I'm behind, but we always give tests at the same time and start units at the same time
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	WHAT TYPE OF ASSESSMENTS DO YOU PLAN TOGETHER? all of our assessments, pretests and posttests, QUIZZES? quizzes for sure, and even some of our smaller, like our exit tickets, daily, those type of assessments, and we always discuss how we are going to assess things so that we are all assessing in a similar fashion

Interview #1: Participant 3

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	I would define as PLC as a group of educators and I guess satellite staff, administrators, and aids and all that, working together to develop umm...common, sorry...consistent ways of doing student...like lessons, tests, assessments, that sort of thing
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	well, we meet with our content area, and so I have two content areas, because I teach 7th and 8th grade, so basically I meet with 8th grade during my planning period which is first period and we plan common assessments and we usually at the beginning of the year create goals, and 7th grade, is more of a...I interact with them more online, because I don't have a common planning with them but I still try to contribute a lot with the assessments, and things like that that they need but not as much as 8th grade just because I have planning
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	well, we meet with our content area, and so I have two content areas, because I teach 7th and 8th grade, so basically I meet with 8th grade during my planning period which is first period and we plan common assessments and we usually at the beginning of the year create goals, and 7th grade, is more of a...I interact with them more online, because I don't have a common planning with them but I still try to contribute a lot with the assessments, and things like that that they need but not as much as 8th grade just because I have planning
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	yeah, I guess...that's the thing...when I was in school I had a gap between when I graduated and when I started teaching, okay I had a gap in between China and when I got this job of like two or three years, so I don't think they called it a PLC at that time, but it was always very clear that that's what it was, you got to be willing to collaborate even across disciplines sometimes, my school focused a lot on integration of subject matters into different subject matters so like science with social studies, etc.
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	in theory a PLC is a really great thing, because you can get support, and you can learn new things, but PLCs are...they are of course made up of people and people clash, and so that was always a concern of mine, because I sometimes can be very honest, and sometimes doesn't work out necessarily as well in a PLC, when you have to be more...beat around the bush... I'm very direct and sometimes that doesn't work out
What types of meetings did you attend?	well...I mean...we do...I guess the collaborative meetings for our school would be our collaboration one time once a week with a content area which is...that's on Tuesdays, then on

	<p>thursdays we have faculty meetings, and often times we are splitting off into collaboration groups then, just depending on what the goal is for that Thursday, and then of course there is always the professional development days, sometimes we do rotations, and then one teacher will come up and teach a new skill and lead a group and then we'll rotate to different stations, and stuff like that</p>
<i>Relevancy?</i>	<p>depends on the meeting OF THE TUESDAY MEETING? the Tuesday meeting is...I find it very useful because the group that I am in is very focused and actually wants to accomplish something, and I think that is really good quality of this particular group, we are very much a...you know...a let's get what we need to get done, and we talk about...we do talk about other things, and we talk about what we are experiencing but we also accomplish things so it feels rewarding to be able to accomplish actual tasks like creating common assessments and things like that</p>
<i>Mandatory?</i>	<p>yes</p>
<p>What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?</p>	<p>well..umm....last year....speaking about last year... our goal was to create common assessments for every unit, and so normally what we would do is.... we would come in and we would discuss the assessments, we would divide up the standards, and then outside of the meeting we would come up with questions and then we would present the questions to the group, and decide if they were good questions or not to put in the assessment, and that was a big focus last year, this year....it's more...because from our district we've gotten a lot of materials and new assessments...because a lot of stuff for SS is changing again...so we now mostly we're talking....we're going through assessments and we're talking about the CRQ...talking about...struggling with the CRQ writing assessment stuff that we have to do this year, and creating strategies for working that into our lessons, because essentially they've turned them...they've turned our SS classes into 3/4 english classes with a little bit of SS mixed in and so it's causing a little stress, so we tend to figure out how we can fit everything in at that point</p>
<p>What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues,</p>	<p>we typically keep it professional, we talk about ... we do talk about things....like that we have a problem with, it takes us four days to....have the students participate and write one CRQ prompt, and so like....and I'm talking about from start to finish, because they take two days to write it, we go over the prompt</p>

<p>initiatives or concerns?</p>	<p>one day, we write it the second day, they want us to extend that to three,so we have to teach the content at some point, and so the fourth day...they also have to revise it,so we have to go back over it and revise it, so we've been talking about that a lot lately and how stressful that is, because have to take that time away from teaching other standards, and we're not used to doing that, well I am not used.....I'd say we as a group are not used to doing that, I am not used to anything, because this is only my second year, well second year teaching social studies, so I'm not used to it, but it is still very challenging to try to fit everything in</p>
<p>What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?</p>	<p>well...we create assessments, we analyze data for those assessments, this year we are creating these umm....these things called "look fors", PAUSE TO LAUGH AND TALK ABOUT THE FLY so we are also creating these things called "look fors" that our district supervisor is having us create, sort of what we are looking for when we grade the CRQ prompts, and so she's done the first two so we're actually writing what we are looking for for the others, and kind of to get on the page in terms of grading, everyone grades essays differently it seems, so that's a big thing we're doing this year, so not so much creating common assignments, although we do share projects and other assignments and powerpoints that we can use in our classes, we've really been focusing this year on this writing</p>
<p><i>Planning?</i></p>	<p>we try to stick with similar targets, but within my group we have very different teaching styles, and so we don't often....we don't have the same activities...we do try... to have goals and information the same but we present it in different ways, I know that two of my team teach the exact same way but they have the exact same teaching style, and it doesn't fit with my personality at all, and they wouldn't be able to do my teaching style because it doesn't fit their personality, so werespect that, but we share as much as we can, we just end up modifying things to suite how our classroom runs</p>
<p><i>Instruction?</i></p>	
<p><i>Assessment?</i></p>	<p>the unit assessments that we do, and the CRQ assessments are all done the same, and sometimes we share quizzes and stuff with each other, but those are the only that we make sure that we are all doing at the same time</p>

Interview #1: Participant 4

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	a PLC is one in which ideas and knowledge are shared between professionals of whether it be teaching, or engineering or any other profession or the army for that matter ummmm... which ideas knowledge are shared between..yep..that would be it
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	um... actually they work pretty well, we have really good collaborations, really like especially I plan primarily with my 7th grade team because that is when my planning is and I've uh... gotten all kinds of ideas, and people are open to listening to my past experiences as well, ummmm.. and then umm.. of course we have the ones that we do school wide as far as professional development, kim taylor is awesome, with the, as the...consulting teacher, not consulting teacher, anyway having that as a resource is great, having someone that is there to specifically...with experience to come back and help other teachers, just kind of bounce ideas off of them, I think that is something the district does really well
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	umm.. well I retired from the army so, that is definitely a PLC and it's constantly sharing of ideas as you go to new places and learn about...not necessarily your job per se, but how that place does it, and then everyone else experiences you bring in at each level of education there from the primary leadership development of course all one forward the biggest thing that comes up there is not so much what you learn as a class but what get from other people and their experience, that is one of the things I like about teaching here at their particular school is that everyone is willing to share and to bring in their experiences from wherever
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	umm.. well I retired from the army so, that is definitely a PLC and it's constantly sharing of ideas as you go to new places and learn about...not necessarily your job per se, but how that place does it, and then everyone else experiences you bring in at each level of education there from the primary leadership development of course all one forward the biggest thing that comes up there is not so much what you learn as a class but what get from other people and their experience, that is one of the things I like about teaching here at their particular school is that everyone is willing to share and to bring in their experiences from wherever
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	

<p>What types of meetings did you attend?</p>	<p>umm....weekly collaboration meetings for my subject area, umm....monthly meetings at least or as needed for STEM with math and science, the weekly faculty meetings that are usually not just a faculty meeting but there is some focus on it whether its collaboration or whatever subject that we are looking at there, last year I was part of the new teacher mentor program, which changed a little bit last year, so it was at first weekly and then biweekly meeting with new teachers different things we can use, we studied a book as well, which I have the book other there, I can't remember the name of it, but it was on professional teaching and how to do different parts of that, additionally inservices to include, let's see this summer I went to two different STEM, went to a collaboration, google docs, so very varied and I'm sure I'm leaving something out</p>
<p><i>Relevancy?</i></p>	<p>the collaborative meetings are very topical, we are going over, not only are we having common assessments, which we worked on last year, getting those, we're modifying this year but also talking about data for our students, sharing ideas of what we are going to do, teaching, we don't lock step, not everyone does exactly the same thing, but we are definitely sharing ideas, and even within the district, with several of the other schools, I know Kenwood, Montgomery Central, anyway, I know we have several teachers on the 8th grade side and we have a sharing dropbox, where we put our different things that we found and use in our classrooms and that's all available on the Dropbox, currently I'm using a lot more of theirs than sharing mine, I'm still....it's definitely a really valuable resource, and one other that is kind of on the personal side, my wife is also a teacher, has taught 7th and 8th grade science and math, well and RLA, but a lot of things I've gotten from her and she has a Teachers Pay Teachers store so I use a lot of her products, which she provides free for [REDACTED] teachers</p>
<p><i>Mandatory?</i></p>	<p>yes, once a week during planning, however that's not all, that's the only time we formally meet but we are constantly in each others rooms, trying to make sure we are all on track, and then yeah....as far as that goes, the 8th grade I'm not required to go there, but I try and go to 8th grade once in awhile and I'm definitely in finding out what they are doing outside of time</p>
<p>What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?</p>	<p>instruction, and testing, and data....using data, each session we'll focus on something different, depending upon where we are going, this past week we were finishing up collaborative...I'm sorry...common assessments, for both pretests and posttests....ummmm...and we...actually we share</p>

	and we use Google docs as well to put everything in there, and um...we just started that this year, and ummm... next week we will sharing data from the assessments we all gave this week and finalizing the post test for unit 4....so we are 2 units out
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	typically as far as collaboration...typically we're discussing instruction and testing primarily and then ummm..that is mostly what we do...at the formal meetings don't talk about anybody in particular, primarily, but it's a subject are so none of us have the same students, but we are definitely talking as far as... levels of students, in terms of is it the inclusion students we are hitting or advanced kids...or things like that again it kind of varies, it depends upon whatever you were doing that particular week, whether it be data, assessments or clear targets, and we do try and share clear targets as well, so that wraps that up
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	again common assessments, both pre and post, data, (pause) STEM projects, we all share those and do those together, otherwise we share ideas and we may do the same things but we don't lock step, we figured out in terms of personality wise we have different teaching styles,that trying to come up with one particular thing does not work, however, for instance we are doing mineral identification, all of our mineral identification labs are going to look similar but at different times so we can all use the resources
<i>Planning?</i>	SO YOU COVER CONTENT AT THE SAME TIME BUT IT ENDS UP LOOKING DIFFERENT? Yes, common clear targets look the same, but exactly the methods we will use to get those across are not necessarily exactly the same, many are similar
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	ASSESSMENTS ARE THE SAME? PRE AND POST? Yes, they are all identical and that's in both 7th and 8th grade QUIZZES? Umm.... just the pre and post tests, we haven't quite gotten to common ones, we might be at slightly different points, though the clear targets are the same,they may be in a different order, primarily because of resources, we talked about the mineral identification, there are a limited number of minerals that we can use and we have 4 different teachers teaching the same subject

Interview #1: Participant 5

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	I would define it as a group of individuals who are given the opportunity to bounce ideas off of each other, to allow students to all have the same chance in a different classroom as far as academics, umm.. just a cohesive community, not necessarily everyone doing the exact same thing just everyone being on the same page as far as the information we are giving our students
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	I'm actually able to experience it on both sides or have two different experiences with my math 7 th group we are ...I don't want to say one unit but very cohesive.... plan anywhere, wherever all the time, very much on the same page, I plan on the 8 th grade side where ideally we would be on the same page but we're not...like it's not as cohesive or together, ummm...definitely one that needs more practice
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	None, this school that I taught at before, I taught science before, so we shared ideas but we were not obligated to meet or have a designated meeting time or it was more of "hey" what are you doing this week
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	I did Chemistry undergrad, so I didn't have, it was formal undergraduate degree in education, I didn't get my degree in education until I got my master's, so ummm... to be honest I do not remember anything about PLC
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	
What types of meetings did you attend?	what do you mean? YOU SAID YOU HAVE A MATH MEETING AND AN 8TH GRADE MEETIN? we do... with 8 th grade I don't get to go as often, I have class during 8th grade planning because I teach 7th grade as well, so every once in awhile I'll get pulled to go to 8th grade, 7th grade is during my planning so it's umm... I always go to theirs on Tuesdays... you know we meet standing in the hallway 7TH GRADE EVERY WEEK? 7th grade every week on Tuesday 8th grade um.... try to pull me about once a month I get their notes every week but in terms of actually being there it's about once a month YOU THEN YOU HAVE A MATH ONE? no, it's 7th grade math and 8th grade math and a STEM one once a month
<i>Relevancy?</i>	umm.... 7 th grade, relevant, very relevant, we meet about everything, like everything, 8 th grade just depends upon what were doing at the time is how relevant, I have one 8th grade math teacher that we've kind of gotten on the same page, so

	when we meet now it's relevant, we're kinda..we're working towards the cooperative planning IT'S A PROCESS yes
<i>Mandatory?</i>	Yes the Tuesday ones are, any other time they are not, but the Tuesday ones are, FOR 7TH GRADE? 8th grade are too mandatory but I have class
What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?	it could be creating a test, it could be creating plans for the unit, pretests, umm.....how a quiz or something just went...an assessment or something just went, how we're even going to grade, umm... how an activity like if we havesay we have something that we feel like is not our strong suit, to explain or teach, we meet about how would you explain it to this person, what did you do to explain and we go from there, we meet about everything.. it doesn't matter, we meet about everything, how was your day today? (laughing)
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	I THINK WE HIT THIS IN OUR EARLIER QUESTION. WHAT DO YOU TYPICALLY DISCUSS IN YOUR PLC MEETINGS? I THINK WE HIT THAT IN OUR EARLIER QUESTION. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD ADD? Ummmm...nothing that I can just think of right off the top
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	Tests, notes, lesson plans, ummm...no, no lesson plans is more of we look at unit as a whole and plan what we're going to do and we say okay you plan this day, you plan this day, you plan that, so I don't know if that would be us actually planning it together, and then activities, any activities, and so if someone plans then we pull that activity in and we say okay this is what that activity should look like
<i>Planning?</i>	
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	ANY ASSESSMENT TASKS YOU WORK ON TOGETHER? All assessments we work on together, pretests, tests and quizzes, and that's for both grades that we do pretests, tests and quizzes DO YOU LOOK AT THE RESULTS TOGETHER? not always, again with 7th grade, just because I am not there I will email them my results fsor 8th grade, we'll say okay well mine was similar or yours was way off, 8th grade preassessment wise we look at it together this year we are starting to look at the end ones in terms of analyzing them and deciding what we want to do together, normally it was just "how were your scores?" (laughing) "or was it just mine that were bad or just mine that were good? am I the only one feeling like this right now?" (laughing)

Interview #1: Participant 6

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	a PLC would be a group of individuals coming together umm...with a common goal, you know, usually related to student success and student achievement
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	we have a PLC actually within our content and grade level, we meet, we have a standard time of day, Tuesday, you know every week is the same, we always have an agenda, with a goal for that meeting
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	at my previous school, I had a PLC, it worked a little bit differently, but it was still a group of teachers who met during planning during a planning period, so I've had a little experience
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	no, at the time of my licensure program, PLCs hadn't come up too much
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	
What types of meetings did you attend?	of course we have our Tuesday meetings, there's been opportunity that we collaborate during faculty meetings as well, my collaborative group has been good about meeting, we've gotten together in the summer and there's been other times that we've gotten together, there's other collaborative meetings I've had to go to, as a first year teacher last year, I attended for the school, any teacher who was new to the district, so we collaborated that way with other teachers
<i>Relevancy?</i>	well, they have all have been...pretty relevant, especially the Tuesday meeting, and actually getting to collaborate with my content and grade level, and even just the content area, like with other grades, like I've had the opportunity to meet with 6th grade and 8th grade, met with those teachers as well, they've been relevant as well, those ones
<i>Mandatory?</i>	the Tuesday meetings, yes, we can meet more but we have to at least meet on Tuesdays, my group we meet several times a week, we try to
What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?	several different things, of course we analyze student data, last year our focus was coming up with common assessments, umm.... this year we are kind of basically building on that, now looking at data in a common way, using that data together, to go

	from there, to make plans, or differentiate, where do we need to go from there? do we need to come back to something?, a lot of that, also RTI has been another thing that has come up in our plans, focusing on RTI and that data as well
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	my group is pretty open with each other, umm.... but I mean...we talk about issues...with data? ANYTHING? oh yeah, yes, definitely so, with RTI doing something....it's different this year, there have been concerns with that, I would say that there are any issues with anything communication wise, just kind of things that come up, timing's a lot, I think it's probably our main issue with a lot of things, we have a new writing plan that the district just went to, basically we have a lot to do and really not enough time to do it all, IN TERMS OF STANDARDS? yeah that's probably the only issues or concerns that we have discussed
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	well last year we were really focusing on building those assessments, we are still working on them, but we are kind of moving beyond that, just fine tuning the ones that we used last year adding and taking away, umm.... we have worked on assessments together, our goal this year has been to analyze data together, and I have my data wall, looking at it the same way and looking across at all the kids in our grade level, umm.....we work pretty well together, we pretty much work on everything together
<i>Planning?</i>	DO YOU WORK ON LESSON PLANS TOGETHER? we do, but not during our PLC times on Tuesdays, we are not allowed to, we were told that that time was to be used for data, but like lesson planning...that needs to be done on our own time or at a different time, Tuesdays has a specific purpose
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	SO IT'S FOCUSED MAINLY ON THE ASSESSMENTS ON THE TUESDAY MEETINGS? yeah, we had started the PLC last year kind ofand being unsure we worked on lesson plans, and then we were told not to do that, we were told that time was not to be used for that, so we met different times of the week...couple of us have been better with the summer DO YOU DO ALL ASSESSMENTS THE SAME OR JUST THE UNIT ASSESSMENTS? we have our summative or unit assessments are common assessments that's every three weeks, how our curriculum has been designed by our district is modules, so every three weeks is a unit so we take a test every three weeks or at the end of that unit and those are all common,

	we also do within my collaboration group we do some formative assessments as well the same, like today for bell work, since we just went over quotation rules, we all did the same bell work where the kids had to add quotations, so we do a lot of that the same
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Interview #1: Participant 7

How would you define a Professional Learning Community or PLC?	a PLC is where teachers or people who work with students on a daily basis come together for the common good of the student being successful both in the classroom and outside of the classroom, and that would include their parents, and it can be the student as well.... both doing their part of the work, and when it doesn't...making sure it does get done, and for the main part it's to make sure the students are getting what they are needing, and it's to get the best of what they need, and meets their and their abilities and all that stuff
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	PLCs work by...on Tuesdays we come together as a 7th grade content area, sometimes after faculty meetings or during faculty meetings we have more time, and then we also use google docs to share different ideas of what we're teaching, right now our focus on getting common assessments, so pre-assessment and a post-assessment, which we started last year, so currently my group is still working on getting the first three units done, because we started the fourth unit last year, so then would be able to talk about data, and see if there's a group of my students that are weak in an area or SPI, which is a standard, and then... another one of the science teachers is doing well in that area, I can talk with them or maybe even use a strategy where we can switch classrooms, so that the students get a different perspective or way of teaching, but for the most part this year we've been going back and looking at different assessments, and trying to find more rigorous standards that are still multiple choice, science is still TCAP for this year, but for the most part...it's not just a recall information or multiple choice question
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs?	I had quite a bit of knowledge, I worked while I was at APSU with my bachelor's degree...I worked on a committee for PLCs, for...it was like an undergrad of science professors there, so I kind of knew what it was but I was never a facilitator/leadership role, which I am now...that I was a little worried about, but I knew with my co-workers I would... they wouldn't let me sink

	and fall, and I knew I wouldn't let myself sink and fall, but us as a team...it works really well because we are not there to..."well you didn't do this" and "you didn't do that" it's more of a we gotta get this done, it's for the students, it's why we're here, it's why we are teachers, that sort of thing
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	for PLCs...pretty much that everyone would come together, for that it was more of a college level...they were going to do for assessment of student teachers and their portfolio, or whether they were going to do a new field study, and I'm going blank of what the name is even though I did it, ummm....I'm think about it and not be able to tell you and after you leave I'll remember.... but pretty much they were in the mix of switching everything over, so the qualifications/credits so that students that were starting out the ed program had to complete and so on....that whole process...and we would come together collaborate on the pros and cons of each step, what it shouldn't look like, and what it should like, the role role of the teacher and the student and you would know everyone in that building were going to be so that students were successful and stayed in the field of education
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	I really like them, I think that students benefit from them greatly, it's always a learning experience as well, because you are learning different things from your colleagues, and different ways to teach, I feel like if everyone's involved and their on board with being a PLC and that way it's very effective, in other groups I have noticed...there has been some...where one person is still doing all the work, or another person who is doing the common assessments but is editing them, so that the wordings different, so yeah...there's still...we're still in a place of getting everyone on board, but I think the groups that are on board have seen significant growth in their students and their teaching
What types of meetings did you attend?	umm....obviously 7th grade science one, I have been to the PLC for the beginning of the year data, what the school needs to do in order to meet all of our goals, what needs to happen for teachers to increase their growth scores, which strategies...you know... that kind of stuff.. and then I was a part of the group that was selected to go to a PLC training in Missouri, and we talked about what a PLC is, what it's supposed to look like, that sort of thing
<i>Relevancy?</i>	they are very relevant, we...for the time that we have, which is about 45 minutes...we can usually get a good chunk of well....these are the questions we are going to use, one of our

	<p>teachers that is really computer literate and knows how to use the program..will actually put it all in and then puts it on Google doc and there we can comment and stuff on it, but if it's a Monday then we'll just wait and comment on it, you know...make changes...all that stuff, we try to get it where one Tuesday we actually working on Common Assessments, if a test is coming up, and we'll have that one open to talk about the assesment, so if it's where we need reteach...it's in a time frame where kids aren't going to be like "woah...we didn't talk about that until 2 months ago and now you are bringing it back up"</p> <p>LAUGHTER</p>
<i>Mandatory?</i>	yes, on Tuesday, yes, but there are many times that we meet that it is not mandatory
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	creating common assessments, data review, where we look at the questions and brainstorm what could have been...where the wording was something that could have been a factor and kids missed it, umm... what was a good question, what needed to be improved about the question, what strategies were taughton the questions that were good and bad, pretty much just trying to get an awareness of what would change... or help students be successful
What did you typically discuss in your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	on days that we do common assessments we talk most about the standards, what we need to cover, basically what we need to cover in the actual lesson, what strategies are going to be used, so that our teaching is rigorous as the test, what needs to be on the test, that sort of thing, and then...ummm.. if we are talking about data, pretty much what do we need, what needs to happen for improvement, and what do we need to continue doing
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	common assessments, and data review
<i>Planning?</i>	not yet, no
<i>Instruction?</i>	
<i>Assessment?</i>	SO IT'S THE PRE AND POST UNIT ASSESSMENTS THAT ARE COMMON? Yes, we are in the very beginning

Interview #1: Participant 8

How would you define a Professional	usually whatever we design in our PLC will be the main focus of one of my classes for the whole day, so for tests that would
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Learning Community or PLC?	be what takes up the whole time, tasks we don't design as many tasks, we usually focus on the test, if we do have a task that would be my lesson plan for the day , would be do that task and we would discuss are they going to do it in pairs, or on their own, things like that
Describe how PLCs work at your school.	we meet on Tuesdays during our planning and we talk about whatever we need to talk about whether it's data from a previous unit or making the assessment for the upcoming unit or who is going to plan what part of the unit ...ummm.... or looking at new state test which we don't have any same questions for yet, so we can't look at them, IT'S A WAITING GAME, yes
What kind of experience or prior knowledge did you have of PLCs	I went to the a plc institute in st charles MO, so that was 3 days and we had breakout sessions that we went to
<i>What did you learn about PLCs in your undergraduate program?</i>	not very much
<i>What were your perceptions of PLCs as a result of initial knowledge?</i>	
What types of meetings did you attend?	faculty meetings on Thursdays, collaboration meetings on Tuesdays and then professional development just whenever I have it
<i>Relevancy?</i>	I think they are very relevant and very helpful and I appreciate having them, it's good problem solving, because a lot of us have the same problems and we work together to solve it so we can find what works best for our kids
<i>Mandatory?</i>	yes
What was the focus of these meetings? What was typically on the agenda?	students and how they are either responding to, some time we talk about RT, and how our intervention students are responding to intervention, sometimes we talk about our regular classes, and how they are responding to our teaching or how we anticipate they will respond to our teaching so that we can plan accordingly
What did you typically discuss in	I think I've already covered it

your PLC meetings? What topics, issues, initiatives or concerns?	
What tasks did you work on together with your PLC team?	collaborative assessments, we all give the same assessments, and then umm... we also work lesson plans but the focus is more on the assessments
<i>Planning?</i>	we sit down together and figure out how many days we want the unit to last, well first we figure out for each of our sub-standards within the unit, how many days we are going to spend on each one, and then that tells us how long unit is going to last and then who will plan which days in the unit, and then once we've planned our days we meet again go over those days make sure we understand their lesson plans and that there's a flow and that we've covered everything
<i>Instruction?</i>	yes, a lot of us do same lesson plans, we don't all do the same lessons plans depending on what's going on in our individual classrooms but we do similar things every day, a lot of the same stuff
<i>Assessment?</i>	yes (brief conversation with another teacher) IS IT BIGGER ASSESSMENTS, IS IT QUIZZES? the main focus is on the end of the unit assessment but we spend a little bit of time looking at quizzes, but mostly the unit assessment

Interview #2: Participant 1

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	okay, a lot of what we do together, is to try to construct lessons that will be successful. We really need to think about how many problems we want in the notes, do we have more hands on activities. When we come together in our PLC, we need to make it differentiated, because not every learner is a visual learner, auditory learners... etc. We take that very serious, therefore, common core forces teachers to apply concepts in different ways. So not only do we need to get students to logically solve problems, but we also need them to be able to explain their thoughts, or draw an example. Anything that is going to assist the students with the final assessments. When we get together for PLC tasks, our goal is what will help our team be the most successful, and have the most growth from students. So we are very vigilant when it comes to that, we are honest, we don't try to overplan, we want to make sure we leave
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	room for reflection at the end of lesson, which is very important to us.
<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	We have a google doc that the 7th grade math team utilizes. Everyone is assigned a day to complete. During collaboration, we view the Google doc and see what needs to be done, or what needs to be prepared usually a week ahead and possibly two weeks ahead. When collaborating about the lessons, we look for things that could be taught differently. At times, we look for videos or anything that can assist students with homework. When I am creating powerpoints for the lesson, I'm looking at what is a good flow after the bell ringer, what could I hook the kids with, various things like that because you want your lessons to be engaging. So when I'm looking at the google doc, it's for a week or for a month. I try to look at each day individually, and self-reflect so we can improve each lesson.
<i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	okay... so you are always planning, does that mean you always finish it? no, but you are always able to go back and add notes, and that's what we do, we try to add notes to the Google Doc to remind us for the next year, what worked, or what didn't work, we always try to plan or apply everything that's in that lesson for that day, whether we get to it or not, we still put summaries in our Google doc, to say was this a great lesson, was it too long, was it too short, did the homework really reflect this, there are times that we assign homework and to be honest.... is it too difficult, is it too easy, is it just basic, so those are things that we are looking at and prior and during..we kind of ask ourselves how well did this go
<i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i>	we really want to make sure that when we are planning our lessons it reflects what the questions will be asked on the assessments, so if are giving notes or giving examples, it's pretty much helping them...it's helping them try to expose what they should be expecting on the assessment, I've never had it where I'm teaching one thing and it has nothing to do with my assessment, we want to make sure that lessons we are planning for are joined in with that, that some way this is our goal...that's our assessment so we are trying our best to collaborate, and make sure we have enough examples, and if they don't understand the examples that we put in another day of practice, we are trying to get it to the point that once they see the questions on the assessment, they can successfully solve them and they are prepared

<p>2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?</p>	<p>what is going to make our days easier, LAUGHTER...no...I think a lot of it is being self-reflective, we need to discuss with each other what works, what didn't work, how are your students catching on, what are you doing different that I need to be doing, if we had time I would love observe different teachers that are on my team, but it's not very often that you can find a good math teacher that you can observe a lesson that you just taught you are able to sit in a class, however, I know that everyone has their own way of teaching it, so when we do get together one of our goals is how are you going to teach this example, and do you have a different way of teaching it and if you do, let's has it out so that when we do deliver this to the students, they know it's not unified, but there are various different ways of solving one problem, so collaborate a lot, but we also self reflect a lot</p>
<p><i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>I know pacing is a lot, but I feel I'm doing well with pacing, I try my best to make my questioning rigorous, I don't know if it's rigorous enough, and that's just for the regular classes, my advanced I feel like I'm doing great, I have allowed myself to be okay with taking on a math club, which is enrichment children, so you are definitely challenging them, I would love to have more understanding of how can you balance home life with making sure that you are not letting this students..... you are not leaving them behind, I do struggle with that a lot, I try my best to put boundaries, and allow myself to have family time, but if anybody our there could come and do a PLC about grading and making it where not grading...but feedback is so crucial for children they need to know how well they are doing, what words could I use to get to the point, so that they can understand what I'm saying, so I would like to develop more on my feedback, when it comes to giving the kids.... i know it's quick, but they look at the problems that they missed and they need to know.... you don't want to do this long drawn out letter, you want to be quick and to the point so that they understand, okay this is what happened. so I'm trying to get better at that, I know they can only learn as much as I allow them to learn, so if they want to change an error I need to be able to vocalize that in a way that they understand and makes sense, some of the students may have reading comprehension issues, I would love to know how to leave feedback so that they understand what I'm trying to give it's too the point</p>
<p><i>b. do you have any personal goals or</i></p>	<p>CLARIFIED QUESTIONS....maybe the same as my professional goals, my first goal was to be a 5, I started off as a</p>

<p><i>development goals related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>3, I've always wanted students to be confident enough to that they can use their mind without a calculator, people look at me like I'm crazy, but I think it's possible, just personally I want to make sure that I'm feeding and I'm throwing good seed out there, because I know they can do it, I know they can, I know developed a great relationship with my students, so just knowing that they feed off of that, and they know they are learning more than just math, so that's important to me, those are very high on my list of goals, it's not just a math class...you know</p>
<p><i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>well, I think I probably self reflect way too much, LAUGHTER... I think I pick myself apart too much, but anytime I find things that could help another co-worker, I love sharing, so anytime I am able to share, I definitely share, I don't agree in reinventing the wheel, so anytime you can make someone else's life easier, I truly believe it will come back to you, even if it's hard, I always try to keep my mind open to students who are trying to talk to me, everyone has their bad days, so I try my best say that if you don't understand how I am showing this to you, you need to say that... don't be afraid, don't be afraid to tell me that, because that's my job is to research to make it easier for you, that's my job, so try my best to make it where I do develop that relationship with students, so when I do start self-reflecting, I want them to be honest, I've done class surveys at the end of the year, where they are anonymous, they leave feedback for me, I've done that since the beginning, I do want to change, I want be better</p>
<p>3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?</p>	<p>that there's no wrong answer, if you fail, it's okay, get back up, we are always going to have our bad days, but we've got to keep going, yes it does get stressful because there are time constraints, we can do it because we are a team, the ladies that I work with are phenomenal, where I may have week where it's so busy, they are there to help me, if I see they are having issues I go out and help them, having that unification in your team is crucial, and I think that's where I grew the most, is just understanding that you can learn from someone else, and you can learn from your mistakes, and it's okay, not everybody is perfect, I think that once you realize that, and you can actually accept that, you are able to change, and it's for the better, and it's for the students</p>
<p>4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you</p>	<p>we never have enough time, we collaborate so much people think we are crazy, but we just never have enough time, if there was wrong thing that we do, I couldn't really pick it out because</p>

face in your work within your PLC team?	we flow so well together, even as we are having this interview, they are planning next door, so I know if I miss anything I'm not going to feel lost, because they are going to inform me, if anything else I would just say...and I know that Mrs. Hollinger is giving us this which is awesome, give us as much time to plan, just so that we know how to get those students there, we want them to grow
5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?	if there was a list of different topics, and at the beginning of the year we were able to choose what we'd like to learn or develop in.... that would be cool, and make it where that's not all the time, but at brief moments when the teacher needs it, we are going to need that time to decompress and actually be the students so we are able to learn, but also have the time to collaborate, that would be neat

Interview #2: Participant 2

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	CLARIFIED QUESTION...well the lesson plans we plan together we implement them in the classroom, the common assessmentswe give the common assessments, so we can use all of that as feedback everyday
<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	well after we do... for instance.... if we have data chat over an assessment we look at our own individual data, and that will very and so we can talk about missed questions, talk about maybe why my students didn't do as well, and how could...then I use that when I'm planning... to go back and reteach or can I just do it in a bell ringer, things like that...I plan where and how I will go over that information again based on that information
<i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	well...I was going to go there actually..things that they talk or mention are the things that I would use in the classroom, or they might say that you need to teach or bring up this type of thing, or these are some of the vocabulary that they need to be using, then when I'm actually teaching I make sure I'm not forgetting something, and I'm talking about that and bringing it up
<i>c. how do these task apply to your assessments?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION...IS EVERYTHING COMMON... yes, everything is common, if it's all together then by murphy's law it's all going to be impacting everything...I don't know...ARE ALL OF YOUR QUIZZES THE SAME? FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS? well not always the same, quizzes might have to be tweaked based onI might have a standard that my kids after reteaching it learned it and I might

	add that on, add it on to a quiz, just to say get a formal assessment for my ownself, where someone else might not need to assess that but in general, yes, they are the same
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	to improve students' understanding, improve student interaction, improve the quality of education as a whole
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION.....well just like....feedback, seeing how my kids are doing on the different assessments, and things, currently one thing that I'm trying to focus on, it's not like anyone said to me...you need to work on this...it's from self reflection, and I'm trying to work on differentiation a lot better, maybe better is not the right work, just focus on that, because I feel like... there so..I don't know if it's just this year...but I feel like their gaps are large this year, and so I'm trying to focus on how can I be teaching the same lesson, but then have lessons within lessons at different levels, I don't know that I'm doing that good right now, but that is what my current goal is right now...is differentiation
<i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	a personal goal I guess I would like to start doing would be writing assessments, a personal goal...because right now I'm not writing any assessments, I just get questions and turn them in and they sort check off whether it was an acceptable question, so I'd like get to the point where I could build some confidence on that level, so I could build some assessments that are something that would perform well as an assessment for inside the classroom
<i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION...I feel that's it's effective for sure, I wouldn't keep doing it, you know, I feel it's effective, I feel it does help my confidence...IN WHAT WAY? I feel like I haven't forgotten anything, you know that my kids are getting the same type of instruction, the same kind of thought provoking questions are being asked of them, so I'm giving enough rigor to them

3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?	what I get out of it the most... I would say would be... being able to identify strengths and weaknesses of my students
4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?	CLARIFIED QUESTION....I think challenges are...I'm assuming are the same for every new teacher,I feel like maybe...feeling like what you are doing is being valued at the same level of importance as others THE WORK YOU CONTRIBUTE? correct, (pause)and another thing I find challenging...just resistance to new things, change THINGS YOU SUGGEST? yes, suggestions being taken more seriously, and if it's not something someone has done before, not just say...ways it couldn't work..but then maybe pointing out some ways it could be improved so that it would work,I would find that most beneficial, say okay... I'm all fine to hear how it doesn't work but I'd also like that to be in tangent with...okay this is what we could do to improve it
5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?	(pause) I think there could be more focus on...again...instead of just what is not right how ...I would think we could be more solution focused, okay so if something doesn't work how does it work...instead of just it does not work, being the final statement, MAINLY WITHIN YOUR TEAM? I've seen that....I think it's a theme

Interview #2: Participant 3

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	I think we talked about creating assessments together, and so especially this year we are basically reviewing the assessments from the district, and what we do...of course...is we all give same unit tests, which allows us to see and compare and see if our teaching methods are consistent, like we might have different methods because every teacher has different strengths, and we do things differently, but....the assessments are all the same so we all know if we are being effective on the whole and whether we are being consistent with what we are teaching, and so that helps, we also look at data from the assessments in our collaborative planning, and decide what standards they most had difficulty with, and so that influences our reteaching, not to mention we also talk about activities, we talking about sharing
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	these, those activities get implemented as well, is that what you were thinking about? YES
<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION....part of what I do when I'm planning is I take the assessment that we've created and looked over and worked on, and I work those questions and answers into my teaching, so I make sure those questions that we are looking at in a standard end up somewhere in my lesson, so especially because all of our tests have long reading passages, so usually those are the excerpts from the primary sources that I'll go over and we'll spend time on in class to try and prepare them for what they'll be tested over
<i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	the collaborative stuff that we do...I am always keeping in mind that I stay on pace with the other teacher in my collaborative group, and maintain same level of difficulty, so when I'm implementing that I'm always trying to keep it at the same rigor level or even up it a little bit, I want to really push them without making them crack....
<i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i>	the smaller formative assessments are not...we are not usually doing the same formative assessments, because my teaching style is very different, I will still do the DBQ stuff....I do a lot of project based and other stuff like that so they do influence what my formative assessments are....because I need to make sure that I'm assessing whether they are reaching or getting the same material as the assessments that we've agreed on, so I do create the FA around what's going to get them to the place they need to be, WHAT IS DBQ? document based question, with a primary source and then answering questions about it
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	the main goal of our PLC work is to make sure that our instruction and assessment is standardized...is consistent across the board and at a high level so we keep each other accountable for that
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION, yes, I have a couple goals this year and one of those goals is to give more useful feedback to my students, and so I'm taking the time to learn from my collaborative groups.... we've talked about feedback several times, another goal is to improve their writing, that's a goal for all of us, we've talked about this a lot in our collaborative group, grading writing, and how to improve their writing, and nontsop writing...so that is also the case, ultimately professional wise with our collaboration group we are really trying to improve our use of technology, and we've been applying for grant money, we've been trying to get class sets of computers, which we are on the list for from the district but the district

	can't find the money, but that is one thing we are also trying to work on as a team, and that's my life goal...to get a class set of computers (laughter)
<i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	as it relates to my collaborative group? YES, it's always to become a more effective teacher, to get ideas, to be able to also help other teachers, right now in both of my groups I'm still the newest member, so eventually I'm sure they'll be new teachers that come in and so my professional goal would be to also help them like I've been helped, I have several teachers in my groups that have gone out of their way to make sure I've been set up over the last couple of years, so I'd like to be able to help other teachers
<i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i>	with 8th grade collaboration, I definitely pull my own weight, especially because I'm the one who knows the most about technology, so when tech stuff happens I can contribute that way, so I feel very useful, and while my content knowledge is not as much as theirs yet, I still feel like I contribute activities and ideas towards assessments and things like that, 7th grade.... I'm not very effective, part of that is that I don't have time with them because of how the schedule works, and with some other teachers that have two preps they pull them out of class to go to their collaborative group, their other collaborative group, and I think I'd have a panic attack if they did that, so I'm not mentioning that I would like to have time with that other group, I would miss my instructional time because I feel like that's even more important, so I sometimes....it's through email and Google docs and so I do not feel as effective with 7th grade as I do with 8th grade
3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?	REPEATED QUESTION...well like I said before, they are always very willing to help if I am struggling with anything or if I need ideas for lessons, we share materials and really all I have to do is ask and other teachers will help, it's also I think very useful to get different perspectives, because the guys that I work withthey have different teaching styles than me, but we are on the same page, and it's also nice to hear what they are doing in their classrooms because sometimes the activities that I pick might not be as effective as theirs, and so I end up adopting some of their stuff and I like being able to share, without being overwhelmed and feeling like I have to do exactly what they are doing, so I'll share what I'm doing, but you don't have to do exactly the same thing, a lot of times I'll share something, and they'll be like...that's not going to work for me and they'll do the same, and it's nice to have that kind of

	relationship to where we don't feel like we have to teach the same exact thing in the same exact way, but we can still be consistent with what we're teaching getting the students to where they need to be without sacrificing who we are as a teacher and that's really useful
4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?	well with 8th grade we are very cohesive, very cohesive, we all know our roles and work really hard, 7th grade on the other hand...because I'm not there...and when I do have the opportunity to sit down it's a very unfocused group, I get frustrated with that so going from this uber focused let's get this stuff done group and we have fun..we joke around and stuff...to this other group,who basically one person does all the work, and everyone else doesn't do anything, gets very frustrating, so if I were at that meeting...there might be a fight or two, I don't know...I try not to....but that's one of the reasons that I'm kind of grateful that I don't sit down with them on a regular basis, because every time I do they don't accomplish anything and one person does it themselves and then just share it....that's my challenge
5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?	OTHER THAN YOUR 7TH GRADE ISSUE? that is specific to that particular group, because what we are supposed to do is what 8th grade does, as far as changes that I would like to see.... I don't know..... I'm okay with it... I like that they give us a little bit freedom to discuss what we need to discuss...and I'm afraid that they will go the route of everyone has to teach everything the same, so I don't want to see that happen so right now....I'm finding it very useful, I don't feel like we have to meet to often, I don't want to meet any more than we do, although a couple of faculty meeting days it would be nice to meet with our collaboration groups which sometimes we do....but no, I don't know....I like it the way it is..I like my 8th grade group

Interview #2: Participant 4

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	okay...some of the things...the common assessments we use to... I use it to guide what I'm going to be teaching,and to remind myself of the important things we said we were going to cover, I go back and I look a the test...and say...hey, did I cover this?...also I use it as a tool to make sure I'm aksing the right type of questions or the same type of questions so that we are not working one way throughtout the unit...and then all of the sudden they get a test and it's out of left field and they don't
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	<p>know how to answer, we try and make the common assessments as much like benchmarks and TCAP as possible, obviously that's what the kids are going to see....that's the way they are going to be asked so we try to get them familiar with that type of questioning, not necessarily the exact one, we also are doing common clear targets, while we modify them slightly... I use "I can" ...others may use different to ones, we are essentially doing the same thing so we are covering all the different areas that we need to cover, one of the guides we use is the TN curriculum website, i use some of the different phrases in there as well as the textbook not as much because i know a lot of that is pulled from different places...let's see...that's what I can think of off the top of my head...there's a lot we do</p>
<p><i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i></p>	<p>well...on the same vein as I said before....I use what we've talked about to make sure that my plans are going through..and we're covering the same material, the whole...the four of us together figuring out what the content is going to be together is better than me working in a vacuum and saying this is what I think we need to, and Mrs. Sikes this is what we are going to cover, we all come together formulate similar plans, also we share activities we are planning on...we talk about different activities we are going to use, we try not too specific as far as I'm going to do this and this, but this is the overall activity I'm doing and this is why I'm using it and then each of us can use our own style to present it according to our personalities</p>
<p><i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i></p>	<p>again....we are trying to gear it the way, we are trying to get all the students and all the classes, making sure we are covering the same thing...even though each of us are different people, but we are still trying to make sure we cover same things, the common assessment is the biggest tool because we come together and say these are the things we think they have to know in order to master this unit, while we are not teaching to the test...has gotten to be a bad terminology...but it really it was we are doing,we are teaching them what we know they need to learn, making sure we at least cover those things and then if there are other things that build into it... we can add those in but we want to make sure they have the core goals and achievements and they're going through it.....</p>
<p><i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i></p>	<p>the unit assessments are, we sometimes will give quizzes throughout, each of us...as we feel we need to... but we a common pre-assessment and a common post-assessment and then we compare the data between the two, compare it at the</p>

	beginning to see what ...are all the students in our group probably needing the same reinforcement, or new learning, and then at the end we look how they did by standard and see if each of us are in the same area, or if somebody did a little better, and go and ask that person how did you do this, what did you use, so we can use that to revise our plans, feeding on previous and revise them to improve our instruction because we always want to improve our instruction
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	to give students the best quality instruction that we can give them, growing us as teachers and educators, as well as figuring out what they need to do and how we need to go, and of course every year the group of kids is different, so adjusting it based on that as well...
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	well since this is my...other than improving myself as a teacher...not really... this is second career, I'm already retired so my goal is to continue to teach, I have no aspirations to be in administration, I want to teach, other than constantly improving myself I want to be better at that, I don't have any aspirations at trying to get ahead or work at central office or anything like that...I had enough administration at my last job
<i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	still working a little more on....personally...I'm still working on my classroom management, which I don't think I'll ever be able to stop working on that, but....kids are little different than soldiers...little adults...so there a lot of different practices and ways of addressing things that are a little different than dealing with them rather than adults, and also how to deal with....be more...not sure how to say it...but couching things to parents in such a way that so that they understand that I'm trying to look out for their child...there's not something wrong with their child...I'm not attacking them... not out to get them...trying to couch it in such a way that my actual meaning comes across, I don't come across....in a non-positive way
<i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i>	I'm very confident in what I do, I've be up in front teaching people for the last 27 years, so feel very self-confident, but at the same time I always have things to learn, I learn from the kids, I learn from my peers, of course from some of our staff development...some of them are very useful, towards our... professional development ...that's what it is (laughter)

3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?	just discussion of how each of us are doing things in our classrooms, finding other approaches and other ways...that we may have not thought of that someone else is using.... brainstorming, the sharing of ideas with peers
4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?	CLARIFIED QUESTION...just different personalities....I guess...I've been very fortunate....my PLC team is very cohesive and very open, the main thing is that..just... sometimes each of us tend to go our own ways, we have be understanding of each other....so okay..got it..you did this...also trying to make sure that something that we do is not going to impact other people, I don't think anyone has every done it....but if we went in and just changed up the test, and took four questions out and put our own four questions in.... probably would be an issues...so we aware of those things, we usually come to a consensus, we have very spirited discussions, everyone is pretty thick skinned so we basically have a good time, I am very comfortable with my particular collaboration or PLC group
5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?	want to see more focus on actual the instruction portion of it, more so than the data side, while data is important and we need to drive our instruction, seems like sometimes data is overemphasized at the expense of other things, and that's really a mandated thing...I would like to see...we need some structure but a little more focused on what do you guys want to do, rather than here's what we're doing....and how we are going to do it....a little bit of autonomy

Interview #2: Participant 5

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	one of the things we create a lot are the notes for students, I use those as a guideline for what I want my students to have in the examples, if one of the students wanted to go to another teacher for help they can use the same examples that we have, we try to keep all of those the same, homework...we keep that the same, so no matter which teacher they go to, they are able to help them because they have the homework, tests, we give all the same tests, when they do corrections with the kids....because I don't have the same lunch as my 7th graders so being able to have the other teachers to go to helps, it helps to have the same thing I guess
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<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	it's made it easier,(laughter) with 7th grade it's more "you do this, you do this", everyone pulls there own weight,we create assessment and then we do checks and balance, you know make sure there's enough rigor, make sure that the answers are correct, the problems will make sense, or that the problems flow, same thing with 8th grade so this is what lesson you want to cover, so this is what you are going to write, and then we check and give it to each other and go from there, so it's pick a day and plan a day as opposed to take 7 days and plan 7 days (laughter)
<i>b.how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	(pause) instruction is more so...just making sure I'm covering what needs tothat I'm covering every aspect of the lesson, as far as how I give it...I still teach in my own style, I just make sure I'm covering the same thing Mrs. Alvarez, Miss Wheaton, etc. it's just making sure that we're all covering the same things hopefully in the same day, we try to shoot for the same day
<i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i>	keep the same assessments, all of them are the same across the board, when we are reviewing, it helps me to make sure that...okay we start with the assessment first, we've already made it before the unit,it's helps us to say, okay, this assessment is where we need to go, and if one of us feels like maybe that's too far or too in-depth, it's more than one mind thinking about how a test should look, so you get more of a balance of what you need in a test, ARE ALL OF YOUR ASSESSMENTS COMMON? yes, for 7th grade, yes, for 8th grade, most of the time, sometimes it's not, but recently it has been, Miss Wheaton and I have been trying to be on the same page
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	to make our life easier, (laughter) to make...to really...decrease the work load that one person has and then to also make sure that...what a lot of students ran into last year...they moved all of their classes to my classes and so having me on teh same page in terms of information they are going to get, it doesn't matter which teacher I move to, you are going to get the same information...we don't teach it the same, we give the same information and the same homework, helps with cohesiveness
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	well, I'm normally the last minute person, (laughter) so I'm trying to get more ahead, so I've got to get this done, ideally if we could go through the summer and plan the first three lesson and then have them go according to plan, that would be great, the biggest goal...is to always create the test first, sometimes lose track of time, and we might be a week into the unit and we know this needs to be covered, but we haven't written the test completely out

<p><i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>(laughter) not be the last one,(laughter) not be the last one, I'm telling you, okay what do I need this week okay let's get this get this one, for them they are like "██████ it's this week, we need it" (laughter) I'm the last minute person, they keep me on my toes</p>
<p><i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>knowing exactly what I'm going to do that week, it just makes like so much easier, as far as... these are my examples I've already been through my examples, the students feel more like she knows what's going on, I have a chance to work through them, do the problems and anticipate their questions, where if it was just me planning the whole unit we'd probably be planning day to day, (laughter) today we are going to do this and hope for the best, just having other people to bounce ideas off of....well, how would you explain... whatever it is that we are explaining, or ummmm....I don't know if I would explain it like that so that definitely helps to be able to bounce those ideas before trying it with students</p>
<p>3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?</p>	<p>(pause) that's a hard question...one more time please REPEATED QUESTION...I'm not sure....trying to think...CLARIFIED QUESTION....yes, Mrs. M can write a lesson plan, I mean detail... to a T, before I would be like this is what I'm going to do, this is what I'm going to do....she has it written, we need to this, we need to do that with examples, following her lesson plan, being able to say this is what my lesson plan should look like definitely has been a plus, because she has it mastered, with detail...even the way it's structured makes it easier, it has a flow, so I've definitely been able to take that from her, to be able to write a decent lesson plan</p>
<p>4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?</p>	<p>timing, we always over plan,and so then that leads to frustration because we didn't get to everything we wanted to get to, so just being able to say....okay....the students...being able to anticipate more of what the pace would look like, we just have a lot of stuff to cover in 45 minutes, so the pace just sometimes gets to the point where we don't cover everything, we didn't get to this....so increases frustration but if we could master that we'd be pretty good</p>
<p>5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?</p>	<p>standard across the board, where is everyone is held to the same standard as to what a PLC should look like, I don't feel like...even with just one math and the other math...it's night and day to see the difference, ANYTHING ELSE? they should somewhat look the same or similar as opposed to night and day (laughter)</p>

Interview #2: Participant 6

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	well, the materials that we use for example like the common assessments of course things I actually use in the classroom because we create those assessment together, those are the assessment that I use as the summative for the unit for my classes, and then regarding the other work we do, we usually come back and analyze the data, that each of us has come up with from that common assessment, and it kind of is a guide in where we need to go back in instruction,because it is a summative assessment, for example one of things that came up was the students were still struggling with identifying central idea,they were getting it confused with theme, so that data told us that we needed to go back and teach central idea again,and then it also on the flip side of that tells us what they have mastered and when can move on, other materials of course too.... we have been working on a lot....of course questioning within certain texts and those text dependent questions within our classes, and vocabulary has been another focus this year in our PLCs as well, after we have the text what vocab are we going to be using specifically with the students
<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	we do...within our PLC, because we follow a framework from the district, we each follow that framework and then the materials that we discuss or talk about that goes into my planning, when we analyze the data we've found a lot of times our students across the board in 7th grade are struggling with the same standards, and so being able to collaborative with other teachers in my PLC we are able to bounce ideas and so I can incorporate those into my plan, activities, different strategies, collaborate to find what strategies my team members use, and what I've used and things like that
<i>b.how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	about the same as the planning, but for example...especially with strategies, one of my team members is really talented with coming up with just things on her own, just awesome new ideas and ways...ways of instructing, we've talked a lot about.... this year with our tests...we are allowed to leave posters up, so little short rules, that just a new strategy...something quick we can use in the classroom, and then working on how we are doing our interactive notebooks this year...that's another thing that we've kind of talked about and that's impacted my instruction as well, a new way or new idea about teaching something
<i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION...definitely the common assessments are a big one, that's what we've been working on the last two years in our PLC, and really...it has been helpful to have the

	<p>same assessment as the others in my PLC, because we can sit down together and see 7th grade as a whole, you know our class as a whole, what they are struggling with, what they've needed, and that's been a big help, just kind of seeing my classes, and my team members are pretty open about sharing data, and the data we get from those assessments? ARE ALL OF YOUR ASSESSMENTS COMMON? all of our summative assessments are, sometimes our formative, you know the end of class, We'll come up with things that we'll share as well, yes, all of our unit assessments for sure are</p>
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	I'd say the main goal would be those common assessments and analyzing the data, would probably be the main focus
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION...professional....I mean definitely....(pause) I've enjoyed....I feel like I'm becoming better at writing assessments because of it and that would be a goal to continue the growth in that (pause) another prof goal would be continuing to learn new strategies and ways for instruction...and just kind of growing as a teacher
<i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	yes.....we've definitely been introduced to a lot within RLA, findinga personal goal would be...may sound terrible...but just taking what we've learned and be able to do it faster, my personal goals are really just toI need to spend more time with my family, that's been a big challenge this year, I want to take what I've learned and then....keep that professionally, that's just my personal goal this year...I feel like I've neglected my family a lot, and it's been weighing on my heart
<i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i>	CLARIFIED QUESTION....It sounds so terrible...just thinking about this....I feel like a Debbie Downer about all of this... I WANT TO HEAR YOUR VOICE....honestly feel that there's some growth, there's just a lot, nothing that I blame on my PLC, or necessarily anything like that, there's just been a lot of changes, standards state wide and curriculum, just the shift of education, especially in the last five years, since I started teaching, I'll be kind of honest, there's been moments where because of these changes, I have felt like I am not as effective, or a good educator and I've had to pep myself up, and say no it's not just you, and keeping in mind that things are changing and going with the flow, I do feel like I'm getting to that new direction of what they want, I am growing, my confidence with that, there are some things out there that I don't agree with the shift of education has gone, some personal things

<p>3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?</p>	<p>personally, I think I said this in our previous meeting....with my team members I work really well with them, and think we would all kind of agree, that we work well as a team, we are really open with sharing data and even moments when we struggle, and things like that, and that's not something that we struggle with at all and personally they've kept me motivated to trying new things, and not giving up even when you feel like you are down, that kind of stuff</p>
<p>4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?</p>	<p>really it's just been a lot of changes that have gone on within testing, and within our state, and um.... at time the challenges...just feeling really overwhelmed, that...and I know my team members feel the same, we are just not ever going to get ahead... at time overwhelmed and at times burned out, no light at the end of the tunnel, and the time in the day to do all of those things, to get it done within planning, following those practices a d things like that</p>
<p>5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?</p>	<p>I love that my school pushes for the PLC and that we plan together, I think it does benefit the students, having their teachers are all on the same page, I think it really, it does help the students, I guess the major change I would see is....the detailed lesson plans that we have to submit,sometimes I feel like the focus for the PLC is these model or perfect...the focus is on the by the book lesson plans rather than taking the time to work on the materials and feedback,I'm not saying that those things aren't important, sometimes I just fee like with all that has been put on our plate, specifcially with our content area, sometimes it's forgotten....truly how much time it takes, I feel like I've not been able to give as much feedback, having time for other things, because we've had to focus on analyzing pages and pages of data, writing these extremely detailed 3 and 4 page lesson plans per day, (pause) it sound like I'm complaining, I'm not a complaining person, I feel like just personally...I spend more time writing lesson plans than it takes toactually teach a lesson, because of what all needs to be included in them, I'll spend easily four hours on a particular day, for a lesson that is going to take an hour to teach, SO WHAT WOULD YOU DO CHANGE IT? I definitely change the lesson plan requirements, maybe not having...I understand what they are wanting to see from our PLC, but maybe not making that a daily or weekly, but maybe periodic checks or checkpoints, so they can check to make sure we are including everything, like having those specific questions they are looking for or the different levels of questions, but to have that as daily requirement, forces teachers</p>

	<p>to spend so much time on creating those lesson plans, that I'm not....I don't have time...I would like to give authentic feedback to students, it takes away from creating some of the materials, the focus sometimes...the level of detailed required on lesson plans, (pause) previous schools the requirement was not quite the same, I've had to turn in unit plans and things like that, but it was just kind of a check, I create more detailed lesson plans than I did in college</p>
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Interview #2: Participant 7

<p>1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?</p>	<p>well once we have our common assessments, we are not the point of having same clear targets and formative assessments yet, but as of our last meeting, I let the other science teachers know that's where I'd like to start going, since we are hitting to point where we started last year with common assessments, but I like to take the tests and the standards, and just pick out what standards wants, and make sure it's standards based, and it's something that is information that just deepens the knowledge, or is a side part to make them understand the knowledge better, and then from there I like to start making my lessons, in the sense of this is the very basic stuff they need to know and then build upon that, and then the third overall lab or whatever assessment it is is going to be where they can apply what we have been learning</p>
<p><i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i></p>	<p>CLARIFIED QUESTION at a stand point especially since I've gone to a PLC with administration and other teachers, and I have seen how PLCs work, and how effective they are, and even in our own school with how effective they are, other subject and grade levels and the growth that they have, I am just ready to get to the next part so we reach our goals and the kids reach their goals as well</p>
<p><i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i></p>	<p>make them where they are more to the point, I know exactly what I need to do, what the standard says, and how I'm going to assess them and the overall goal, what I need to do and they need to do for both of us to be successful</p>
<p><i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i></p>	<p>definitely made them more rigorous, and I believe at this point, I'm starting to see the fact that my teaching in starting to get a little more in depth so the students do have the ability to apply the basic knowledge to a higher ended question, but it has definitely made it more advanced than in year's past had been</p>

<p>2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?</p>	<p>to make sure that the students are getting what they need in terms of being successful not only in 7th grade but as their educational career goes, and to know that I'm doing the best I can as a professional and a teacher, that I'm using strategies that are effective, I'm helping my science team use effective strategies, and know that we are all in it together so that everybody is successful</p>
<p><i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>I'd like to see myself bring the group to what I've seen in the PLCs where they all do work together, where it's a group effort for...you do this...you do this, we work together, I feel like it is now..where it's two of us doing all the work, okay well the other two are going to be where...we are just going to go with the flow and whatever you bring we'll use it</p>
<p><i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>to grow more professionally, I feel like I'm really still young in my professional career, I have seen a lot of growth in myself, I just want to continue to push myself to be all that I can be, I just want myself to be the best teacher, and let the students see my passion for everything that I do, and that I'm here for them 100%, that's why I do what I need to do, and you know...I want everyone in my group or that I work with to see it as well and have the same desire and determination to get everything done, and the students succeed and meet their goals in life</p>
<p><i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>CLARIFIED QUESTION honestly, I think that not everybody is on the same page, I think that some of them are in it to just say I'm following along, and doing what I'm asked, but I don't believe in it and I'm going to do what I want to when I can, I think there needs to be...not only myself but when have that come to Jesus meeting... an administrator that can stay for the meeting, and give this is what I'm expecting of you, this needs to happen, and a time frame, right now I feel like we are in a stand still, with just making common assessments and reviewing common assessments, there's so much data out there than can be used, and I want to learn how to effectively use that and help my students and my team also seeing that...and understanding that we have to do this and we have to do that...this is what we have to do, instead of seeing it as extra work, seeing this is what I Need to do for my students for them to be successful</p>

<p>3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?</p>	<p>the different strategies that the other teachers have can be helpful, especially in terms of different areas of science, like physical science, which is what we're doing now, it's not my strong point, and I don't really like it because it has math in it and I'm not a math person, but there's a lot of thing that I've grown to know about myself and my teaching strategies has made it easier and more enjoyable time teaching it to the class, making tests that was one of my areas of struggle, and know I feel like I could make a test that is going to be clea cut, it's going to do the basic questions as well as the higher end, it doesn't always have to be an essay question in order to make it an advanced question to see what they know</p>
<p>4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?</p>	<p>getting everybody on board, I think that three needs to be more time between us that's being used, but not everybody is open to using their planning period or staying after school, we've talked about doing the Google doc, then there's always an issue of I can't get on it or blah, blah, blah.... I just feel like some of the teachers see it as another thing that it's going to be put into education and then in two years it's going to be gone, why do we have to do it know? but I feel like PLC is something that we do on a daily basis, when we talk about what are you doing in your class, etc, instead of it's more structured in a PLC where.. this is what we are doing and this is the results of it</p>
<p>5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?</p>	<p>pretty much answers to the previous questions, just to have a team that sees the results and sees how effective PLCs can be set up and have the people's attention, them being effective and how the students actually react to they are all doing the same stuff, while [REDACTED] says have to have to do this, and we are not doing that in our class, why is she doing this, why isn't he doing that, there's a lot of that that goes on and sometimes it makes be feel bad because I feel like, not that I'm the best, but I don't see why they students don't get the opportunity, because I feel like my job is more of eye opener or an effective teaching strategy that teachers are doing, but at this point in age, I'm trying to see what is going to reach the most of my students and keep them engaged, to where they are going to learn the most from it, and is is something I can refer back to that they can actually remember, and I can use it in other units, or at the end of the year, when it's like remember this because we are about to test it, I wish they were open minded to the idea instead of shutting the door on it, because education does have a lot of changes, and it does change very frequently, but being open to the opportunities, opening the door to something that is going to</p>

	be successful, if your door is always shut, then that's the risk you are going to take and miss the opportunity to be successful
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Interview #2: Participant 8

1. How do you use the various PLC tasks you described in our first interview within your daily work?	usually whatever we design in our PLC will be the main focus of one of my classes for the whole day, so for tests that would be what takes up the whole time, tasks we don't design as many tasks, we usually focus on the test, if we do have a task that would be my lesson plan for the day, would be do that task and we would discuss are they going to do it in pairs, or on their own, things like that
<i>a. how are these tasks applied to planning?</i>	yes, IN TERMS OF YOUR DAILY LESSON PLANS, yes
<i>b. how are these tasks applied Instruction?</i>	daily instruction, we mostly talk about instruction not in the Tuesday collaborations but in a Google Doc, we'll just add different things, the lesson plans, we have a lesson plan for each day, there is one person who is charge of doing the lesson plan for each day but we kind of all contribute to it as well
<i>c. how do these tasks apply to your assessments?</i>	we try to get the assessments done before the lesson planning so that they'll be successful on the test, but that doesn't always happen DO YOU DO ANY ASSESSMENTS THAT ARE NOT COMMON? most of them are common, occasionally I will put in a quiz that I made on my own or a test occasionally, but usually they are common, all tests are common
2. What is the main goal of your PLC work?	the main goal would be to make sure we are all on the same page with teaching of standards, that we are all getting the same understanding of what the students are supposed to learn, and to share ideas so that we can all do the best teaching it as we can
<i>a. do you have any professional goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	my professional goal since I am at the beginning of my career would just to be learn from the two who have been teaching for 20+ years so that would be my professional goal, but also know that they use some of my ideas too so they are getting some ideas from me as well
<i>b. do you have any personal goals or development goals related to your PLC work?</i>	I think I've pretty much said my goals

<p><i>c. what about your sense of efficacy related to your PLC work?</i></p>	<p>my confidence has grown a lot as we've developed our PLC over the last 3 years, because my first year didn't have it all, so I was really lost, I didn't have a lot of support from the other 8th grade math teachers, because we were all doing our own things and we didn't talk about much, but then the past two years it's been a lot better because my classroom is with the other 8th grade math teachers and we meet every Tuesday, it has really helped my confidence a lot because I know I'm on the same page as them</p>
<p>3. What do you personally find helpful in your work within your PLC team in terms of your own practice and growth?</p>	<p>I find it helpful when they...somebody says something their students have struggle with and then everyone contributes how they have taught it, I get a lot of good ideas from them on how they have taught it, and ways that it's been helpful for their students to understand it and I realize I can explain it in different ways to help my students understand when they are not understanding it yet</p>
<p>4. What do you struggle with or what challenges do you face in your work within your PLC team?</p>	<p>I think the only struggle is that we are four different people, we all kind of work differently so sometimes it's hard to all be on the same page, some people like to work ahead more and some people are more fly by the seat of their pants so that's kind of stressful sometimes but overall it goes really well</p>
<p>5. If you could make changes to the PLC work at your school, what changes would you want to see?</p>	<p>I would just like to see more time for it, more time for PLCs and also more independence within our PLC, a lot of time the principal will come in and tell us what she wants us to talk about and that that's not always what we think would be the most beneficial for us to talk or what we think we need to talk about, so more independence with what we do within our PLC and more time</p>

APPENDIX B
OBSERVATIONS

Observation #1

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #1 and 5 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 1 and 5 + 3 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

<p>1: let's figure out what we are doing unclear conversation</p> <p>2: do we want them set up in the same order the questions, or on the test do we want to mix them up? Combining with terms, etc. do we want the three documents to be in the same order or do we want the test to be mixed up? That's my questions</p> <p>T: what's easiest?</p> <p>2: it doesn't matter. Usually I mix them up.</p> <p>Unclear conversation</p> <p>L: will it be more paper if we mix it up, or no?</p> <p>2: might have to be mixed up by sections, okay then I'll reprint that, okay. I think the study guide will work. <i>Unclear conversation</i></p> <p>L: so I kind of wanted to discuss in terms of bell ringers are considered for this week. Do we still want to keep multiplying and dividing fractions on there or do we want to mix up?</p> <p>2: we haven't done multiplying or dividing with decimals yet have we?</p> <p>L: we did fractions and decimals with them, do want to continue with adding and subtracting fractions or do we want to substitute it for something else? I want to keep mult and dividing for one more week.</p> <p>1: do all of them for one more week. Then it wraps up the nine weeks.</p> <p><i>Unclear conversation</i></p> <p>2: what we could do next week is we could throw in one problem a day with mixed numbers to add. Maybe even multiply too.</p> <p><i>Laughing,</i></p> <p>1: small numbers</p> <p>L: I'm thinking time wise. What are we doing next week? Distributive property?</p> <p>2: remember last week we did one and we never really touched back on it.</p> <p>L: what direction do we want to go into, because I know eventually we need to go into daily decimals? maybe equivalent fractions, I'm just throwing stuff out there.</p> <p>1: we said we wanted to number line too. But I don't know if we figured out a way to do number line.</p> <p>3: can you tell us how you are doing that?</p>
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2: I quit with my number line because I do a copy
 T: remember we did one across the top
 L: my kids did really well with the number line that we did.
 1: I don't think we should put any spots between
 L: ok.
 1: we are probably not doing it with advanced again next week.
 L: no, we are not
 2: maybe a 0 and a 5, and ask what is the middle point
 3: then they have to fill in the rest of it
 L: not for advanced
 2: the other than we can do is we could print out a number line *Unclear conversation*
 pass those out on Monday, what did you give them, plot 2 numbers a day
 T: even if you gave them a number line with the 10 numbers above it, so they these are
 the numbers you are going to plot, that would only take up the header part of the page,
Unclear conversation what I'm say is maybe in bell ringers we could do integers,
 negative numbers, like just adding and subtracting negative numbers, in addition to
 subtraction one day *Unclear conversation*
 2: eventually we need to phase out the tick marks
Unclear conversation
 L: this is the problem I'm having, one thing that Shelly said that I agree with is you
 can't have too many concepts in one week, and they have to flow together in some
 way, so coming back to fractions now, next week I'm going to do another week of
 adding, subtracting, mult, dividing fractions, when we come back which direction to do
 you want to go from fractions to with them?
 2: doing mult and dividing decimals. Just the 10th
 T: I wouldn't do them both in the same week. I would do multiplication one week and
 division the other.
 L: so maybe, can we do this then, since we are mixing it up, can we do take T's idea
 and just multiply decimals can we just add negative numbers or something
 2: then they have to decide what the sign is.
 L: multiplication, just the tenths, that would be one problem, reiterating the negative
 numbers that we know they are all having problems with, one problem of each day
Unclear conversation
 2: you could mix it up where it's a tenth times a tenth, or a hundredth times a whole
 number, so it would still have two decimal places so they could see it's not always....
 L: that's what they had to do for homework last night, they had 16.5, they had to
 multiply it by that by 5
 T: in theory they took it home and used a calculator
 2: or they just didn't do it
 3: do make it so there's not so many decimals in a problem
Unclear conversation
 L: two problems a day, bring it back to help them with 2 step, the week after that
 dividing decimals, or we could wait, I know that our percentage is going to come up

soon, we are going to have percent in December, eventually we have to bring in that daily decimal

2: take the time that it takes to get through this content

L: I know

2: so when are we going to add in the number line thing

L: honestly this is the thing, our Bell Ringers need to just be a few moments to be quite honest because we using all this time for basic math, *Unclear conversation*

Keep it at two, and then we can pull in the number line, do whole numbers, decimals, and fractions on the number line, that will help with path driver, could help with the inequality we are coming up to

Unclear conversation

T: so maybe we need to write a list of the basic math we need to cover in bell ringers

L: so I'm thinking in unit 4 I may type that in there, so when we come back we can go ahead and mention it in 4

3: we could put it in 3

L: do you want me to put it in Unit 3? Because I want to remember this

1: wherever you want it

Unclear conversation

phone rings...side conversation occurring.....

L: going to put it right here, bell ringers ideas, this is just for me to remember, next week same add, subtract, divide and multiply

1: I'm going to keep going. unit 4, do we need to pretest?

T: yes

2: we set it up so that the first pretest would be only one step, complimentary, supplementary, so yeah, need to pretest that

1: do we want to try to do that next week?

T: yes, whether we want to or not

1: what do you want to include?

2: just basic two steps or do we want to take it

1: in the advanced class we took it two steps

2: we did, supposed to be all

Unclear conversation

T: maybe one and one, one addition/subtraction and one multi/divide

2: *Unclear conversation* we are not going to get all that in before fall break

phone rang again....AP asked SpEd teacher to check the hallway

1: I didn't have anyone that stood out as knowing anything

2: I did have some, showing how they got the process, just a few, some were really good guess and checkers *laughter Unclear conversation*

L: so when we intro the number line, are we doing whole numbers first? Or can I do a decimal with a tenth?

2: if we are not going to give them parameters, then it's just going to be a day, *Unclear conversation*

2: do it with whole numbers for one day *Unclear conversation*

T: let me ask you this. would we consider $8/2$ as a whole number, and realize that is for
 L: I say fractions, we'll build up to that, they need to be able to understand improper fractions can be whole numbers, I would start with whole numbers the first day, then decimals to the 10th

Continued to figure out how to write the number line

2: give them 0.5 first?

L: are you going to give them a number line like that?

1: first day they could put the number line in, that's what Path Driver does

2: what if we just give them a 0 and a 5 and then they put in the 1, 2, 3 and 4, can you do it? can you space them out some what evenly, five different spaces, I think that that would be the first day, put in the 1, 2, 3, and 4, talk about it, make some adjustments, then next day should be the halves, I think each week we should start out with a blank number line, it could be a complete disaster by Friday

AP: use their reasoning skills about fractions *Unclear conversation* they should be able to do it

L: so day 1 we are going to have them label the whole numbers from 0-5, day 2, *etc.* we should be able to do that

Unclear conversation

2: lay some foundations here, I think you are going to be really shocked when you see kids can't do that *laughter*

L: okay so my question then is this, I know this is getting ridiculous, but when we are doing this on day 5 what are we asking them to do

2: fresh new number line, pass it out and say glue it on, maybe just the halves

L: ok

2: see how they put those on with no parameters

laughter, Unclear conversation

1: I want to see them be successful

T: this is scary though, that they are struggling with these basics

L: okay so day 3 will be decimals, because are doing decimals before fractions

T: yes

L: okay

AP: I think you should offer an incentive if you have more kids, if they just sat there, whoever can figure this out accurately gets a piece of candy, you'd be surprised how many kids would figure it out, but if they have no incentive they are just going to sit there

Unclear conversation

AP: I think it would be interesting to see what they do without the incentives, see where their motivation, and then say okay if you can figure it out and you can't tell anyone because you can't have a piece of candy, figure it out on your own, and how many minds would be able to divide that up correctly, into the correct number, all it is is dividing it into 5ths

2: it does take some spatial, to get it where they have 5 sections

AP: yeah, because it's not 0 to 4

Unclear conversation

2: I can do it because I've practiced it

L: so after the halves, are we doing 3rd, 4ths, and 5ths?

1: what about fractions?

Unclear conversation

L: that is what they are doing in Path Driver, they are using their estimation, right?

1: but you are saying the parameters are there, we can do that, that's fine

L: so on day 3 can I give them a number?

1: yes

L: that's what I needed to know

Unclear conversation

1: we'll try it, we won't really know until Friday, we'll know a little from walking around, but we won't know every kid

Unclear conversation

2: can we move on to unit 4?

L: go ahead, sorry

2: um...I was trying to look back on the Google doc, because it was a little confusing about what we had before, we started off with one step inequalities, do you think we can start of on the first day with this or do we have to do a one step?

1: no

L: we've already done one step, they should be able to do it

Unclear conversation

1: you are talking about solving, not graphing, right?

L: we need one day of solving and one day of graphing

T: we've got to give them negative numbers, all that stuff

L: remember the first day is just the operation, like the rules

1: introducing the negative rules

Unclear conversation

L: they can solve and graph

T: have the never graphed inequalities at all before?

1: they all did in sixth grade math, all they've done is graph a solution

T: Okay, so I'll put that on the pretest, a one step equation and see if they can graph it, whatever it is they solve

Unclear conversation

1: so that will have to be about 4 problems because we want to do one that is less than, greater than, positive, etc.

Unclear conversation

T: I'll just do one greater than or equal to, I wouldn't do all 4, because the biggest thing we want to see is whether they know open circle or closed circle

1: open circle shape to the right, closed circle shape to the left

T: yes

1: okay, that'll be good, are we even going to try and ask them if they can solve it?

Because we know they haven't been taught anything about it

2: what do you mean? How to solve....
 1: give them a negative Ys is less than 4
 T: I wouldn't do negative because we know they don't know negative, I'm making the assumption
Unclear conversation
 Continued to discuss how to design the problems on the pretest
 L: are we able to pretest on the day we do distributive?
 1: pretest on the day they are doing disruptive, that's what Monday?
 2: essentially
Unclear conversation
 T: yeah, mixed practice
 2: what about Friday?
 L: we are doing factoring, the little hands on thing on Thursday, and probably just give them notes on Thursday, if you have it on the Google Doc, I'll separate it out, but if you'll put the activity you want to do, put that in there for me, then I could space out the factoring lesson to where *Unclear conversation*
 L: Wednesday is a mixed day *Unclear conversation*
 T: I say Wednesday
 1: so we'll have that and then basically 2 step equations
 2: do some basic
 T: do some problems like

1: if it's too easy then they just guess
discussed specific numbers to use in the problems on the assessment
 2: I think that's enough
 T: how many problems is that? 6?
 1: that's 1, 2, 3,4, 5
Unclear conversation
 1: 5 problems, that's good enough to give us an idea of what they know
Unclear conversation
 2: so a day of one step inequalities solving, one day of one step inequalities solving and graphing, and then we do two step basic
Unclear conversation
 1: can we do the equation and then the inequality
 2: I think we said yes last time we talked
discussed specifics of the problems
 2: let's make sure we are all going to teach this the same or we all have the same idea of how we are teaching it, in the past we've said what ever is closest to the variable
Unclear conversation
Specifics about teaching and how to solve and how many days to teach each component
Laughter, multiple conversations
Wrapped up the meeting

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #2 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 2 + 4 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

S: shared a quiz with the rest of the team

K: have you heard from Linda?

J: I did. I don't know what's going on. She's just not here to today.

S: The only ones...for like 3 and 4. I'm just wondering if I should cut end of it off....so that they have to write for every...and then ask them to put it into ratio terminology...so they have to write before every blank there are blank...then if all they have to do is write the numbers in there...it seems too easy

Another team member joined

J: my only thing is this problem we haven't ...if we don't do anything with them like this then how are they are going to get it

S: it's from today's powerpoint....but did yall not get to that problem

K: I did the first part and the video

J: Between two powerpoin....there's so much going on with that lesson so I couldn't figure out what was what. I'm just saying if we do this then it's extending their thinking.

Unclear conversation

S: they have to figure out how many pans do they have. They can use the table and then they just match the table. If I was them, I would just find out what it was and look for the one that matches it. I thought that would go with what yall did today and then tomorrow they can do the tables and matching stuff

J: like I said...if nothing else we are just extending their thinking. I'm for it. It's taking what we know and applying it to a different problem. That was my only concern is that we haven't technically done anything like that. But it's taking what they know and applying it to a different problem and there's no possible way that we can give them every example of every type of question they might get. So, I'm good.

S: what about these? do you want me to take out the part where we give them the samples and they have to take the ratio and they have to put it into language.

J: I like this sentence because it kind of helps guide them. Personally.

Pause in conversation

S: from that thing that you sent us and then the #5...that document you sent us that had the 2 worksheets on it. *Handed S something*. Look you already had it.

Unclear conversation

J: agenda. The only thing on our agenda is the test. Separate these standards.

S: what unit was it last year? Unit rate?

K: unit 1 was ratios. Is unit 2 like unit rate and all of that?

J: She sent me an email later. That says... *Began to read*. Donna said "will you all please discuss when you plan to give the preassessment should be giving it two weeks before the unit starts assisted in the planning process and gave everyone a focus"

K: Donna sent that

J: Yes. She really wants us to give the preassessment 2 weeks prior. Which means the preassessment should have already been given for unit 2.

S: we have fall break to give us that extra week

J: I'm not going to be doing any work over fall break. Well, we know that's not true. So my thing is every time we plan...our collaboration dates have been focused on RTI. We have dropped the ball with that, but it's understandable because we have this RTI, but I do get what's she saying. So, Linda....

Pause in conversation

4: see what you think about my post 2 test...my version of the test that I give my kids.

S: do they use a calculator?

4: they cannot use a calculator.

S: ours can't either but I wanted to make sure

4: I have kids that can't borrow

J: our kids wouldn't be able to finish this in a timely manner.

S: no, *laughing*...this is hard

4: mine skipped questions 1-6 and went to the end

S: they went to 7, 8, and 9 because it's multiple choice

4: they have to show the work. If they don't show the work I can't give them credit. Don't you think that's hard?

K: it shouldn't be hard, for kids that are fluent, but it is

J: it's time consuming

4: we are going to work on it tomorrow, but they don't even know how to set the problem up, the way it is

S: Did you model that for them?

4: yes. It's in their notes.

S: maybe if you started with this one. This one is fluency so they have until the end of the year to master it. could you let them us notes? It's a modified grade. I don't expect them to reach mastery. See how they do it with notes the second time. You could see if they don't know anything or....

K: I let mine use notes on one of the quizzes we do.

4: I let them use their multiplication table. But they didn't know how to use that either. the 49 divided by 5...they put 10. Go back to your multiplication chart and look up.

S: I think instead of being frustrated...because with that they are going to struggle with. What can you focus on to build so that at least have fluency in their charts to help them.

Unclear conversation

K: asked about an email Mrs. Jackson was looking for

Another team member said she put something on Google Docs for them team in the email. Discussed the email.

K: I do have stuff for unit for. I have the mapping out and unit 4.
 J: You have the mapping out? *Pause in conversation.* I don't have it. It's not there.
 J: I see it over here.
 K: That's weird. I went back to this and found it.
Unclear conversation
 K: what is that? *(asking the researcher)*
 Researcher: My recorder *(discussed what it was for)*
 J: Let's divide up the standard. Scratch that last email. *Emailed to tell a team member she found the documents*
 K: okay which ones did she say she would do?
.Pause in conversation.
 J: Oh, there it is. It showed up.
 4: Did you have to go out of it and come back in?
 K: that's what I had to do
K began to take notes
 J: okay, *pause in conversation.* Okay, so here's our standards. She is taking A2. It's says 6RP2.
 K: She means A2. I'll put the name of it and I'll email it to everyone.
 J: fluency we incorporate through the whole thing so wherever we can incorporate fluency...it's not like it's a specific standard
Unclear conversation. Side conversation.
 J: so that leaves, 6RPA3B and 6RPA3C
 K: that's what I googled when I started looking for tasks. Yesterday I realized for the task really you needed to know unit rate, so I went back in and put questions that would be from a *unclear what was said*
 S: Would anyone care if I take B?
 K: So, RPA3B, so I'll take RPA3C
 J: we are actually going to need some fluency questions there that they are capable of doing.
 K: I can put some in there. I'll do those
 J: Your questions are multiple choice or multiple select
Unclear conversation and laughing.
 J: But if we make a little fluency part, even if it's only 3 questions, maybe one for each part that would be sufficient, anything more than 3 fluency would take them too long
 K: so do you mean decimals and ratios?
 J: so take a word problem from here and but make the number where it's fluency related
 S: do you think that's too much?
 K: do you think it's too hard?
 J: we have to put fluency in there according to our scope and sequence
 K: okay
 J: so that's what I'm saying, if we have 2 or 3 fluency questions, we can give them a little separate piece of paper

S: are we going to be showing them decimals, *gave an example of a problem*
 K: that would be unit rate
 S: does the fluency have to be.....
 K: you can do it with 8
 J: this is cups of whatever, so you can do 7.5 so show...*example*...you can use decimals to show a portion, you can do 3A and 3B
 S: you can do it with the money too, so they'll have decimal problems
 J: so I don't think that'll be too difficult
 K: you think?
 J: I think it'll be okay
 K: even with hours, we could use that
Pause in conversation
 S: they are also getting it when they are simplifying, they are practicing fluency then
Unclear conversation
 J: so which one am I taking?
 K: 6RPA3C
 J: when do we need to have the questions ready to go? We need to get it donw this week.
 K: Friday? When are we meeting again?
 J: Friday.
 S: so have that done Friday, we can discuss how it went with the week too
 J: today is Tuesday, so yep...so Friday
 S: so what about the pretest
 J: well the pretest is going to come from questions on the test, so if we put the test together on Friday, your 5, my 5, Linda's 5, etc. I think that will be plenty of questions. Then we'll pull one question from each section for the pretest.
 S: can I make the test this time?
 J: we never discussed it
 S: so when Linda talked about the test, I said I would like to do it. I would like to practice putting a test together. If I have everyone's questions then I could put it together over the weekend and then we can all discuss it and make sure it's correct. I would like everyone's feedback. Make sure that it's good.
 K: so we could give it on Tuesday? The pretest?
 J: so that would be one day shy. Even thought it's supposed to be 2 weeks, that would allow us get it tested, look at the data, analyze the data, and then make our plans from it. We'll definitely know what we are doing before we leave on Friday, so I think that'll work.
Team in agreement
 J: so on the mapping out, I'm going to put Pretest unit 4 *typing*...*pause in conversation*...*typing*... on Tuesday, October 6th.
Unclear conversation
 S: so October 6th we give the pretest. So if I have the test ready then we can pull one question from each standard can be the pretest.

K and J typing notes and Mapping Out document

4: would you mind if I do some progress monitoring?

Unclear conversation

Pause in conversation. Typing notes.

S: that thinking blocks activity that we were talking about...from the powerpoint...the thinking blocks one is using all of these blocks to set up and take diagrams. It starts at the very beginning and it goes all the way through.

J: ummmm...do you remember that website that Jamie James shared with us? that website has amazing stuff. And it has lessons for our standards. It's through Kohn Academy so you have to set up a username and passwords. Kids can set it up.

S: Where is that? The kids couldn't access it without a parent approving it.

Teachers typing notes

K: I don't know if I wrote that address down.

Looking on their computers. Typing. Unclear conversation.

J: what is my password? Nope...*laughing. Unclear conversation.*

K: I have several that used to be my login at school.

J: I just set this up yesterday so I should have saved it.

Typing and trying to figure out login.

S: are you talking about the Open Math?

K: she emailed that didn't she?

S: they can earn better things for their Avatars too as they go

Pause in conversation

J: this is not the same. Sarah, I'm sure it's the same as you are saying.

S: when they log on they could do 6th grade work. They could practice 6th grade standards in general. It gave them a pretest to start. But they could not...as a part of their coaching and assigning them assignments and all that...that's where it said you could not be their coach without parental approval. Would that mean that every parent would have to login and click yes?

J: when I went to add a class. I don't have to add students. They could use a class code. I wonder if it's different because of their age.

Pause in conversation. Typing on their laptops.

K: how do I get that?

S: go to www.kohnacademy and create a teacher profile

Pause in conversation. Working on computers

S: So here's my dashboard and here's my students. I wanted to assign him specific work. I'm under him. I'm still logged in as him. He can start here and do this part of it. It says your parent has to first check their email and create their parent account.

Walking through steps on website. Add a coach. So this says for you to add another coach. So I thought it's just for different person...So I went under my account. I tried to do it. It still said he had to have parental approval. I don't know what I've done.....something's wrong.

J: for ratios, rates and percentages, their order is introduction to ratios, *etc.* ratio word problem *etc.* then it does introduction to rates and then unit rate, unit price. So the way they have it set up is very similar to how we are teaching it. *Listed more standards*

K: I can't open it but what you are saying makes sense.

S: showing team member what she's talking about on her laptop

J: discussed how she set her students up in the Kohn Academy account.

J: *Read aloud from website.* Accounts will be restricted until a parent account connects. I wonder if there's a way we can.....

Pause in conversation. Some unclear conversation.

S: we could get parent permission through a note?

J: if they are above the age 13 then there's no restrictions

K: oh.....

Discussed logistics

J: it'll be a logistic nightmare

Pause in conversation

K: with the restricted access, can we use other portions of the site without a login?

J: okay, so that's out.

K: guess so

Unclear conversation

J: the standards are all mixed. I don't know if it'll work

S: you can Google a lesson online and do a portion of it

K: so let's try... *Googled it*

Pause in conversation

K: *pulled up a video and listened to it*

J: continuing to type up notes from the meeting

S: who sent the email with how to use Kohn Academy? Jamie?

J: that was a link that she sent us

Working on their computers and searching for resources

4: you were asking awhile ago about student email. You can look in your grades, no in our school, but if you'll go under your class, you'll find it there.

J: okay, maybe that's the one option.

J: what's the day that we come back from fall break?

K: I have a calendar.

4: the 19th is a Monday

J: October 19th

Pause in conversation

Turned the air back on

J: it looks like according to this we are supposed to start with unit pricing...no unit rate

J: how many dates do you want to do unit rate?

K: we've already started it

J: to be honest, we can't do this until we have a pretest data

S: we could do it on Grade Cam

J: on the type of account we have, I don't think we can

J: there were only be 6 questions so it won't take that long to grade.
SpEd teacher left
 S: Okay ladies

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #3 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 3 + 3 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

1: When is the writing assessment for the county?
 A: They gave usI feel like they gave us a window.
 1: I know.
 A: I think we can do any day in that window. That is what Nancy Dye made me think.
 But I'm not sure what the window is.
 2: What is it? the second week in November?
 A: I'm looking it up right now.
 1: Ok, thanks.
Introduced the researcher to the team.
 2: Today we are going to looking at the unit 3 test.
 A: Yes, I put the unit 2 test on Test Drive and I did the student copy of the test. I tried
 to make copies, but the copier is doing blurry images again. By the end of the day, it
 should be warmed up enough and I can make the copies.
 1: When is the window for the writing testing?
 A: I'm looking for that.
 1: She give it to us?
 A: She put it in an email somewhere. There are 500 hunder million emails.
 2: Nancy Dye emails a lot. I made her her own folder.
 A: She would have called it an assessment, right?
All looking online for the dates.
 A: There is a chance she is on her computer. So, I'll email her.
 2: She's always on her email. She has is on her phone.
 1: It has to be graded, scored and returned before Thanksgiving.
 4: We will have a district wide writing and scoring event the week of October 19th.
 We'll grade them together. The teachers will come together for a district wide writing
 scoring event.
 A:I feel like she's giving us a window for computer issues.
 1: Is it just up to us to pick a date in the week of October 20th?
 4: October 19th through 22nd is the week
couldn't hear what was said here
 A: that is the one I tried to predict what it would look like
 1: Are they going to give it to our administrators on the morning of the 19th?

1: They said we couldn't have it ahead of time so are they going to send it to us or give it to our administrators?

A: She said we weren't going to get it ahead of time so we can't prep for it. Which means they have to have a specific date.

A: emailing their question to Nancy Dye

Couldn't hear what was said here

A: that's the good thing.

4: they won't see it that way.

4: she's not going to give us the prompt. They are going to end up writing two questions.

A: That is why I modeled the CRQ after her design.

4: I think it's a good things, but the kids are going to be like "ugh....."

A: That's why I'm going to sell it to them as preparation for after fall break. Be happy that you are giving a preview so it'll make it that less stressful.

Couldn't hear what was said here

A: That's good. If it's fresh on their minds then it's less stressful.

2: Can I get a piece of paper from you?

A: I sent that to her. We'll see what she says.

All looking at their laptops. Pause in conversation.

A: So we are going to start working on Unit 3 test?

2: Yes.

A: I'll upload it. Are we going to use our test from last year? Or are we going to use Nancy Dye's?

2: I say Nancy's

1: we had to make that decision

couldn't hear what was said here

A: uploading last year's assessment and Nancy Dye's

1: I personally like what we did last year. This is the point that we started using 100 questions too....if I'm not mistaken.

4: That is true. There was one point where we just started...most of the standards I pulled came from her

2: We did tweak some

A: We can't do that as much this time.

Couldn't hear what was said here

Pause in conversation...looking at laptops

A: This will be the one with the constitution.

2: Yes

A: This one is like 40 questions. I have a feeling this one is going to look an awful like hers.

1: The one we did last year was 33 questions.

A: they are finishing them

1: yes

Couldn't hear what was said here...pause in conversation

A: I'll download the answer key.

1: When are we going to do the assessment?

4: yeah, I'd like to do later in that week? So we have time to review.

1: So like a Thursday? I would like the time to review. They may be rusty.

2: She'll probably give us a specific date. Welcome back guys.

2: She will probably change the wording so the students may not recognize that it's similar.

1: The following week is the benchmark, October 29th.

2: what day is that? October 29th?

A: no, no....really?

1: I have it written down here.

A: I thought they got rid of one benchmark?

A: That's a lot.

A: It's uploaded...should be shared with you

2: What day are we grading this? November 2nd?

4: October 19-22nd, then we'll have a week before we grade the other assessment.

2: Are we going to count this for a grade? The essays?

A: I think it's left up to our discretion.

1: I backed off on grading them as she wants us to from 8 and a 4. That's all I'm doing. I'm not giving them a grade in the grade book per se other than a completion grade.

1: I have issues because I don't teach them writing. And we are scoring them on writing.

2: I grade the history content part.

1: We've got all different ways of doing this.

2 different conversations going on

A: I'm starting counting it at a lower percentage and then moving it up to 20% closer to the writing assignment. Because they need to understand the weight.

1: They will find that out. They will understand that

A: I'd like to prepare them. I'm doing the grading like you are with the rubric, but I'm not putting the grade on it like that. I'm only grading content. As I move up in my scaffold and process then it'll weigh more.... then I'll start to make that score count. They are not getting finished. I don't want to penalize them for not being able to type fast.

1: I was shocked how many were able to complete the essay within 45 minutes. I never expected it. I had 111 essays complete. Given what happened last time.

2: You made it easier. Because it was story like.

1: They had to have an introduction and conclusion. I made it more personal. They had to convince others. It's a letter to the ruling counsel. They asked if they could use "I statements"...I told them they had to in order to convince people. "I lived there...it worked out well"

A: Did they hand write it?

1: No, they typed it. During that day I got 111 essays, 5 paragraphs, in 45 minutes. I have to look at a clock. They can do. They can do it. I couldn't believe they did it.

A: That's the thing...I wrote a prompt that matches Nancy Dye's so we'll have that comparison.

1:How do you know what Nancy Dye's looks like?

A: I matched her format and what she's putting together. I'm trying to guess. It's a lot like yours. It's about a legacy but it's a third person essay. We can see if it's the third person essay that they are having difficulty with. If yours could do a first person in five paragraphs and put themselves in it...it's the third person they are having difficulty with. Can they be objective about it. I'm glad you did it, because now we can compare and see where they are having difficulty.

1: We are running out of time. Going to have to glean over this assessment.

A: I'm putting in the key in right now. See what the answers are.

Conversation about the key and the images. Unclear. Casual conversation. Pause in conversation. Typing.

1:Did Nancy Dye said they can't say "this paper states"?

A: That's what she calls announcing. She made it very clear they can't have announcement statements. Announcing what you are about to write in your own paper and that's not okay. I'm having them revise their own papers.

Unclear conversation

A:That's different...that's evidence statements. *Explained the difference*

2: I'm curious. How come?

A: They will lose points on literacy. That is not a solid way to write a paper. *Unclear conversation.* That was the first thing she honed in on. I brought her some really good examples and that is what she honed in on. Why did you ask me to bring examples?

Typing

1: She changed the wording a little bit?

All looking at their laptops.

1: She changed her questions...her wording...I know we would not have put a Mayflower Compact question into our unit 3 assessment.

A: but it's in our standards

2: it is in the standards

1: I understand that.

A: it's making connections to prior documents

Student returned a lap top.

A: I might need to look at a word document of this test and see if we are missing any images.. The format left a lot of blank spaces that I've been deleting, but I'm wondering if images are supposed to be there.

All reviewing the assessment.

1: I can see one image is not on there.

A: which question?

1: Number 6

A: is that the one with the blank diagram?

1:Yes

A: That I'll fix. I'll have to copy it over into work. I'll make an image of it.

Unclear conversation. Pause in conversation.

2: That prompt you sent me. What would be your thesis statement?

A: read it to me

2: Read the question

A: the main idea should be a restatement of the question

Your main idea might be....

4: I would say....The legacy of the declaration of independence is evident today

A: That is one acceptable way to write a thesis statement

A: Remember what Nancy Dye said...they have one sentence and then a clarifying sentence

Discussed how you would answer it

Pulled up question. Unclear conversation.

4: That's the hard part about that standard. *Described the question.*

Remember last year that was a stumbling point.

2: I understand your first sentence. What would you say?

A: *asked team member 4 to say his thesis statement again.*

4: *restated it*

A: that is what I'm teaching my student.

2: what would you say?

A: hold on I'm working on it.

Pause.

A: Teaching students how to restate the question to make an opening thesis statement

2: My second sentence would include the 3 bullets

A: you have a 4 day window (*reading email from Nancy Dye*)

A: Back to your question. *Restated the question.* I'll have them define the declaration of independence.

A: Nancy Dye said for them to have 2 sentences. I'll think about it.

4: I'm going to tell mine to write your thesis, 3 paragraphs, and then go back to add to your thesis statement.

A: It will be something like....the declaration of indep was a central document in declaring our indep from England

4: I would say....that would be a good clarifying statement.

4: Tell mine....Write thesis statement first, write 3 paragraphs, conclusion, and then go back and clarify their thesis statement.

4: The Declaration of Indep has our major beliefs....is like the bible for American government....it has the core beliefs

A: that's a great sentence that's what Nancy Dye is looking for. I'm going to use this today.

2: I'm going over this today. I'm still confused on the introductory sentence.

A: she is very much stressing...the fact that she repeated it again in her meeting. We should not have a full intro paragraph. It's different from English class. She said it again. Don't need a full paragraph introduction.

2: I feel like I'm rewiring my brain.

A: It's like common core math. I still don't get how to do it. My brain does it the other way.

A: In the minutes....

2: Continue looking at unit 3 test. Finish looking at that test.

A: I'll fix the formatting

Discussion about the use of the word "our"

1: You need that as a Bell Ringer. 5 minutes to get them to understand legacy.

A: I'm spending the whole class period on it today.

1: Alright folks.

Member got up to leave.

A: what's the date today?

2: September 29th

A typing up minutes from their meeting to turn in

Other 2 left in the meeting looking at laptops and typing as well.

One prepping for today's class

A: so next week is finishing unit 3 assessment

Meeting ends

Thought about doing what Nancy suggested today. Timing them. Set up a graphic organizer. Okay guys...now type your essay.

A: are you going to read it to them?

They are writing it today and they are finishing it today.

I'm going to be in between.

I'm going to grade it using the history content.

A: are you going to have them go through their own papers?

I don't know yet

The only problem with having them grade it is that they have to print it and make editing symbols.

Meeting convened.

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #4 and 7 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 4 and 7 + 2 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

M: are you going to start the 5th and end the 9th?

S: no, I'm not, I've just given a test, my 8th graders are doing research, doing labs to get them started, my full on waves will be the 5th through the 8th with the test on the 8th, the 9th is the day when half the kids are absent

1: do you really think you'll be able to get waves completed within 3 days?

2: four days?
 S: I can't give it to them after fall break
 2: you have to before fall break
 M: me too, but realistically
 M: we've talked about strategies and the test, Kelly wanted me to tell you about NCE scores,
Looking at videos for lessons together on lap top
Side conversation about a video
 1: do you know what would be good? We have some alcohol burners. Even the sound that will make the flame move, gives you an actual visual of a transverse wave, thought about that when I saw the video, they can't see it, but they know the something is disrupting it, that would be a good "hook"
 M: I think I just got locked out of my account
 1: are you going into the individual account?
 2: what are we looking at?
 M: do you add the zero, zero, zero?
 S: yes
 1: glad you know yours by heart
 M: wish it would show me my password
Pause
 1: are we using what we have here for our pretest?
 M: go to student search, I got in
 2: do want each one of us doing this Meaghan?
 M: stressing me out, type in the student's name
 S: I have all of them
 M: click on a student's name
 1: put it up on the screen
unable to get the screen hooked up. Used doc cam.
 M: she wants us to look at the NCE scores for each of our kids, look at the trends, to grow a student to a 5 you have to raise their NCE by 2 points
 S: don't know how they figure the NCE? Never understood that
 Looked at student's score together
 S: my strength area is the middle student
 M: I teach to the low
 1: which ones to you tech to?
 2: growth in the upper and middle third
 1: talk about what you are doing to reach these different groups, however it is that we are teaching or instructing, help each other
 M: go back to the calendar, this is bothering me, when are you introducing waves?
 1: you see teaching til Friday
 S: start with vocabulary, inquiry
 2: when are you giving your test?
 M: Thursday or Friday

2: were you going to do test corrections by Friday?
 M: my projects are due Friday
 2: I think it's feasible to get it in in 5 days.
 M: I could probably due the introductory and then go into the amplitude
 2: if they don't know it then you could come back to it, you could do the test on Friday, not going to do be a catastrophe to have fall break in the middle
 S: I'd like to finish it before fall break
 1: I just forwarded you the wave simulation
 M: going to look at data from our earth's layers and plate tectonics, look at waves assessment, and anything else that Kelly needs us to talk about, make sure that your layers are seen on the test
 S: those are the actual tests?
 M: yes, any questions?
 2: we are on pace with the district guide, so as far as right now we are good
 M: feel like we are flying through it, especially with inclusion students
 1: what I would suggest you do...when do they meet?
 M: everyday
 1: I need to see certain kids in science on a certain day of the week. One day they aren't going to math tutoring. They are coming to you.
 M: I told them I could come to the lunch table.
 1: what I would suggest you do.... I could stop by and pick up your kids on my way. Your kids get down the same time as mine. How is that going to disrupt your class? It's feasible.
 M: I know one day is first period, one day is second period, etc.
Laughter
 M: they do test corrections but those are at home, come with your data from pre and post and strategies for fall break....I mean simple machines
 S: I misspoke. it's actually Newton's Law that we are .
Reminded them what would be on the agenda next week. Meeting convened

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #6 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 6 + 6 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

Team Members gathering
 AP: pull up your own data and pull up the document from the Mississippi department of education, we are going to refer to that too, I think you have a student outside the door

Took care of student

AP: the first thing we can do is look at the Blueprint. It's been since before school that we've looked at this. I'd like to discuss what percentage is language vs. vocabulary on the TN Ready. That will also help us as we design our common assessment. How much of our assessments should be vocab, reading for literature, *etc.*. The first page can help with that. Lays out part 1 and part 2 of TN Ready. Part 1 is the writing assessment. Part 2 is the multiple select, the drop and drag, and all the other questions. So if you look under the conventions section when they combine part 1 with part 2... What percentage of the test will be language? If you go all the way over to the last column.

H: so combine language and conventions?

AP: sorry, I didn't make myself clear, so if you go the conventions, and you go straight, all the way over

H: so, 11% for conventions

AP: so that would be language standards

H: right

AP: and then if you go down to the vocabulary section, there's not any vocab on part 1, not specifically, I mean they'll have to use vocab, and when you go all the way across the percent of the test is?

S: 13%

AP: so, maximum both parts of the test combined with language and vocabulary it's going to be up to what?

Unclear conversation. Laughter.

O: language and conventions has 5 items, and that's within the application of writing, so that's in the process not in an ABC selection

P: so we can talk about our ice cream cone?

Agreement. Laughter. Unclear conversation.

C: do we have an idea on format? In writing? Or is it a multiple choice question that happens to be on writing?

O: it's in the writing itself, what we should be doing at the middle school level is using, using, using, not identifying, but using these correctly, using relative pronouns, *etc.*

AP: can I ask a clarifying question? On part 1 they are being scored on how well they can use it in writing. So is it on part 2 where they have to be able to make corrections in a piece of text?

O: yes, they are going to have to do that, but it will still be in...it won't be an AB or C

H: it'll be like on MICA?

O: yes

Unclear conversation

AP: on the side by side example, it showed TCAP and TN Ready side by side, it showed where the kids will have to highlight the section where the correction should be made, or ...I'm sorry I said that wrong...or there will be parts of a passage that are highlighted and then they'll have click on it and there will be a drop down, and they'll have to select the correction that way, that's how it will be done, but we don't have...we can't do that except through MICA or possibly Edulastic if we designed

some questions on Edulastic, so on the module B unit 1 test we designed some questions that will be in context, but we still have it ABCD but it'll be in context

C: does Edulastic have the same data crunching tools that we have on our TestDrive?

AP: you can get reports on Edulastic. We can get more information from 8th grade RLA, they have created their module B unit 3 assessment on Edulastic? They are the ones that have actually created an assessment.

C: just tooling around with it...it doesn't look complicated, the only question would be computer access, because we already use, with all of our writing stuff being on Google Classrooms

AP: you do plan ahead, they've planned when they are giving their assessment, they've already reserved their computers well in advance, so they've done a lot of planning to make sure there able to get on computers on their date

C: we do that. We actually send semester schedule when we are going to be doing writing units

AP: I'm talking about for the test.

C: I'm just saying we do plan ahead.

P: everyone needs them

AP: everyone needs them especially SS and RLA, our kids do need the practice on MICA or on Edulastic, there's good reason to reserve them and use them, we can't wait until April to get them on a computer, so when we design our tests, we need to look at a maximum of 5 items on part 2, not that we shouldn't teach language, but we should teach it in context, we need to make sure it's in proportion with what's going to be on TN Ready, and the vocabulary is anywhere from 8-13%, when you look at reading for literature and reading information then it's the large majority of the test

Pause in conversation

H: thankfully, I think we've been focusing on these reading standards, you can look at our clear targets...comparing author's point of view and looking at the structure of text, I think we are doing a good job of focusing on those reading standards

Pause in conversation

AP: any questions or comments on the Blueprint? *Asked the principal:* Anything you want to add?

P: no, I'm good on this part

AP: *Unclear conversation*

AP: the next thing on the agenda was to look at unit 2 post assessment data and discuss areas for reteaching, I also asked you to print your demographic report

C: I have it on the computer. You said bring it. Is that okay?

AP: Anyway you want to bring it. I did not say print, you can "go green" and leave it on your computer, *laughter* and your item analysis so we can talk about possible reasons why students missed certain questions, and your student report so you can know exactly which students missed when you go back and reteach, think about those students that need enrichment, and those students that need remediation, then you can focus on those students specifically

H: looking at our data...*started to share...interrupted by AP*

AP: I just wanted to mention something about our AMO, when we talked about the AMO targets at the beginning of the year, it's been suggested that we print our demographic report from Test Drive too, so we can focus on those areas where we did not meet safe harbor, like our students with disabilities, and you'll be a great resource there (*speaking to SpEd teacher*) so that we can stay on target in our inclusion classes

C: so which groups did we not meet safe harbor?

AP: like our economically disadvantaged, we need to focus on them, but we should focus on all students, but especially focus on those students that did meet their AMO

C: how will we do that?

AP: well, you would match your demographic report, you look there, you may find out when printing your report that you have a disproportionate numbers of males vs. females that are proficient and advanced, so why is that? Why do have so many females compared to males in my class? So what is it about males that would make them not be as successful in my class? So if you've had classes on culturally diversity you can think about that...what can I do make it more interesting for the males in my class? go down and look at FRL and non-FRL, see that they are out performing by a large amount, maybe you need to build more background in your lessons, that they don't come with a background, think about doing things like that, say your white students are out performing your minorities, think about reasons that could be, look at Hispanic, African American, and Native American are very social culture, do more groups activities, they are a social culture so they like to communicate, so they need to talk about their learning, so you can think about doing things like that, does that answer your question

C: how am I going to find out which kids are economically disadvantaged?

AP: you can find that out from Ellen

H: on the demographic report you can see who is FRL, that signifies....

C: we have a large number of kids are FRL, over half, so there's not a good way to pair down who I need to target, so I'm targeting two-thirds of my class

AP: you can also use your student report for that standard, so if have kids on FRL and you they are advanced in that standard, then you need to be enriching them, but if you have kids that are on FRL and they did not score well, then you need to remediate, so you match your demo report and match it to your standards, this report will help you be aware of your teaching, do I need to adapt my teaching style, change to meet the needs of the class, good question

C: good conversation

AP: *turned to visitor* you may have more to add?

O: we don't have enough training on cultural awareness, you are taking the first step to know who am I not reaching, am I narrowing it down to a group, do those happen to be the ones that sit in the corners of my room, the ones I don't see, I only teach the ones in the middle of the room, these are the first steps, *unclear comment*

AP: we don't do it intentionally, it's like she said, the ones that fly under the radar, print that student report get to know students by that report then you start paying attention more

C: yeah, it's just knowing the students
H: do you want to look at that then and see where are strengths are or weaknesses?
AP: it's going to be different for everyone, so you can focus on that when you go over your students and you know them by class and think my Hispanic students didn't do well, if you happen to know your SWD, they didn't do well on this standard, then if you need help finding strategies, that's something we can help with, maybe I can help too, researching, okay start looking at our item analysis and comparing them with our test questions
All pause to look at reports
AP: okay, everyone did pretty well on #1
C: yep
H: what are we looking at now? Module A or the preassessment
AP: module A unit 1
C: almost 80% of mine got the first one right
H: they are struggling,....I've looked at the preassessment data, they are struggling with author's purpose and author's point of view
C: that's what we are deep into right now
O: how many days? I'm trying to clarify in my my head, looking at her I can statements....are you spending two days on Author's purpose? Is that the way I read that? Just Tuesday and Wednesday?
H: 2 days of direct instruction, picked it up on the other days while we are looking at the structure of the text
O: what does that look like on Tuesday compared to Wednesday compared to Thursday
H: *described her lessons for each day this week*
O: what does modeling look like in your room?
S: today? *shared her lessons this week*
C: *shared how they taught their lessons/standards this week*
H: *showed the resource they used to teach Author's Point of view, then read an excerpt, picked out the text evidence to support the author's point of view*
C: you talked about vocabulary support, we talked a lot about connotation and word choice, *gave examples of words that they talked about*
H: then we read today's article, so
O: that was all planned based upon the data we are talking about right now?

H: that was already in our plan
C: it was already in our plans, provided a keen awareness that this needed to be taught, one of our first standards is theme, and them relies upon really grasping author's purpose, so reflecting on some of these things
H: *showed a passage that she is using in small groups*
C: I use those passages....text structures, author's purpose, dozens of passages you can use to draw those in
Pause in conversation
C: are you looking for an exemplar for tomorrow?

H: just talking about demographics, I just realized something...my lowest are Hispanics, I need to focus on reaching Hispanics, so I have 2 in a group with an African American student, would that be a good thing? Bad thing?

AP: if they are both low then it wouldn't be

H: well he's my high student, that's why I put him with these two students specifically

AP: that would be fine, you wouldn't want a high student with two low students

Pause in conversation

H: what are we looking at now?

AP: do you all want to talk about the pretest?

C: item analysis? Let's do that. Elaine and I talked about that yesterday

AP: so what do your students need to work on?

H: author's purpose, point of view, and question time which was vocabulary or spelling correctly

O: what's your viewpoint on spelled correctly on a multiple select test? What's your view on that?

C: you blindsided me. I didn't know you were going to ask me that. *Laughter* we know that it's going to be assessed, but it's going to be in context, so we should worry about assessing that in our writing, did I get that right?

O: I think that's good idea. It makes more sense to me

H: so we need to focus on author's purpose and author's point of view in informational text

C: do we need add additional reading selection for the test or should we take those 2 items off?

H: if we take those two items off it will an 8 question assessment

unclear conversation

C: I can find a passage to add that will assess author's purpose

H: that's already in the assessment

C: should we add an additional one?

H: I was thinking about reteach or add to our instruction, that is focusing on key words that signify the author's purpose

O: I'm so glad that you've said that, we're not doing good on author's purpose, we've tested it, we're not, so I'm excited that you've said that, looking at our teaching

AP: on our unit 2 and now it's in unit 3

H: I have 2 passages, I'm going to focus on identifying the key words and phrases that signal author's purpose

O: so what I need to do is just good teaching practice, what I'm forgetting to do is "Cloze Read", I will read and I will omit as they follow along that key transition words, and they underline it, they are jumping on it, that's active participation, that's high on the TEAM rubric, and that is drawing their eye to the vocabulary, that's the partn that I'm not doing, that I'm going to start doing, in order to try to get them to see point of view, so that their brain is trained to read and focus on key words, I know we always chorally read to level that playing field, but Cloze Read is something we often skip and move on to the next, pull that back in

C: I'm thinking regarding author's purpose or point of view, a Cloze passage where they have to replace the words with a word with a different connotation, they have to take a different perspective on the same topic

O: that's intense, but that's a good strategy and I'm going to hold it in my pocket for one of my high achievers, I don't think my students are ready

S: saving it for later in the year, the standard actually says how they differentiate their point of view from other, they are not there yet, but by the end of the year they should be there, so you could save it for later in the year

O: good for you for knowing we are too far ahead of ourselves

AP: look at that document that I had y'all pull up from Mississippi, look at what they should already know, what they taught at sixth grade and below, so you can design your questions that you ask in your SET, and when you are modeling your check for understanding questions in that prerequisite knowledge column, so expect them to know those things, and then you can see what they should understand when you are teaching, and the evidence of knowledge column, so you can see where you are trying to lead them, and you know what strategies that you need to use with them to develop that conceptual understanding, what knowledge they need to demonstrate that conceptual understanding

C: is that a PDF document?

AP: yes, I sent it to you in an email

O: this is the one that we spent a whole year on a just in time training, looking at the standards, we got table group ideas, we did clear targets, this is hard for students, start looking at other people's perspectives, that's one of the reasons that we did that training, it had clear targets already on there, assessing and advancing questions, if you kept your work you should have that

AP: skip down to numbers 4, 5 and 6 which is RI 7.5, it actually contributes to their understanding author's point of view and purpose

S: we haven't hit that too much, this is introductory

O: how is it different from last year? Where should you have started compared from what you did last year? Yes, Elaine we looked at that.

C: we looked at that in an inservice, standards compared to progression, but that's been a year ago

O: we know that you all hone in, you all have to analyze, I just explain how it's conveyed, you all get deeper, how it distinguishes,

H: according to our preassessment we definitely need to make sure we are hitting it at an introductory level first, make sure they have the foundation

AP: next reading standard, RI 7.1

Unclear conversation

AP: RI 7.9, reading standard

O: this should be their first time, it starts out with analysis

Pause in conversation

C: we did touch on some of this

H: did you add those low standards to our minutes? Since we are continuing our lessons on author's purpose tomorrow...just kidding we are out of time, we are reading Why do we need Zoos? So this is an editorial, how can we do this? so we need to focus on key words and phrases to signify author's point of view. Can we spend some time after school picking those out?

S: yes

H: we can do it right now if we grab a literature book

C: if we use the one in the book as independent practice and then use another passage as modeling

H: today's article will be our guided practice, That would make sense, turn to p. 1029, shout out key words or phrases that indicate author's point of view

S: your life as changed drastically

C: false

H: look at transitions

S: suddenly

H: one of the best

S: as a result

H: one of the best....but...unfortunately

C: in this way

S: despite

S: still looking at transitions

H: those key words, not just....but also

C: relative pronouns? What is that? Correlated conjunctions?

H: is that a good plan to use this?

O: you going to read it to them and do a Cloze Read

Bell rings...and students start entering the room

Date: September 29, 2015 Case #8 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 8 + 2 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

S: She said it would be a good day for us to look at that test.
When I was looking at the test from last year it looks good?
R: Yes, it does but It's missing slope triangles.
S: Today is the 29th
S: There were a lot of kids at the restrooms.
Everyone getting settled. I had to move so I could hear them better. S asked about my recording device.
S: We were looking at last year's test. We worked hard on that test and the only thing missing is slope triangles. we were looking at questions on MICA and the only thing our test is missing is triangles. It matches the standards.
Unclear conversation
A: What is the website?
R: MICAtime.com
All discussed username and password
R: Mine is not working
S: Going to have to do what I did last week and reset it
All looking at their laptops
S: Did you find it?
A: I've found it. It's says it's connecting. Hasn't done anything.
R: It says my username is 630rwheaton. *Asked Sandra about her username.*
A: So it's that and then that way.
S: Did you change your password?
A: Still not letting me in.
S: trying to remember where she said to go. She said go to practice. Remember when she was showing us how to do this?
R: Look under Assessments.
A: What is wrong with the internet?
S: See it says no assessments. I thought it was in practice.
R: new password. Okay, new password.
R: okay it worked
Looking on MICA website
Unclear conversation at this point
S: we may not be able to find any slope triangles on this
R: we should be
A: *still trying to enter his username and password*
A: okay that time it worked. Go figure
S: do you have notes?

R: Notes? I'm searching.
S: oh, you're searching.
R: I went to assessments. *showed her how to create an assessment and find questions by standard.* It looks like there are 2 questions for slope triangles.
A: Which standard are we in?
R: EEB6 is slope triangles
R: this is tough. That question. *Showed S.* That is a weird.
A: *reads question aloud.*
R: is it?
A: yes
S: that's got to be the slope
A: all they are wanting you to do.... is extend that line and create another triangle
That is useless.
S: it is
A: That is not demonstrating any knowledge whatsoever of the concept. Except that you recognize one triangle has to be inside the other and share the same hypotenuse. That's the only thing this is testing.
R: so, all they would have to do is draw a triangle that has that hypotenuse
A: yeah
S: it has the slope of the hypotenuse. So it has the same height to base ration. that isn't a good question. I don't understand why that would be a good question.
A: I'll be honest. I'm not sure why we have this standard.
S: I don't either. It's just slope.
A: I was thinking about this last night. I'm missing something here. I'm not seeing a connection with where it's going.
S: You teach Alg II. where is it going?
A: it's going to similar triangles. But you are using proportions you are not using slopes. You are only using the one. It's that the two are equal.
S: my students were sitting there like looking at me....what are we doing.
Student came in with a question.
S: how is this one?
A: what I don't understand is in this problem it says to use the grid to create...etc.... it gives you a triangle. All they have to do is trace it and make a bigger one
R: they could just trace that one. Congruent triangles are similar.
R: I don't want to put that question.
A: I'm at a loss as to how this is supposed to connect.
R: are you looking at question 2?
A: is it a multiple choice question?
R: yes.
R: I don't get what that has to do with triangles.
A: I don't either. do we even teach point slope?
S: no

R: could give them graph paper and figure out Y intercept. Will they get graph paper on the TN Ready?

Unclear conversation

A: The only way I know to teach this one is to teach them to plug in the X and Y and see what's true

R: they don't understand that because they don't know how to check their answer.

Laughing

S: my triangle is no longer there

Unclear conversation

A: can you imagine that?

S: a triangle. Mine is not coming up.

R: what standards are we going to put on the test before fall break? Slope and unit rate?

S: we should look at the test and see which standards we are going to be able to finish before the break.

R: we should be able to get through the slope triangles.

S: hopefully they can identify slope and y intercept but will they be able to manipulate it? No

R: would they be able to put it on a graph?

A: by when?

R: next Friday.

S: Will they be able to manipulate the formula? No. I don't think they'll be ready for that. This is the Y intercept and this is the slope. That is what I'll be focusing on for the next week. Slope intercept form. Do you have the test? I'm looking at the test from last year.

R: unit 4 or 5?

S: unit 5

A: this was later last year

A: I'm looking at unit 4 from last year. *Looking at questions*

S: which is a better buy? Guess we don't need that one.

A: it's a unit rate

S: it is a unit rate

R: are you still looking at unit 5?

S: yes

R: can you have two assessments open?

S: No. I discovered that.

S: I did it a little different than you guys. I'm giving most of unit 4 tomorrow. I didn't give a test yet. I thought that is what we were doing.

Pause in conversation. Working on laptops.

S: your students will be able to identify the slope of a line. Correct?

R: barely

S: and then tell the slope that passes through two given points.

R: oh yeah

S: number 4...is your number 4 proportional relationships?

R: let's all go to 4.
A: let's all go to 4
A: *read through each questions.*
S: that's the one I'm talking about
R: they should be able to do that
S: thought you already tested on this
R: we did, but we can test it again. It was introduction.
A: is the answer to #7, right? *Read the question* Am I reading the question wrong.
R: #8 is the one we need to white out.
A: Yes, on c
R: I think we could give the unit 4 test right before fall break. Do we want to add anything about slope triangles?
S: we probably want to that on another test
R: I don't understand how we write questions about slope triangles.
A: I'm struggling to write the lesson plans. I don't know how deep to go into it...that particular concept
A: I can go deep
S: that is why I wanted to see some sample questions so we know what to teach in that area.
A: I think this standard....it's this wide and this deep (signals with hands) it's so broad.
A: where do you focus? You've got to focus somewhere. You can't get very deep with it.
R: *typing notes from the meeting.*
R: do we think that the unit 5 test will be good when we actually finish this unit?
S: I do.
R: what were the questions Tammy gave you? See what they were.
Pause in conversation. Searching online
S: I used this.
A: what is it AE6?
Side conversation
A: do you want the good news or the bad news? They aren't testing AE6.
S: *showed and explained team members a video.* I can send it to you.
S: They have to pick out the triangle that going to continue the straight line.
Unclear conversation
S: Whichever has the same ratio. That's what my kids asked..... how it's different from rise and run? Told them it's not different.
A: I understand that.If that's all we're covering. I don't see two days out of that. One day would be more than sufficient.
R: let's do one day and put one question on the test.
Unclear conversation
A: continue the straight line.
R: make it multiple choice? okay
S: leads into Pythagorean theorem

Pause

S: do you want me to send you this link?

R: what is the video that Candy was talking about? Solving for Y. Was it J-dog Y intercept?

S: they said it was pretty awful but the kids remembered it

R: I'm going to show it that day.

Pause

A: they are not testing EEB6 in Mod Math. They've got a question on here that...that's interesting?

S: did they have any good questions on their test?

R: *video started. Listening and watching it. Laughing. Agree it's not the right video.*

S: I don't think that's the video we are talking about

R: I don't think so either. I'm going to email her.

A: they actually have a couple of good questions.

R: what are you looking at?

A: on the ModMath test. They are having to...umm.....

S: can you send it to us?

A: I should be able to.

A: *saved the test he was looking at and sent it to the other team members*

A: #3 is a good one

S: got it

A: there are some good questions on here. #7 is a good question.

Pause in conversation

S: I think we do need an equation question like #5. We need linear and nonlinear

A: 5 and 6 are good. 7 is a good question.

R: don't we do linear and nonlinear in another unit?

S: it's in this unit

A: 8 is a good question

S: I like that

A: 9 is a good question, comparing

S: 10 is flat out..... I don't think they'll have a question like that if they have to prove, etc.

S: they need to hurry up and get us some sample questions so we know how to teach and assess the standards

R: let's do one day on it and make it multiple choice

A: I'll get that done tonight.

S: do we want some of these questions? Are you doing the lessons on that?

A: I'm going to do the lesson on hypotenuse of a triangle. I'm going to teach it like that video does.

S: that's basically what that question is

R: did you send that lesson to Taneidra?

A: no, but I can. The kids are coming.

R: so we are going to give the unit 4 test before fall break.
 S: add some of these questions after fall break.
 S: sounds good.

Observation #2

Date: December 8, 2015 Case #1 and 5 Time:during planning

Members Present: Participant 1 and 5 + 2 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

T: I'm okay with that...doing long division...I didn't say to them...to point it out to them
 1: I didn't tell what it was going to be over
 T: I didn't...if they gave me the correct 5.5 then I think I would be okay with giving them credit for that...just because I didn't...
 1: it doesn't make sense for it to be 5. Anything
 T: okay 0.if they gave me 0.5 as their answer right here...it wasn't written or lined up
 1: okay I don't care about that....
 2: how did it get 5
 1: because he put it above...
 T: okay
 1: instead of putting the decimal point....I would have been okay with it because it would have shown me that he knew what he was doing...
 t: okay
 1: so little mistakes like that
 3: that was him being lazy..that wasn't a simple careless mistake
 1: he didn't get a 100 this time, I had another one that started out right and then in the second step they lost it
 3: which was the one we had just done
 1: this is the one we did in the Bell Ringer today
 L: yeah, I know, just goes to show that people are paying attention
 Unclear conversation
 L: okay do you want to talk about points before we do this
 1: okay we know that #3 is going to be a bonus, and #10 on the other page
 unclear conversation
 1: all they had to do was double
 3: a lot of them got it

t: so 10 is bonus?
 1: yeah
 unclear conversation
 1: without the 2 it is out of 13
 t: are we counting it as 2
 1: no, we are going to do as one, but we said that if they want to do a retake it would be on this part only
 L: I think they need a retake
 1: this is ridiculous
 3: cause you are allowed to use your notebook
 1: you got your notebook and the calculator
 L: I mean technically if you gave them a study guide to use it's the same thing, if you understand or know what you are doing or not
 Unclear conversation
 1: if there are kids that didn't understand we can address them privately
 L: okay so can we just say....if there are any retakes can we do it on Friday please?
 3: this Friday
 L: we bite the bullet this week or we miss them next....I already have more than a few that are going to be out of town
 Unclear conversation
 T: next week
 L: parents are emailing me that they are going to be out of town, my advanced class they leave early with the military
 1: my son's leave is starting on the 18ths
 T: depends on the unit
 L: I don't know if it's staggering or what but I have one that is not coming back
 2: do we want to change the bell ringer to accommodate?
 L: that's what I'm thinking
 1: well the ones....basically what do we have in there, the division? That's part of what we need to do is the division, maybe simplifying the equivalent, the didn't remember to simplify
 T: a ratio?
 1: yeah
 T: I was like we did this off the study guide
 3: the vocab really got them
 T: I had some just write 3:4,
 1: they just wrote them a different way
 3: that is an equivalent ration
 Disagreement
 3: it is
 1: it's a different form
 t: a different way of writing the same number
 3: a different form

1: it's not another equivalent ratio
 3: I'm being devil's advocate, it is equivalent, it is the same
 laughter
 t: if they argue it then I'm going to give them points
 1: if they argue that then they understand
 L: some of mine did that
 T: I would say okay
 1: they are showing you the concept, without showing that I wouldn't give them credit though
 L: okay
 T: I agree, if they argue that then I'll give them credit
 2: you aren't giving a test over this tomorrow are you?
 L: I say let's not give it back until Thursday please
 1: are you going to have it graded
 L: I'm asking chorals and my aids to mark them, they aren't giving grades they are just marking the wrong answer
 1: are you using grade cam? It could help
 T: I forget about grade cam
 L: I tend to forget about grade cam, I'm bad, I've been forgetting
 1: it's making it easier, then we have some data
 2: so we can retest on Friday, I don't know if we can do that
 L: It's simple stuff, I'm going to test the ones who are leaving, but honestly, how much more practice do you need long division
 3: they don't know their math facts, you can't do long division if you don't know their math facts
 1: they need practice
 L: should we even let them retake it?
 T: I'm going to let mine retake, because I missed three days, I did white boards and I split the class in half, so we got to practice, but I'm going to let them retake the hand part, I just feel like...
 1: I understand how you fee
 L: I don't know what is going to happen, hope for the best, my 4th period always suffers, so if anyone is going to come see me then I'll be my 4th period
 T: how many points do we can to?
 Unclear conversation
 L: I did the first lesson, and I didn't even get to the light bulb, I tried to preglue I had them glue in the tables and the graph so that when I come back on Thursday, I'm on it, it's long, so taping gluing whatever takes up time
 2: I don't think we have time for corrections
 L: I say Friday during lunch, suck it up and do it during lunch, and no calculator
 T: can we not give it to them over the weekend
 Unclear conversation

L: we said we were going to let them use their composition notebook, we agreed, which means they get the multiplication table, they are going to use their table
Unclear conversation
L; I don't see a lot of them retaking,
T: I misunderstood, I let them use it for the 1st part and not both,
L; no because technically they need to be able to see from their notes equivalent ratios
1: they should have been able to use their notes to get the right number
T: I told them to put it away
L: mine really needed notes, I would give it back and let them use their notes
2: look at them tonight before you put X's
T: that was just my misunderstanding, they used them for the first part not for the 2nd
L: how many points a piece
T: out of 13
L: two bonuses
1: 7.7
t: is #9 all or nothing
1: yes, you do
unclear conversation
1: have you graded your MICAs
1: is there a quicker way to do it
L: go to notifications and click score it
1: I didn't know to do it
T: mine gave me analysis
1: you have to score the 3rd question
2: I couldn't find the report on edulastic
L: I found the picture of the report, I would click here, scroll down, do the ones that aren't scored
L: I had a bunch that failed, it scores it for you
Unclear conversation
L: you guys need to see it
1: how are you assigning a grade for yesterday's work
L: I don't think we can, most of mine couldn't get to Edulastic
L: are we doing it out of 7 points or 8
2: I think 7
L: okay, so then what are the 2 bonuses worth
T: 5 each
L: 110?
1: it's counting as a quiz
L: they got it full
T: I don't go through all of that, I don't ever count the bonuses until after, I just add the bonus points in the end
L: that's the same thing
1: five points each

L: I don't know why it can't be seven
T: 7 is fine, that's fine
L: to me it's easier
1: I like to show them what they missed
2: are we doing 7?
T and 1: yes, 7 is fine
L: I'm gong to be doing this wed
T: this is out of 13, right
L: 13, but we are still counting them as 7 points a piece
T: calculating the possible points
2: let's wait until we have results to decide whether it's going to be a test or quiz
T: that fine
2: that bonus might help
2: so we are going to give partial credit on this one
L: I know yours is partial, know you are killing me with partial
1: take off 1 point instead of 3
T: for #1, if you set it up wrong it's going to be wrong anyway, #2 same thing
2: they'll get 4 instead of 4.6, so what do you do with that
t: I would give them points for it
1: I think it should be your discretion
L: Can we just do our discretion but the max we can give them is 4 or 3
1: so just take off 2-3 points, just your discretion
L: okay
3: I like that, because it's based upon the specific student, that is areally big deal for them
T: I'm okay with partial, 4.6 depending upon what the question is
L: are either of you guys going to scan that, because I'm not going to remember this
T: yeah
L: I already gave Mrs. Quarls my key, I'm just wondering if you could scan it for me, as far as the points and stuff
2: they are all 7 a piece
L: out of 13
2: they are 7 a piece, there is nothing out of 13
L: it should be 15 out of 13
1: that takes into account
T: it's based upon 7 points
L: so you subtract or plus what they get right
1: if we go by 7 points you kind of have to do that
T: I just write the grade most of the time, this is for me, not them, this is my key
L: I always put subtract and whatever because I know you do the fraction bit
2: if we can I do, but in this one we can't
L: can we discuss what the AP asked us to do now, it's a monster, I'm sorry
1: Kim gave us something to do, RTI spreadsheet

L: right now I'm going to relay what we have do before Thursday
 1: we have to do some RTI spreadsheet
 L: I didn't get it, could you forward it to us?
 L: if you look at the 2 print offs, I'm going to wait, because you need to see which ones are staying in and which ones are going out
 L: we are moving students out of group (named the groups and names)
 3: are you deciding who is going out of RTI
 L: we are looking at it, we need to collaborate to decide
 3: what about the data?
 L: we need to look at data. That's the points. can you mark the ones that are SpEd
 Ashley
 3: yes
 L: it's a monster, if everyone can go to EPS, or the management system, while she's marking down SpEd
 2: was Kiki here today?
 L: she was present in my class, so she must have been dismissed early
 1: no, all I had was the 2 boys, etc.
 1: okay, management system
 L: go to PathDriver for math, click to screening details on the left, make sure you are on reports, so as she's going through this, look for your kids
 T: I know the 2 without looking
 L: go to NEMS 7 all, she wants us to start writing numbers, she is gong to say on Thursday, do you have the numbers she is going to ask for numbers
 T: am I marking RTI
 L: she just told me SpEd
 T: so I'm marking RTI
 L: I have 4 coming out
 1: who is coming out?
 L: named the students
 1: I don't know why D is not coming out, his picture is beautiful
 L: they gave us percentages, I don't know, mine went from.....
 3: do I need to be marking
 L: go up to the red, that's why I need your help
 1: are these prioritized in any way?
 L: they color coded them
 L: go to AS, I'm going to show you, this stuff we have write on here, going to collaborate to decide, everyone take a page, does that make sense, so when we go home tonight
 Unclear conversation
 L: I'm going to divvy up the students
 1: what are those sheets are they are current students?
 L: it's what they scored in winter
 2: it's not just her, she's on a list

L: she wants us to put data on her, so I'm using her as an example, look her up, her last name is Silva?
T: what is that that you are on?
L: this is pathdriver, this is what we do for 5th period
2: it's a universal screener
T: I've never been on it
L: you need to be a part of this, make sure you are in winter, did yours look like this
2: no, I'm on this....
L: you are good
2: I was on student screening details
L: she wants us on class screening details, scroll down, click on AS, do you see her?
2: they are not even alphabetical
T: it's listed by how they are scores
L: click on current, this is what we are supposed to do by Thursday, click on her name, go to 2014-15, she wants us to write all the numbers from last year, that's what I need you to write
1: which one?
L: she wants us to write, is that national, do national, she wants all of those numbers
L: what I would do if I were you, we are going to divvy up the papers
1: we have to write that, should we make a column?
T: so do it over here like this
L: I don't think, whether we do the data tonight or tomorrow night
T: do we have to do it on every single student
2: what does 1, 4, and 3 mean
L: that was her national percentile
2: you can go to where we were
T: are we doing it for every single student?
L: yes, the ones that don't have an S, you can do one, you can do one
1: Ashley, can you do the partials
1: I'm not going to write 2014-15 for every student
3: I only have access to these 2
L: go to NEMS fall
Two side conversations going on about the data needed for the AP
1 showing T how to use PathDriver
L: make sure it's the winter scores
1 still helping T
2: this is every single kid
L: I don't know how you got that
2: it would be nice if you could see it all on one page
L: she wanted to make sure at least we got the numbers in we can collaborate
3: some didn't take it
L: that's why I'm putting a line through it
T: I'm never going to catch up

T: I decided to give a pop quiz today with 8th grade
Meeting wrapped up

Date: December 8, 2015 Case # 2 Time: during planning

Members Present: Participant 2 + 4 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

introductory conversations

1: I've been putting them on the bell ringer from the ones that my kids most missed from chapter 5 because I figured they would be about the same
Working on their computers. Pause in conversation.

2: we are really going at it today. Donna is not here to make us talk.

1: did yall have something that you were uploading

2: 7

2: going to do our assessment questions

working on their computers. Pause in conversation.

2: we kind of have to nail down, paper pencil or computer, someone is going to have to make it

1: from MICA

3: can't do questions from edulastic

4: we still need a test for backup, Sarah said there were problems when a student had trouble getting logged in, so to save time she just handed them a test, need a paper test for backup in case we have problems that day

s: I just printed the copy, I had the you had already put together, so I don't know

s: I thought too how you felt about if doing the test is too much. I'm okay with that because if we started doing to whole exam, but could we start doing the quizzes on there. At least for things like Drag and drop for number lines, because I just felt they need the practice

2: then let's use MICA

3: also, the tech lady was here today, she knew we were looking at making online tests, and she said if we needed helped making a MICA test, that she would, she sent me her email.

S: I went on MICA to make my assessment, so edulastic had questions for all of them, 6A and C. MICA didn't have questions for 6A. I don't know if I'm looking in the wrong bank, but I can't find questions on MICA that are preset, since we have to make them, I just chose the one which was 6C that was premade.

Working on computers

2: so what is the first thing?

Unclear conversation

2: There is only one question on there. Which statement is correct? The temperature indicates...reads the question.....that's the only question on that standard

4: that's one of those odd ball answer choice that we aren't supposed to use any more...it's broken

2: what's the next one?

4: 6C

2: Do we have any questions for that?

s: that's mine. So it's just ordering a number line

4: if they can't do that problem then we're really going to have issues

s: the only thing that I'm worried about is they need practice with drag and drop. Look at the kids...you have the one on the RTI...and I just figure Brandon it wasn't He wasn't that we couldn't place the numbers, he didn't know how to drag and drop, he didn't know, there wasn't an interval thingy, grasping how to break it up, I just wondered if some of our other kids might have issues

4: which question were you talking about?

1:are you on MICA

4: didn't you choose one of those unclear conversatino

2: I don't think we can do 6 questions, but maybe it's something we can do for review, just quick review

s: I don't understand with MICA there are not a lot of choices, if we are supposed to use it why doesn't have as many questions as Edulastic if we are supposed to use

2: probably just starting

4: edulastic is created by teachers.

S: it is new

4: we talked about giving the first semester quiz on edulastic, is it really going to be beneficial, because how many questions are we going to be able to find

S: on MICA you mean

4: 6 for just this one unit. Maybe it won't be so bad since we have 6 units to pull from.

S: I was wondering too for the semester quiz, I don't know if this is good or not, I just had this idea, Could we do the most missed questions from all the tests and that became the semester, I do like to see if they can do division of fractions of course

1: those are the ones that have been on Bell Ringer. I've gone over all of them, I've highlighted them and showed them. I went over why they missed them, why they picked the wrong ones, Put it on bell ringer this week and they are still not getting them

S: I want to see if I am being effective with reteaching? Is it working? Can they now go back and answer those same questions? The grade may...laughing...I don't want to set them up for these terrible grades either.

1: might want some that aren't the most missed ones on there, we still need to see what they know

2: we did share questions on MICA

1: yes, she showed us how to do that

2: so only one of us has to make it.

Pause in conversation

2: We need to make a decision. I like the computer.

1: I do too. I've already told the kids they are doing it on the computer, so we might as well

4: I've already started making the unit 7 test, but I can stop

1: I can make the MICA test, I'm not the most tech savy.

4: let's do it on MICA and if we like the results we get we can use them .

2: go quick after Christmas. 6 questions, Quick quiz and move on, before 8 and 9

S: semester quiz the mean?

2: no, unit 7, since we want to go quickly after Christmas what if we did do it on MICA and made it a short quiz

1: not a hard unit. They did their best

2: see how it goes, we don't have to count it for a grade

4: is six questions enough? Do you think it would be beneficial for them to see the questions from all of the other units?

2: on the semester quiz, yet

4: so you are talking having the computers twice?

2: yes

4: I won't be able to get them before break

2: no, after the break, this is for 7, that won't be tested until after Christmas

lots of agreement

4: maybe that day they could do online review while we need pull kids that really need support for small group, or something like like, I don't want to spend a lot of time, but I don't want to get mobile labs out for 6 questions, that would be an awful waste of time.

Pause in conversation

1: so who wants to put the semester quiz on MICA

s: It wasn't hard, I just selected them

4: you'll have to go back and select all the standards

S: it's easy because you just click, click, click

4: we do need a performance task. They've been taught everything but one grouping. That performance task that we did the day we went to MSB, they should be able to do that whole performance task, so I would put that on there

1: yes

s: I'm looking at the RPs right now, there are tons of questions

2: someone pull up questions on the standards we've down

s: if you do math, grade 6 and you don't filter standards, it gives you all the questions, and there are a quite a few questions

S: maybe we should all do it together

1 read standard out loud to S

working on their computers

2 read question out loud

1: we've been telling them take what you have and divide it by what you need. So it would be that way? The question is worded different.

S: if you divide then it figures out how many boxes

2 Read another question out loud.
2: I say we put both of them on there.
S: so am I making it, I've got it open, I'll make it.
1 read more standards from each unit
S found more questions
1 read standards
2 read question out loud
2: I think that one is fine
2: next one has a chart...read the question...yes, I like that one too. That's the basketball question.
1: need another standard?
2: yes
1 read standard
2 looked for questions
Assistant principal came in and asked what they were doing. Discussed using MICA for questions.
5: all the questions are about the same
2: you know we are working hard when it's quiet
AP: that's why I was hesitant to come in. but make sure when you are going through and doing the test, you have enough questions quality questions for each standards, that we can get good data on and go through and do the depth of knowledge, so that we have the higher level, Make sure they are high quality.
1: they are hard, Level 3
AP: they are all level 3
1: they are hard
AP: this week we are doing Thursday collaboration
Laughter and side conversation
AP: on Thursday it is a time for you all to collaborate. We need to start looking at next semester, and you know we are going into the winter months. And it's going to snow.
1 and 2: it's not going to snow
AP: We need a game plan. If we do have snow days we are going to have to start prioritizing. So that we are looking at the...I call it the road map...but that's really not what it's called.... The Blue Print make sure we are hitting all of those big standards. That is what Thursday is going to be allotted for. Coming up with that game plan. We didn't do that until March. Any questions before I depart?
1: might be the first year we might pray for no snow
2: at least until after February
laughter....side conversations
AP: RTI...the equipment has been ordered. I'm going to send you x-number of students coming out looking at Path Driver so you need to look at x-number of students going it. When you come to the table on Friday have a list of students who can fill that space. Does that make sense?
4: so we don't just do the next kid on the list

AP: we don't have a list, we are going to start creating a list, when they went in at the beginning it was off of last year's data, so now we have 2 solid data...pieces and 3 from last year. We have more data that we can make a better decision.

4: I have a student given to me from Emerson's group. I thought the conversation was that she didn't really need it. That she was a referral from mom.

AP: she needs it. She needs to stay in there until we can collect enough data.

Unclear conversation

2: we are going to have more questions than we need

s: for 2 unit rate, there are 2 questions

side conversation

2: why don't we just pick one

s: one is solving for unit rate with a calculator and the other they have to solve but they have to pick the one that is true, I think that's harder

2: are you on RPA3?

S: RPA2

Working on their computers

Discussed what to put in minutes

Pause in conversation

2: I saw use the one that says which is true. We may have to take some of them out. Have you done all the 3s?

s: there are a lot of them. I can deselect them

2: then share it

s: then I can just deselect

2: unit 4 was...we've done (listed standards)...also in that unit...we don't do fluency until April. Unit 5 was 6EEA1. Any questions on that?

S: one

2 read more standards and S found questions

S read the questions to the group

2: that's higher level thinking, definitely

2 read another standard and S found a question, read questions

4: can I ask you guys? for unit 7 the performance task is supposed to cover 5 of our standards. Are we good to use this?

2: that's all the standards, 1 through 6

S: right now there are 25 questions

2: but they are hard

S: trying to make sure we have all of the NS questions. what are the NS questions?

1: we don't have that until unit 7

S: that's the fluency

2: no fluency until april

s: I have that and there are 25 questions. Selecting all of the available ones.

2: we'll sift through them Thursday and we'll call it a day

side conversations

2: that's the plan for Thursday

s: I've saved it. Save and exit and save and assign. I don't know how to share it.
 2: go ahead save assign it to one class. And then we'll go back in and figure out how to share it.
 2 showed S how to assign it
 side conversations
 s: figure out how to share it. There's a share button. Enter email addresses.
 2: there you go. we collaborate again this Thursday
 2: meeting adjourned

Date: December 8, 2015 Case #3 Time:during planning

Members Present: Participant 3 + 3 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

A: I will do that for your guys. I'll be the timeout room.
 1: forgot about Chase
 A: I have lots of extra work for him today.
 2: going to write CHRISTMAS PARTY and make them earn it like in elementary school, oops, you just lost a C
 3: just write PARTY
 A: if you have students who can't handle the party please send them to me
 3: they are good until they get to the end, that's when things get a little
 A: that's what they said too, I am going to send an email out to everyone
 2: I bet there other teachers don't have homerooms out there
 A: they are usually going to other people's parties, and help out, really, me going to other people's parties just adds more chaos, I was going to come to your party, Will, so I can add a little more chaos to your life.
 1: I have enough sixth period
 A: I will say, the first 15 minutes, I'm going to go down to Ms. Tindle's room, Going to make an appearance, all of my teacher's aids are there, so you can't send anyone to me for 15 minutes and that's what I'll put in my email
 1: today we Going to look at Unit 6 part 1, finish that up
 Pulling up files on their computer
 A: we could probably upload 6.2, I thought we were almost done with 6,
 1: yeah
 working on their computers
 A: what is the date today?
 1: 8th
 A: when are you giving your 6 test?

2: after Christmas, we need to go over a few things, we need to do a review day, because they won't remember anything, and then it'll be a few days after
A: okay, that is when mine is tracking to be as well
2: I haven't started to map that out yet
A: don't...nobody upload 6.2 because I need to remove the table formatting
1: okay
All working on their computers
1: have you had a parent that is asking about their child's work when you know the student doesn't have the ability to read and write
3: if that kid doesn't have the ability to write, then I would let that parent help that kid, and accept the work
1: I accepted it
3: love when the parent gets involved
A: I had him last year
A: does he use in Neo?
1: I emailed the assignments, and it gets emailed back to me, and I know he didn't do it and it doesn't look like his work
A: does it look like...he doesn't write it...but does it look like their not his words?
1: yes, did she does this last year
A: no his parents weren't involved
1: well I got them involved, I emailed them that he wasn't doing anything, and she wants me to email the work to her, because he doesn't do anything in class, she'll email it back
2: she may be doing it, but I bet he's sitting right there, I don't have any problem with getting the parents involved
1: I haven't said anything about it, I just wondered if you had a similar experience
2: I'm sure I have, but I don't remember a specific one
A: why don't you ask him about? Don't ask him about his parents doing it, but ask him about the material?
1: he doesn't demonstrate that he's learning anything because he fails the test, when I send home test corrections, they are sent back perfect
A: when he brings something in, the day he brings it in....
1: he doesn't bring anything in
A: the day she emails you, talk to him about and say well, sogive him a spot check question and see if he can remember talking about it with his parents, and if so she's working with him and he is sitting there, if not, then She's doing it by herself, but I didn't have that problem because I pulled him for lunch last year and worked with him to do some of that stuff, but no, He was one of my toughest students last year
1: understandable
A: do I have the most recent version?
2: the other end of that is she gets tired, she's going to get tired, the level of work is going to go up , she's going to give it up, she's going to say I'm done, so I'd let it go.
1: I'm not going to....there's no way I can prove

A: No, then you'll just have people angry
2: path of least resistance sometimes
looking at their computers
got a paper from the printer
2: I thought we were done with 6
2 left the room
A: on the minutes it said review and finalize 6 test, so we need to upload 6.2, which I'll do
A: going to try and do this a different way
2 returned to the room
working on their computers
A: maybe it's not worth it
Looking at their computers
Long pause in conversation
A: I uploaded 6.2
Working on their computers
A: interesting
Long pause in conversation
1: trying to figure something out
Working on their computers
1: did you upload 6.2?
A: yes
3: the question that we have for 2 on the test that we did last year, the question is on Nancy's test, but there was a stimulus that goes with it, did you notice it?
A: which one
3: which government principle is at the heart of the nullification crisis? There was a stimulus that went with it, that summarized the whole things, if you want to add that.
A: I'd say so
3: It's not a primary source. It's a secondary source.
A: copy and paste it in
3: I can't
a: may have to screen shot it
laughing..
3: how do I do that?
A: command F4
looking at the test all together on Google drive, laughter, unclear conversation
A: learn something new everyday
3: can you insert it?
A: yes
2: how's that related? I understand the nullification crisis. How does that lead to supremacy clause? I guess it just explains to them nullification, gives them an explanation of nullification, leads them to what a nullification actually was, if they didn't realize

3: I guess
working on their computers
A: that's just ridiculous
2: brought up a concern about a question
discussed it and revised it
working on their computers, long pause in conversation
1: on number 5, I don't like choice D, I don't mind them mentioning electoral vote at all
A: you mean?
1: I like the electoral and house vote, I don't like electoral vote mentioned in any other response other than that
2: see that and probably choose that
A: I think that makes more sense
A: what is that? What did I just do? I hate tables.
2: talking about the pink part
A: oh, yeah that I'm highlighting
A: no, no, no, I can remain calm.
Working on their computers
Printing more documents
A: where did the rest of the test go?
2: it's there
2: #10 was it an actual force bill, I thought he sent the troops down there, didn't know he actually threatened to send them down there
1: I don't remember that
2: I'm not debating it but it doesn't sound familiar at all
1: force bill...reading the question
A: that is one we had issue with last year
1: is that a Nancy question?
A: guess so
2: going to look that up
3: I remember, south carolina they decided not to nullify the tariff, but they didn't decide to nullify the force bill just to prove that they could still nullify a law, I remember that
2: they decided not nullify the tariff?
3: right they decided not to nullify the tariff, but just so they agreed to pay the tariff, I think I remember reading where they decided to nullify the force bill so they could prove that they could pass a law, I could be wrong, I feel like I read that somewhere
2 reading from online about the bill they were discussing
A: okay so I sort of fixed that formatting issue
2 reading online
working on their computers
2: south Carolina proported to nullify the force bill, so they threatened to nullify the force bill, but they didn't nullify it

1: but they didn't nullify it
 2: no
 Working on their computers
 Unclear conversation
 1: I saw Nancy yesterday
 3: you saw Nancy?
 1: yeah, I passed her
 3: did you wave?
 1: she didn't see me
 1: she lives in Kentucky
 3: does she really?
 1: guess so
 Working on their computers. Reading the test. Long pause in conversation
 2: #14?
 3: oh, yeah, that one
 2: I would never have chosen that one
 3: got to be natural resources
 A: that's definitely a nancy dye question
 3: that's a question you get on an AP test, that's a question you could get on the praxis
 unclear conversation
 A: I think...after we made that test. I explicitly taught them. The three reasons for.....
 3: I need to write that down
 a: these are the 3 reasons for...and I repeated it over and over
 reading through the questions. Unclear conversation
 1: ...unclear conversation.....that's what I was thinking
 A: we could change them
 2: read the question
 1: the other 3 don't make sense
 2: if they have a half a brain, they will chose it, if it's one of her questions we might
 see it again, could put in parentheses i.e. farmland
 1: leave it
 Wrapped up the meeting and began leaving
 A: asked about the minutes and finalized them
 3 teachers remained and continued working on their computers

Date: December 8, 2015 Case #4 and 7 Time:during planning

Members Present: Participant 4 and 7 + 2 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

M: are you going to start the 5th and end the 9th?
 S: no, I'm not, I've just given a test, my 8th graders are doing research, doing labs to get them started, my full on waves will be the 5th through the 8th with the test on the 8th, the 9th is the day when half the kids are absent
 1: do you really think you'll be able to get waves completed within 3 days?
 2: four days?
 S: I can't give it to them after fall break
 2: you have to before fall break
 M: me too, but realistically
 M: we've talked about strategies and the test, Kelly wanted me to tell you about NCE scores,
Looking at videos for lessons together on lap top
Side conversation about a video
 1: do you know what would be good? We have some alcohol burners. Even the sound that will make the flame move, gives you an actual visual of a transverse wave, thought about that when I saw the video, they can't see it, but they know the something is disrupting it, that would be a good "hook"
 M: I think I just got locked out of my account
 1: are you going into the individual account?
 2: what are we looking at?
 M: do you add the zero, zero, zero?
 S: yes
 1: glad you know yours by heart
 M: wish it would show me my password
Pause
 1: are we using what we have here for our pretest?
 M: go to student search, I got in
 2: do want each one of us doing this Meaghan?
 M: stressing me out, type in the student's name
 S: I have all of them
 M: click on a student's name
 1: put it up on the screen
unable to get the screen hooked up. Used doc cam.
 M: she wants us to look at the NCE scores for each of our kids, look at the trends, to grow a student to a 5 you have to raise their NCE by 2 points
 S: don't know how they figure the NCE? Never understood that
 Looked at student's score together

S: my strength area is the middle student
M: I teach to the low
1: which ones to you tech to?
2: growth in the upper and middle third
1: talk about what you are doing to reach these different groups, however it is that we are teaching or instructing, help each other
M: go back to the calendar, this is bothering me, when are you introducing waves?
1: you see teaching til Friday
S: start with vocabulary, inquiry
2: when are you giving your test?
M: Thursday or Friday
2: were you going to do test corrections by Friday?
M: my projects are due Friday
2: I think it's feasible to get it in in 5 days.
M: I could probably due the introductory and then go into the amplitude
2: if they don't know it then you could come back to it, you could do the test on Friday, not going to do be a catastrophe to have fall break in the middle
S: I'd like to finish it before fall break
1: I just forwarded you the wave simulation
M: going to look at data from our earth's layers and plate tectonics, look at waves assessment, and anything else that Kelly needs us to talk about, make sure that your layers are seen on the test
S: those are the actual tests?
M: yes, any questions?
2: we are on pace with the district guide, so as far as right now we are good
M: feel like we are flying through it, especially with inclusion students
1: what I would suggest you do...when do they meet?
M: everyday
1: I need to see certain kids in science on a certain day of the week. One day they aren't going to math tutoring. They are coming to you.
M: I told them I could come to the lunch table.
1: what I would suggest you do.... I could stop by and pick up your kids on my way. Your kids get down the same time as mine. How is that going to disrupt your class? It's feasible.
M: I know one day is first period, one day is second period, etc.
Laughter
M: they do test corrections but those are at home, come with your data from pre and post and strategies for fall break....I mean simple machines
S: I misspoke. it's actually Newton's Law that we are .
Reminded them what would be on the agenda next week. Meeting convened

Date: December 15, 2015 Case #6 Time:during planning

Members Present: Participant 6 + 2 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

1: going to start with what questions to put into our assessment...I think we need to be more diligent about editing it so I'm going to start putting it in Pathdriver so if you all can start editing it so it's ready when we get back from the break

S: one thing that we did that we were supposed to be doing was putting the standard above the question, which will be nice for the review aspect, tell student to ignore it, may be a distractor,

1: we should have 3 assessment questions for each reading standard, is that right, no one told us at the beginning

S: was it 3 or 2

2: 2 questions

S: when Kim and I were working on it, and Elaine was coming around, the test that was given to us, they had 2 for everyone, Elaine said the language standards only need to be one because that was the percentage on TN ready

2: so the standards that we took out...additional language standards.....

1:that's what I heard

s: it was 3-4 hours, the assessment was not a good...

1: would you guys reading me the standards, the first section was one through 8, #1 is C, #2 is C, etc.....

unclear conversation

1: now I need to add a new section, I need to continue numbers, so multiple select 6 choices, now there is a box here that says partial credit, do we want to do that?

2: unclear comment

1: so partial credit

S: how is it going to be on the real assessment?

2: it doesn't apply

s: questions to ask Elaine

1: multiple select for the rest of the assessment, so 4 questions

2: unclear comment, reading standards

1: I did it backwards

2: unclear comment

1: reading standards, L7.52, developing the assessment in MICA during the meeting

2: read more standards

1: added more questions

1: okay,what else is on our agenda?

S: we need to talk about the station review for the module

1: unclear comment

s: you said it went really well

2: unclear comment, I think we should keep that model, one day dedicated to review skills

1: that's what history does

s: after the test or before the test

1: after

s: I think that would be good

1: one day is the test, then test directions, students get assigned a particular location

s: I like it for review or after the fact

unclear conversation

s: so in the minutes I'll put in that we need to work towards that

1: what else can we do that can prepare us for the assessment

s: assessment is done

1: now it's in test drive

s: yes

unclear conversation

laughter

1: first I have a question, are all the tests an appropriate length

s: we need to put that in there, because Elaine and Kimberly asked for it

unclear conversation

s: there were only one or two tests

1: is it on test drive

s: we only have a hard copy

1: I have a sample, do you have it?

2: yes

1: can you put it on the drive

s: she gave us hard copies of everything

unclear conversation

1: can you add that to our minutes, we have our staff development, what about conversations with America, was that found

2: yes

1: is that the title of the piece, found it online

2: unclear comment

added to minutes

meeting adjourned

Date: December 8, 2015 Case #8 Time:during planning

Members Present: Participant 8 + 3 others

class period ends, bell rings, planning time starts and teachers slowly gather

s: are you going to going to try and do your test on edusoft?
 R: the Pythagorean test
 S: I'm just wondering if you are going to test online
 R: yes
 s: probably would be better to start testing them that way
 r: yeah, but I had beg to get computers
 sped: do you have some for tomorrow or do you need computers
 r: I'm going to take yours and Ashley and Bill's cart
 sped: where is her classroom
 r: top of the 7th grade hallway
 sped: does she teach 8th grade
 r: she teaches 2 7th and 1 8th
 r: so for P theorem, I was looking through the standards, and I think the only thing different from last year, is that we only need to teach the how to find area of a right triangle and how to find diagonals of 3D shapes.
 S: yes
 R: I don't think there's anything different
 s: yes, that's it
 r: I think I can reuse my plans from last year and then add in that stuff. I looked at my stuff from last year and all of it aligned, except those two things
 s: I basically did too, except I changed my intro lesson, to make them discover the P theorem
 r: what did you do to do that
 s: I gave ...I put them in pairs and gave them an intro, I looked at a lesson that I saw on Discovery or somewhere, I watched that guy teach it and I liked it. I'll have to go and look and see where I found it. Anyway...Gave them the numbers 6,8. And I told Half the class take the numbers 6 and 8 and figure out how they could get an answer of 10. The other half I had them actually draw out a 6 x 8 triangle and then measure the hypotenuse
 R: our kids could do that second one, I don't think they could do the first one
 S: not many kids came up with that, offered them a candy bar though
 R: do you remember when we took the day off and had to go see Jim News we had to take the outline and everything
 S: I don't remember that
 S: I have centimeter squares that I had them use to find the areas of the legs and move it make the area of they hypotenuse
 R went to her cabinet to find something.

R: do you have these? That's what I do. Have you ever seen this before? That's what I do and it usually goes well .

A: do you have your beans? From last year

R: yeah, I may use it, it took me a really long time, but then I figured out a faster way to do it after I was finished. So if you want me to show you a faster way I can, Tony, you can borrow them if you want to

A: do you need them tomorrow

R: no

A: can I borrow them tomorrow

R: yeah, because TaNeidra will probably use them on Friday, I haven't asked her yet

S: that's like volume with the beans

A: no, you just cover the surface and then they literally count the beans.

S: that good

A: It's so close that they get the number of the square plus the number of the square equals...it's very very close between the number of beans

S: that's good, I like that

S: the only other thing I know what do is, if we are going to start doing assessments on edulastic to start working on them

R: could you email it to us

S: it's not on edulastic

R: is it on exam view

S: yes

R: we can look at it because we might want to change it for our regular classes anyway
Working on their computers

S: you get the other one that I sent you?

R: yes, thank you

S: it's cold

A: may do that today

R: okay

S: what?

A: introduce, do that today and tomorrow and switch the two days

R: I put this on this on Google Drive. These are the questions that I did with it. They just kind of fill it in. it's guiding questions. It's on the drive if you want it

Unclear conversation

S: have you seen the big darth vader toy in walmart

A: yes

S: my husband bought it on Saturday for our grandson..... They scanned everything and he said you didn't get the darth vader. And she said what I thought that was your son?

Laughter

R: what is the company that works on the telephone poles? What is the name of the company?

A: AT&T

Laughter

A: I'm not trying to be smart

R: yeah you are

A: that's the only one that I know of

R: at home it's called like City Co, is that a thing here too, or is that just at home

A: must just be at home

S: there was one question I wanted to take off of this before I sent it to you

Unclear conversation

R: is it called a ladder truck? The thing that has the bucket on it

A: it's a bucket truck

Working on the computers

A: what's it under?

R: lesson plans, yeah, I'm putting some stuff on there

A: there it is right there

R: how many feet tall do you think a telephone pole is? 50?

A: I don't know. Google it.

Unclear conversation

R: 40 feet

A: standard height of a utility pole is 35 feet

R: okay I'll change it

Working on their computers. Long pause in conversation.

S: okay it is sent

R: thank you

S: and received

Emails coming through with the document they need to review. Pause in conversation

S: what's nice about the edulastic is that you set it up by standard and everything and level. Ant then It breaks it all down for you, right. But then you have to do that. When you create the question don't you tell it the standard?

A: when you create your question, you input the standard first, question is in your standard block

S: and then your levels too

A: and it asked you....there levels are easy, medium, hard...they just give three levels

S: I like that. Then You can see where they are struggling.

A: it'll print when you download their scores, because I did this one for a previous assessment, and you can how many got the question right or if they got partial credit or full credit. You can tell this question was a disaster so I definitely need to review a lot.

Question 14 lots of zeros, so you know immediately what areas you need to work on.

That's why I like it. This did not download like what I wanted....unclear conversation

Working on their computers

S: do you have a test for your students?

Sped: for pythagorean theorem?

S: for every unit.

Sped: They are made for us. We don't have access to them. She's been sending them to us a few at a time. I have through unit 8. I got an email last week when no one can access them online. I take that back I don't have them through unit 8.

R: when are you doing PT?

Sped: in late January some time. Or early February, we are behind, they missed the whole first 9 weeks of math.

Working on their computers. Pause in conversation.

S: are you looking at the questions?

R: no, but I will. I was looking at the lesson plans.

S: you've got to go in and remove your students from RTI

A: I don't have them on my roll. I thought that was just for the enrichment people

S: maybe. I thought it was for any of us whose schedule changed

A: does anyone know what that means?

R: no

A: that's why I was thinking that doesn't have anything to do with us

R: what are you getting ready to teach, Sheryl?

Sped: we are getting ready to start irrational numbers tomorrow

R: what did you just finish?

Sped: slope, graphing lines

R: can they do it?

Sped: some of them can, some of them find it difficult, probably about the same

R: okay

Sped: I was trying to open what you sent us

S: do you have to drag it to your desktop

A: yes

Discussed exam view

s: are you all able to open it

a: yes

R: was it what Sandra sent or what Jaime sent you

Sped: can't open hers either

S: we need to get Rachel in here

S: I took some of those from the MICA test, for PT

A: thought some of them looked familiar

R: oh, I can see it

A: we can copy and paste pictures into Edulastic

R: it looks good. There's area and 3 dimensional shapes. When you taught 3D shapes did you actually have some 3D shapes that they?

A: I do. I have some

S: they have some in the library

R: can you put a string in it to show the diagonal

A: you can put it in there, cut a piece of cardboard, they are clear plastic and the lid comes up

R: okay. I would like to do stations when I get to that. This looks good. Is it all multiple choice?

A: no, multiple select

S: multiple select and

R: that looks good. I might make it shorter. Find some of the repetitive

S: yeah, you could take some off

A: it is going to be calculator

All said yes

A: that area...unclear conversation

R: the problem is that they have to memorize the formula. And they are not going to. If we could give them the formula then they could use it, but we can't...we have to have them memorize. I'm probably going to give a quiz on the formula for area of triangle. Either that or you don't

R: they have to be able to memorize. Everybody? do you think Josh is going to memorize those formulas

S: do people memorize in real life

R: no, I don't have them memorized

A: they are going to ask Siri, unless you are in a specific career then it's not something you need

R: is anyone taking notes today

Discussed getting computer issues fixed. Two different conversations.

S: that one is on MICA

A: it's a good question. They understand the square of the two small ones, add them together, then you can do the big one, if it's a right triangle, they understand that concept

S: they need to understand that concept

R: tony what's your room number

A: 112

R: I liked that room number. But that's the only thing I liked about that room.

S: why didn't like it

R: because it was red, it made my kids angry

R: so are we going to leave this test for the regular students?

A: #11 is almost distance formula. Almost.

S: yeah

A: That's not calculator. You can use a calculator on it. Don't you think?

S: oh yeah, I was trying to get my students to come up with that distance formula, they need it in Algebra I

A: our regular kids

Working on their computers. Pause in conversation.

S: you can monitor. Change things, take a few off.

A: that is the kind of question we will see on TN Ready

S: which question is it

A: number 11

A: the one toby's house, which expression is being used, it sounds like a MICA question, doesn't sound like something that came off

S: I'm not sure if I got that one from MICA, they do need to know that, and understand

A: it's the square root of....

S: they need to understand that, I think, Those type questions were on TCAP. There were questions where they had to choose the answer and it was square rooted

A: this has the operation. They've got to fully understand what happens, when you are finding a missing leg

S: yes

A: in times past, when I had students who struggled, I actually taught it as two different formulas, if you are looking for....

S: ideally they come up with it themselves

A: when they are ideally not too bright, then they need more help and you are going to have ideally lead them in the direction you want them to go

S: I know, you are going to have to lead them

Working on their computers

A: what does MU stand for on attendance? Unclear conversation

Sped: he was in my first period class

S: that doesn't look good

A: counting...we have 5 in alt school

S: one of my advanced students has been there for the last 2 months.

A: we have 8 in alt school

S: see how the exponential expressions are tested

S: that's a MIST question. Are you talking about this one?

R: are MICA and MIST the same thing?

A: MICA is the practice site, and MIST is the actual test site, but it's all one

R: is there anything on MIST that I could pull that would be useful?

A: No

R: just use MICA

S: and then the town question is on here too, town A, B,C

A: those questions they need to see

S: Yes you are right, I put all of the PT questions I could find.

S: I'm having trouble finding exponential expressions on this test. Looking on this MICA test. I wanted to see how they are asking these questions. That's our next unit.

S: are you guys going to use that test

R: first I have to see if I can get computers

A: there are no computers available between now and Christmas

R: I'll give the test after Christmas

S: I signed up for after, so going to make my next test on Edulastic

Meeting wrapped up.

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Participants: [REDACTED]

(7 out of 8)

1. How does your involvement in your PLC or collaborative team assisted with your personal efficacy?
 - a. Have to do things on time because I can't wait until the last minute
 - b. Accountability (yes, that's the biggest thing)
 - c. Tests done not the night before
 - d. If someone else is waiting on me, I have to do it
 - e. And if you forget someone is going to be kind enough to email and remind you
 - f. Accountability
LAUGHTER
 - g. I think working together collaboratively allows for the questions to be more than a basic question because you are getting people thinking or ways of thinking instead of just your own
 - h. Different ideas and teaching strategies
 - i. That goes for teaching styles too
 - j. And clear targets
 - k. We aren't there
 - l. we have been there
 - m. sometimes we don't always agree
 - n. We have some good discussions
2. How does your the involvement in your PLC team assist with student success?
 - a. Kind of going with what [REDACTED] was saying with the testing getting all of the different points of view in there and styles and methods and activities that everyone else is doing
 - b. I like hearing how everybody teaches things differently, we have been trying to help our students understand negative numbers and all four of us shared how we explained it and all four shared it differently so I had four ways to explain it to help students understand negative numbers
 - c. I agree too, whatever...regardless of what you are teaching, it has been nice to have a collaborative group and see how they are doing it, it's definitely opened my eyes to new ways of teaching certain things or maybe ideas of why students may not get something and how their brain works and just hearing how they've done it differently and new strategies has been helpful
 - d. Hearing vocabulary how you are using it has been help
 - e. Especially when we are collaborating with math partners, that has been big help

3. As a new teacher, how has the PLC structure shaped your decision-making processes?

LAUGHTER....

- a. As a new teacher, I can be up front about this one, at my first school there was no PLC, it was very difficult, I was a first year teacher coming in and not having anyone to plan with or get ideas from, no idea what to teach, there was no formed curriculum..nothing, you just go in there and hope for the best, it was really nice, actually at another school I was at, it was pretty similar, it was not no where to how are PLCs are, how established it is, it has been nice coming in to here, to have that, knowing what are we doing next, what are we supposed to be teaching these students, I feel like it's been really good, I'm happy to have it, it's been a different experience, it was scary, here's a textbook, go
- b. I think most of the time, I like the balance that we have, I taught at another school, it was in China, but I didn't have a PLC either, that was a language barrier issues, it's not that I didn't like working with colleagues, but I liked the autonomy of being able to do what I want to do, so with this you have learn to compromise a little bit more which is a great skill to have and I think that our school has a decent balance, by not making us meet every planning period together, having the meetings once a week, that allows us to do that collaboration and get ideas but still allows freedom to develop own teaching style, which is important to me, since I don't have similar teaching style to anyone in the 8th grade, so...which we all share ideas and activities and stuff , but we are different kinds of teachers so we have a balance between not having anything at all, like what your school had, and going overboard
- LAUGHTER
- c. I agree, Speaking from my own experience, Being able to go out there and teach, the drill sergeants would have memorize exactly, I can't stand going by a script, I need to have here's what you are going to cover, this is what we're going to do, we all know what we are covering, I'm going to do it one way, [REDACTED] is going to do it one way and [REDACTED]'s going to do it another way, and you know we are all covering the same thing, I like that freedom to have a little bit more, we can't all teach the same way
- d. Not everyone is as loud as me
- e. I can be
- f. But When you are that loud you are scary
- g. Well there's that

UNCLEAR CONVERSATION

4. How has the PLC structure influenced your instruction and assessment practices?
- a. Well the assessment, I have definitely gotten better at writing assessments since we started collaborating, because when we started collaborating I was with people who have taught in TN a lot longer than me, so they understood how to align their test to the TCAP, so that the way we were assessing students all year prepared them to be successful on the TCAP and my first year I had no idea, I

didn't know how to help them practice for that, so now we are all starting over again because we have a new test now

- b. But still Having all of your experiences together, I'm sure helps a lot
- c. It just we all have common assessments, we all have to align our consistency
- d. It Keeps us focused on what we need to teach

UNCLEAR CONVERSATION

5. When you think about your preparation as a teacher, what components of the PLC structure do you think you would use if you were in a school that did not have this structure already in place? REPEATED QUESTION...CLARIFIED QUESTION
 - a. I would be running around asking everybody what they would be doing, just being honest, that's what I would do, I would be knocking on everyone's door
 - b. I would still want to collaborate with my content area, what they are teaching, I would still try and get ideas
 - c. I really like that we have common assessments, that would be something I would suggest having, just becauseIt can be difficult sometimes because you don't always agree with test questions, you can test anything, there are a billion questions you could have, you don't really agree on what the most important information is in SS, so like the benchmark had a bunch of questions about George Williams, well you know he's not as important as George Washington, so you disagree, but I like having...to know that I'm working towards the same thing, so I would want to suggest that
 - d. At least get a group together, the consensus, at least get a group together and get an actual clear focus on what needs to be taught and how you are going to teach it
6. What recommendations would you offer to administrators and/or other new teachers based on your personal experiences with the PLC structure?
 - a. For them to actually be in the meeting
 - b. For them not to be at every single meeting LAUGHTER because we have another additional audience members every week, we have people from the district every week
 - c. I would say more independence in letting us decide what we need to talk about as a content area because we know what we need to do right away, and sometimes they come in with other matters that they want you to discuss, that may not be the most pressing thing that we need to take care of
 - d. I agree
 - e. And PLCs, not necessarily just as our collaboration thing, especially as new teachers, most of us just went through and got all of the latest and greatest and coming through and having to go through the same instruction all over again is not very useful, practical applications of things are great, but going back and redoing classes we just took in the last couple of years is not helpful
 - f. Irrelevant
 - g. I was going to say insulting LAUGHTER

- h. A lot of times, and I've seen this on the internet as a joke, it's really true, sometimes it could be sent as an email, it doesn't have to be an actual meeting, I've had literally someone send me email and then I've had someone come in and read that email and then someone else, and that was to prep for another meeting we were going to have, so it was an email to prepare us for a meeting, I mean literally word for word, so that idea of I wish that we would sort out our priorities, like Rachel said, and let us have a say in what those priorities should be
- i. I think going off of that, I think both RLA and math need admin to back off a little bit, but in areas that aren't TN Ready or the high... these subjects that are all taught in elementary school, from K all the way up, they are like okay, here's this, I think as a facilitator I think it's an administrators' job to make sure that that group is on task and the expectations are clear and giving guidelines, as to this is where I want you to be going and the end in sight, just like we want in our students, this is what you need to know and this is how we are going to get there
- j. It really has been interesting hearing different areas... what their PLC is like and what they experience and how vastly different it is between grade levels and content areas
- k. For example [REDACTED] is doing all of this data work and everything ours was putting depths of knowledge levels on our test, which again is a slap in the face when we having a meeting about what DOK is
ASKED IF THERE WAS ANYTHING SPECIFIC FOR NEW TEACHERS
- l. I agree with what everyone has said, to be honest my first year was nothing like I thought it was going to be, I feel lucky, I don't spend my whole weekend planning, I play with my kids but we all share, we take days writing lessons, so I pull up Google Docs and I'm like "boom" I've got lesson plans for this week, it was someone else's job, I think it's fabulous, I don't have a lot of bad things to say, but I know it's different for me to hear how you feel in SS, but for math...I would hate to think like you just said, I would have been freaking out, you spend all of your free time doing work and I'm just thankful it's not like that, I'm thankful
- m. I don't want you to think that we are not completely negative, I love my collaboration group, we have arguments
- n. If I was talking to a new teacher I am so thankful, it has been a good experience, that I have that and I'm glad that I have team members to rely on, we work really well together, my thing is the structure of what is expected during those meetings is not the same
- o. I find it interesting, honestly, that's why I wasn't saying anything, I was just observing, how you go from subject to grade levels around the room and it's almost like a unique experience, every person is the finding more common, some time of PLC every one is feeling as good about it as me, for your area
- p. That's where I feel like admin being in there, your set, your PLC is on it's way, I feel like in our group some of us are not all on the same page in terms of...giving

off work, obviously we do our share, we've made clear targets one or two times, and we share out strategies, I feel we are all in different areas, if admin had been there saying, even if they are not going to be at the meeting, at least send an agenda and this is what I need you to do, and this where you should be by the end of the month, something, and now it's too the point where we are getting close to where we started common assessments and we do need the next step, and not being in education long, and I feel like being the leader I need my leader to tell me what I need to do, I love my PLC, don't get me wrong, but I would like see some growth from it and the next step being taken, because I feel like I'm at a standstill now

- q. I think if I were talking to a new teacher, I would say tell them to remember that your PLC is made up of human beings and that means every group is going to be different, and your not going to have the same group, no matter what, and even if you had a handbook of what is supposed to happen, you are still going to, I can tell because I'm part of two grades, 7th grade SS is night and day from 8th grade SS, in terms of how we work together, how we get along, what we agree on is completely different, it's a completely different atmosphere between the two grades, so it runs differently, that's what I would tell a new teacher, you have to figure out how to make your group work with the personalities that you have and to be open to compromising and talking it through, and also not to just sit an stew if you are unhappy, be open and talk, that's what I would suggest
- r. I would tell a new teacher to not do what I do, and keep their head down and not talk LAUGHTER last year I was much quieter
- s. I was going to say, I've seen a change in you, you were really quiet at new teacher meetings and I thought it was maybe just the atmosphere
- t. I tried not to rock the boat at the beginning
- u. UNCLEAR CONVERSATION
- v. I can see what you are saying, because when I see across the hall, I see what you are going, 7th grade RLA, we like ban together in our interrogation sessions every Tuesday
- w. That's tough, we don't go through that
- x. We keep our heads up, because I don't have it, someone else does, I know that someone's got it, we stick together,
- y. Great wall of China baby
- z. I can only imagine if I had to sit through what we go through by myself, you feel like drained by the end of them, is that assessing the standard? how do you know this is assessing the standard?
- aa. That would be stressful
- bb. That is high pressure
- cc. I think that's an RLA thing, sorry to tell you that, we are at the end of the day, sometimes we run into not having an admin there
- dd. Imagine having [REDACTED] at every single one collaboration
- ee. Our person is at every single one, we have at least two guests at every meeting

- ff. On the opposite end of the spectrum, we have not seen Tracy at our collaborations, in our PLC since the beginning of last year
 - gg. On the flip side I can see where that would be upsetting, you feel like you are being pushed to the side
 - hh. I think we need somewhere in the middle..like monthly goal...instead of every single minute...
 - ii. With scores and everything literacy is a level 1 so all of their focus on them, so I'm not going to lie, Science is not that great,
 - jj. Math is awesome LAUGHTER
 - kk. UNCLEAR CONVERSATION
 - ll. So is my subject not as important as theirs, obviously there's room for improvement, Science is the step child
 - mm. I can see why you feel that way
 - nn. We need to back off of RLA and put the peddle down in Science
 - oo. A balance, no, We need at balance
 - pp. Guidance but not too much
 - qq. I would tell a new teacher to take advantage of a PLC and the good things about it, because even how hard or horrific experiences that I've had, I am super grateful, I wouldn't want to back to that school where I didn't have any support, I would trade this for that any day because I had no one to talk to, it was hard, if they have it take what you can from it, thankful for the support
 - rr. Good outweighs out the bad
 - ss. We started it last year, there were still groups that still met and those are the groups that are already like banging, put that in your vocabulary
 - tt. LAUGHTER..UNCLEAR CONVERSATION
 - uu. As a new teacher going in..especially we having three preps, I knew that I could rely on the math people, science was a little different, they would help me if I needed it, but I would have to seek the knowledge, and SS
7. Are there any aspects of the PLC process that you will like to learn more about?
- a. We went to...four of us...we to a PLC training this summer, conference, it was interesting because we feel like we've been doing PLCs and we've got this together, we know what's up, it was really surprising to learn how many things that we were not doing as a PLC and even are still not doing as a PLC, after we went to this conference, after we went to this training and it was all about PLCs
 - b. 11 of us went...we went and we had all of these awesome ideas that we could collaborate, it was good, and we had all these ideas and then when you come back it just went...
 - c. everything else happens with the school year and you just run out of time
 - d. and you probably meet resistance with some of those ideas
 - e. yes
 - f. yes, that's the thing, when somebody is stuck in their ways and not willing to try something new, that can act as a road block too
 - g. because all 11 of us were all on board, because we were there and we heard it

- h. UNCLEAR CONVERSATION AND LAUGHTER
- i. we didn't have anyone else who was in our grade level content when we returned
- j. REPEATED THE QUESTION
- k. One thing that I would say that would greatly improved is to work towards being more solution focused, sometimes it doesn't work, great then tell me what does, if I give you this idea and it doesn't work, tell me what why, I don't want to spend 20 minutes talking about how it doesn't work, let's move on, and that's just my personality
- l. what do we do know
- m. a little bit is spinning your wheels, we've talked about this, let's move on
- n. we've hit on the same things, like beating a dead horse, like you said, okay, let's move on, we've had a couple of situations like that, we are done with this one
- o. I would like to learn, I don't know if there have been any studies on this, but the most effective, the best PLCs...how much do they really need to meet and work together in order to accomplish what really needs to be done?
- p. Enter your study...LAUGHTER
- q. Is once a week enough, an hour, I would like to learn, here are these studies
- r. Here's my concern..with meeting more, in terms of what you are teaching and how you are teaching it.....my concern with that is what happens when you have two very different teaching styles, and then on the one hand is that nobody is willing to compromise and do a blend of those, no one is willing to do that, then somebody is going to have to give, and then that person who is more daring, is going to have to scale back, I'm always trying new things, my team isn't comfortable with some of that stuff, they are just not willing, it's stressful, so for me getting on the same page and doing the same activities, that would kill teaching for me, because I would have to be the one who compromises on that, and stop being...I would have to convince them, having to teach the same way, like with your team and the music videos last year, I was really mad about it, I just feel like that's the trade off and I don't want to lose the ability to try new things and to be adventurous with my teaching
- s. That was one of the scary things about the training that we went o this summer, we went to some breakout sessions that were terrifying, that were where PLC turns into micromanaging, I remember I went to a session where a principal was presenting, and he was so proud of the fact that every room in is school the desks were arranged the same way, he had an arrangement he determined was perfect, that was terrifying to me, because I moe my desks around all the time, he had rules about how they were to be set up, so it was terrifying to see how a PLC could turn into micromanaging, being able to draw the line
- t. That would be terrifying
- u. That sounds terrible
- v. I don't remember which one it was, but it was a principal and he was telling us this was wonderful

- w. Going back...that would be a good situation...you have to be able to compromise, it would be nice to have the support of an admin there...then you have a person coming in and saying you are going to have to give
- x. Having to do the same exact activities and be taught the same exact way, sometimes that won't work for everyone, depending on your classroom management style, that rigidity is not productive to have to teach it exactly the same
- y. Because like you said, the PLC is Full of humans how you teach best may be different, how you teach may not the best for me, we are two different people
- z. I'm not saying that I disagree with my team members even, they are fantastic teachers, they have the test scores to prove it, their doing great, they have great classroom management, but I teach very differently, that is the scary part of PLC, if we can too into managing, where we have to teach the same lesson plan, what if I want them to do skits, what if I want them do something different, and being told no, that is what I worry about
- aa. That is exactly what we were talking about before, where we are all common, this is what we need to cover but how we cover it looks different, talking about the music videos last year, the quality of my music videos was very different from yours LAUGHTER
- bb. It was a learning experience
- cc. I don't have the background to really know how to do drama in the first plan...I enjoyed it, the kids got something out of it, but it would not have been my first, that not something that I would have thought of doing, and I probably would not have done it, it wouldn't have worked with me
- dd. I liked collaborating across disciplines too
- ee. As someone who collaborates on a very rigid team, last year I was glad because I don't have to figure out whatever, but this year I am trying to have an opinion, because I am the one who is less rigid then everyone else, so sometimes I guess I have to draw the line about what I want to do it, If I want to do it I have to say this is something I want to include, they are really strict, they want it be organized a certain way, so what I have realized it let's do this, they will adjust it to how they would do it, keep my activity, but they will adjust it, they know if something I want to do I'll do it...also something I've done this year, if it's notes week, if they do fill in the blank notes, and I don't really want to do fill in the blank, I'll give it to them in a different way, I've realized that, that's how I've had to adjusted, but they want things in a line, they want the activity, I am all for organized chaos, I love it, it makes my day go great, sometimes they say we can't do that one, but they will adjust it to whatever works for them, I think they've realized that TaNeidra is going to want to do these things, let's put a few in there and move on, having them be rigid, like with the videos, and they thought this was the worst idea ever how in the world
- ff. LAUGHTER

- gg. Here's the thing...In mine..I have a little more...I'm much more relaxed...I don't know if I should say that because I'm not sitting in their classes....I literally don't know.... I just think personality wise I'm just different...Math is important, it's serious, but we not gong to act like we are solving homelessness, I do tasks like that and fun, and al little more like that, the ladies are really good with okay...she really wants to try this, and I don't if we are comfortable with this, but we'll try it, I don't know about this Battista, we have the Google Docs where you can go on there and it's written, or I do this myself, I don't know how to teach this lesson in my style, this is not going to work, so I'll just rewrite it to make it my own plan
- hh. That I like
- ii. It's not like written in stone, we don't have to do everything the same way, we take turns writing the lessons, you've had a really busy weekend, and you need something to do on Monday, it's there, Sunday night I've found the awesomest acitivity, I'm going to do that instead , I guess I like I have a little more fluidity
- jj. I miss doing things like that...I miss being able to do fun activities, but we have a strict framework....we don't get to choose our own texts, we are taught how to teach ...I've had to change my style a lot, some things are good, I feel like I'm teaching some things better now, it's been really hard, it's not because our group is not agreeing, it's the state and district requirements, we've gotten to the point where we've literally been handed a script, this is what you are teaching and this is how you are teaching it, it's hard not just for me but for the group to adapt to that, it's been hard not to be able to analyze bohemian rhapsody and figure out the theme and what it's teaching you, that is what students enjoy doing, but now we don't get that freedom and it's soul crushing
- kk. We don't have it as hard as you, but with all of the writing requirements, they say they are doing more writing in my class than they do in English
- ll. All prompts are writing prompts are given to us and they are all three centered around the same topic ...informative and narrative...when I told the kids we were writing a narrative they were so excited to write a story, and it's centered around, the same topic as always, drum roll please, the global water crisis, it was the most soul crushing experience in my teaching career to tell the students you are narrative about what it would be like if we were in a global water crisis, it's been the same for all three prompts, that's not fun
- mm. I don't think people think about that on the higher level, that kills kids working for you..this teacher is making me do all of this boring stuff, they don't know that it's not you
- nn. One kid was so excited....my story is going to have a t-rex...but no, it's going to be about the global water crisis, why can't we have t-rex
- oo. LAUGHTER....wrapped up conversation

APPENDIX D

QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY FIELD JOURNAL

July 17, 2015- February 5, 2016**July 17, 2015****Communication with both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to identify potential participants and confirm use of PLC model****Names from [REDACTED] school:**

Rachel Wheaton, Amanda Hensley, Liliana Alvarez, TaNeidra Nixon, Stephen Morehouse, Aimee Hoffman, Stephanie Powell, Chase Grimm, Meaghan Sikes, Staci Field, Sarah Battista

Names from [REDACTED] school:

Anna Hardin, Jenna Wallace, Amanda Spain, Caroline Hudspeth, Lyndsay McKnight

July 30, 2015**Initial Email sent to solicit participants to teachers at 2 schools**

Dear PARTICIPANT,

My name is Elizabeth Vest, and I am a doctoral student at MTSU. This fall I am starting the research for my dissertation, and I would love for you to be one of my participants. I am looking for novice teachers with one to three years of experience in the classroom.

My study is focused on professional learning communities and novice teachers. I'm interested in learning how you perceive the collaborative work you do each week with your colleagues. My hope is that the results of this study will help both new teachers as they adapt to teaching and school leaders as they work to provide you with the support you really need.

To gather information, I will be conducting interviews, doing observations, and holding one focus group this fall at your school. If you are willing to be a participant in my study I would need to meet with you twice this fall to conduct the two interviews (30 minutes each) and observe your team during your planning time two times. At the end of the fall semester, I would also like to visit with you and the other participants in your school during a short 30-45 minute focus group.

Your principal will NOT know that you are a participant. She has given me permission to conduct this study in your school, and she knows that my participants will remain

anonymous to her. I will use pseudonyms for your name and the name of the school so that you are free to share your feelings and opinions.

So, if you are willing to be a part of my study it is an approximate total commitment of 2-3 hours this fall. I will come to your school for the interviews and observations, and I will share all of my results with you if you are interested. I will also need you to verify that you have less than three years of experience in the classroom.

Please let me know if you are interested in learning more about being a participant and/or willing to get started. Please reply to this email with your years of experience and your level of interest:

1. I am not interested.
2. I would like to learn more.
3. I'm ready to participate.

Thank you,
Elizabeth

Received responses for 8 potential participants within a few days from [REDACTED] and 2 replies from [REDACTED]. The Milan participants required several emails before they replied. A few of the participants had more than 3 years of experience so they could not participate.

August 13, 2015

Follow up email sent to potential participants at both schools with Informed Consent attached ([REDACTED])

PARTICIPANT,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study! I look forward to learning more about your experience within your PLC/collaborative team both last year and this year. Before we can start, you will need to review the document that I have attached. I will bring a copy of this form at our first meeting and get your signature and consent at that time.

A few key points to remember as a participant:

- Between now and December, you will be asked to participate in **2 interviews and one focus group** (each 30-45 minutes). I will also **observe two of your PLC meetings** this semester. I will use an audio recorder during all of these sessions.

- Your principal will not know that you are one of my participants. She knows who was eligible for my study, but she won't know who actually ends up participating. Your name will not be used at all in my report. **EVERYTHING will be confidential.**
- I am doing this study so that I can learn from you. It is not evaluative. There are no right or wrong answers, and I want to see what your PLC team is really like.

A few questions I have for you at this point:

- Is this the start of your ____ year as a teacher? I need to just confirm this since my study is focused on novice teachers.
- Can you check your calendar and let me know which date is best for our first interview: _____? What time would you like for me to come?

Please let me know if you have any questions. I really appreciate your willingness to be involved in my study.

Thanks,
Elizabeth Vest

Monday, August 17, 2015

One of the two [REDACTED] participants withdrew from the study via email and I was left with one from [REDACTED] and 8 from [REDACTED]. I emailed Dr. Craig.

Dr. Craig,

I am having trouble getting participants at the school in [REDACTED]. I have 6-8 participants from the [REDACTED] school. What would you think about me focusing my study at one school?

Thanks,
Elizabeth

Dr. Craig's Reply

Hi, Elizabeth

Sorry for my late response. I am in the process of moving and I close on my house tomorrow.

I would proceed with one school to keep on track. Next week I will review the chapters you sent and will make suggestions regarding how to revise in order to reflect one research site.

;-)

Dr. Dorothy Valcarcel Craig

August 18-27

Scheduled and confirmed 8 interviews at the [REDACTED] school via email. I sent the Informed Consent again with the confirmation email. I told the teachers that I would bring a blank consent form for them to sign to our first interview.

Participants:

1. [REDACTED] - 2 years experience, 8th grade Math
2. [REDACTED] - 2 years experience, 7th grade Math
3. [REDACTED] - 2 years experience, 7th and 8th grade Math (alternative license)
4. [REDACTED] - 1 year experience, 7th and 8th grade Science
5. [REDACTED] - 3 years experience (1 year in China), 8th grade Social Studies
6. [REDACTED] - 3 years experience, 7th grade ELA
7. [REDACTED] - 3 years experience, 7th grade Science
8. [REDACTED] - 1 year experience, 6th grade Math

Interview #1 Schedule**August 28, 2015 Interviews**
[REDACTED]**September 4, 2015 Interviews**
[REDACTED]**September 11, 2015 Interviews**
[REDACTED]**Friday, August 28, 2015****Interview #1**

I arrived at the school at 12:40 and my first interview was scheduled for 1:00. I signed in in the office and was given a map of the school and a faculty list. The secretary was expecting me and knew what I might need in order to conduct my research. I went to the library and prepared my document to take notes on during the interviews.

At 1:00 I met the first teacher in the hallway and quickly started on the interview. The teacher was friendly and welcoming. We reviewed the consent form and she signed it. The interview lasted 10 minutes. We talked about a date that I will return to observe her collaborative group.

I returned to the library and began transcribing the interview.

At 2:30 I met the second teacher in the hallway and moved into his classroom for the interview. The consent was reviewed and signed and the interview started. The interview lasted 14 minutes. We chatted at the end of the interview informally about my work and set the date for the observation.

At 2:50 the third and final interview started. It lasted 18 minutes. We also talked about the observation date and chatted informally about the value of PLCs.

All three teachers were welcoming, friendly and positive.

Friday, September 4, 2015

Interview #1 cont'd

I have four interviews scheduled for today and a fifth that I am hoping to squeeze in with the teacher's permission. I was a few minutes late for the first interview, but she was finishing up copies and not in her room.

We quickly began the first interview after obtaining consent. She was friendly but did not elaborate a lot on her answers. We were able to talk about the second visit during which time I will conduct an observation and the rest of the research process as a participant. She seemed to have a positive outlook and appreciation for her collaboration with her peers.

In between interviews, I sat in the school library and transcribed the content of the interviews from my prior visit. I introduced myself to the librarian. She was friendly and welcoming. We talked about what a nice school community this seemed to be. She shared that she was relatively new to the school and that she had not been in a school where the teachers were so nice.

For the second interview, the teacher had told me in advance that she had a 504 meeting, but that it would only last a few minutes. She felt we would have time to still do the interview during her planning. When I arrived in her room, there was a sub who was also waiting on her and needed directions about what to do with her afternoon classes. She made it down during the last 10-15 minutes of her planning. She said she was still willing to do the interview even though she was leaving to go home sick. She had some

questions about the observation and anonymity. I assured her that I would not use any names in my report and that the principal did not know who my participants were. We then started the interview. She still answered all of the questions, but may have given them more time and thought on a different day.

The third interview went well. She was on the phone when I arrived in her classroom. After getting off the phone she shared that they had plans to leave and with her husband in the military, he was anxious to get on the road. She seemed still willing to sit down and answer my questions. She signed the consent form. She was welcoming and didn't have any questions at first. We reviewed her level of commitment to the research project. We then conducted the interview. Following the interview we made small talk and discussed her prior experience with interviewing.

I continued transcribing and working to determine my schedule for observations.

My final interview was running late after dealing with a bus issue, but she was still ready to talk and knew that I would be waiting for her. We reviewed the consent form. She had some questions about anonymity and whether her principal would read my dissertation. I assured her that her name would not be used and that it was my intent to hear her voice and protect her anonymity throughout the process. She seemed a little hesitant, but signed the consent form. We started the interview and she talked openly and comfortably. After the interview, she asked if she could read my dissertation. I told her of course she could read it. She expressed an interest in qualitative studies. We chatted informally and then I left.

Overall it was a good experience at the research site. The teachers were friendly and comfortable talking. The principal is out on medical leave so I did not see her on this visit.

Friday, September 11, 2015

Interview #1 cont'd

This was my 8th and final interview in this round of interviews. The teacher and I had scheduled and rescheduled the date several times, but she was agreeable and flexible. She was held up in the office, so we started a bit late. She was friendly and explained what all had happened and why she was late. I gave her the consent form and asked her if she had any questions. She quickly signed the form and we started the interview. Her responses were complete and thoughtful. We also talked about my next visit during which I would observe her team during collaboration.

At each of the interviews, we discussed a possible date for the collaborative meeting observation and what that would look like. I told them that the meeting would be

recorded but that the agenda would be their own. I told them that I would not be asking any questions. I'm going to have to move the date to a different week but I will schedule it via email and reiterate again what the observation will look like. After this round of interviews, I began emailing all of the participants every Tuesday to remind them to send me their collaborative meeting notes.

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Transcribing, journaling, member checking and preparing for the first observation

I was able to transcribe most of the interviews on the interview days. I had 1 and ½ interviews left. I spent time finishing up the transcribing and writing in my field journal. An email was drafted to all of the participants to schedule the observation and the content from their interviews was attached to their email so that they could member check their interviews. All participants approved their interviews as transcribed, except for [REDACTED]. She made some revisions and sent the revised interview back to me.

PARTICIPANT,

I really enjoyed meeting you when I came for the interview. [REDACTED] seems like a great school, and I know it's because of hard working and conscientious teachers like you.

First, I'd like for you to review the transcript from our interview. When reading the transcript don't worry about whether it's in complete sentences or correct grammar, just make sure it captures the essence of what you were trying to say. If you'd like to make revisions, type them into the Excel spreadsheet, save it and email it back to me. If you have no revisions, please indicate in your email that no changes were needed.

Second, I need to change our observation date to Tuesday, September 29th. Please make sure this date works with your calendar and make sure your team knows that I will be coming. I will not ask questions or have any input on your agenda. I'll be listening, taking notes, and recording the meeting. Please **confirm that this date** will work for you and that _____ is the correct time. I'd also like to start collecting agendas and notes from your meetings after this first observation.

Thank you!

Elizabeth

Observation about Interview #1

There were some redundant questions in my first interview, but I had to stick with what I had written in my protocol and asked of the first participant. I need to review my second protocol and check for possible redundancies. I may even field test the questions with a teacher at a different school that is in a PLC to make sure it doesn't happen again. I will

also determine if the initial coding process reveals a need to make adjustments to questions.

Overall the attitude about PLCs is positive and the teachers have common expectations about the work they are supposed to do within these teams. Very few had prior knowledge and what knowledge they had was not the same as the model articulated in the research.

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

All interviews member checked and observations appointments were confirmed. Two participants make revisions to their interviews and returned a file with their revisions reflected. The rest were good with the interviews as sent to them.

Tuesday, September 29, 2015

Observation #1 All Participants

I sat in and observed 6 collaborative meetings today. Some of my participants are on the same team. The observations went very well. I was able to take notes while they talked and record them on my audio recorder. One meeting was different from the others because it was run by the Assistant Principal and she did most of the talking. The others were teacher led. One meeting had a few interruptions because of a student issue. I'm not sure how I will code these observations. It seems that these are secondary to the interviews and that the content corroborates that they actually do what they said they do in their PLC meetings. One observation, for example, had a lengthy conversation about the use of a website with their students and I'm not sure that the actual words from the observation are as important as the overall work completed in the observation and the repetition of a few key words like assessments, standards, pacing, lesson plans etc.

I looked at the calendar for potential dates in November and December to conduct the remaining interviews, observations and Focus Group. I sent the dates to Tracy.

This was my follow up email to the participants after the observations:

Thank you for allowing me to sit in on your collaborative meetings today! Please also thank your team members for their willingness to let me attend. Please review your attached transcript and let me know if any revisions need to be made.

So from here, I just need you to email me the minutes from your meetings today. We will take a little break in October. Each Tuesday between now and our next observation, please forward me the minutes from your meeting. Again I'll be looking for connections between your meetings and your interviews.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Confirmed interviews and sent a reminder about the Focus Group

Just a reminder: Our Focus Group will be after school on Thursday in [REDACTED] room at 2:30. I will have snacks and drinks. You do not need to bring anything with you. You all have been excused from Faculty Meeting that day to meet with me.

Thanks!
Elizabeth

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Interview #2 (4 participants)

[REDACTED]'s interview seemed to be the most in line with the answers that I was hoping to gather from each of the questions. She had some interesting insights.

[REDACTED] interview was a bit strained. She seemed more comfortable with me personally but it's evident that her experience with PLCs is different from the rest of the participants because she doesn't feel like her contributions are valued. She wants more of a solution focused, positive approach to collaboration.

[REDACTED] interview was very light and easy to conduct. She expressed concerns about the level of involvement of her team members, but she clearly believes in the PLC process. She wants to see more engagement from her team so that they can move forward in their level of collaboration.

[REDACTED] seemed more subdued during this interview. Her answers were not as long as the first interview, but more succinct in her answers. She provided sufficient information but the tone was different.

2 out of 4 interviews from this day were emailed to the participants to be member checked on November 19th or 20th

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Focus Group

7 out of 8 participants in attendance

We met in a teacher's classroom for the focus group. They had been excused from attending a faculty meeting so overall they seemed agreeable to be in attendance. Sarah refrained from answering most of the earlier questions, and by the end it was more of a conversation among the participants.

Monday, November 30, 2015

Email to participants

Hello all! I wanted to confirm that **Tuesday, December 8th** is a good day for me to come and observe your collaborative meetings. This will be my last visit and will complete the study. I understand there may be an RLA meeting that day for 7th grade??

1. Please email me to confirm that the 8th will work for you and your team.

██████ do I have this right about the 8th? Could I observe your group on the 15th?

2. Send me your notes from your meetings tomorrow/Tuesday. (Dec 1).

You all have been a pleasure to work with! Thank you!

Elizabeth Vest

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Observation #2

Scheduling this round of observations went very smoothly. I was able to observe all but one of my participants in the same day. The tone was positive and welcoming. Most of the team members remembered me from my earlier observation and very little was discussed about my presence. Most of the teams had a clear plan for their meeting and a few had been given tasks to complete from the administration during their meeting and/or this week.

██████ observation was very similar to the last one and the team spent the whole time reviewing an upcoming assessment. They discussed the content of some of the questions and made some adjustments. The tone was positive and productive.

██████ meeting was also focused on assessment development and review. They discussed teaching strategies for upcoming content as well and they made plans to share resources. The tone was very professional and supportive.

██████ meeting was focused on assessment development and the majority of their discussion was centered around moving the assessment to an online format and which program to use with their students. They developed an assessment based upon standards that need to be included during the meeting. Sarah pulled the questions from an online platform. The meeting was more strained than the others.

████████████████████ meeting was focused on assessment review. ██████ had made their next common assessment and they were reviewing the content. ██████ discussed

some areas that she would need to reteach during the meeting based upon the assessment questions. The other two teachers had already taught the content in a similar way to how the questions were worded. They also reviewed content. One team member was not present. They discussed that he had been working ahead of the rest of the team. The overall tone was positive and light.

██████████ meeting was hurried and packed with tasks. They discussed grading practices and other relevant topics. They had been given a RTI-related task to complete by the administration. ██████████ was charged with sharing the task with the team. There were lots of questions and confusion. Some tension was evident between team members. ██████████ seemed more in the line with the thinking of the veteran team members than ██████████

Friday, December 11, 2015

Member checked remaining interviews from the November 19th interview (██████████) and added to field journal. ██████████ submitted some adjustments to her interview. The rest of the participants approved their interview content as transcribed.

Final email to participants

Thank you for participating in my study this fall! I appreciate your openness and willingness to be involved. I will forever be in your debt when I finally become Dr. Vest in August of 2016.

When my dissertation is complete, I will send you one last email to see if you'd like to receive an electronic copy. As I explained at the start of our study, I will use pseudonyms and I will not reference your subject areas to ensure your anonymity in the final document. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

I do have **ONE LAST REQUEST**...please send me your collaborative meeting notes from this week **ONE LAST TIME**. Stephanie and Aimee, please share the Google doc one last time. I do not need any more collaborative notes after this week.

If I can ever return the favor, please don't hesitate to contact me. I enjoyed getting to know each of you and it's evident you all have a bright future ahead of you as an educator.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Vest

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Observation #2

■■■■■■■■■■ final observation was conducted over the phone. I recorded the call and then transcribed afterwards. I had some difficulty hearing all of the members of her team, but was able to get to the heart of their discussion.

Finalized all transcriptions on December 15th. All of the participants submitted their last round of meeting notes.

Ready to begin coding.

CODING AND ANALYZING PHASE

January 12- 19, 2016 Precoding Round #1

- Read through all interviews, observations and the focus group
 - Underlined key words and phrases
 - Listed topics of conversation in the margins of observations
- Not a lot of time on student performance- broad statements about results
- Evidence in content of “what to teach”- question #1, “how to teach”, test development – question #2, and reteaching –question #3
- Evidence RTI and other admin task concerns
- Lots of what and how to teach
- Overall positive view of PLCs
- Concerns- team buy-in, administrative tasks/directives, variance of expectations between content areas

January 20-22, 2016 Precoding Round #2

- Read all interviews, observations and the focus group for a 2nd time
 - Made additions to underlines words and phrases
 - Made additions to topics listed in the margins of observations
- What is the impact of the use of technology (lap tops) during collaborative meetings?
- Limited prior knowledge of PLCs prior to their experience at ■■■■■■■■■■
- Almost all participants are using technology to collaborate outside of the structured collaborative meetings
- Admin expectations of work completed within PLC varies between the content areas
 - Central Office visitor at every meeting
 - Very structured expectations for lesson plans
 - Critique of planning and assessments by admin during collaborative meetings

- Participants expressed a desire to see a balance- some content areas need more guidance and some need less
- Not as much evidence of enrichment in data (question #4)
- Two participants went to the PLC institute with administration
- Evidence of increased confidence because of collaboration with more experienced teachers (more than one participant)
- Share lesson plans but have the freedom to make them their own
- Easier over time to speak up as a new teacher within their teams
- Work completed during the meetings are very standards focused
- Evaluation of assessments
 - Matching questions to the standard
 - Level of rigor
 - Mirror standardized testing from the state
- Evidence of sharing the work load among team members
- Ability to still teach in their own style- AUTONOMY
- Understanding how classroom practices can prepare them for standardized assessments
 - Not aware of the importance of this coming out of their undergraduate programs
- Desire to see growth around PLC tasks within their team
- Some liked the higher level of consistency within their team and some liked being able to remain independent while still having support
 - Different dynamic developed on each team
 - Seemed to suit the needs of the novice teacher

January 25-29 Entering data into Table 1 and Coding

- Being able to contribute to the team even as a new member
- Value the experience of their team members
- Varying levels of consistency between teams in terms of lesson plans, but ALL use the same unit assessments
- Do they spend more time discussing what they need to discuss instead of actually getting specific during their collaborative meetings?
- Allowed to be themselves- have autonomy
- Want to be able to determine their own agendas for their meetings (with oversight)
- One participant has initiated collaboration with another novice teacher on her own time (don't have common planning but she has a section of that grade level each day)
- Continuity among teachers so that students can seek support from any teacher on their team and strive provide a guaranteed curriculum regardless of class placement

- Appreciate having an exemplar or model lesson plan to use from more experienced teachers on their team
- One participant is the facilitator for her PLC team
- One participant is concerned about the level of buy-in from her team members and feels they could achieve even more if everyone valued the concept
- Assessment development skills supported and encouraged through their PLC work
- Several participants referenced collaboration during faculty meetings and outside of designated weekly meeting
- One participant that they are not allowed to develop lesson plans during their PLC time
- One participant always has admin and a Central Office visitor at every PLC meeting- concerning
- One participant expressed concerns about the increased accountability and pressure being placed on teachers as it relates to standardized testing in the state
- One participant expressed concern about the detailed lesson plans required of her content area by administrators was too much
- Two participants expressed a higher level of confidence because of collaboration with more experienced teachers
- Concern about team dynamics

**February 3-5 Refining Table 1 for each participant and coding
Initial Codes for ALL participants**

- share ideas and strategies
- collaborate during weekly meetings
- pacing of content
- standards based
- what to teach
- how to teach
- use technology to collaborate
- develop common pre and post assessments
- test development
- student performance
- student learning and achievement
- reteaching based upon assessment data
- shared lesson plans
- preparation for standardized test
- shared resources
- test content
- analyze student data to make decisions

SHARED initial codes

- shared work load (1, 2, 3,5,6,8)
- consistent grading practices (1,2,3,5)
- common lesson plans (1,2,5,8)
- collaborate more than mandated (1,2,4,5,6)
- relevant (1, 2,5,7,8)
- helpful (1,2,6,8)
- builds confidence (2,8)
- level of rigor of questions (2,3,4,5,7)
- accountability of instruction (2,3,4,5,8)
- self-reflection (1,2)
- analyzing quality of assessment questions (2, 3,4,6,7,8)
- experience based decision making (4, 5,8)
- need more time to collaborate (1,5,8)
- motivating and engaging students (1,5)
- rigor of instruction (1, 3, 7)
- scaffolding for student understanding (1, 5,8)
- growth of the teacher (1, 4,6)
- easing work load (1, 5)
- collective effort (1, 7)
- most missed questions (4, 7)
- anticipate student response (5, 8)
- Email, Dropbox, Google Docs (1, 4, 7, 8)
- Autonomy in deciding their own agenda (4, 8)

Concerns of teachers

- Participant 1- balancing home and work and having enough time to work with PLC
- Participant 2- feel like my work is being valued by the team, resistance to new ideas from team members, and more solution- focused
- Participant 3- people clash, impact district writing tasks and expectations have had on the work their team is doing
- Participant 4- too much emphasis on data and not enough on instruction, autonomy in deciding their own agenda
- Participant 5- pacing, over plan and then can't fit it all in, not enough time to plan together
- Participant 6- administrative expectations of content area (different from other content areas), scripted nature of lesson plans and content, balance of home and work life, feeling overwhelmed, concerned about emphasis state wide on testing and the impact on ELA classrooms

- Participant 7- buy in of the whole team, not sharing the work load and not seeing the value of their PLC, wants an administrator to attend their meetings and provide more guidance
- Participant 8- difficulty in merging opinions/differences of the team, autonomy in deciding their own agenda

Goals of participants

- Participant 1- developing more than just math skills in students, importance of student-teacher relationship, providing effective feedback
- Participant 2- write assessments for the team
- Participant 3- give more useful feedback to students, become more effective, help other teachers as they have helped her
- Participant 4- continuing to grow as a teacher/educator, improve classroom management
- Participant 5- work further ahead, not be day by day
- Participant 6- growing as a teacher, learn new strategies and ways of instructing, continue to develop assessment writing skills
- Participant 7- improve the outcomes of PLC team, continue to develop as a teacher
- Participant 8- learn from more experienced teachers

APPENDIX E

ARTIFACTS

Re: Minutes from your meetings

[Redacted] and [Redacted]

Wed 10/7/2015 2:00 PM

Inbox

To: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

Participants 1 and 5

We discussed different ways of reteaching and retesting for summative assessments.

[Redacted]
7th Grade Mathematics
Classroom Website: [Redacted]
Email: [Redacted]

On 10/7/15, 8:11 AM, "Mary Elizabeth Vest" <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu> wrote:

- > Just a reminder to forward me the minutes from your collaborative
- > meetings yesterday. Thank you! Have a great week!!
- >
- > Elizabeth Vest

Re: reminder

[Redacted]

Wed 10/11/2015 1:51 PM

From: [Redacted]

To: Mary Elizabeth West - west4@njrcsl.net; [Redacted]

Here are the minutes:

- Performance task for 7th grade (whether or not we prompt the students about the directions)
- Transitioning from retaking the unit test to retaking the exam
- When should we create a letter and post it to the parents (about the transition from retaking the unit test to retaking the exam)
- Universal screener will be conducted Dec. 2-4th
- Benchmark will be conducted on Nov. 4th with a calculator

Participants 1 and 5

parent communication

> when assessments will be given

pacing

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: Mary Elizabeth West - west4@njrcsl.net; [Redacted]

Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 at 11:02 AM

Subject: reminder

Just a reminder...please forward me your collaborative meeting notes from this week.

Thursday Collaboration

[Redacted]

Sat 11/04/2015 12:58 PM
To: Mary Elizabeth Vest <mev@msd.wisc.edu>

Participants 1 and 5

We got together with the 7th grade Science department to discuss upcoming STEM interactive lessons. The math team will be integrating F + MA into our fall rigors this week.

[Redacted]
7th Grade Mathematics
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Collaboration
across disciplines

Tuesday Collaboration Minutes

[Redacted]

Participants 1 and 5

Tue 10/27/2015 3:46 PM

To:
Mary Elizabeth Vest;

...

Tue 10/27/2015 3:46 PM

Inbox

To help protect your privacy, some content in this message has been blocked. To re-enable the blocked features, click here.

To always show content from this sender, click here.

You replied on 10/27/2015 9:01 PM.

Here are the minutes:

- [Redacted] provided a resource from Mississippi State University that will assist with teaching the curriculum.
- We went into the Google Doc to look at Unit 4 and plan for the rest of the Unit.

[Redacted]
7th Grade Mathematics

[Redacted]

planning
using technology
to collaborate

Tuesday Collaboration

[Redacted]

The Minutes 1:55 PM
Mary Elizabeth Val - mval@central.njtu.edu

Hello Mary,

Here are the minutes to the meeting:

- Yesterday, we were grading a performance task that was given two weeks ago.
- Discuss what trends and instructional strategies would benefit 7th grade math as a team to approach the performance task.
- Discussion on what day WOULD BE BEST TO HAVE the students practice NJCA (Math Assessment) online for the end of the year assessment.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Participants 1 and 5

grading

how

pacing

test prep

Collaboration Meeting Minutes

[Redacted]

Tue 11/10/2015 1:57 PM

To: Mary Elizabeth West <marye@nasa.gov>

Hello Mary,

Here are the minutes to the meeting:

- Discuss and agree on a pre-test for Unit 5 (possibly using MICA questions)
- Discussed the "I can" statements in Unit 5

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Participants 1 and 5

- test development
- what

Re: Thank you and one last request

[Redacted]

Participants 1 and 5

Fri 12/11/2015 8:32 PM

To: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

Tuesday Collaboration:

- Discussion over what each question is worth in the quiz
- Which questions were bonus
- Look over Path Driver winter data
- Determine which students will benefit from study interventions

test development
grading practicing
student data
#3
RTI

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

Date: Friday, December 11, 2015 at 11:43 AM

[Redacted]

Subject: Thank you and one last request

Thank you for participating in my study this fall! I appreciate your openness and willingness to be involved. I will forever be in your debt when I finally become Dr. Vest in August of 2016.

When my dissertation is complete, I will send you one last email to see if you'd like to receive an electronic copy. As I explained at the start of our study, I will use pseudonyms and I will not reference your subject areas to ensure your anonymity in the final document. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

I do have **ONE LAST REQUEST**....please send me your collaborative meeting notes from this week **ONE LAST TIME**. Stephanie and Aimee, please share the Google doc one last time. I do not need any more collaborative notes after this week.

Re: Tuesday Collaboration

Participants 1 and 5

[Redacted]

Tue 12/1/2015 7:44 PM

To: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

Good Evening Mary,

Today, we discussed the following:

- finalized the Unit 5 test
- what type of questions do we want to review for the test
- what standards will be covered in Unit 6
- what should be on the Unit 6 pre-test

test development
what and how
pretest
test content

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

On Nov 30, 2015, at 8:37 PM, Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu> wrote:

Thank you.

[Redacted]

Sent: Wednesday, November 25, 2015 6:23 PM
To: Mary Elizabeth Vest
Subject: Tuesday Collaboration

Hello Mary,

I hope you are having a wonderful evening! This Tuesday we had STEM collaboration. We discussed our 2nd semester STEM challenge and which challenge we will be taking to APSU Expo. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Collaboration 10-6-15

We looked at the unit 4 test and corrected a few problems.
We are giving the pretest today.

- Revisions

test dev
pacing

Participant 2

[REDACTED]

Collaboration October 27, 2015

[REDACTED] shared a document that breaks down the standards. It should be in email.

data from unit 3 - We used the item analysis to break down standards.

Resource
Student performance
data

Participant 2



Collaboration oct.29 2015

- Dec 2,3 4th universal screener given by math
- November 4th benchmark
- Donna will put testing outline in our boxes.
- Discussed unit 4. Test on Thursday of next week.
- Discussed the upcoming performance task. Will practice on bell ringer.

pacing
test admin
test development
how

Participant 2

Collaboration November 3, 2015

*We went over data from unit 4 test.

* Discussed results from performance task. Most students can solve the algorithm.
They could use more help with setting up the problem and modeling.

Student performance
→ impact on
planning
reteaching

Participant 2

Collaboration Dec. 1st 2015

- Mica will be used for our semester quiz. We will meet to pick questions. We reserved computers for 16th and 17th of December.
- Discussed purchasing items for RTI. Shawn completed the purchase order.

test development
RTI

Participant 2

Collaboration December 8, 2015

We went over questions on MICA to use for our semester quiz next week.

Discussing DOK 1-4 and choosing questions accordingly.

Discussed Unit 7 questions.

rigor of 3.5
test development

Participant 2

8th Grade Social Studies Collaboration Minutes

August 18, 2015

1. Reviewed characteristics for PLCs – Data, differentiation, enrichment
2. Discussed purpose of a PLC – To improve student learning, common goals, collaborative teams
3. Discussed Norms and commitments
 - a. Be on time
 - b. Stay fully engaged and focused
 - c. Contribute equally to the workload/make at least one contribution a meeting
 - d. Be positive in your comments
 - e. Be accepting of constructive criticism.
4. Discussed goals for the year
 - a. Using same tests as last year – double checking against Nancy Dye's
 - b. Look at data after test and develop instructional strategies for reteaching
 - c. GOAL – Develop "Look-fors" for the CRQ prompts from Nancy Dye by Christmas.
 - d. GOAL – Develop common grading practices/rubrics
5. Discussed teacher effectiveness levels and data.

Participant 3

Next Week

1. Review Norms
2. Reflect on Jamestown writing.
3. Talk about next writing piece. *What to teach*

August 18, 2015

1. Reviewed norms
2. Jamestown writing – When asked to use a direct quote, some did not. When they did use evidence they did not explain evidence that they used.
 - a. Need to reinforce identifying the source.
 - b. Some used writing frames, some did not.
 - c. Talk about proper main idea statement.
3. CRQ Assessment for Unit 1 next week.
4. Discussed 8.1 writing prompt
 - a. Discussed "look-fors"

What

grading practices

Next Week

1. Proof the test
2. Talk about 8.1 CRQ
3. Create "look-fors" for other CRQs

September 1, 2015

1. Uploaded the test to google; made sure everyone could access cmcss google docs
2. Went through unit 1 test
3. Discussed Review strategies
4. Made the Key

#3

test development

7th Collaborative Planning: 10.27.15

I. Unit 5 Teaching Strategies

1. Discussed MSP lab for Newton's laws
2. Activities for graphing speed, velocity & acceleration

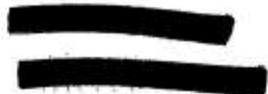
II. Worked on unit 5 post-assessment

III. Discussed plans for simple machines (unit 6)

What & how to teach

test development
what to teach

Participants 4 and 7



Science Collaborative Planning: 11.10.15

I. Discussed benchmark data

A. Students struggled with difficult vocabulary (non-content related)

student weaknesses

B. Not being able to write on the test may have made math questions more difficult.

Reason for student struggles

II. Discussed forces & motion post-test data

A. May need to re-teach Newton's 3rd law (action/reaction)

#5

What to re-teach based on data

Participants 4 and 7

Next Week

1. Discuss unit 2 assessment *development*
2. check for errors

September 15, 2015

1. Discussed RTI/Enrichment strategies
2. Looked at the assessment for Unit 2 - Decided to use Nancy Dye's test
 - a. Checked over test and fixed formatting *development*
 - b. Discussed issues with the test.

3

Next Week

1. Finish looking at Unit 2 test
2. Work on prompt for extended essay

September 22, 2015

1. Finished discussing unit 2 test
2. discussed how to reinforce learning on tough questions.
3. Discussed meeting with Nancy Dye and questions to ask.
4. Looked at DBQs for Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*.

strategies

Next Week

1. Next writing piece (Constitution writing)
2. Unit 3 Test

September 29, 2015

1. Video for Declaration *resources*
2. Discussed October writing assessment
3. Discussed unit 3 assessment
4. talked about Declaration of Independence prompt

*what to teach
test development*

Next Week

1. finish unit 3 assessment

October 6, 2015

1. Discussed Unit 3 assessment. *development*
2. Worked on formatting and revising certain questions. - *test content*
3. Discussed Extended Response Benchmark potential dates. *pacing*

Next Week (Well, not next week...but next NEXT week)

1. Go over Unit 4 assessment
2. Discuss Unit 3 and Unit 4 CRQs

October 20, 2015

1. Finalized Unit 3 assessment *development*
2. Created student copy of Unit 3
3. Discussed writing prompts for unit 3

- a. 8.17 - Ben Franklin
 - b. 8.32 - Federalists v. Anti-Federalist
 - c. 8.34 - Freedom of speech
4. Started working on unit 4 assessment

What to assess 3

Next Week

- 1. Finalize unit 4 assessment
- 2. Discussion about extended response benchmark

test development

October 27, 2015

- 1. Met with ELA to discuss potential field trips and strategies for making field trips work
 - a. Topic: Civil War
 - i. Sam Watkins - Journals
 - b. Split up/rotations to different locations
 - i. Ft. Defiance (geo-caching, reenactment)
 - ii. Customs house (presentation (compare and contrast north and southern soldier and museum))
 - c. Close read a primary source
 - d. Gather information to support an over-reaching question and a task to complete at each location.
 - e. Liberty park for lunch
 - f. Next day - writing task
 - g. Staying with 6th period
- 2. Discussed clear targets for collaboration meetings with Kim Taylor
 - a. Reteaching
 - b. Looking at data
 - c. creating a plan

Cross-curricular

integrate subjects

#1 - 3

Next Week

- 1. Finalize unit 4 assessment
- 2. Discussion about extended response benchmark

November 3, 2015

- 1. Discussed Bridge to Practice
 - a. What went well
 - b. What we need to review with students
- 2. Discussed Unit 4 assessment

data review #3

Next Week

- 1. Discuss data for Unit 3 assessment
 - a. discuss reteaching strategies
- 2. Discuss Unit 5 assessment

Next Week

1. Discuss data from Unit 4 test
2. Discuss writing

*student work**3*

November 20, 2015

1. Analyzed data from writing assessments
 - a. We need to focus more on content
 - b. Need to make sure students can address ALL aspects of the questions.
 - c. Need to practice discerning information from primary sources. Needing to find evidence that relates to the prompt.
2. Discussed strategies
 - a. Student self-evaluations and goal writing
 - i. use check sheet to analyze writing
 - ii. write goals for one thing students will improve
 - b. Attempt strategy for Unit 5 extended response essay
 - i. Created check sheet and directions

*What**how to teach - based on results*

December 1, 2015

1. Reviewed and finalized Unit 6.1 Test.
 - a. Decided to keep the test split into two sections but added Nancy's test questions.

development

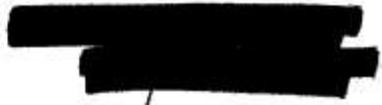
December 8, 2015

1. Finalized Unit 6.1 Test
2. Began working on 6.2 Test
 - a. Will continue working on 6.2 next week.
3. Discussed struggling student issues and strategies.

#3

December 15, 2015

1. Discussed transcendentalism lesson
2. Finalized Unit 6.2 test



7th Collaborative Planning: 10.6.15

I. Discussed unit 3 post-assessment data

A. Students struggled with subduction zone questions & fault line question.

missed ?s
#3

II. Discussed teaching strategies for waves

A. Demonstrations and independent practice sheets

What to teach

III. Finalized Waves post-assessment

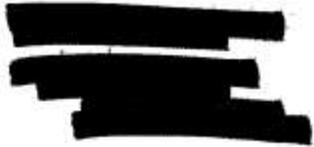
A. Give by this Friday

pacing

test development

IV. Next time bring unit 4 post-assessment data and questions for unit 5

Participants 4 and 7


Collaborative Panning: 10.20.15

I. Waves Post-Assessment Data

1. Discussed questions #13 & 18 – students struggled with mechanical vs. electromagnetic waves.

#3 missed questions

II. Forces & Motion post-assessment

1. Modified multiple-select and added additional questions.

test development

III. STEM Challenge #1

1. Discuss possible challenges Friday

cross-curricular planning

- A. Genetics & Photosynthesis challenges during 2nd semester

2. Focus on integration of math/science standards throughout the year.

integration

Participants 4 and 7

Science Collaborative Planning: 11.17.15

I. Finished cells post-test

test development

II. Discussed simple machines & cells teaching strategies.

A. Need to address simple machine identification and equation for work.

reteach student
weakness

1. Explain mechanical advantage as it relates to simple machines

what to teach
based on data

Participants 4 and 7

Collaboration Notes for Dec 15th

CLEAR TARGET

- I can describe the cell cycle.
- I can identify the stages of mitosis.
- I can describe the stages of mitosis.
- I can create a diagram of the stages of mitosis.
- I can identify the stages of meiosis.
- I can describe the stages of meiosis.
- I can create a diagram of the stages of meiosis.
- I can compare and contrast mitosis and meiosis.
- I can identify the different types of asexual reproduction.
- I can explain the different types of asexual reproduction.
- I can identify the different types of sexual reproduction.
- I can explain the different types of sexual reproduction.
- I can compare and contrast asexual and sexual reproduction. (advantages/disadvantages)
- I can demonstrate my knowledge of mitosis, meiosis, and the types of reproduction.

Teaching Strategies

Using pipe cleaners and beads to show what is happening in each stage.

Use carousel learning, to have students write down everything they know about a specific stage. Have the students rotate. They can draw, write, whatever they need to do to explain the stage.

Amoeba Sister Video and Worksheet

Task Cards

Card Sorts

Microscopic pictures of each of the cells.

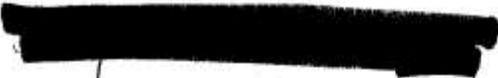
Story book--what it's like to go through the stages of mitosis or meiosis.

Participant 6

What to
teach

how to
teach

resources


Agenda for 8/25

- Settle on a goal for PLC and a deadline - ✓
- Produce exemplar text - 6
- Discuss differentiation activities needed (bumped)
- Discuss ideas and strategies for instruction/small groups in interventions (bumped)
- Discuss upcoming data chats (bumped)
- Reminder: have and be familiar with data by August 31st faculty meeting (Data Chat)

Minutes for 8/25

- Track data better to monitor student growth so we can better drive instruction Deadline: 9/4
- Produce a exemplar text:
 - Intro Paragraph-** Topic sentence is the last sentence of our intro. Bridge/Transition from hook to topic sentence. Scene Shot/Scenario of someone lacking water .
(Hooks we will focus on this year: Figurative Language, Scene Shot/Narrative, Interesting Quote, Fact, Statistic) *how to teach*
 - Body Paragraph-** Elaboration and evidence stems, No First Person, Connecting evidence to the topic sentence, body paragraphs that answer the prompt *strategy*
 - Conclusion-** Begins with restating topic sentence, summarize prompt, summarize body paragraphs, finisher
 - Feedback** will be individualized per student needs; not just score on rubric. Only scoring Lang/Conventions on Intro and Conclusion. Keep original writing so that we will see growth in November.

Agenda for 9/1

- Discuss differentiation activities needed (bumped)
- Discuss ideas and strategies for instruction/small groups in interventions (bumped)
- Discuss upcoming data chats (bumped)
 - Reminder: have and be familiar with data by August 31st faculty meeting (Data Chat)

Minutes for 9/1

- Send home letters for September 8.
 - Send one home, and keep one in the purple folder for each student
- Fidelity check update *RTI*
 - Admin or coach will go through the rubric with each intervention student
 - Will be kept in record with the data points for each student
- Academies need not be worked on every day (per Donna)
- Any books or games specifically for th
- Next Data Chat - moved from **October 2nd to October 5th**
 - Will only be for students within interventions
- Folder RTI Fidelity Record walkthrough/explanation

- *Set up progress monitoring for September 15

Agenda for 9/8

1. *Revise lesson plans to match writing task expectations
2. Discuss differentiation activities needed (bumped)
3. Discuss ideas and strategies for instruction/small groups in interventions (bumped)

6
What & how to teach

Minutes for 9/8

- Narrative Writing Prompts: Exemplars will be written on all district prompts this year.
Explanatory exemplar due tomorrow 9/9
Narrative exemplar deadline: 9/18
- MAU1 Data: According to all data, L.7.5 Word Relationships and L.7.6.Vocabulary standards (Questions 8 and 9) are identified has areas to reteach.

data review

Small group word relationships/analogy: synonyms, antonyms, characteristic, part/whole, degree (Model thinking for those who are struggling and those who master have them create their own.) Deadline: 9/14 #3

strategy

Agenda for 9/15

- Follow up on reteaching of L.7.5 and L.7.6 (Deadline to reteach 9/14) Discuss how it went and reassessment #3
- (Modeled thinking for those who struggled and those who mastered create their own)

Minutes for 9/15

- Final instructions from Kim for Pathdriver with contingency plans for any testing hiccups today
- Connotation/Denotation discussion:
 - Revisited clear target and
 - Discussed how preassessment data helped us in planning
 - Grade-level vocabulary
 - In a future lesson, consider using words in context replaced with others that have a contrasting connotation (**developing level**: planned)
 - Will be assessed this Friday on the common assessment
- Revisit the blueprint with Kim next week.
- Add: reading standard-specific questions to the common assessment ASAP for the Friday test.
- Create formal reassessment for L.7.5 and L.7.6. #3

What & how to teach
pacing

Agenda for 9/22

- Integration of standards presentation (Kimberlee)
- Look at this week's lessons (Wednesday through Thursday)
 - Discuss integration of next week's standards

What & how to teach

- *Revisit blueprint (moved to 9/29)

resource

6

Minutes for 9/22

Kimberlee's presentation:

Target: We can effectively integrate the standards to improve student learning.

MAU3:

- Reading Standards: RL5 Structure connects to RI5, RL 6 POV connects to RI 6, RL 9 compare/contrast connects to RI 9. "All the reading standards are like a scoop of ice cream."
- Writing Standards: used to support "The cone": W 1 argument, W 7 Research, W 9 Evidence. "Kids learn to write what they read."
- Speaking and Listening Standards: "The flavors" SL 6 adapt their speech, SL 3 summarize what they learned
- Language Standards: L 2 conventions, L 4 words, L 5 Figures of speech

what & how to teach

Agenda for 9/29

- Discuss student data from MAU2 Post and MAU3 Pre assessments
 - Areas of reteaching
- Revisit blueprint
- Look at week's lessons and discuss integration of standards

#2 and #3

resource

what & how

Minutes for 9/29

- 7th Grade EIA Blueprint: Parts I Writing Assessment and Part II Multiple Select, etc. Language both parts will be up to 24%
- Assessments on Edulastic
- RI*CLOSE Reading passages that focus on key words that indicate author's purpose and/perspective
- RI 7.6, RI7.5 Heavily focus on these two standards #3
 - Key Words from Zoos: Joys or Jails-
 - Although
 - Suddenly
 - One of the best...but...
 - Unfortunately...
 - In this way...
 - Despite...
 - Not also...but also...
 - Though zoos are meant...

what to teach
resource

strategy

Agenda for 10/6/15

6

- Presentation from [redacted]
- MICA practice scheduled for tomorrow 10/6/15 *resource*
- Look at week's lessons and discuss integration of standards *what? how*

Minutes for 10/6

- Discussed appropriate use of MICA practice test items (best to use a lower number of items preferable for demonstration purposes). *resource*
 - Need to edit practice assessment for tomorrow *test development*
 - Make a practice of reviewing items as a collaborative group in order to make sure the questions are appropriate
 - Model how to use the MICA tools for test questions (drag-and-drop, highlighting, etc.)
- Using graphic organizers in student assignments: *strategy/how*
 - Use the same organizer for every type of writing/task
 - Emphasize the necessity of planning their writing task using the familiar organizer
- MIST is only open through the end of the month. It will not be open again until later this year. Look through lesson plans and find a day where we can adjust for MIST practice. *test prep*
- Module B Framework has been updated with the integration of standards *what to teach*

Agenda for 10/20

- MAU3 Post Data *Student data*
- Update on Integration of Standards for MBU1 *what to teach*

Minutes for 10/20

- Reviewed data for MBU1.
 - Identified lowest performing standards for each teacher's classes on pre-assessment. *most missed ?s*
 - Identified the component of each standard being assessed on the pre-assessment questions.
 - Identifying central idea is something that needs to be addressed more
 - Strategies: using shorter texts and focusing on student annotations on hard copy. *how to teach*
 - Distinguishing between central idea and theme
 - Develop a process chart (visual, tangible) that students can complete and think about as they read. Cloze passage. *strategy*

Agenda for 10/27

- Review graphic organizers and cloze sentences constructs developed for teaching central idea. *strategy - how*

Minutes for 10/27

- * SPECIFIC plans & strategies
- Everyone completed cloze reading lesson modeled after Elaine's from training.
 - **RL.7.2 Determine theme** (developmental stage) Focus on how "theme is developed" ⁶
Students understand author's developed central idea through:
 - word choice
 - characterization
 - plot
 - figurative language
 - stylistic devices
 - other literary devices

what to teach
 - **Theme related questions (developmental level):** ^{what to teach}
 - How does the author develop the theme through the characters? (How does the character move through the beginning to the end?)
 - How does the author further develop the theme with a specific scene? ^{& how}
 - How does the author's word choice affect the theme?
 - Is the author explicitly telling us the theme, or does the reader have to make an inference?
 - How does this section of the text impact the theme?
 - What impact does words and phrases have on the theme? (Overseer)
 - Where or when does the author give hints about the theme?
 - Which conflict in text best develops the theme?
 - Five major events in "The People Could Fly" and individual character's contribution to each event (character's actions, speech, changes) (Graphic Organizer first day)
 - Overarching question: "How can an event in someone's life affect how they treat others and how others treat them?"
 - **L.7.2a Coordinated adjective** pg. 1011: "hard, glinty coal" pg. 1010: "black, shiny wings" ^{What}
 - **RL.7.9 Historical Events Compare/Contrast**

Agenda for 11/3/15

- Discuss how Cloze read lesson on "People Could Fly" went
- Deconstruction of standards and corrections on MBU1 Post Assessment ^{student understanding strategy}
- Deconstruction of standards and correction on MBU2 Pre and Post Assessment ^{test development}

Minutes for 11/3/15

- Finished Units 1 and 3 assessments ^{test development}

- MBU2 Post Assessment Questions 8 and 9 (RI.7.3) revision

Agenda for 11/10/15

- Finish MBU2 Open-ended question
- Look at MBU1 Post and MBU2 Pre data

What &
how

Student data

6

Minutes for 11/10/15

- posters can stay up in classroom for TNReady
- MBU1 Post Assessment Date:
 - RI.7.1 (#9) Evidence that supports central idea (What is the big central idea all about?)
 - L.7.4a (#2) Vocabulary with Context Clues
- Reteaching Strategies for RI.7.1 and L.7.4a

Student data

reteach standards

how to teach

Agenda for 11/17/15

- MBU2 Pre data
- Rest of unit
- MBU3 Unit

preassessment

Minutes for 11/17/15

- MBU2 Pre Data
 - L.7.1c Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers
 - RI.7.3 Interactions combined with RI.7.1 Evidence that supports central idea (What is the big central idea all about?) on Tuesday text Robert Service Bio

What to teach based
on data

Minutes for 11/20/15 Staff Development

- Demographics for Post Common Assessments
 - Negligible differences between male and female performances on all standards on common assessments
 - There is not a clear pattern between demographics and results on common assessments
 - Slightly lower performance results shown in hispanic demographics vs other races
- Prioritize standards based on TNReady Blueprints
 - Reading Standards have highest priority
- Focus of first text, "Five Reasons Not to Drink Bottled Water"
 - Reviewed standards RI.7.1, RI.7.4, RI.7.5, RI.7.6, RI.7.8
 - Create graphic organizer that assesses these standards

Student data

What to teach

resources,
strategies

What

Agenda for 11/24/15

- Finish the graphic organizer for *Robert W. Service* strategy 6
- Determine how to assess RI.7.1 and RI.7.3 how
 - Create questions
 - Determine key vocabulary
- MBU2 Post Data Student data
- MBU3 Pretest
- Benchmark Data

Minutes for 11/24/15

- Fixed formatting response sheets for MBU3 Pretest test development
- JITT Dec 8th on PLAN "Search 7th grade JITT"
 - There will a brief overview integrating standards, Planning, etc
 - Planning much of day
 - Central Services South
 - Bring anything to use for planning, binder, etc.
- MBU2 Post Data LARGE IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE BOARD!! student data
 - RL.7.1 and RL.7.3 areas of need for improvement
- Benchmark Data
- RI.7.3 Graphic Organizer was for Five Reasons Not to Drink Bottled Water strategy

Agenda for 12/1/15

- MBU3 Pretest Data
- Identify standards of concentration based on data - What-based on data
- Discuss how RI.7.3 Graphic organizer worked in classes - strategy
- Unit framework and outline

Minutes for 12/1/15

- MBU2 Post MBU3 Pretest Data standards that need improvement: RI.7.3, RI.7.8 What-based on data
- Discuss the progress of RI.7.3 analyze interactions and using a section from today's article (reason 3) for bellwork tomorrow.
- RI.7.8 trace and evaluate claims
 - How well does the author support his argument? Explain and support your response.
 - Claim 1: Tap water is the best choice to drink. and Claim 2: Bottled water is the best choice to drink.
 - Discussed appropriate evidences choices
- RI.7.1 citing evidence to support strategy how
- Argumentative Essay: Revision task/activity that integrates RI.7.8 and W.7.3

1.Claim: Tap water is the best choice to drink.

- Tap water is certainly less expensive.
- Tap water that is properly tested is clearly a good choice.
- Tap water from a municipal source also contains fluoride, a mineral important in maintaining dental health, as an added benefit.

6

2.Claim: Bottled water is the best choice to drink.

-Bottled water is considered a food, and the FDA is responsible for ensuring that bottled water is safe, wholesome, and truthfully labeled.

-Water from artesian aquifers can be very pure because the confining layers of rock and clay impede contaminants that might migrate into the water.

Evaluate evidences – Which best supports the claim.

Agenda JTT 12/8/15:

Time to discuss ideas on incorporating more small writings into lessons (Kimberlee)

Minutes JTT 12/8/15:

- Teaching coordinate adjectives "Can you replace the comma with 'and' and have the phrase still make sense?"
 - Ex "He was a fast, powerful guard for the basketball team."
 - Ex "He wore and old green jacket." "The football players owned 12 shiny pairs of cleats."

Strategy

Writing Practice on MIST - January (whole month)

TN Ready Part 1 - February 17-24 (exact days forthcoming)

TN Ready Part 2 - April 26-May 4

- MOJ Assessment -
 - 2 questions for all standards (12 questions)
 - Remove one non-"R" questions per standard
 - Add on "R" question per "R" standard.

test prep

Agenda 12/15/15

1. Review pro/con of 12/14 station review activities (focus standards-based)
2. Review materials created at 12/8/15 JTT (What still needs to be done?)
3. Assessment vocabulary ("contradicts" -MBU3)
4. Counterclaim strategies in argumentative writing
5. MIST practice days in January

Student
Understanding
Strategies

test prep

Minutes 12/15/15

- MBU3 Review Stations went well across the class. Working to create similar differentiated station-like lessons for upcoming units.
- MCU1 standards and assessment review (* Question for Kimberlee regarding partial credit for multiple select questions on assessments)
- MCU1 Framework Review checked lexile or Flesch-Kincaid for all texts in MCU1/choose appropriate texts
- Began to divide up tasks for MCU1 standards

#3 - student understanding

student data

6

share work load

Agenda 1/5/15

1. MIST practice/Writing Practice 1/25-26 (possible cold read and write on Docs since MIST only has two practice tests)
2. TNReady Part I Writing Assessment 2/17-24: (What do we need to teach/reteach with students before then)
3. MCU2 Standards to teach (Review previous data)
4. MCU2 Assessment Revision rite ("Letters to Rifka" already used on previous assessment)
5. MCU2 Framework

test prep

what

test development

how

Collaboration Notes

October 6, 2015

Attending: [redacted]

Participant
8

1. Discussion concerning the using of Mod Math questions on the Unit 3 Test
2. Mrs. Myers reported that we are giving a Benchmark/Task some time in November. Mrs. Taylor mentioned that she understood that we were grading the task on November 2. Mrs. Myers said the window opened on the 2nd of November. In reality nobody knows exactly when we are finding this out. Mrs. Myers has an "AP" meeting on Thursday, maybe someone will know then.
3. Discussion concerning the scope and sequence of Math 8. Mrs. Tilden is teaching the skills in a different order. He test is not exactly the same as everyone else.
4. We are testing on the first half of Unit 3 this week. Taylor and Tilden are testing on Friday/Wheaton and Nixon are testing on Thursday/We need to have students explain their answers on tests in order to determine the students understanding of the depth of the material. It is difficult for them to explain their answers when they can't even multiply, but we will give it the old college try.
5. The second test over Unit 3 will be mostly "real world" scenarios. Everyone should have the basics completed by the end of the week. We need to add multiple select and open-ended questions on the second Unit 3 test.
6. It was discussed that MIST is open and we could use it to create a test like the students will be testing on in February and April. However, it was also mentioned that we don't know when we will be giving the test and therefore getting the computers will be very difficult.
7. We have yet to learn "how" to create a math assessment in Edulastic. We are still waiting for information regarding that process.
8. We are each going to each take a standard and find five questions to assess that standard.
 - a. EE.B.5 - Rachel
 - b. F.A.2 - Tony
 - c. EE.B.6 - Sandra
 - d. F.A.3 - Tony
 - e. F.B.4 - Taneidra
9. Each person should bring their questions on October 20, 2015, to our planning session where we will combine the information and create an assessment.
10. Mr. Taylor made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Tilden seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (Not really, this just sounded good)
11. Next meeting - Tuesday, October 20, 2015

test development

test prep

student understanding

test prep

resource

hard work load

test development

Re: Thank you and one last request

Participant 8

[REDACTED]
 Fri 12/11/2015 1:04 PM

To: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

You're welcome!

No one took official notes but we discussed:

The systems of equations test on edulastic, *test development*
 The Pythagorean theorem test, what we needed to change from the advanced version to the regular math version
 and if we would try to do it on the computers

[REDACTED]
 Please view my Donor's Choose page to see what we need in our classroom!
 [REDACTED]

From: Mary Elizabeth Vest <met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu>

Date: Friday, December 11, 2015 11:43 AM
 [REDACTED]

Subject: Thank you and one last request

Thank you for participating in my study this fall! I appreciate your openness and willingness to be involved. I will forever be in your debt when I finally become Dr. Vest in August of 2016.

When my dissertation is complete, I will send you one last email to see if you'd like to receive an electronic copy. As I explained at the start of our study, I will use pseudonyms and I will not reference your subject areas to ensure your anonymity in the final document. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

I do have **ONE LAST REQUEST**...please send me your collaborative meeting notes from this week **ONE LAST TIME**. Stephanie and Aimee, please share the Google doc one last time. I do not need any more collaborative notes after this week.

If I can ever return the favor, please don't hesitate to contact me. I enjoyed getting to know each of you and it's evident you all have a bright future ahead of you as an educator.

<https://outlook.office.com/owa/>

12/16/2015

APPENDIX F

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

IRB
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
 Office of Research Compliance,
 010A Sam Ingram Building,
 2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
 Murfreesboro, TN 37129



EXPEDITED PROTOCOL APPROVAL NOTICE

7/2/2015

Investigator(s): Mary E. Vest (PI) and Dorothy Craig
 Investigator(s) Email: met4c@mtmail.mtsu.edu; Dorothy.craig@mtsu.edu
 Department: College of Education (ALSI Program)
 Protocol Title: "Through the eyes of the novice teacher: Professional learning communities at work."
 Protocol ID: 15-348

Dear Investigator(s),

The MTSU Institutional Review Board (IRB), or its' representative, has reviewed the research proposal identified above. The MTSU IRB or its representative has determined that the study poses minimal risk to participants and qualifies for an **EXPEDITED** review under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110 within the category (7) *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior*. This approval is valid for one year from the date of this letter **for 15 (FIFTEEN) participants** and it expires on **7/5/2016**.

Any unanticipated harms to participants or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918 within 48 hours of the incident. Any change(s) to this protocol must be approved by the IRB. The MTSU HRP defines a "researcher" as someone who works with data or has contact with participants. Anyone meeting this definition needs to be listed on the protocol and needs to complete the required training. New researchers can be amended to this protocol by submitting an Addendum request researchers to the Office of Compliance before they begin to work on the project.

Completion of this protocol **MUST** be notified to the Office of Compliance. A "completed research" refers to a protocol in which no further data collection or analysis is carried out. This protocol can be continued up to **THREE** years by submitting annual Progress Reports prior to expiration. Failure to request for continuation will automatically result in cancellation of this protocol and you will not be able to collect or use any new data.

All research materials must be retained by the PI or the faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion. Subsequently, the researcher may destroy the data in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity. IRB reserves the right to modify, change or cancel the terms of this letter without prior notice. Be advised that IRB also reserves the right to inspect or audit your records if needed.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board
 Middle Tennessee State University