The CRAFT of Leadership: Developing PLCs That Really Work

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Thank you for attending!

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1. What distinguishes successful schools from less successful ones?

2. What can I do to enhance learning and raise achievement in my school?
What Distinguishes Successful Schools From Less Successful Ones?

Leadership
Let’s begin our journey with a thoughtful question:

Is leadership more of an art or science?
Of course, leadership is both an art and a science, but is it more of an art or more of a science?

Let’s use a tool called Physical Barometer to see what the group thinks.
Physical Barometer

What is it?
A technique for assessing students’ positions quickly and for having students participate physically in the lesson.
Where do you stand?

Is leadership...


Go to the area of the room that corresponds to your position on this debate.
The following activity will give you a chance to explore and preview the five key behaviors that thoughtful educators in highly successful schools practice on a regular basis.
1. Select a partner. Determine who got up earlier this morning.

2. The early risers will be the activity leaders and will be given a thoughtful learning line by the presenter. Late risers will be the line-makers. Make sure the line-maker doesn’t see the line!

3. Line-makers will be asked to close their eyes so that they cannot see the leadership line. Line-makers must keep their eyes closed!

4. Leaders will place the thoughtful learning line in front of the line-makers and place the line-maker’s hand and writing implement on the starting point (Point A).

5. Leaders must find a way to guide the line-makers’ writing implement along the line from Point A to Point B as accurately as possible, without physically guiding the hands or moving the paper.

6. Together, you will have five minutes to complete the task. Remember: You can do anything you feel is necessary to create an accurate line except touch the line-maker’s hand or move the paper!
Reflecting on the activity.

• What happened?

• What feelings did each of you have?

• What ideas do you have about how each of you would improve your performance if you did this activity again?

• What can we learn from this activity about leadership?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What role did <strong>focus</strong> play in this activity?</th>
<th>What role did <strong>collaboration</strong> play in this activity?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What role did <strong>trust</strong> play in this activity?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What role did <strong>reflection</strong> play in this activity?</td>
<td>What role did the ability to <strong>adapt</strong> play in this activity?</td>
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How could the practice of these five capacities enhance your CRAFT as a thoughtful educator?
The CRAFT of Educators

**C**ollaboration, or a school’s capacity to create opportunities that encourage teachers and administrators to exchange ideas, support each other, and work together as a team.

**R**eflection, or a school’s capacity to assess student learning and current instructional practices—and to use this assessment data to develop and/or revise instructional plans.

**A**daptation, or a school’s capacity to support teachers as they learn and use of research-based, classroom-tested instructional strategies to address learning goals and differentiate instruction.

**F**ocus, or a school’s capacity to develop well-defined goals that make sense based on available assessment data and to remain focused on achieving these goals over time.

**T**rust, or a school’s capacity to establish and maintain a positive culture that promotes the idea that “we’re all in this together.”
A thoughtful educator/leader is continually engaged in and modeling the CRAFT behaviors.
We call these behaviors are the DNA of a thoughtful educator.

What is our DNA, or our...

D: District’s
N: Nourishing
A: Attributes
A Quick Assessment
How CRAFTy is Your School?

Take a moment to complete the following assessment. Use the rating scale below for each of the sections of CRAFT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you joking?</th>
<th>We’ve made a good start</th>
<th>Almost there</th>
<th>Absolutely!</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
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Collaboration

Our school has established forums where teachers can learn from each other, support each other, and help each other teach more effectively.

Our school is a place where the responsibility for learning and implementing new teaching strategies is shared, and where teachers work together to integrate these strategies into their everyday classroom practice.

Teachers work together to analyze student work, establish goals, and develop plans for improvement.

Members of teacher teams/other learning communities have taken the time to develop norms, procedures, and skills (e.g., communication, inquiry, problem solving) that enable them to function effectively.

Our school is driven by the belief that collective action is more effective in bringing about change than individual effort.
Reflection

Teachers use a variety of measures to assess student performance and identify students’ learning needs.

Teachers regularly analyze their instructional choices and the impact that those choices have on student learning.

Our ability to achieve the learning goals that we have established is regularly assessed, and the results of these assessments are used to revise plans of action.

Teachers are provided with sufficient time for deep and meaningful reflection.

Our school is committed to looking beneath the surface to identify the root causes behind our challenges.
Adaptation

Teachers encourage one another to try new things and to share what they have learned.

Our school has a support system in place that is designed to help teachers convert what they know about effective instruction into action.

Educators are not satisfied with the status quo; they are always on the lookout for ways to improve teaching and learning.

Our school is a place where inquiry is valued and where teachers can challenge each other and question each other in a respectful and productive manner.

We push past “good enough” to continually challenge ourselves and our students. Quality is job number one!
Focus
Our school’s mission, vision, and plans are clearly identified and linked to district goals.

My school follows through on plans for improvement.

Teachers focus on making the kinds of instructional changes that research shows will have the greatest impact on student achievement.

Teachers develop data-driven, measurable, and results-oriented goals for improving teaching and learning.

In my school, critical achievement data is updated regularly, shared, and visible for all to see.
A Quick Assessment
How CRAFTy is Your School?

**Trust**
There is a strong feeling across our school and district that we, as a staff, “row as one.”

Our school has developed a culture where good will and a genuine concern for others’ well being is demonstrated every day.

Our school is a place where administrators and teachers can depend on one another’s competence as they work to pursue their school and district goals.

The staff at our school is comfortable making themselves “vulnerable” to each other through open discussions about their practice and through honest feedback on how to improve.

The teachers in our school are confident in what they can expect from each other and their administrators.
A Quick Assessment
How CRAFTy is Your School?

Total up your score in each of the CRAFT capacities.

What do your overall scores tell you about your school or district?

Which CRAFT capacity or capacities seem to be strengths in your school and which seem to need attention?
CRAFT: One Thing Leads to Another

Something that you may have noticed—and something that you should keep in mind throughout the workshop—is that the CRAFT process is not a linear one.
Assume that you want to help your school become more CRAFTy. Does the data from your completed REFLECTION chart (“How CRAFTy Is Your School?”) offer you any suggestions about what aspect of CRAFT you might want to FOCUS on first?
Does your selected **FOCUS** offer you any information about the types of changes (**ADAPTATIONS**) that teachers and administrators at your school might want to implement?
How would having the opportunity to **COLLABORATE** with other educators at your school make it easier to **ADAPT**? How might you make these changes more likely by establishing greater **TRUST** amongst your staff?
1. What distinguishes successful schools from less successful ones?

2. What can I do to enhance learning and raise achievement in my school?
What Distinguishes Successful Schools From Less Successful Ones?

One of the most effective strategies for enhancing learning for both teachers and students, and raise student achievement is the implementation of PLCs—Professional Learning Communities.
Agree or Disagree?

Take a minute to discuss your responses with a neighbor. Use evidence from your own personal experience to justify your positions.

Collaboration is the lynchpin that binds thoughtful educators together. However in many schools...

1. “Teaching is, for the most part, a lonely act.”
2. “Expertise in teaching and learning abounds, but the current structure of the educational profession has precluded our capacity to access, use, and disseminate it as well as we could.”
3. “Norms of individualism tend to prevail over collaborative problem solving and inquiry.”
Thoughtful educators across the country have come to recognize the power of CRAFT as a process for putting the wisdom of their teachers and the best that educational research has to offer into practice.
The things that teachers do, and the instructional decisions that they make, can have a profound impact on student learning. In fact, teacher efficacy is believed to have a greater impact on student learning than any other single factor.

(Darling-Hammond, 2003; Bandura, 1993)
The “immediate and clear implication of this finding,” according to William Saunders, is that “seemingly more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor.”

(Wright, Horn, & Saunders, 1997)
Teacher’s Can’t Do It Alone

If the goal is to make classroom instruction more effective than it is now, learning the craft of teaching should **not** be a solitary pursuit!

(Martin-Kniep, 2008)
Teacher’s Can’t Do It Alone

*Why?* Implementing any kind of significant change can be a difficult task, but it is virtually impossible to effect meaningful change without collaboration and support. In fact, “Creating a collaborative environment has been described as ‘the single most important factor’ for successful school improvement initiatives and ‘the first order of business’ for those seeking to enhance the effectiveness of their school”.

(Martin-Kniep G., 2004; Eastwood & Lewis, 1992)
How Can Learning Clubs Help Educators Practice the CRAFT of Thoughtful Leading and Learning?

Schools that are serious about improving teaching and learning should make every effort to encourage educators to communicate with each other, learn from each other, and work together as a team.
The first step is to develop action-oriented forums that enable teachers to work collectively and collaboratively toward the goal of refining instructional practice.

We call these forums “Learning Clubs.”
Why do we call these forums Learning Clubs?

Why do people join clubs?
People join clubs because they want to! Clubs offer people the chance to spend time with people who share a common interest.

Can you guess what interest the members of a Learning Club share?
Members of a Learning Club share an interest in learning.

But learning what?
Learning Clubs Make a Real Difference in Schools

In your packet you will find a principal’s account of the positive impact that Learning Clubs have had on his students, his staff, and his school.

Read the article and respond to the following questions:

- What learning do Learning Clubs focus on?
- Who belongs to a Learning Club?
- When do Learning Clubs meet?
- How do Learning Clubs improve teaching and learning?
But learning *WHAT*, exactly?!?

- How to become more effective classroom teachers
- How to enhance student learning.

They recognize that increasing TEACHER LEARNING is a sure-fire way to increase STUDENT LEARNING.
WHO belongs to a Learning Club, anyway?

- Small groups of teachers (and sometimes administrators).
- Administrators
- Teachers from the same grade level or department, or from a mixture of different grade levels and departments.

Most importantly: Members of a Learning Club are **100% committed to learning** – both their own and that of their students.
And *WHEN* do Learning Clubs meet?

- Members of a Learning Club meet on a regular basis (at least twice per month) to reflect on student work, case studies, and their instructional practice.
- They use this information to determine how they can adapt instruction
  - to better meet the identified needs of their students,
  - to improve lesson and unit design, and
  - to develop appropriate formative assessment tools to measure their progress.
**HOW** do Learning Clubs improve teaching and learning?

- Foster collaboration, community, and a sense of shared responsibility
- Promote regular and reflective analysis of student work and classroom practice
- Initiate meaningful changes in instructional practice
- Empower teachers to establish specific goals for improving instruction and learning
- Trust each other to provide meaningful feedback
HOW do Learning Clubs improve teaching and learning?

They practice the “CRAFT” of thoughtful leading and learning.
What Does a Learning Club Look Like?

In your packet you will find a list of possible attributes of an ideal Learning Club. These attributes are based on the work of educational leader and author Giselle Martin-Kniep.

Check off all the attributes that you believe would be critical to the success of a high-functioning Learning Club.
What Does a Learning Club Look Like?

When you are finished picking your top three attributes, form a group of four, and share your “top picks” with your group. Explain why you selected the attributes that you did.

After everyone in your group has had an opportunity to share, work together to achieve consensus on the following question:

**What do members of a Learning Club need to do on a regular basis?**

*Remember*: You all have to agree on what the three most important attributes are.
An ideal Learning Club would be a place:

- where teachers’ knowledge and experience is valued and shared and where teachers are committed to learning from each other and helping each other learn
- where teachers can ask for and receive the type of constructive feedback from their colleagues that will help them become more effective classroom teachers
- where the responsibility for learning and implementing new teaching strategies is shared by everyone and where teachers work together to integrate strategies into their everyday classroom practice
- where a sense of community replaces a sense of isolation and where collaboration replaces competition...where teachers feel comfortable taking risks and discussing their failures as well as their successes
- where teachers use a variety of assessment tools to help evaluate their use of research-based strategies in the classroom and the effect that those strategies are having on student learning
- where teachers are not satisfied with the status quo, but rather look for ways to improve
- where teachers recognize that things don’t always work the first time and understand that perseverance and a commitment to collective problem solving will eventually bring success
- where teachers work as a team to achieve common goals, and where high expectations motivate and challenge everyone to learn, grow, and fulfill their potential
- where inquiry is valued and where teachers can challenge each other and question each other in a respectful and productive manner
Why do you think this activity is critical for a Learning Club to discuss at its inception?
One of the reasons that Learning Clubs are so powerful is because they provide a forum for teachers to practice their "CRAFT" —

Collaboration, Reflection, Adaptability, Focus, and Trust
Making Learning Clubs a Reality

We have developed five PLC Guides in partnership with ASCD and over 75 schools to help schools establish and sustain successful Learning Clubs.
“Knowing-Doing Gap”

How do we find a way to bridge this gap between what we *KNOW* about good instruction and what we *DO* in our classrooms?

The degree to which we are able to implement best practices in the classroom in a thoughtful and meaningful way determines how well our school and our students perform.

—Based on the research of Pfeffer & Sutton, 2005
The good news is that we know how to bridge the knowing-doing gap!

Look at the bar graph on the next slide.

What does it tell you about what it takes to help teachers actually DO the things that we KNOW can make a different in student learning?
Behaviors That Influence the Knowing-Doing Gap

Adapted from Joyce & Showers (2002)
How do we get to 90/10?

...to this!

Implemented in classrooms

Not being implemented in classrooms
At your table you have a sample PLC Guide. Examine the PLC guide and its structure.

How does the PLC Guide address the challenge of developing teachers’ know-how in implementing effective research-based strategies?
What Does an Ideal Learning Club Look Like?

C  concentration on instructional techniques proven to make a difference.

L  earn new strategies collaboratively.

U  se new strategies in classrooms.

B  ring student work back to their Learning Clubs.

S  elf-assess throughout the process.
Phases of PLC Guides

**Phase 1: Introducing the strategy**
Learn what the strategy is and “play with it” a bit – try it out!

**Phase 2: Planning a lesson**
Try planning a lesson using the strategy. Invite your colleagues to observe your lesson (and/or lesson plans) and give you feedback. Do the same for them.

**Phase 3: Evaluating the lesson**
Evaluate your ability to design a successful lesson using this strategy. Consider your own feelings as well as the feedback that you received from your colleagues. The purpose of this evaluation is to help you refine and improve your practice.

**Phase 4: Analyzing student work**
Collect and analyze student work to determine the impact of this strategy on student performance and to see how well you were able to implement the strategy in your classroom.
This Teaching Strategy Stuff Really Works!

Research shows that Strategic Teacher PLC Guides and Learning Clubs

✓ make a difference in today’s classrooms

✓ help teachers learn new strategies

✓ help teachers bridge the knowing-doing gap

✓ bring new strategies into their classrooms!
The Impact of Tools & Strategies, Learning Clubs, and PLC Guides

Accountability Gain From 2004-2006

- Average, all KY schools
- KY school districts using The Thoughtful Classroom

Educational Index

KY school districts using The Thoughtful Classroom

* Indicates significance
We end with a simple but powerful story:
A Story About...?

Ask yourself, What is the big idea here? This story is a study in _______________.

_Hint:_ It’s one of the five CRAFT capacities.

_A study in trust._
A little girl and her father were crossing a bridge. The father was scared, so he asked his little daughter, "Sweetheart, please hold my hand so that you don't fall into the river."

The little girl said, "No, Dad. You hold my hand."

"What's the difference?" Asked the puzzled father.

"There's a big difference, "replied the little girl. "If I hold your hand and something happens to me, chances are that I may let your hand go. But if you hold my hand, I know for sure that no matter what happens, you will never let my hand go."
To make this all work...

We all need to hold each other’s hand.
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