Ambassador Model PLC at Work®

Narrative Essay

Please tell us how your school or district has demonstrated its commitment to the PLC at Work process by continuously improving after achieving model PLC status.

This could include but is not limited to mentoring others as they implement the PLC at Work process, sharing your school or district by setting up site visits, creating video clips of your PLC work in action, and/or venturing outside of the usual education role to ensure advancing student achievement for traditionally underrepresented populations. Share what unique ways you are continuing to ensure that all students are learning at high levels.

Receiving the status of a Model PLC at Work has propelled Lincoln Heights Middle School to further it’s work with Solution Tree research and practices in order to best serve our students.  Rather than rest on the award, we have been empowered to continue learning, applying, and growing new teacher leaders.  This work continues to create opportunities for our students and build capacity among our staff.

Our model status has allowed us to partner with and mentor other schools and programs either in helping them begin their PLC processes, or refining those processes in leading up to a model school application.  We have identified three schools in our district that we are currently mentoring.  Two schools have new principals and are beginning to build PLCs in a meaningful way.  The other school has PLC processes in place, but we serve as a thought partner in polishing those processes in a way that has greater impact.  Hopefully, this school is on it’s way to it’s own Model PLC at Work distinction in the near future.

On a larger scale, we have created a partnership with the Multilingual Learners department at the district level and are working with them to create guiding documents of best practices for including special populations teachers in regular PLC work.  This partnership includes creation of videos and sharing of resources across the district.

Our school has also been tapped for numerous site visits now that we are included on the All Things PLC website. We have had multiplevisiting teams of administrators and teacher leaders from across our region who want to come view our collaborative team meetings and hear about our PLC journey.  We have developed a visitor folder of guiding documents and sample resources for those who visit with a team, and our collaborative team meetings themselves are always open to visitors when they come.

In addition to onsite visits, our leadership team has served on several regional panels as PLC experts for training and panel discussions.  Our administrators were a featured session on becoming a schoolwide PLC at our regional Learning Together Day, a training day for principals across 23 districts in our state.  Our teacher leaders presented a breakout session on creating strong collaborative teams on the same day for teachers from across the same area. LHMS leadership has spread the work of PLCs and collaborative teams on Zoom calls and conferences including principals study councils, regional learning teams, and educational professional organizations.

Within in the building, Solution Tree work continues to help us live up to our school motto of Good to Great, mainly in 2 ways.  Our focus for the last 2 years since being named a Model PLC at Work has been on changing outcomes for students with unique learning needs.  In our building, that is primarily students with disabilities and multilingual learners.  We have sent two teams of teachers to Yes We Can training.  These teacher leaders have served as an SWD task force in our building, providing professional development and ongoing support to our staff to keep students with disabilities a vital part of our collaborative teams work and a focus of our instruction.  In the same way, we have sent a team to the Soluciones Institute and that team has provided the same support for teachers of multilingual learners.  Thanks to this work, our level of proficiency among both  Hispanic students and students with disabilities doubled from 2022-2023.

The most recent layer of work has happened this year (23-24) with our focus on behavioral supports as guided by Behavior Solutions.  One team of teacher leaders attended the Behavior Solutions workshop and one group attended Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap.  The learning from these two courses as well as the Behavior Solutions text has driven our work around MTSS and RTI for behavior. We have developed the Patriot PRIDE program, a multi-tiered system of support for behaviors.  Patriot PRIDE includes a schoolwide positive behavior support program, a tier 2 mentoring program with multiple supports to correct behavior, and a tier 3 support team that develops behavior assessments and behavior plans for students who need the most support.  This is a robust program that has had a tremendous impact on our school, decreasing first semester office referrals by 56% from the past year.

We are driven by all we are learning through our Solution Tree partnerships.  We love to share of our story and our resources.  It would be our honor and pleasure to serve as a PLC at Work Ambassador School.