**Our Professional Learning Community…**

Professionalism is … continually improving through deliberate practice and use of high probability strategies. The Grattan Institute 'Making Time for Great Teaching' report says that teachers need more time to work collaboratively. In the best school, education should not be about which teacher you get. Teachers must be committed to collaboratively working together in an ongoing process of collective inquiry and action research in order to achieve better results for all students. A Professional Learning Team (PLT) operates under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job embedded learning for educators.

Our school forms a Professional Learning Community (PLC), it is made up of Professional Learning Teams (PLT). These teams are working toward the common goals of the professional learning community – our School’s Explicit Improvement Agenda.

Each faculty will form at least one Professional Learning Team that will have:

a shared mission

vision, values and goals

collaborative teams focussed on learning

collective inquiry into ‘best practice’ and ‘current reality’

action orientation and experimentation

commitment to continuous improvement; and

a focus on results.

Our PLTs will emphasise learning for all, building a collaborative culture and maintaining a constant focus on results. Each PLT must have:

* shared vision, goals, purpose and a collective responsibility.
* shared, common and consistent understanding, actions and practice.
* common assessment, interventions and success tracking.
* data collected - quick observations, questioning, surveys and minutes
* the curriculum implementation exactly the same for every teacher/student (the ‘what’ is the same / the ‘how’ can be different)

Advantages of working in a PLT:

* Gains are made in student achievement
* Problems have higher-quality solutions
* Staff have increased confidence
* Teachers support one another’s strengths and accommodate weaknesses
* Teachers can test new ideas
* New teachers have more support
* An expanded pool of ideas, materials and methods exist.

PLTs are an intervention program designed to change student results, designed disruption to the status quo. It is an opportunity to share best practice (strategies that work) with colleagues, collaboratively plan, moderate and feedback. Through PLTs teachers will know exactly what they will be teaching and work with a willingness to move things forward and identify strategies to improve outcomes.

The fundamental purpose and functioning of a PLT is based around the following 4 key questions:

1. **What is it we want our students to know?**

What knowledge skills and dispositions must all students acquire from the unit we are about to teach – what is essential?

What system do we need to put in place to ensure we are providing every student with access to this guaranteed and viable curriculum regardless of the teacher they are assigned to?

1. **How will we know if our students are learning?**

How can we check for understanding on an ongoing basis in individual classrooms?

How will we gather evidence of students learning across the team?

What criteria will we establish to assess the quality of student work?

How can we be certain we apply the criteria consistently?

1. **How will we respond if our students are not learning?**

What steps can we put in place to provide students who struggle with additional time and support for learning in a way that is timely, directive and systematic rather than invitational and random?

How can we provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning?

1. **How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who are proficient?**

How can we differentiate instruction among us so that the needs of all student as are met without relying on rigid tracking?

The PLT process will enable teachers to lead the:

* front loading of summative assessment – develop at the start of the unit
* identification of a guaranteed and viable curriculum by identifying essential knowledge and skills (de-clutter the curriculum)
* development of Learning Goals directly related to the Essential Knowledge
* introduction of the Proficiency Scales. This will help with differentiation.
* recording the Learning Goals and Proficiency Scales – including development of vocabulary.
* communication of Learning Goals and Proficiency Scales to students, have Learning Goals on display in the classroom and Proficiency Scales provided to students.
* have students track achievement of Proficiency Scales
* use of data to determine current reality and desired outcomes
* introduction of SMART goals for each PLT
* development a common language

**Teacher Expectations**

Each faculty will have weekly meetings (Faculty PLTs), where the faculty:

* Formatively Assess – use to benchmark, structure differentiation
* Analyse data – how do you know it is working
* Intervene – deliberate interventions / drill down to the individual / change practices and plan improvement pathways with explicit actions
* Critically reflect on what worked and what didn’t work
* Moderate summative assessment.
* Review the plan
* Review targets

**How:**

1. 5 hours planning time at the end of the year to prepare for 2017
2. 2.5 hour planning meeting once per term (Student Free Day Afternoons – Week 6)
3. 60 mins per week (Friday afternoon 1.40 – 2.40pm)
4. **Faculty PLT Planning Meeting (Whole Day):**

PLT members will develop the curriculum, by:

* collaboratively developing an understanding of the ‘essential’ knowledge and skills needed by students across the year.
* developing summative assessment – what and how
* creating Learning Goals based upon this essential knowledge.
* creating Proficiency Scales for each Learning Goal, including vocab / spelling list

1. **Faculty PLT Planning Meeting (2.5hr):**

In Week 6 of every term there will be a 2.5hour SFD Afternoon planning meeting:

* January SFD – 2.5hrs allocated to Faculty PLTs for Term 1 planning.
* SFD Afternoons In Lieu use each term to plan for the following term/year.

It is suggested that all subject staff participate as a whole group to determine planning for each year level.

Teams must develop/endorse norms or protocols to clarify expectations regarding roles, responsibilities and relationships among team members.

1. **Weekly PLT Meetings: Timetabled Time / Friday 1.40pm – 2.40pm**

The weekly PLT groups can be smaller year level groups (this is at the discretion of the HOD) to:

* fine tune and monitor implementation of PLT plans/Planning Matrix
* critically reflect on what is and is not working
* review data gained through formative testing
* amend/monitor intervention strategies