



Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District
PLC Handbook
2023-2024

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The Rationale for Collaboration

Professional Learning Communities collaborate to improve learning outcomes for all students. By joining together regularly, teachers have the potential to affect great changes in their students and their school. Our fundamental task is to evaluate the effect of our teaching on student's learning and achievement (Ventura, 2022). High-performing schools embrace collaboration and a shared responsibility for the success of all students; it is a part of their culture.

Confidentiality

FERPA regulations guide our ability to share that information; it is important to maintain professional transparency while preserving the privacy of students and teachers. Confidentiality is key. It is critical to develop a safe environment for all team members. Most people will share if they feel safe in their environment. If a team member leaves the meeting and discusses student data, a particular team member, or that member's data, it may cause the team to shut down. As professionals, we share student data all the time for educational purposes. As a team, you will need to address any breaches in confidentiality or your team may be hampered for the remainder of the year. Discuss any confidentiality issues with your administrator.

Maintaining Focus

Keeping the meeting on track takes skill and practice but, in time, the meetings will flow smoothly from one agenda item to the next. The workplace is filled with distractions that take our attention away from what is at hand. They cloud our thoughts, purpose and, ultimately, what we started to do in the first place. The same is true with our collaborative meetings. With limited time to accomplish many tasks it is imperative that the focus be maintained. One team member can derail the meeting. One off-topic conversation can take several of those too-few minutes and delay the work you intended to accomplish.



Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

2023-2024 School Calendar

Approved 6-12-23

August							September (18 days)							October (20 days)							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5							1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					
November (18 days)							December (16 days)							January (21 days)							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4							1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				
							31														
February (16 days)							March (20 days)							April (17 days)							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
				1	2	3							1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
25	26	27	28	29			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					
							31														
May (22 days)							June (12 days)							First and last days of school							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	First and last days of school							
			1	2	3	4							1	Holiday/Vacation - no school							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Tea. Prof. Day - no school							
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	1/2 day of sch. - students							
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	1.5 hr. early rel.-students							
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29								
8/29/23	Teacher Professional Day - No School										Administration Office					508-398-7600					
8/30/23	Teacher Professional Day - No School										Dennis-Yarmouth High School					508-398-7630					
8/31/23	Teacher Professional Day - No School										Dennis-Yarmouth Middle School					508-778-7979					
9/4/2023	Labor Day										Dennis-Yarmouth Intermediate School					508-398-7695					
9/5/2023	Teacher Professional Day - No School										E.H. Baker Innovation School					508-398-7690					
9/6/23	First Day of School										M.E. Small Elementary School					508-778-7975					
10/6/23	Teacher Professional Day - No School										Station Avenue Elementary School					508-760-5600					
10/9/23	Columbus Day										Early Learning					508-778-7988					
11/10/23	Veterans' Day - Observance										District Website: www.dy-regional.k12.ma.us Conference Days: 10/17,10/19,3/5,3/7 (Early Release All Grades) 1.5 Hour Early Release Days All Grades: 9/27,10/25,11/29,1/24,3/20,5/22 Trimesters: 9/6-12/1,12/4,3/15,3/18-last day of school HS Quarterly Term Dates: 9/6-11/9,11/13-1/26,1/29-4/9 4/10-last day Report Card Target Dates: K-7-12/13,3/27,last day of school HS: 11/16,2/5,4/16,6/27										
11/22-11/24	Thanksgiving Break																				
12/25-1/1	December Vacation																				
1/2/24	School Resumes																				
1/15/24	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day																				
2/19-2/23	February Vacation																				
3/29/2024	Good Friday																				
4/1/24	Kindergarten Registration																				
4/15-4/19	April Vacation																				
5/27/24	Memorial Day																				
6/8/24	D-YRHS Graduation																				
6/19/2024	Juneteenth Day - No School																				
6/25/2024	Last day including 5 snow days																				
District Open House Dates																					
9/12 SAE							9/19 DYI														
9/14 DYH							9/20 MES														
9/19 DYM							9/21 EHB														

Developing Norms

What Are Norms and Why Do We Need Them?

Norms are the framework from which team members commit to conduct business. Attention to their development and adherence to them ensure the success of the group and facilitate the members' ability to deal with critical issues. Norms are comprised of several components that clarify team dynamics.

Norm Elements to Address

TIME: When and where will we meet? Will we start on time?

LISTENING: How will we listen to our peers? Are there any bad ideas? How will we discourage verbal interruptions when others are speaking?

CONFIDENTIALITY: What content is to be held in confidence? What can be shared after the meeting?

DECISION MAKING: How will we arrive at a decision? What if everyone doesn't agree with the group decision?

PARTICIPATION: Is participation optional? Will we have an attendance policy? What will we do if a member consistently misses or is late for meetings?

EXPECTATIONS: What do we expect from team members? Do we need a method for ensuring each member comes to the meeting prepared with appropriate data or other items?

Examples of Team Norms

We will maintain a positive attitude during each meeting.

We will stay on topic and follow the agenda.

Tips:

Teams develop their own norms.

Less is more.

Read the norms at each meeting.

Norm violations should be addressed.

Give some thought to the development of a means to address how to ensure adherence of the NORMS. If a team member consistently breaks the norms; how will the team respond to that?

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Norms Development Template

[Click here for a working copy](#)

¹ Elements to Consider	Group Proposed Norms	How to Address When a Norm is Challenged
<u>Time</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will we meet? • Where will we meet? • Will we be on time? 		
<u>Listening</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we listen to our peers? • Are there any bad ideas? • How will we discourage verbal interruptions when others are talking? 		
<u>Confidentiality</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What context is to be held in confidence? • What can be shared after the meeting? 		
<u>Decision Making</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we arrive at a decision? • What if everyone doesn't agree with the group's decision? 		
<u>Participation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is participation optional? • Will we have an attendance policy? • What will we do if a member regularly misses meetings? 		
<u>Expectations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we expect from team members? • Do we need a method for ensuring each member comes to the meeting prepared? 		



PLC Team Role Descriptors	
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reviews norms and sets the focus ✓ Keeps the group on task ✓ Encourages everyone to participate ✓ Helps set the agenda for the next meeting ✓ Is an Active Participant
Accuracy Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Verifies that Grade Level Standards are being addressed ✓ Monitors consistent implementation of district approved resources ✓ Identifies and alerts group to equity issues ✓ Is an Active Participant
Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Records ideas and input from the meeting ✓ Asks group for feedback on the accuracy ✓ Communicates and shares the final record with the group and administrators, as needed ✓ Is an Active Participant
Time Keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Divides the time for tasks ✓ Keeps the group moving ✓ Gives periodic signals as to how the time allotment is progressing ✓ Is an Active Participant
Active Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaborates with others using a growth mindset ✓ Comes to meetings prepared and on time ✓ Seeks and provides data and input ✓ Actively engages in discussion ✓ Monitors self-adherence to norms ✓ Stays focused on the agenda, purpose, and goals of the meeting



PLC TEAM ROLE:
Facilitator

- ✓ Reviews norms and sets the focus
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Adapted from Steve Ventura, 2022



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PLC TEAM ROLE:

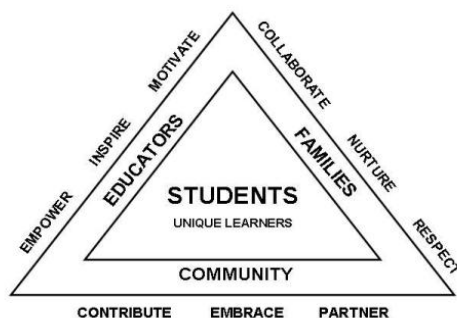
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(Grade/Content) PLC Meeting Agenda

Core Values



The Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District is a community of innovative learners. Each student will be college, career, and civic ready, empowered to seek new challenges and make a positive difference in a changing world.

Meeting Date:

Team Roles	Team Norms
Facilitator: Accuracy Monitor: Time-Keeper: Recorder: Active Participant:	
Resources:	

Bring/Prepare:
•
Meeting Objectives:
•
Questions Guiding Our Meeting Goals:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do we expect students to know and be able to do? How will we know if students have learned it? How will we respond if students have not learned? How will we respond if students have already learned?

Notes:

-

Next Steps:

Materials to Prepare and Deadline

-

Data to Collect & Enter

-

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

-

PLC Norms Reflection:

[Click here for working copy](#)

Glossary of Terms

Benchmark - Specific points of reference related to levels of performance or outcomes against which students are monitored or measured. They may also be defined as targets that are used to analyze output of students, and staff as well, on a continuous basis in order to identify effectiveness and/or efficiency. This may also be applied to processes within educational institutions.

Collaboration - A systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results. In a PLC, collaboration focuses on the critical questions of learning: What is it we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who are proficient?

Collective Efficacy - The overall belief that teachers can have a greater influence on student achievement when they combine their collective efforts. It is a concept that focuses on a shared belief by faculty that together they can positively affect the lives of the students they serve.

Common Assessment - An assessment of student learning that uses the same instrument or a common process utilizing the same criteria for determining the quality of student work. State and provincial assessments and district benchmark assessments are "common" assessments. However, in a PLC, common assessments are also created by a team of teachers with collective responsibility for the learning of a group of students who are expected to acquire the same knowledge and skills. Team-developed common assessments provide members with the basis of comparison that turns data into information and help individuals identify strengths and weaknesses in their instructional strategies. They also help identify problem areas in the curriculum that require attention.

Common Formative Assessment - An assessment typically created collaboratively by a team of teachers responsible for the same grade level or course. Common formative assessments are used frequently throughout the year to identify (1) individual students who need additional time and support for learning, (2) the teaching strategies most effective in helping students acquire the intended knowledge and skills, (3) curriculum concerns- areas in which students generally are having difficulty achieving the intended standard-and (4) improvement goals for individual teachers and the team.

Community -A group linked by common interests. Whereas the term organization tends to emphasize structure and efficiency, community suggests shared purpose, mutual cooperation, and supportive relationships.

Curriculum - sequence of student learning experiences based on the grade-level standards.

Curricular materials - the resources teachers use to facilitate sequences of learning experiences.

Glossary of Terms

Essential Learning - The critical skills, knowledge, and dispositions each student must acquire as a result of each course, grade level, and unit of instruction. Essential learning may also be referred to as essential outcomes, power standards (Reeves, 2002), guaranteed and viable curriculum (Marzano, 2003), essential academic goals (Lezotte, 1991), learning intentions and success criteria (Hattie, 2009), or learning expectations and tangible exemplars of student proficiency (Saphier, 2005).

Essential Question - questions that probe far deeper meaning and set the stage for further questioning; ones that foster the development of critical thinking skills and higher order capabilities.

Formative Assessment - An assessment that informs the teacher of the effectiveness of instruction and of individual student progress toward proficiency. These assessments help teachers to identify concepts that students are struggling to understand, skills that they are having difficulty acquiring, or learning standards that they have not yet achieved so that adjustments can be made to lessons, instructional techniques, and/or academic support.

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum:

Guaranteed - Every student is provided the opportunity to learn a core curriculum which provides them with the probability of success in school; it is not optional, must be taught not replaced.

Viable - The necessary time is available and protected so students will be able to learn the guaranteed curriculum (taught and learned, not rushed and covered).

Curriculum - A sequence of student learning experiences that are based on the grade-level standards.

Language Objective - "how" the student will show what they are learning. Promote student academic language growth. Include the use of either receptive and/or productive language skills. Connect clearly with the lesson topic or lesson activities.

Learning Acceleration - All students receive consistent access to grade level work with targeted scaffolds to make it accessible.

Pacing Guides - Timelines that show what standards should be taught and assessed. Each subject area follows a logical sequence within a grade level and between grade levels.

Progress Monitor - A scientifically based practice that is used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

Glossary of Terms

Professional Learning Community (PLC) - A team of educators who share ideas to enhance their teaching practice and create a learning environment where all students can reach their fullest potential. Educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

Protocol - A system of agreed upon rules that explain the correct conduct and procedures to be followed.

Scaffolding - a temporary support that a teacher provides to help students tackle complex or increasingly complex material or tasks.

Behaviors That Foster and Undermine Effective Conversations

What Do We Want to Hear and See in Group Conversations?

- Active listening through paraphrasing and by asking follow-up clarifying and probing questions
- Active listening through nonverbal communication (making eye contact with each other, nodding)
- Questions and wonderings grounded in genuine inquiry
- Summarizing of each other's ideas
- Invitations to quieter members
- Making sure that everyone's voice is heard
- Probing questions that go below surface comments
- Clarifying questions that elicit more information
- Appreciations for what others say and do and for taking risks
- Productive conflict around Ideas
- Respect for the opinions of others and valuing their input
- Problem solving
- Offering of ideas, suggestions, solutions, and next steps
- Empathy for each other and others outside of our team (including students, parents and administrators)
- Flexibility and vulnerability
- Thoughtfulness around the language that is used and awareness of the impact that certain words have
- Awareness of emotions when appropriate

What Don't We Want to Hear and See in Group Conversations?

- Going off topic and into long digressions
- Dominating the conversation by taking up too much airtime or trying to dictate the conversation
- Being sarcastic
- Disengaging and not participating
- Avoiding contentious topics
- Criticizing people and their ideas with negative comments
- Dismissing the ideas of others with "Yeah, but"
- Taking pride in being a devil's advocate
- Being contrary and blocking team progress
- Boasting about personal skills or experience
- Pulling rank on each other
- Insulting team members or others outside of our team (including students, parents, and administrators)
- Gossiping about others
- Blaming others
- Complaining about things that are outside of our sphere of influence
- Using emotions to hijack a conversation
- Using language that is explosive and can trigger others as a way to bully the conversation
- Being distracted by other things (technology) or people