Building Effective Campus SPED PLCs

Deeana Rosiles and Bobbe Sanders
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Do Now

Read the article on your table.

Highlight, underline, annotate, comment on whatever you feel is important to you
Learning Targets

- What is the role of special educator in the PLC process?
- What are common barriers to effective SPED involvement in a campus PLC?
- How can we overcome those barriers?

“Research reveals that special education teachers’ classroom practices, like those of their general education counterpart, often change in a positive direction as a result of their participation in PLCs.” -Blanton and Perez, 2011
About the Presenters

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All Together Now

- Inclusion of SPED teachers in grade level PLCs positively impacts all student achievement.
- The PLC model focuses on what ALL students need to learn, those who are not yet meeting expectations as well as those who exceed them.
- Special educators are important resources for strategies and tools to ensure the learning of all students
PLC v. PWC

PLC (Professional Learning Community) is not a PD session. Focus is on the Four Critical Questions and the teacher learning needed to achieve goals.

“The focus of PLCs is ongoing “job-embedded learning,” rather than one-shot professional development sessions facilitated by outsiders, who have little accountability regarding whether staff learning is successfully applied. In addition, PLCs emphasize teacher leadership, along with their active involvement and deep commitment to school improvement efforts. PLCs therefore benefit teachers just as much as they do students.”

https://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/best-practices-for-professional-learning-communities.shtml

PWC (Professional Working Community)

“This teacher collaborative time is being spent getting work done, tasks completed. This is not a bad thing to do, but it differs from teacher learning as an outcome.” Barkley (http://barkleypd.com/blog/plc-or-pwc/)
DuFour’s Four Questions

1. What do we expect our students to learn? (Goals/Expectations)
2. How will we know they are learning? (Assessment)
3. How will we respond when they don’t learn? (Intervention)
4. How will we respond if they already know it? (Gifted)
DuFour’s Four Questions

What is our role in the PLC, related to these four questions?

Discuss the role of the SPED educator in a PLC and how that question relates to the needs of our students. You can jigsaw the task, and assign one question to each person at the table or focus on each question as a group.
DuFour’s Four Questions

1. Ensuring essential outcomes for all, not just some.
   High expectations, increased rigor

2. Increased opportunities for formative assessments
   More chances to show what they know
DuFour’s Four Questions

3. “Promotes powerful collaboration”, teachers know when to preview, spiral, support
   Improved pedagogy for all

   “Special educators have a toolbox of strategies that increase learning, aid in classroom
   organization, and reduce behavioral problems in the classroom.”

4. Students may struggle in some skills and quickly master others. Flexible groupings

   “Instead of grouping kids by labels, the proper question is ‘What does the child need, and who
   on our staff is best trained and able to meet this need?’”
Barriers to Effective SPED PLCs

Affinity Mapping Protocol

1. Using the stickies, write down something that is preventing (or you foresee preventing) participation in or creation of a SPED PLC. Thinking of our role in the four questions, what is keeping that from happening? One idea per sticky, place it on the poster. (4 minutes)

2. SILENTLY, move stickies you feel belong together to create common groups. If someone moves a sticky, but you feel it belongs in a different group, move it. Just remember to keep silent. (3 minutes)
3. Once you are satisfied with the groups, organize them and create a label for each group (e.g., Time Constraints) (3 minutes)

4. Now that we know our barriers, let’s plan to overcome them! Brainstorm in your group and collaborate to create as many ideas as possible to break the barriers.
Action Plan

Share out some ideas for overcoming these barriers. (5 minutes)

- Common SLOs
- Creative meeting times (during other campus meetings, special events, curriculum mapping) and creative coverage
- Make PLC a big rock
- Involve your instructional coach and principal

Once your group has several ideas, create your own action plan. How will you use these ideas to increase the effectiveness of your PLCs or start one?
Thank you!

Presentation and handouts on the Conference website