PLC Meeting Protocol

A Professional Learning Community (PLC) is so much more than a team meeting or faculty meeting. A PLC aims to answer four essential questions (DuFour):

- What do we want all students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know if they learn it?
- How will we respond when some students do not learn?
- How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?

Consider how the questions align with what you have learned about UDL, inclusive practice, and equitable access. As you reflect below, consider the following prompts and take notes if it is beneficial to your learning.

- What do you notice?
- What do you wonder?

PLC Core Questions	UDL Connections
What do we want all students to know and be able to do?	How does this step align to understanding "firm goals,"and grade level standards, a core component of UDL to ensure that all students, especially those students who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and minoritized, have access to advanced coursework?
How will we know if they learn it?	How can we design inclusive assessments that are equitable, aligned to firm goals/grade-level standards, and culturally responsive?
How will we respond when some students do not learn?	Which barriers can we eliminate through design? Be sure to explicitly examine access and engagement as well as barriers that prevent access because curriculum and instruction are not trauma-informed, linguistically appropriate, and culturally sustaining.
How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?	What are potential barriers to deep engagement and acceleration?

Step 1: Define Roles

Your PLC should be composed of the same team members each time and ideally, these team members include diverse perspectives. It's always a good idea to keep team small, ideally 6-8 people. In order to build understanding to eliminate barriers, teams should include general education teachers as well as specialists in special education, English language development, student service providers, and adjustment and school counselors. This ensures that teachers build collective efficacy and have strategies for eliminating barriers to student learning. There are a few special roles you'll want to assign to ensure you have an effective PLC meeting. You may wish to consider rotating roles, so every member of the PLC gets the opportunity to facilitate.

- **Facilitator:** Designs and facilitates meetings, creates calendar invites and agenda, attaches docs, creates small groups/breakout sessions if necessary, is respectful of privacy.

- **Note-taker**: Takes real time notes and shares notes with teams at the conclusion of a meeting. Ensures that notes include concrete action steps or deliverables for the next meeting and notes who is responsible for each action step.

- **Moderator:** Assists facilitator, asks for clarification, refers back to norms when needed.

- **Timekeeper:** Keeps time. No one likes a meeting that runs over!

Step 2: Plan a Meeting Agenda

Remember, a PLC isn't just a time to gather. We need to set a firm goal for our PLCs, to accelerate learning and ensure that all students have equitable access to grade-level instruction, opportunities to learn at high levels, and have equitable feelings of belonging and hope. By the end of the meeting, what should participants know or be able to do and how will this impact our learners? How can you help them reach those goals? Think of your meeting agenda as your lesson plan. We recommend using a single document as a running agenda, so it is easier to refer to notes from previous sessions, have participants ask questions, and keep track of action items.

Part 1: Provide options for self-awareness

Consider beginning with a community or self-regulation exercise, like deep breathing or pair and share. Make sure to give your educators options and choices here. What might be peaceful to some may just feel downright silly to others!

Part 2: Review meeting norms

Review meeting norms. As a PLC community, you should set meeting norms together. As you create norms, unpack them and examine them for barriers. For example, the norm, "Show up on time every time" may not be realistic as sometimes teachers have students who stay after class because they need support and that is more important sometimes than getting to a meeting with colleagues as the clock strikes 1:18pm. Something like, "Be on time, or text a team member to share if there is something occurring with a student," is more reasonable.

Once you've set your norms, use this time to quickly review norms before each session. Use this tool if you need help setting norms. As you set norms, it is important to also be prepared for courageous conversations. You can use agreements for courageous conversations about race, which is the work of Glenn Singleton.

Part 3: Heighten the salience of goals and objectives

Briefly review the agenda so everyone knows what to expect. Make sure you communicate what the "firm goals" of the meeting are and how they tie to your work to create more inclusive and equitable classrooms where all students learn at high levels!

Part 4: Identify professional learning tasks

Allow for learning and activities that answer DuFour's 4 questions, revised through the UDL lens. Remember to embed opportunities for community and collaboration. If your PLC is virtual, leave time for breakout sessions and discussions through the chat. In person, give options to think-pair-share, discuss in a small group, or workshop together.

- What do we want all learners to know and be able to do?
- How can we design inclusive assessments that are equitable, aligned to firm goals, and culturally responsive?
- Which barriers can we eliminate through design? And how will we respond when some students do not learn?
- What are potential barriers to deep engagement and acceleration?

Part 5: Review actions and next steps

Leave time to collaborate on what you will discuss during the next PLC which can help inform the next agenda.

Step 3: Share Pre-Reading & Reminders

If you want participants to read or do something (or bring something to the meeting) remember to send clear guidelines ahead of time, and don't be afraid of sending a few reminders. Remember, if you are asking participants to learn something before the meeting, think about how you can embed options and choices that will allow them to meet the goal in a way that is authentic and relevant to them and also ensure they have adequate time to review.

For example:

Before the session please take 5 minutes to learn more about the Opportunity Myth. In the spirit of UDL, you have options. You can read or listen to the short article, or do both at the same time. To read or listen in another language, you can copy/paste content into Papago.

Step 4: Run the Meeting

Make sure all participants are aware of their roles and have a voice. Follow the meeting agenda to stay on task!

Step 5: Collect Feedback

After the meeting, provide multiple ways for participants to provide feedback. Try using a poll, Google Form, exit tickets, and/or provide alternatives ways for response for those participants who might want to give feedback in a more anonymous setting. Consider providing a sentence starter like, "It would be great if, next time, we could…." Provide the option for participants to email the facilitator if they are more comfortable sharing feedback that way.

Step 6: Share Notes & Learnings from Feedback

Provide a copy of the meeting notes. Also let participants know that their voices are heard so share any adjustments that will be made for the next meeting based on feedback and encourage them to add comments or questions to the running PLC agenda. Continually assess how effective and advanced your PLC is using DuFours PLC rubric.

Example PLC Agenda

We created a sample PLC agenda where your team can explore how PLCs can help build collective efficacy and create more inclusive and equitable classrooms that accelerate student learning.

Note: To create this sample agenda, we used this template developed by Magdalena Ganias using Harvard Meeting Wise.

Accelerating Student Outcomes in Writing Through Inclusive Practice

Objective

By the end of this meeting, participants will identify additional in-time scaffolds to incorporate into Tier 1 instruction to accelerate learning, as well as strategies for targeted intervention, for those students who have not made adequate growth or progress in the previous 4 weeks in writing.

Norms

We will
- be on time, or text a team member to share if there is something occurring with a student
- begin and end our meetings on time and stay engaged throughout each meeting
- not complain about a problem unless we can offer a solution
- embrace discomfort and vulnerability when our intent does not result in desired impact
- honor confidentiality. What happens in PLC, stays in PLC
- accept non-closure. Improvement is ongoing and we won't solve everything in an hour

Roles	Attendees
Facilitator: Note Taker: Timekeeper: Chat Monitor (if virtual) Meeting:	Add names here

Materials
- Student data reports from common writing assessment
- This is the UDL and SDI crosswalk outlines accommodations for all which may give you some inspiration! See column, "Continuum of Universal Tools Available for All Students."

Pre- Meeting Tasks:
- Before the meeting, take 5 minutes to review the UDL and SDI crosswalk that outlines accommodations for all which may give you some inspiration for determining in-time scaffolds to help to accelerate student writing! See column, "Continuum of Universal Tools Available for All Students."

Post Meeting Tasks:
- Design in-time scaffolds and deliver intervention plans with agreed upon fidelity to help determine the impact of the selected strategies on student writing

Time	Activity	Next Steps/Notes
What do we want all learners to know and be able to do?		
5 minutes	Unpack the writing assessment and align to standards	
How can we design inclusive assessments that are equitable, aligned to firm goals, and culturally responsive?		
10 minutes	Review data overview and dive into student data to determine which students are not making accelerated growth	
15 minutes	Group and regroup students identifying instructional groups of students who would benefit from additional scaffolds and support to approach grade-level standards as well as groups who may need more support to advance their writing to the next level (i.e, proficient or accelerated students who are not making progress)	
● Which barriers can we eliminate through design? And how will we respond when some students do not learn? ● What are potential barriers to deep engagement and acceleration?		
30 minutes	Develop intervention plans for instructional groups who are not making progress that build on strengths and provide in-time scaffolding as well as specific intervention strategies to target acceleration	
5 minutes	Share feedback using the sentence stem, "It would be great if, next time, we could…."	