The Role of PLCs in Building Adult SEL: Creating the Conditions for Adult Learning in Service of Equity
Essential Question

How can PLCs support learning and explicitly build adult SEL in service of equity?
Warm welcome

Share in a group of 3:
Your name and where you’re from.

- What makes an effective PLC?
- What’s working well with your PLCs?
- How do you want your PLCs to develop?
Session Plan

● Calibrate on purpose of PLCs as learning spaces

● Go inside a PLC and understand the role of SEL in learning conversations

● Reflect on our own PLC spaces

● Practice a PLC conversation with an SEL lens
Dimensions of equity

1. Removing the predictability of academic success or failure based on social, economic or cultural factors;
2. Interrupting inequitable practices, eliminating biases and oppression and creating inclusive school environments for adults and children;
3. And discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that each human being possesses (Osta and Perrow, 2008, pp. 3-4).

from Osta and Perrow, 2008 in TRANSFORMATIONAL PEDAGOGY: CASHING THE PROMISSORY NOTE OF EQUITY FOR ALL STUDENTS – ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE MARGINALIZED By Yvette Jackson, Ed.D., CEO, National Urban Alliance for Effective Education
Why PLCs?
HOPE

TRUTH

~Peter Senge
FUTURE VISION
What do I want to happen?

CURRENT REALITY
What is happening?

Creative Tension

Peter Senge
Continuous Improvement and SEL

Improvement is an ongoing exercise in developing self awareness of our effectiveness
What is a learning space?

We share wonderings, and uncertainties and become more clear about:

● our vision, purpose, and goals (big and small)

● who our most underserved (youth or adult) learners are, what they know, how they are approaching their work

● our own knowledge gaps and define a plan to get smarter

● ourselves-- our strengths, challenges, implicit biases
Consider the collaboration spaces in your work--which are the learning spaces?
SELF-AWARENESS

The ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

- Identifying Emotions
- Accurate Self-Perception
- Recognizing Strengths
- Self-Confidence
- Self-Efficacy

SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating Diversity
- Respect for Others

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

- Identifying Problems
- Analyzing Situations
- Solving Problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical Responsibility
Moment of self awareness

Consider the collaboration spaces in your work--which are the learning spaces?

What SEL competencies are you using in the space that is supporting your learning?
Reflecting on the learning conversation

- What did the speaker do?
- What did the listeners do?
- What SEL capacities did you observe?
- How does this conversation support learning and equity?
Conversations that promote adult learning
Reflecting on the learning conversation

- What did the speaker do?
- What did the listeners do?
- What SEL capacities did you observe?
- How does this conversation support learning and equity?
Thinking
Alone
Thinking Alone

1) What is your vision for this PLC space? What, for you, would indicate that people are learning in service of equity in this space. What would we see, hear? How would the learners feel?

2) What is the current reality of this space? In what ways is it a learning space? What conditions (existing mindsets/values and existing routine practices) do you have already that support this? What obstacles exist?
Thinking Alone

3) What are the SEL capacities and equity mindsets that have to be in place for this space to be a learning space?

4) What do you wonder about this space? How could you find out more?
When teachers engage in learning conversations grounded in empathy, data, and shared responsibility, they benefit from multiple perspectives on their students’ learning. They build awareness of their blind spots and implicit biases. They better understand the effectiveness of their instruction. They see themselves as part of a community of learners. They become more open to change and new ideas. They feel empowered to drive their next steps.

**Key roles in learning conversations**

Supportive challenge happens within learning conversations. In a learning conversation, both the speaker (the learner) and the listener (the person supportively challenging) play essential roles in promoting learning.

**Role of the speaker**
- To build their self-awareness through surging honest uncertainties and inviting feedback.

**Common pitfall:** Speaker gives a report on what they are doing and are planning to do without wondering aloud about uncertainties, tensions, or blindspots.

**Role of the listener**
- To build the speaker’s self-awareness by asking questions that deepen the speaker’s understanding of their goals and of their current reality.

**Common pitfall:** Listener offers solutions before the speaker has had time to do their own thinking. This doesn’t mean listeners should not share an idea, however, the most powerful learning happens when the speaker is allowed time to clarify and stretch their thinking first.

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**Supportively challenging colleagues is**

**Supportively challenging colleagues is not**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asking questions and sharing data-based observations to help a colleague clarify their learning goals and next steps</th>
<th>Making suggestions or sharing your own experiences in the classroom</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking questions and sharing data-based observations that help a colleague see what they may not be able to see on their own</td>
<td>Judging colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following a colleague’s lead on what they want to better understand</td>
<td>Planning time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on what is happening with students’ learning</td>
<td>Venting frustrations about students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes emotionally challenging</td>
<td>Making generalizations that are not tied to colleagues’ data</td>
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Setting SEL intentions for the learning conversation

- Read pages 28 & 29 in the playbook.
- What SEL capacities do you want to use in this conversation? What would this mean?
Thinking Together

- Speaker introduces
- Listeners respond
- Open discussion
- Speaker closes
Reflecting on the learning conversation

- What did the speaker do?
- What did the listeners do?
- What SEL capacities did you observe?
- How does this conversation support learning and equity?
Summary

- Distinguished between learning and sharing/planning
- Disrupted the notion that PLC is simply “technical work”
- Built awareness of the SEL capacities assumed in high-functioning PLCs
- Explored how bringing metacognition and intention into PLCs can cultivate conditions for deeper learning
Optimistic Close

Something I’m excited about ...

Something I’m going to be thinking about...

An aha that I am taking away...
Creating Conditions for Adult Learning in Service of Equity

Mindsets
- Agency and purpose drive curiosity and deep learning
- Equity requires questioning assumptions
- Learning is fundamentally social and emotional
- Teaching is complex and uncertain work

Practices
- Practice public learning
- Supportively challenge colleagues
- Make sense of goals collectively
- Use data to make learners’ experience visible

Self-improvement requires self-awareness.
Self-awareness is built in collaboration and with compassion.