

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY COACHES

Rationale

Cultivating exceptional thinkers prepared for the future is at the core of what we do at SAS. To be successful in this endeavor, we need empowered educators on teams committed to continuous learning and a culture of coaching and feedback. The stronger we are as a learning organization of educators, the stronger will be the education opportunities that we offer our kids and the more attractive we will be as a school for talented educators to come to and stay at.

Our investment in Professional Learning Communities to date has created the space for collaboration focused on student learning, especially in determining what kids know and how we will know if they know it (PLC Questions 1 and 2).

We aspire to better link our PLC conversations explicitly and dynamically with classroom instruction and the moment by moment decisions teachers make in service of cultivating exceptional thinkers. In order to more effectively and efficiently shift instruction if kids aren't learning what we planned or show they already know it (PLC Questions 3 and 4), we need structures that ensure regular coaching and feedback on classroom practice. We know that generally the most effective way to further grow in a very complex profession like teaching is by practicing it, receiving thoughtful feedback from someone who has expertise and your trust, and then having a chance to reflect and adjust -- and to do that on a regular basis.

The Professional Learning Community Coach role is designed to accelerate the impact of our PLCs by bridging teacher collaboration and learning to classroom practice. PLC leaders are uniquely positioned to serve as PLC Coaches and facilitate these transformative learning opportunities because they have one foot firmly in the classroom, experiencing the same challenges as those they are leading, while providing coaching amongst team members (including peer-to-peer, coach-teammate, and/or in lab sites). These individuals have fostered trust within their teams and have the subject-matter expertise relevant to the work their teams do.

Effective PLCs, strengthened by PLC Coaches who champion the team's success by supporting both individual and collective growth will help us deliver on our promise of cultivating exceptional thinkers prepared for the future.

Principles Guiding the Professional Learning Community Coach Prototype

| PLCs | Teacher Leadership | Feedback |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective PLCs ensure all students learn at high levels by building a collaborative culture of collective responsibility that is focused on results. 2. PLCs are guided by four questions: What do we expect students to learn? How do we know if they | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distributing leadership to teacher leaders strengthens collaboration and teacher teams. 2. Teacher leaders engaged in implementing practices in their own classrooms are uniquely positioned to provide formative, | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everyone, including top-performing professionals, benefits from regular, actionable feedback to further improve and develop their professional practice. 2. Helping teachers to further strengthen and develop their classroom practices is |

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| <p>are learning it? What do we do if they aren't learning it? What do we do if they already have learnt it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Effective PLCs pay attention to what they do as well as how they function together as a team. 4. Effective PLCs learn together by regularly reflecting on and learning about their individual and collective practices. 5. PLCs are the primary vehicle for us to deliver on our strategic areas of focus, especially around the DSLOs, SEL, and alignment of curriculum and practices. | <p>job-embedded feedback to their peers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Teacher leaders are not the only "expert" on the team but instead use their expertise to empower individuals and the collective to learn and grow. 4. Teacher leaders are more able to give frequent and actionable feedback when the teams each teacher leader supports are reasonable in size (e.g. 6-10). 5. Providing teacher leaders with time and skills to lead and coach their team is essential to the success of the team. | <p>our most important lever to further improve learning experiences for students.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. On-going feedback and communication about instructional practice helps to ensure a highly aligned and coherent program. 4. Feedback is most useful when it is strengths-based, bite-sized, timely, and constructive. 5. Systems that facilitate feedback improve school culture and increase our ability to attract, retain and promote talented employees. |
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Desired Outcomes for Prototype

1. Create opportunities that allow SAS to test and learn from teacher leadership and feedback approaches in our context.
2. Increase frequency and usefulness of feedback and learning opportunities for teachers and strengthen our PLCs.
3. Identify PLC coaches who possess a positive disposition, a growth mindset, high emotional intelligence, strong relationships with peers and strong ability to lead a team.
4. Identify support systems necessary to train identified PLC coaches to facilitate high-quality learning on their teams, increase quality of team-based learning and deliver high-quality coaching and feedback.
5. Develop recommendations regarding which approaches may be best suited to implement to scale at SAS in the future.