Establishing PLC Team Norms

Effective teams generally have a set of norms that govern individual behavior, facilitate the work of the group and enable the group to accomplish its task. Abiding by norms is especially important for PLC teams:

- To increase productivity and effectiveness
- To ensure that all members have the opportunity to contribute
- To keep dialogue open and respectful, even when members disagree

CREATING YOUR TEAM NORMS

Your team norms will focus on the six categories listed below:

- **TIME:** Will we start and end on time?
- **LISTENING:** How will we encourage listening? How will we discourage interrupting?
- **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Will what we say in the meeting be held in confidence? What can be said to others after the meeting?
- **DECISION MAKING:** How will we make decisions? How will we deal with conflicts? How will we deal with differences of opinion?
- **PARTICIPATION:** How will we encourage everyone's participation?
- **EXPECTATIONS:** What do we expect from each other?

1) Ask each team member to reflect on and record group behavior(s) they consider ideal for each of the categories above.

2) After everyone has written down their ideas, make a combined list of norms (combining similar norms and clarifying language as needed).

3) If the list is long (more than 10 norms), the team should work to make the list more manageable.

4) Ask if everyone can abide by the list of norms. If anyone dislikes or cannot comply with one of the norms, review the proposed norms. Determine whether the group can support the norms before the group adopts them.

WHEN YOUR NORMS HAVE BEEN ADOPTED

- **Record & Post:** Use the "PLC Team Norms" template to create a document that lists all team norms and post it in the PLC Shared Data folder.
- **Be Accountable:** Commit to following the norms created by the team, and acknowledge that each team member shares in the responsibility of holding all members accountable to the norms.
- **Review & Assess:** Review the norms at the start of each meeting and assess the team's use of norms at the end of each meeting.