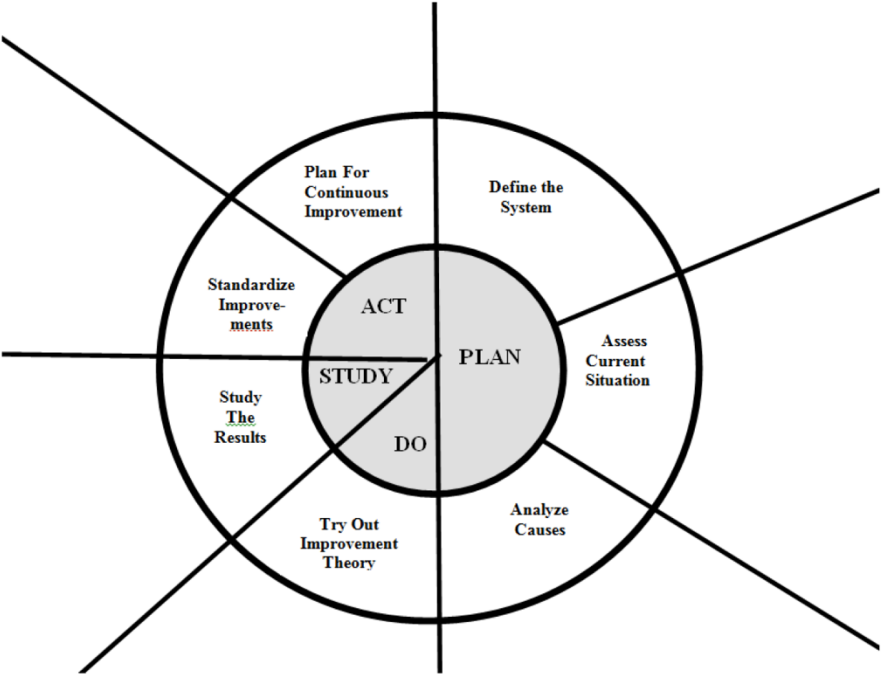
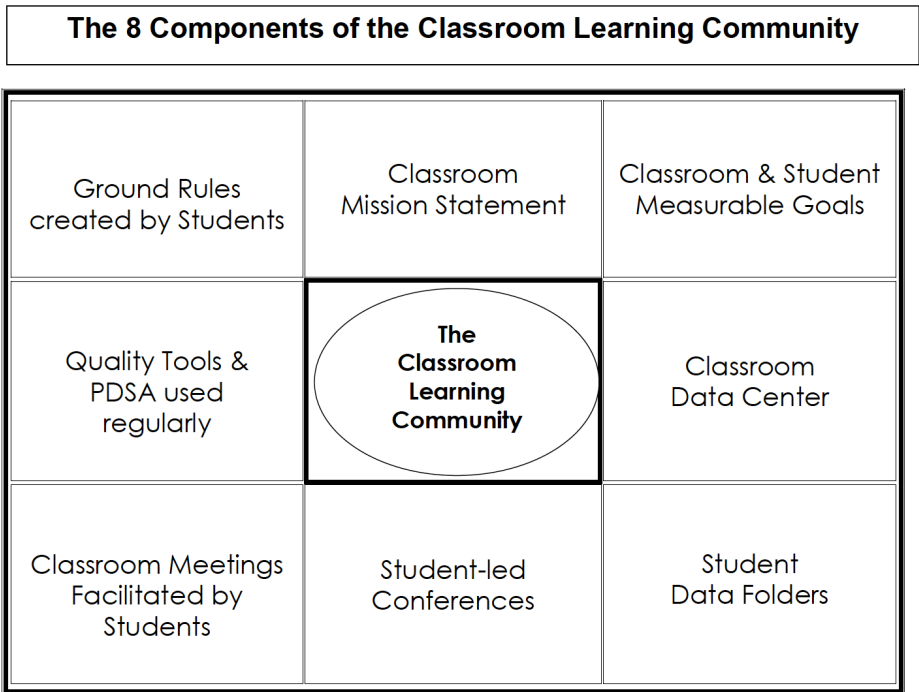


Continuous Improvement Supporting Documents



Documents Referenced in Presentation

Introduction To Supporting Documents

The information included in this “Continuous Improvement Supporting Documents” packet is referenced in Dr. Marino’s presentation materials. The material is intended to provide supporting information to reinforce the implementation of teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership in organizations. The strategies and techniques are rooted in research and best practices and are identified in the table of contents as well as the document titled “An Overview of How Each Continuous Improvement Topic is Supported By Research.”

Key Topics Addressed in the Workshop

Topic 1: The Transformational Change Process

- Using research based best practices to drive change throughout the organization

Topic 2: Implementing a Systems Approach for Continuous Improvement Throughout the Organization

- Embedding teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership at all levels

Topic 3: Establishing Vision, Mission, Values and Goals in the Organization

- Establishing clear direction and creating the future/desired state of the organization (Point “B”)

Topic 4: Creating a Strategic Plan on a Page

- Communicating a compelling case for the future using the “Plan on a Page” strategy

Topic 5: Aligning all Schools and Departments to the “Plan on a Page”

- Aligning goals and measures across the organization to the “Plan on a Page”

Topic 6: Engaging all Staff in Continuous Improvement

- Establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s)

Topic 7: Engaging all Students in the Improvement Effort Through 21st Century Learning

- The 8 components of the Classroom Learning Community model

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Page 4: Research Summary- Key Themes Integrated Into Jay’s Continuous Improvement Model

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- 8 Principles of Total Quality Management
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- What Works in Schools/Translating Research in Action (Marzano)
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Page 22: Involving Everyone Action Plan Template

Pages 23-29: Articles Published by Dr. Jay Marino

- 23-27: District 34 Classroom Learning Community (CLC) Model – Student Ownership, Empowerment and Responsibility- The Classroom Learning Community
- 28-30: A New Paradigm for Organizational Change: Involving Customers and Stakeholders in the Improvement Process
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Dr. J. Jay Marino – Biography

Dr. Jay Marino received his Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Northern Iowa; Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Arizona State University; Educational Specialists and Doctorate Degrees from Western Illinois University. Jay has led continuous improvement initiatives as an elementary and middle school teacher, elementary school administrator, Special Education Coordinator, Director of Technology, Director of Instruction, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of Schools. In addition, Jay serves as an international consultant assisting American and European school organizations in their continuous improvement efforts. Dr. Marino's primary work is focused in the Netherlands where Jay has made 20 visits since 2009 working with over 200 schools in the implementation of continuous improvement practices. Jay is a senior consultant in the Netherlands providing masterclasses and consultation services to schools in the Netherlands.

Jay has delivered multiple key note presentations at local, State, National and International conferences. He has served regionally as the Chair of the Iowa Quality Center's Advisory Council and nationally as the Chair of the American Society for Quality (ASQ) K-12 Educational Advisory Committee. Jay has been actively involved in State Quality Award programs as an applicant and an examiner and has assisted in obtaining State Quality Award recognition for school districts in both Iowa and Illinois.

Jay has authored books for America and Europe including: a chapter in Duurzame Schoolontwikkeling (2014) published by Expertis (Hengelo, Netherlands); Leading Continuous Improvement; Inspiring Quality Education Worldwide (2011) published by Magistrum (Amersfoort, Netherlands); and a book titled Quality across the curriculum; Integrating quality tools and PDSA with standards (2004) published by The American Society for Quality (Milwaukee, Wisconsin). Jay currently serves as an Associate Editor for the American Society for Quality's publication titled *Quality Approaches in Education*.

In addition, the following journal articles have been published: A Study of School Boards and Their Implementation of Continuous Improvement Practices (The Journal for Quality and Participation; Vol. 34, Issue 2, 2011); The American School Board of Education: Results of Their Continuous Improvement Practices (Tijdschrift voor Orthopedagogiek, Vol. 50, 2011); An inside look at the books; The continuous improvement classroom series (The Journal for Quality and Participation; Vol. 34, Issue 1, 2011); National responsibility: Implementation analysis of the continuous improvement model to improve school board accountability (National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal; Vol. 26, No. 3, 2009-10); Boardroom to classroom: Continuous improvement in Cedar Rapids (The School Administrator; Vol. 65, Number 4, 2008); Plan on a page (Scholastic Administrator; Vol. 6, Issue 8, 2007); A new paradigm for organizational change: Involving customers and stakeholders in the improvement process (The Journal for Quality and Participation; Vol. 30, Issue 1, 2007); Involve all stakeholders in aligning district, school, and classroom goals (School Superintendent's Insider; Vol. 9, Issue 9, 2007); Jay authored ASQ's ImpaQT training™ for the School, a two-day training module for teachers and administrators and also served as the first moderator of the national Quality in Education blog hosted by the American Society for Quality.



Jay lives in Antioch, Illinois, USA (near Chicago, IL) and is married to his wife, Laura and has four children; Jessica, Joey, Matthew, and Grace. Contact Jay via email continuous_improvement@jaymarino.me and learn more about Dr. Marino at his website- <http://www.jaymarino.me>.

An Overview of How Each Continuous Improvement Topic is Supported By Research

Topic	Research Reference	9 Characteristics of High Performing Schools (P.1)	6 Principals that Guide Student Achievement (P.1)	Instructional Strategies that Work (P.1)	7 Habits of Highly Effective People (P.2)	8 Lessons about Change (P.2)	Qualification, Socialization & Subjectification (P.2)	8 Principles of Total Quality Management (P.3)	7 Baldrige Criteria (P.3)	7 Key Principles of Lean Six Sigma (P.3)	What Works in Schools (P.4)	Classroom Instruction that Works (P.4)	Results- The Key to Continuous School Improvement (P.4)	School Leadership that Works (P.4)	The 90-90-90 Schools (P.4)	John Kotter's 8 Steps to Change (P.5)	W. Edwards Deming's 14 Points for Total Quality Management (P.6)	Hattie's Highest Impact Strategies for Learning (P.7/8)
Topic 1: Transformational Change Process		X	X			X		X	X	X						X	X	
Topic 2: Implementing a Systems Approach for Continuous Improvement		X	X		X	X		X	X	X						X	X	
Topic 3: Establishing Vision, Mission, Values and Goals		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X	X	
Topic 4: Creating a Strategic Plan on a Page		X	X		X	X		X	X	X				X		X	X	X
Topic 5: Aligning all Schools and Departments to the "Plan on a Page"					X			X	X	X						X		
Topic 6: Engaging all Staff in Continuous Improvement			X		X	X	X	X	X	X								X
Topic 7: Engaging all Students							X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Research Summary

How the practices of continuous improvement align with research based best practices in education!

<u>9 Characteristics of High Performing Schools</u> (Washington Research Report)	<u>6 Principals That Guide Student Achievement in High Performing Schools</u> (Alan Blankstein)	<u>Instructional Strategies That Impact Student Achievement</u> (Robert Marzano)
Clear and Shared Focus	Common mission, vision, values and goals.	ID similarities and differences
High Standards and Expectations	Ensuring achievement for all students with systems for prevention and intervention.	Summarizing and note taking
Effective School Leadership	Collaboration focused on teaching and learning.	Reinforcing and providing recognition
High Levels of Collaboration and Communication	Using data to guide decision-making and continuous improvement.	Homework and practice
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards	Gaining active engagement from family & community	Nonlinguistic representations
Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning	Building sustainable leadership capacity	Cooperative Learning
Focused Professional Development		Setting objectives and providing feedback
Supportive Learning Environment		Generating and testing hypotheses
High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement		Questions, cues, and advance organizers

Research Summary

How the practices of continuous improvement align with research based best practices in education!

<u>7 Habits of Highly Effective People</u> (Stephen Covey)	<u>8 Lessons About Change</u> (Michael Fullan)	<u>Qualification, Socialization & Subjectification</u> (Gert Biesta)
Be Proactive (take responsibility)	You can't mandate what matters	Qualification (knowledge, skills and understandings)
Begin with the End in Mind (vision)	Change is a journey not a blueprint	Socialization (continuation of particular cultural or religious traditions, or for the purpose of professional socialization)
Put First Things First (prioritize)	Problems are our friends	Subjectification (individualism, autonomy and independent in their thinking and acting.
Think Win-Win (focus on results)	Vision and strategic planning come later	
Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood (analyze before acting)	Individualism and collectivism must have equal power	
Synergize (creativity)	Neither centralization nor decentralization works	
Sharpen the Saw (renewing ourselves)	Connection with the wider environment is critical for success	
	Every person is a change agent	

Research Summary

How the practices of continuous improvement align with research based best practices in education!

<u>8 Principles of Total Quality Management</u>	<u>7 Baldrige Criteria</u>	<u>7 Key Principles of Lean Six Sigma</u>
Customer focus (Focusing on those we serve)	Leadership (Set and communicate clear direction)	Focus on the customer (Focus on the needs of students, parents and staff)
Leadership (Embrace shared leadership)	Strategic planning (Establish vision, mission, values and goals in the organization)	Identify and understand how the work gets done (Involve everyone in action plans to improve)
Involvement of people (Everyone is part of the improvement process)	Customer focus (Focus on those you serve)	Manage, improve and smooth the process flow (Use PDSA to drive improvements)
Process approach (Use PDSA to drive improvements)	Measurement, analysis, and knowledge management (Use data to make decisions)	Remove Non-Value-Added steps and waste (When looking at how work gets done, look for ways to streamline the work and eliminate “waste” in the process)
System approach to management (Ensure all parts of the organization are aligned)	Workforce focus (Ensure all staff are involved in improvement efforts)	Manage by fact and reduce variation (Use data driving, data informed decision making)
Continuous improvement (Ensure long-term improvements over time)	Process management (Use PDSA to drive improvements)	Involve and equip the people in the process (Everyone is part of the improvement process)
Factual approach to decision making (Use data driving, data informed decision making)	Results (Work toward positive results in student/staff/parent satisfaction, student achievement results and the social, emotional, behavioral well being)	Undertake improvement activity in a systematic way (Ensure all parts of the organization are aligned)
Mutually beneficial relationships (Carefully manage relationships with parents, staff and partners to be “win-win”)		

Research Supporting *The Classroom Learning Community Model*

	<u>What Works In Schools-</u> Translating Research/Action (Marzano)	<u>Classroom Instruction That Works;</u> Research Based Strategies (Marzano)	<u>Results- The Key To Continuous School Improvement</u> (Schmoker)	<u>School Leadership That Works-</u> From Research To Results (Marzano)	<u>The 90-90-90 Schools:</u> A Case Study (Reeves)
Ground Rules Created By Students	P. 174 Leaders establish safe environments	P. 90 Cooperative Learning/Ground Rules		P. 24 Safe and orderly environment/ self-confidence & responsibility	
Mission Statements	P.174 Leaders have clear vision	P. 90 Cooperative Learning/Mission Statements		P. 5 Clear mission, vision & goals; P. 24 vision	P. 187 Focus on academic achievement
SMART Goals	P. 174 Leaders frame goals, communicate goals & establish explicit academic goals	P. 93 Setting objectives and providing feedback	P. 22, 27,29,31 Measurable goals; P. 35,44 Performance data	P. 5 Clear mission, vision & goals, high expectations	P. 187 Focus on academic achievement
Classroom Data Centers	P. 174 Leaders monitor school performance	P. 52 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition; P. 93 Setting objectives and providing feedback	P. 22, 27,29,31 Measurable goals; P. 35,44 Performance data; P. 65, 68 Periodic data	P. 5 Monitoring of progress	P. 187 Frequent assessment of student progress; P. 196 Value of feedback
Student Data Folders	P. 174 Leaders monitor school performance	P. 52 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition; P. 93 Setting objectives and providing feedback	P. 22, 27,29,31 Measurable goals; P. 35,44 Performance data; P. 65, 68 Periodic data	P. 5 Monitoring of progress	P. 187 Frequent assessment of student progress; P. 196 Value of feedback
Class Meetings	P. 174 Leaders monitor school performance	P. 52 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition, P. 58 Pause, Prompt, Praise; P. 90 Cooperative Learning; P. 93 Setting objectives and providing feedback	P. 65, 68 Periodic data	P. 5 Rituals, ceremonies and symbolic actions & recognition of achievement; P. 5 Monitoring of progress	P. 187 Frequent assessment of student progress; P. 196 Value of feedback
Quality Tools & PDSA	P. 174 Leaders monitor school performance	P. 52 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition; P. 74 Nonlinguistic Representations & graphic organizers; P. 104 Generating and testing hypothesis	P. 16; collaboration as action research P. 22, 27,29,31 Measurable goals; P. 35,44 Performance data; P. 65, 68 Periodic data	P. 15 Total Quality Management & Continuous improvement; P. 5 Collaboration/Norm of continuous improvement/Monitoring of progress	P. 187 Focus on academic achievement; P. 187 Frequent assessment of student progress; P. 196 Value of feedback; P. 197 Action Research

John Kotter's 8 Step – Research Based - Change Process

Steps	Transformation Suggestions	Implications for My System
1. Create a sense of urgency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine current data and results (student achievement, satisfaction, enrollment, finances, etc.) Identify and discuss crisis, potential crisis, or major opportunities Provide evidence from outside the organization that change is necessary 	
2. Create the leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble a group with enough power to lead the change effort Attract key change leaders by showing enthusiasm and commitment Encourage the group to work together as a team 	
3. Create a vision for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a vision to help direct the change effort Develop strategies for achieving that vision 	
4. Communicate the vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build alignment and engagement through collaboration Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies Keep communication simple and heartfelt (plan on a page) Teach new behaviors by the example of the leadership team 	
5. Empowering people to take action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove obstacles to the change Change systems and / or structures that work against the vision Show people where they fit into the improvement process- “no one escapes continuous improvement” 	
6 Anchor the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the connections between the new behaviors and the vision Use the Plan Do Study Act cycle to standardize the improvement process 	
7. Keep moving forward through the swamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated behaviors will reaffirm commitment to the vision Seek input along the way from stakeholders and use the feedback to make mid-course corrections 	
8. Celebrate success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for and create visible performance improvements Recognize and reward personnel involved in the improvements Reinforce the behaviors shown that led to the improvements 	

W. EDWARDS DEMING'S 14 POINTS FOR TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

01	CREATE PURPOSE FOR IMPROVEMENT	08	DRIVE OUT FEAR
02	ADOPT THE NEW PHILOSOPHY	09	BREAK DOWN SILOS
03	CEASE DEPENDENCE ON INSPECTION TO ACHIEVE QUALITY	10	NO SLOGANS
04	WORK WITH ONE SUPPLIER TO REDUCE COST	11	NO QUOTAS OR NUMERICAL GOALS
05	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	12	REMOVE ANNUAL RATINGS OR MERIT SYSTEM
06	ON-THE-JOB TRAINING	13	INSTITUTE EDUCATION AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS
07	LEADERSHIP	14	INVOLVE ALL WORKERS IN THE TRANSFORMATION

Deming's 14 Points on Quality Management, a core concept on implementing total quality management, is a set of management practices to help companies increase their quality and productivity.

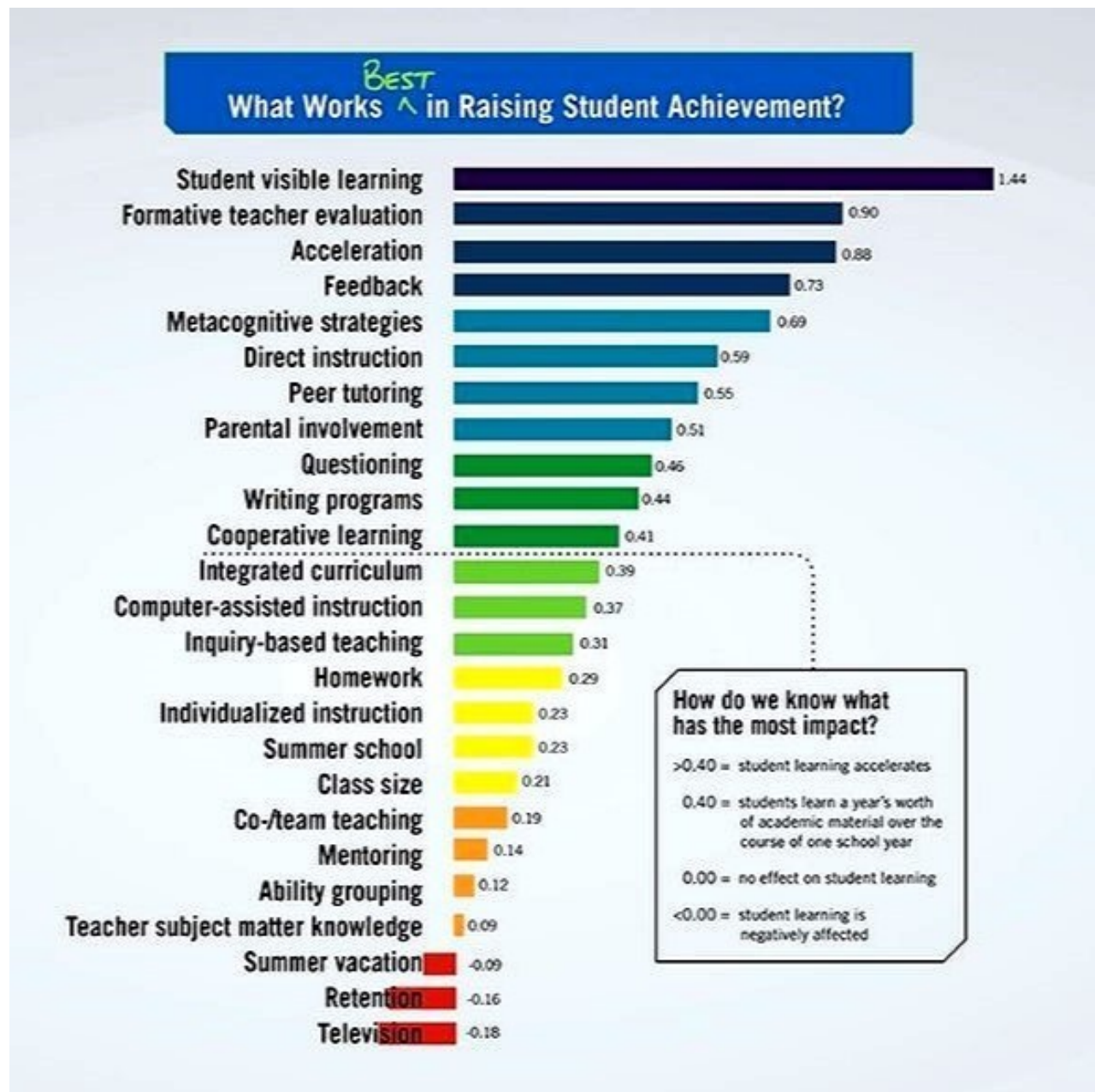
Deming's 14 Points are as follows:

1. Create **constancy of purpose** for improving (Think long term aligned toward vision/mission)
2. Adopt the **new philosophy** (Embrace teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership)
3. Cease **dependence on inspection** to achieve quality. (Don't focus on the wrongs)
4. End the practice of awarding business on price alone; instead, minimize total cost by working with a **single supplier**. (Focus on critical few resources, consultants and services)
5. **Improve constantly** and forever. (Embrace a continuous improvement philosophy throughout the organization)
6. Institute **training on the job**. (Ensure everyone in the organization understands their role in the "big picture")
7. Implement **leadership**. (Embrace shared leadership at all levels)
8. **Drive out fear**. (Ensure open and honest communication and make sure employees feel valued)
9. **Break down barriers** between departments. (Focus on teamwork and collaboration throughout the school)
10. Get rid of **unclear slogans**. (Don't let words and phrases replace effective leadership)
11. **Eliminate management by objectives**. (Measure the process rather than the people behind the process)
12. **Remove barriers** to pride of workmanship. (Eliminate competition in the work place- focus on collaboration)
13. Implement education and **self-improvement**. (Encourage professional development and skill building)
14. Make "**transformation**" everyone's job. (Use effective change management principles ie: Kotter, Fullan, etc.)

The Highest Impact Strategy for Learning (Hattie, 2015)

John Hattie reported the learning approaches with the largest impact on student learning. His 2009 research synthesis show the best strategies were metacognitive strategies (here's a post on [metacognitive strategies](#)), self-reported grades, and formative evaluation.

He updated this list in 2015, so we could better understand those terms. In the update, he simply called these three strategies, “**student visible learning**.” This approach to learning had an effect size of 1.41...that's big effect, but what does it mean?



It just means, that from 800 studies, there was not another student factor that had as big of an impact on learning. Student visible learning can be expected to help students achieve more than a year's growth!

What does Student Visible Learning Look Like in the Classroom?

1. Task: Students think about what they're doing. They understand the task.
2. Process: Students think about the methods. They are aware of **how** they are doing it.
3. Reflection: Students think about their own expectations. What do I believe I really **can** do? How well do I do it?

Visible learning in the task.

1. Be clear about what students will do at the end, from the beginning. Posting an objective is the starting point, but explain the learning target in terms of what the student will actually do.
2. Ask students to explain the task to each other before beginning instruction and again before beginning the task.
3. Use scoring scales or rubrics (even simple ones) as much as possible. This helps your students to visualize what the learning looks like.
4. Ask students to think about their own expectations before starting the lesson. What do you think you can do? What do you think will be hard for you here?

Visible learning in the process.

1. Tell your students, "This is what great students do during instruction and during classwork."
2. Then model what it is by thinking aloud, "What did the teacher say to do? What did I write in my notes? What steps do I take?"
3. Ask students to tell each other the steps needed to complete the learning task.
4. Ask students to decide which steps they need to take next.
5. Use checklists or rubrics, so students can visually evaluate their own learning during the work itself. Not just at the end.

Visible learning as reflection.

1. Students are constantly gauging themselves against their own expectations. They wonder, "Am I doing this right?" Others think, "I can do this. I did it perfectly."
2. Help their reflection by asking them along the way, "What is it right now that you think you really understand well?" "What is one thing that we've done or said that is strange for you?"
3. Give them feedback on their reflection. Let them know if their learning actually matches what they think.
4. Don't say, "Do your best." Instead say, "What are you doing? How can you make it just one step better?"
5. The learning happens most when students are aware of their own expectations and when they successfully move just beyond those expectations.

Retrieved from <https://teamtomeducation.com/what-is-student-visible-learning/#tab-con-6> on 9-7-18

District 34 Continuous Improvement “Systemic” Alignment Model

	Shared Leadership	Roles & Responsibilities	Documents/Goals		Results/Data	Time
District	District Leadership Team (DLT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide oversight to the District Plan on a page (goals/data) Communication & alignment (report back to stakeholders) Stakeholder input (insight into decisions) 	District Strategic Plan	SMART Goals Aligned To The Plan	District Balanced Scorecard	Meets quarterly
Support Services	Operational Leadership Team (OLT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set and communicate direction for the department Monitor department SMART goals Build leadership capacity Align efforts to the District strategic plan 	Support Services Department Improvement Plan		Support Services Balanced Scorecard	Meets 1 to 2 times per month
School	Building Leadership Team (BLT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set and communicate direction Monitor the School Improvement Plan (SIP) Build leadership capacity Align Student Learning Team (SLT) work throughout the school 	School Improvement Plan (SIP)		School Balanced Scorecard	Meets 2 to 3 times per month
Teacher	Student Learning Teams (SLT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every teacher connected to an SLT (by grade level or content area) Answer questions: 1.) What do we want students to know? (I can statements); 2.) How do we know if they know it? (assessment data); 3.) How will we respond when they don't ? (RTI); and 4.) How will we respond when they do? (enrichment & differentiation) 	Classroom SMART Goals		Common Formative Assessment Data Displayed in Classroom Data Center	Meets 2-4 times per month
Student	Classroom Learning Community (CLC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage students in 21st century learning Empowerment/accountability Connect every student to classroom goals and “I Can” statements 	Student Individual SMART Goals		Student Data Folder	Class meetings 4 times per month

Shared Leadership Team Overview

Setting and Communicating Direction Through Shared Leadership!

Team Membership

- Total team membership is typically 25-30% of the total number of teachers in the school
- Members should represent a variety of grade levels and content areas, including special education and art/music/PE, etc.
- Membership should rotate each year (it is recommended that 1/3 of the team is replaced each year)

Key Tasks of the BLT

- Set and communicate direction at school through the following tools that are monitored regularly:
 - Plan on a Page (Mission, Vision, Values, Goals)
 - School Improvement Plan (SMART Goals & Action Plan)
 - Balanced Scorecard (Formative and Summative Data Aligned to Goals)
- Build leadership capacity at the school; engage and empower staff in decision making
- Align Professional Learning Community (PLC) efforts in school to the school improvement plan
- Ensure the 8 components of the Classroom Learning Community (CLC) are supporting the goals of the school.
- Assist in the planning (and facilitation) of staff meetings and the use of school improvement days or other professional development

Best Practices

- Ensure effective team norms are reviewed and adhered to regularly
- Evaluate meetings (using a simple plus/delta or some other instrument) and use the feedback to plan for the next meeting.
- Occasionally, use the *Shared Leadership Team Reflection* instrument to keep the team on track.
- Schedule regular meetings in advance (at a minimum of once per month- recommended twice a month)
- Communicate with the entire staff about the work of the team (send out agendas, minutes or other information so others are informed of what's being discussed/acted on)
- Team members regularly facilitate "all staff" meetings at the school
- Ensure school goals are focused on through PLC SMART goal alignment, SMART goals in classroom data centers and student goals aligned in student data folders

Typical Agenda Template for Shared Leadership Teams (estimated 60 minutes- modify as necessary)

- Review team norms/collective commitments made to each other (2 minutes)
- Teambuilder/ice breaker (5 minutes)
- Review School Improvement Plan action plan/adjust actions and timelines as necessary (10 minutes)
- Discuss Professional Learning Community progress/report out (10 minutes)
- *Occasional Items as Needed (15 minutes)*
 - Review any incoming formative data/update and review scorecard
 - Plan for upcoming staff meeting and assign facilitators
 - Plan for upcoming school improvement/professional development days
- Set agenda for next meeting (5 minutes)
- Evaluate meeting; consider occasionally using the *Shared Leadership Team Reflection* instrument (5 minutes)

Shared Leadership Team Reflection/Assessment

School Name: _____

Date: _____

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.) Our Team has set direction and we regularly communicate our progress with all stakeholders. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
2.) Our team evaluates each meeting and we use the input to improve future meetings. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
3.) Our team members follow the agreed-upon norms. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
4.) All teachers know the School Improvement goals at our school. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
5.) Our school's Plan on a Page is posted in all classrooms. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
6.) All teachers at our school have created classroom SMART goals that are aligned to our School Improvement Plan. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
7.) Classroom data centers are being used by all teachers to track and monitor progress toward classroom SMART goals. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
8.) Students are tracking their individual progress toward classroom SMART goals in their data folders. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
9.) All teachers at our school serve on a PLC team and have SMART goals aligned to the school goals. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
10.) All PLC teams at our school use the PDSA cycle to drive improvements on our SMART goals. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
11.) Our team meets regularly and follows a productive agenda. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
12.) When reviewing our PLC progress, we identified these indicators as strengths and improvement areas → Comments:	Strengths- PLC		Improvement Areas- PLC		

Next Steps for our Building Leadership Team:

An Overview of Professional Learning Communities

Definition

“...A Professional Learning Community is a collaboration of teachers, administrators, parents, and students, who work together to seek out best practices, test them in the classroom, continuously improve processes, and focus on results.”

Rick DuFour, 2002.

Fundamental Assumptions

1. We can make a difference: Our schools can be more effective.
2. Improving our people is the key to improving our schools.
3. Significant school improvement will impact teaching and learning.

The ONE Thing

in a Professional Learning Community,
“learning” rather than “teaching”
is the fundamental purpose
of your school.

Three Big Ideas

Focus on Learning
Collaboration
Focus on Results

Four Corollary Questions

1. What should students know and be able to do as a result of this course, class, or grade level?
2. How will we know that the students are not learning?
3. How do we respond when students do not learn?
4. How do we respond when students learn more?

Six Characteristics of a Professional Learning Community

1.) Shared mission, vision, values, goals

What distinguishes a learning community from an ordinary school is its collective commitment to guiding principles that articulate what the staff of the school believes and that govern their actions and behaviors.

2.) Collaborative Culture

Professionals in a learning community work in teams that share a common purpose. They learn from each other and create the momentum that drives improvement. They build within the organization the structure and vehicles that make collaborative work and learning effective and productive.

3.) Collective Inquiry

People in a learning community relentlessly question the status quo, seek new methods of teaching and learning, test the methods, and then reflect on the results.

- o They reflect publicly on their beliefs and challenge each other's beliefs.
- o They share insights and hammer out common meanings.
- o They work jointly to plan and test actions and initiatives.
- o They coordinate their actions, so that the work of each individual contributes to the common effort.

4.) Action Orientation / Experimentation

Members of professional learning communities constantly turn their learning and insights into action. They recognize the importance of engagement and experience in learning and in testing new ideas.

5.) Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Members of a learning organization are not content with the status quo and continually seek ways to bring present reality closer to future ideal. They constantly ask themselves and each other:

- o What is our purpose?
- o What do we hope to achieve?
- o What are our strategies for improving?
- o How will we assess our efforts?

6.) Results Orientation

Professionals in a learning organization recognize that no matter how well-intentioned the efforts, the only valid judgment of improvement are observable and measurable results. Assessment and re-evaluation are the keys to continued improvement. Collective inquiry, action orientation and experimentation, commitment to continuous improvement, and results orientation are the four habits of highly effective teams.

Summary

Each word of the phrase “professional learning community” has been chosen purposefully. A “professional” is someone with expertise in a specialized field, an individual who has not only pursued advanced training to enter the field, but who is also expected to remain current in its evolving knowledge base. The knowledge base of education has expanded dramatically in the past quarter century, both in terms of research and in terms of the articulation of recommended standards for the profession. Although many school personnel are unaware of or are inattentive to emerging research and standards, educators in a professional learning community make these findings the basis of their collaborative investigation of how they can better achieve their goals.

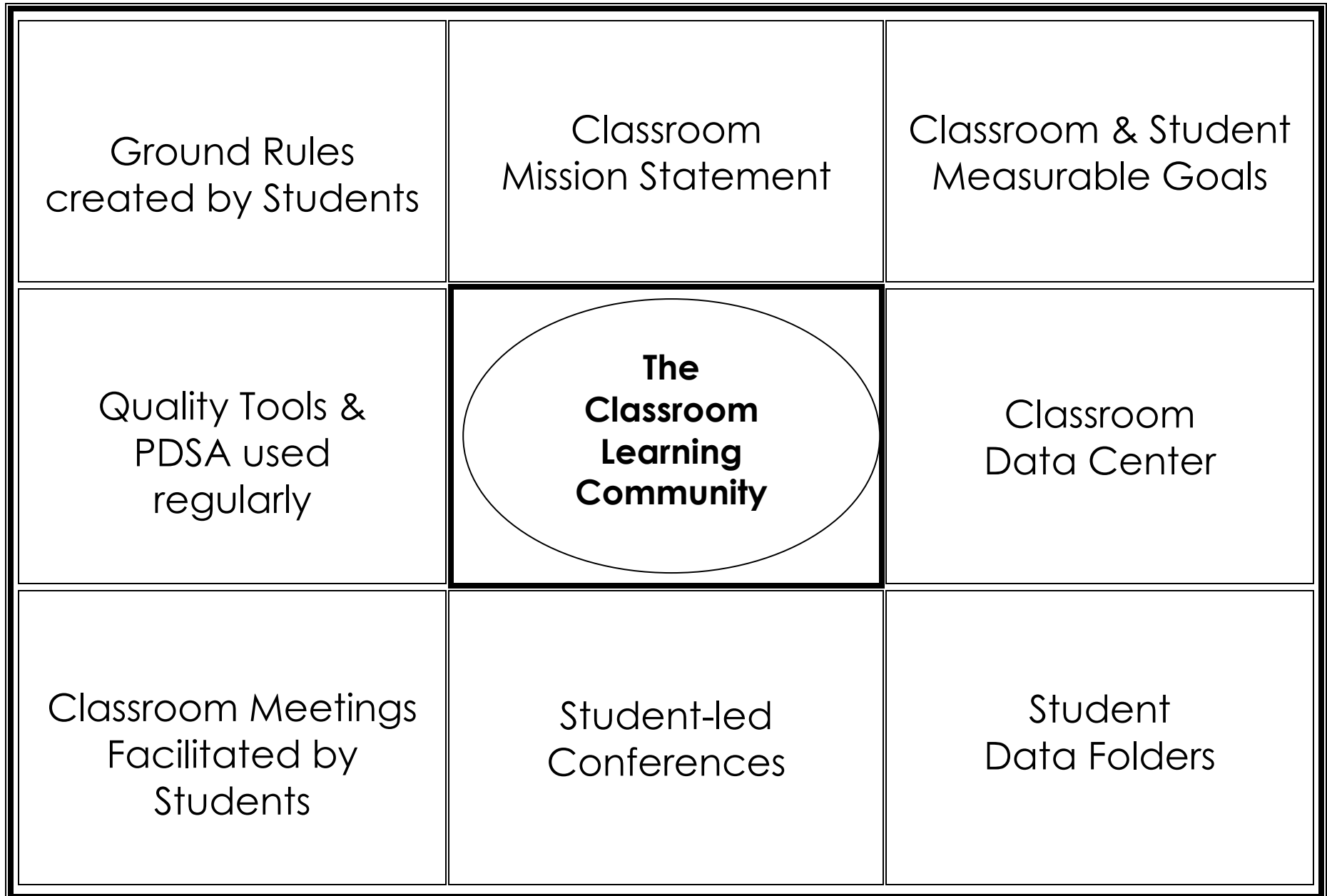
“Learning” suggests ongoing action and perpetual curiosity. In Chinese, the term “learning” is represented by two characters: the first means “to study”, and the second means “to practice constantly.” Many schools operate as though their personnel know everything they will ever need to know the day they enter the profession. The school that operates as a professional learning community recognizes that its members must engage in the ongoing study and constant practice that characterize an organization committed to continuous improvement.

Much has been written about learning organizations, but we prefer the term “community.” An organization has been defined both as an “administrative and functional structure” (Webster’s Dictionary) and as “a systematic arrangement for a definite purpose” (Oxford Dictionary). In each case, the emphasis is on structure and efficiency. In contrast, however, the term “community” suggests a group linked by common interests. As Corrine McLaughlin and Gordon Davidson (1994) write: “Community means different things to different people. To some it is a safe haven where survival is assured through mutual cooperation. To others, it is a place of emotional support, with deep sharing and bonding with close friends. Some see community as an intense crucible for personal growth. For others, it is simply a place to pioneer their dreams.”

In a professional learning community, all of these characteristics are evident. Educators create an environment that fosters mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth as they work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone.

-Adapted from Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker (1998), Professional Learning Communities at Work

The 8 Components of the Classroom Learning Community



If you observed a Classroom Learning Community...

You Would See...

- **21st century learning!**
- Student-created **ground rules**
- **District** and **School** mission statements and the **school improvement goals** in each classroom
- The **classroom mission statement**
- Classroom **SMART goals** and **measures posted** in the **Classroom Data Center**
- **Data** indicating **class progress** towards classroom goals (Charts, Graphs and other Quality Tools displayed in the Classroom Data Center)
- **+/-Delta** from the previous day/class- feedback from the students
- **Action plan** for the day (based on the previous day's plus/delta feedback from students)
- Chairs/desks/tables arranged to **support collaborative work** in achieving classroom goals (Cooperative Learning, Collaboration & Peer Teaching)
- Grade-level/course **standards** in kid-friendly language
- **Flow charts** of key classroom processes (morning routine, turning in homework, lab procedures, etc.)
- Regular **class meetings** where students facilitate the meeting (Goals are reviewed, progress is shared, ideas for improving the classroom learning system are discussed)
- **Student data folders** in which students **monitor and track their performance**
- **Student-led conferences** facilitated by students sharing their progress toward learning goals
- Students using **quality tools** and the **Plan Do Study Act** cycle to improve their learning

You Would Hear...

- The teacher talking to students about the **"critical few"** classroom goals and their alignment to the school improvement plan
- The students talking to the teacher about how they can work **together** to achieve the "critical few" classroom goals and the progress they are making
- Students talking to the teacher about their personal goals and action plans (that are **aligned** to the classroom goals, school improvement plan goals and District goals)
- Students able to describe and talk about the **classroom learning system**, the class mission, goals, measures, the Classroom Data Center and their student data folder

You Would Feel...

- **Student centered** environment focused on results
- A sense of a **learning community**
- Shared **accountability, responsibility and ownership** toward achieving class and personal goals
- **Excitement and enthusiasm** about learning
- **Respect** for different talents, competencies, and perspectives
- A willingness to **collect and analyze data** to improve the learning system
- A commitment to **continual improvement**

PDSA – Key Questions

Plan for Change

- How will I sustain the positive changes?
- What area will I work on next?

Describe the current process for addressing the identified area of need.

- How is it connected to the mission and goals?
- What is the problem and why are we selecting it?
- What is the current way this process is done or handled?
- What are the key measures for this process?

Standardize the implementation

- How can I incorporate the new way of doing things to make it part of my regular practice?
- How will I communicate/share this best practice/improvement theory?
- What staff development is needed?

Assess the impact through data review.

- Did my improvement theory work?
- How does this new data compare to the baseline data?

What is the research-based best-practice/improvement theory?

- What changes am I implementing?
- What are the drivers and restrainers?
- What is my data gathering plan to see if my improvement theory worked?

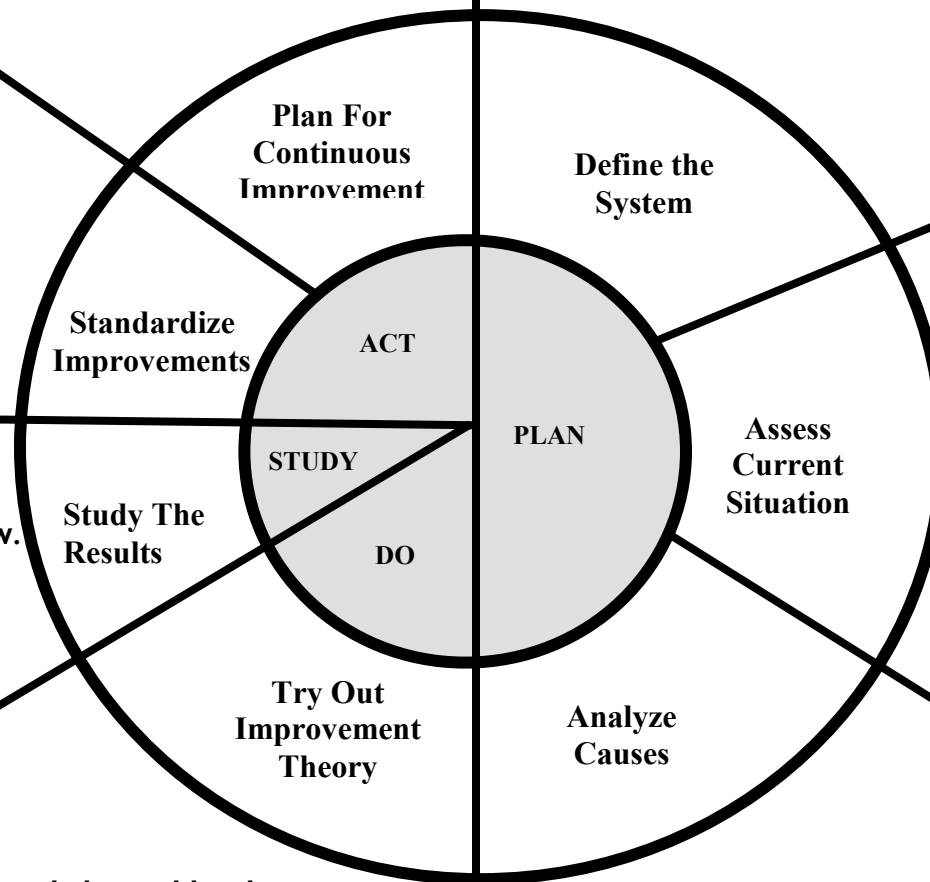
Define the System

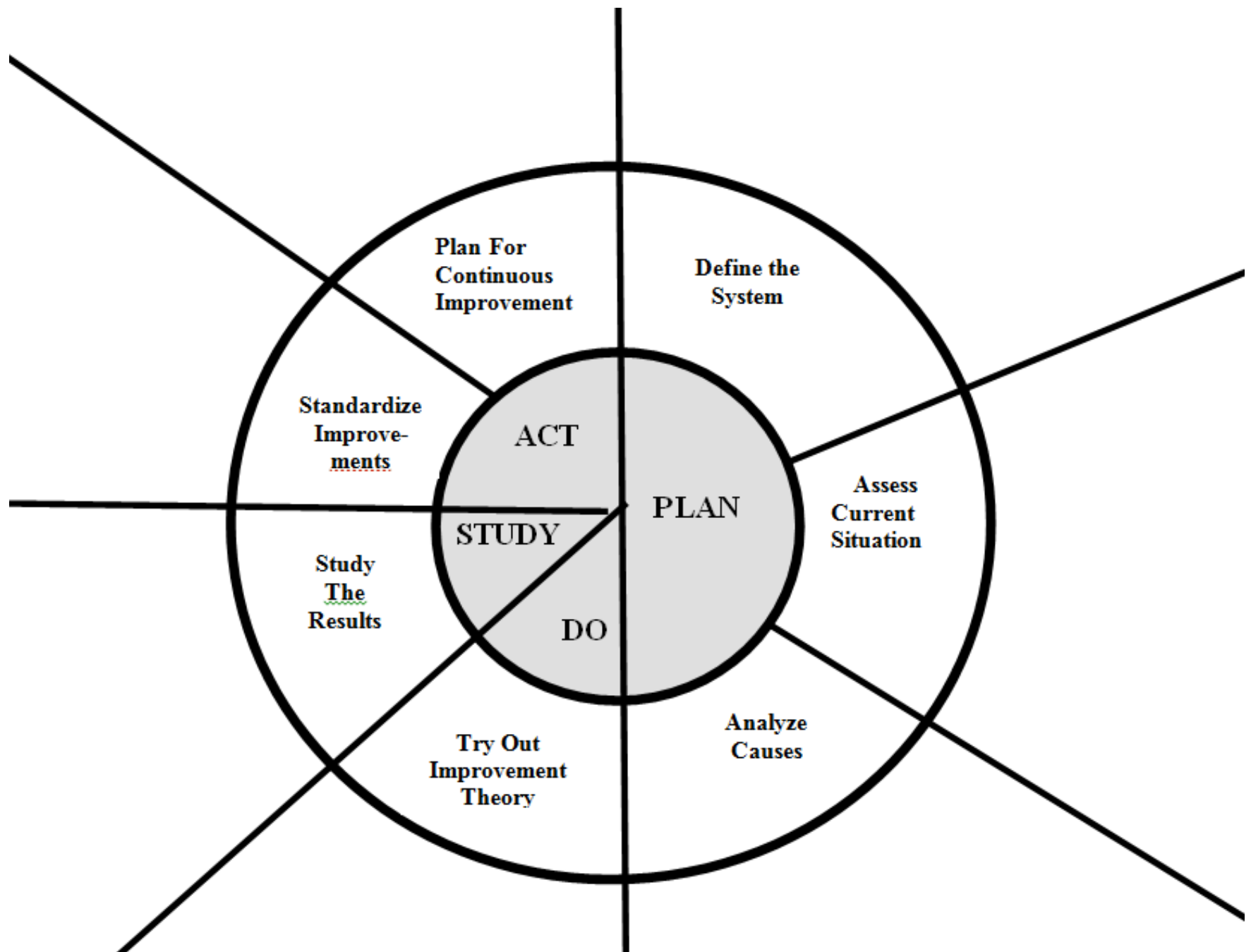
Review data to determine baseline performance in the specific area identified.

- How big of a problem is it?
- What data do I have that show current levels of performance (baseline data) of the area I'm trying to improve?
- What do the data tell us? Any new insights?

Review the baseline data, what are the root causes that are producing the results I'm getting?

- What does research say about how this system could be improved?
- Study research-based best practice/improvement theory addressing areas of need.





My Plan-Do-Study-Act

Name: _____ Date: _____

PLAN

Define/explain the current situation:

Focus: Complete & hand-in work on time

Goal: To complete & hand-in _____ assignments on time.

Assess the Current Situation

During the last _____ school days, I have completed & handed -in _____ assignments on time.

Analyze Causes - Root cause Check all that apply

_____ I don't write my assignments in my agenda.

_____ I don't do my assignments at home.

_____ I don't show my homework to someone at home.

_____ I wait until the last minute to work on assignments.

_____ I don't use my time wisely at school to complete work.

_____ I don't usually understand assignments.

Other: _____

DO

Improvement Theory: To complete work on time I am going to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Study the Results

After _____ days of trying my improvement theory,

My situation: has changed had not changed

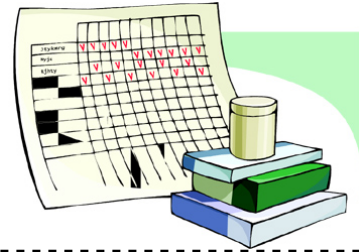
I know this because _____

Act

To continue to improve, I am going to _____

Student Signature:

Parent signature:



Day -

Date

What I learned today:

◇

◇

◇

◇

Application: to my classroom/work

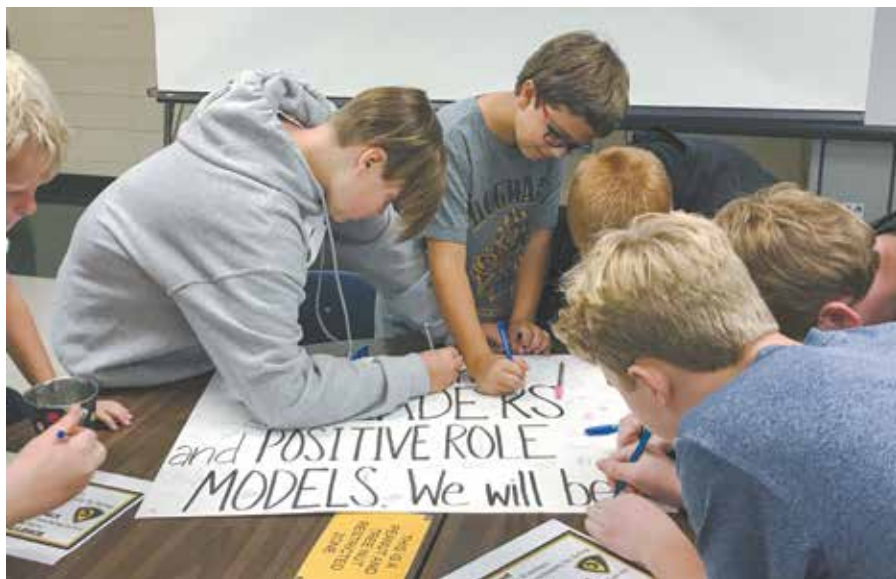
Goal Outcome	Action Steps	Measure of Success	Timeline

“No One Escapes Continuous Improvement”- Involving Everyone!

Goal Focus Area:			
Name the strategy or tool	Describe how stakeholders will participate, if applicable.		
	Teachers	Students	Parents

District 34 Classroom Learning Community (CLC) Model – Student Ownership, Empowerment and Responsibility

The Classroom Learning Community



The District 34 Classroom Learning Community (CLC) model encompasses 8 research-based practices designed to instill a positive and collaborative classroom climate which focuses on continuous improvement. The Classroom Learning Community instills the values of teamwork and collaboration by which the teacher shares leadership of the classroom with the students. In this model, students take responsibility and accountability for their own learning. The 8 components of the model embed true 21st Century learning with a strong focus on student ownership. In District 34, teachers and students are embracing the model and enjoying the benefits of a true collaborative classroom.

Ground Rules: Making Collective Commitments To Each Other

The creation of ground rules allows students and teachers an opportunity to voice what they, as individuals, need to ensure a safe, productive classroom environment.

Ground rules (or collective commitments) are often created with a variety of quality tools. The process is simple, yet powerful, to give every student a voice. Students begin by brainstorming responses to the question — “what collective commitments should we make to each other to ensure a positive and collaborative classroom?” Students generate their thoughts and write one thought per post-it note. After a period of time, students review each other’s comments and begin to organize common thoughts together into key themes of like ideas. This process incorporates a tool called the Affinity Diagram.

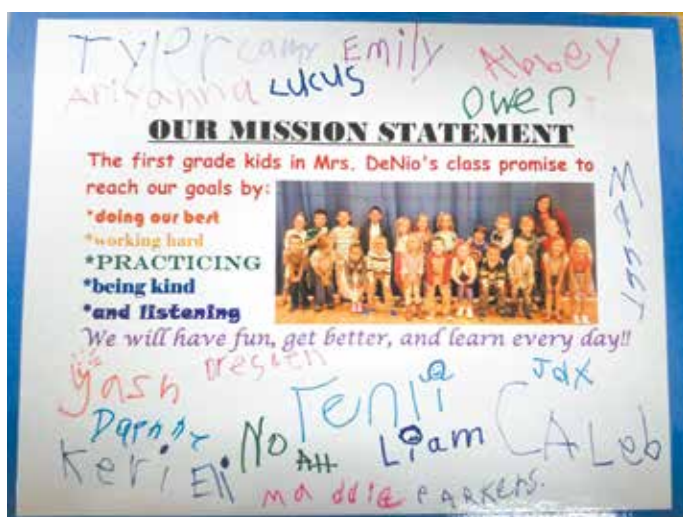


Next, students decide which ground rules (or norms) are most important to help provide the foundation for a successful school year. To prioritize key ideas, students use a tool called Nominal Group Technique to rank order preferred themes and narrow the focus to the critical few (verses the trivial many). Once norms are prioritized and narrowed, they then serve as ground rules for the class. Students sign their name indicating that they had a voice in creating the norms and also agree to do their part in following them. Students use real-life problem solving tools like Brainstorming, Affinity Diagram and Nominal Group Technique to productively create their own ground rules, norms and collective commitments that they’ve made to each other. This is the first step in the District 34 CLC model.

Mission Statement: Ensuring Students Know What They are at School to Do Together!

Students collaboratively create a mission statement that focuses the learning for the year and gets everyone “on the same page” for learning. The process begins with a review of the school’s mission statement which defines the purpose of the school. In the CLC model, teachers review the school mission with their students and talk about how their class will contribute to the school mission. Using the same quality tools for the creation of classroom ground rules (Brainstorm, Affinity Diagram, Nominal Group Technique), students begin the creation of a classroom mission statement.

A classroom mission statement answers the question



“what are we here to do together this year?” Classroom mission provides clear focus for students, reminding them daily of what they are striving to accomplish and how they will go about accomplishing it together.

Just as the classroom mission statement is aligned to the school mission, some classrooms are also having students create personal mission statements. Personal mission statements provide students with clarity of purpose and and is customized to the students helping them answer the question “What am I here to do at school each day?”

Amy Guanci, Science teacher at Antioch Upper Grade School (AUGS) has her 6th grade Project Lead The Way (PLTW) students write personal mission and goals in the student's engineering notebook. “This helps students keep track of their personal goal for the class and the trimester. They can review it and see their accomplishments. Students are aware of what they are learning and where they need to be. Creating this goal allows the student's time to think about the course, why they signed up for it and their responsibility as a student,” says Guanci.

SMART Goals: Targeting Measureable Outcomes

Just like teachers in their Professional Learning Community answer the question, “What do we want students to know and be able to do in our grade level

(or content area)?” — Students use SMART goals to answer the same question. SMART is an acronym that means **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-Bound. SMART goals provide focus and define the measureable ‘desired’ state.

Within the District 34 CLC model, SMART goals are aligned throughout the school. Personal student SMART goals are aligned to classroom group goals which are aligned to school improvement goals. Students participate in goal setting that puts a “laser like focus” on instruction, customized and tailored to each student's individual ability level.

Individual SMART goals, often found in the student's data folder, are an opportunity for the students to create ownership of their learning. Through creating individual SMART goals, students evaluate what it is that is important to them and create a plan on how to achieve their goals. Self-monitoring and evaluating progress are vital characteristics of successful 21st Century learners.

Classroom Data Centers: Collectively Tracking Student Progress as a Group



Once goals have been created in student-friendly language, it is important that students participate in the collection and monitoring of progress toward the goals. The data center is the collection point to monitor

academic progress. The classroom data center helps students answer the question — “how do we know if we know and can do it?”

The data center is the focal point of the continuous improvement model and reinforces an environment that focuses on evidence of student learning. In essence, data centers drive continuous improvement. With the classroom data center, measurable goals/objectives with data charts and quality tools help to keep the class on track and are critical to attaining desired results.

Student Data Folders: Individually Tracking Student Progress



To connect every learner to the classroom goals, students maintain a data folder that tracks and measures their individual progress toward their goals. Data folders are a ‘tool’ utilized by the students in the CLC model.

Data folders allow students and teachers an avenue to track student progress. Students set individual goals that correspond to the classroom SMART goal. The data folder identifies what is important to the student.

When student data folders mirror the classroom data



center, students are able to analyze their progress with the rest of the class. Through individual goal setting and tracking progress, students take ownership and accountability for learning increases.

Kindergarten and first grade students at Hillcrest Elementary School use data folders to track their progress over time. Katie Koczowski, a reading interventionist, states, “The students love using the data folders to see how they have improved. Setting personal goals and seeing their progress toward their goals motivates them to put forth their best effort.” The students are also creating online portfolios through Seesaw to document their growth in reading and writing. The Seesaw portfolios are shared with the families of the students. “My students are excited to show their families what they have accomplished. They can post photos and videos. They can also post voice recordings of themselves reflecting on their work. They are proud of what they have done and want to share it. They especially love it when their families leave positive comments about their reading and writing.”

Student Led Conferences: A New Paradigm Replacing Traditional Parent-Teacher Conferences



21st Century skills require students to look towards self-assessment as a method of evaluation and motivation leading to self-improvement. Having students facilitate their own conferences fosters a sense of ownership of their learning.

In a student-centered classroom, students are expected to be able to articulate their own progress of learning demonstrated through the review of their data folder. Students (instead of the teacher) facilitate the conference with parents.

This past November, students in Tamara Mount’s 4th grade classroom at Antioch Elementary School led their

own conferences. “The students feel empowered to be able to speak about their education. It shows parents their awareness of where they are at and where they are inspiring to be. Parents are always excited to see how their child is taking their goals and progressing towards making them. These students are taking ownership of their education and communicating that with their parents. To hear a child reflect on their areas of growth and their strengths is empowering!”

Using the individual data folder, students communicate their progress by evaluating their strongest and weakest samples of work, rating their study skills and character traits, and setting goals for improvement. Students not only gain a clearer sense of their academic progress, but also open the door for conversations with teachers and parents.

Class Meetings: Revising Mission, Goals and Using Data To Drive Improvements

Effective classrooms take time to revisit the classroom data center, mission and goals to make sure that continuous improvement is progressing. This forum provides students the opportunity to problem-solve and modify the classroom system to obtain maximum results.

Class meetings empower students. With the use of quality tools such as the plus/delta chart to discuss student feedback, class meetings help foster an environment where students and teachers are able to voice opinions and thoughts in a quiet, respectful atmosphere. As a result, mutual respect and understanding develops. The students realize that it is their classroom as much as the teacher's



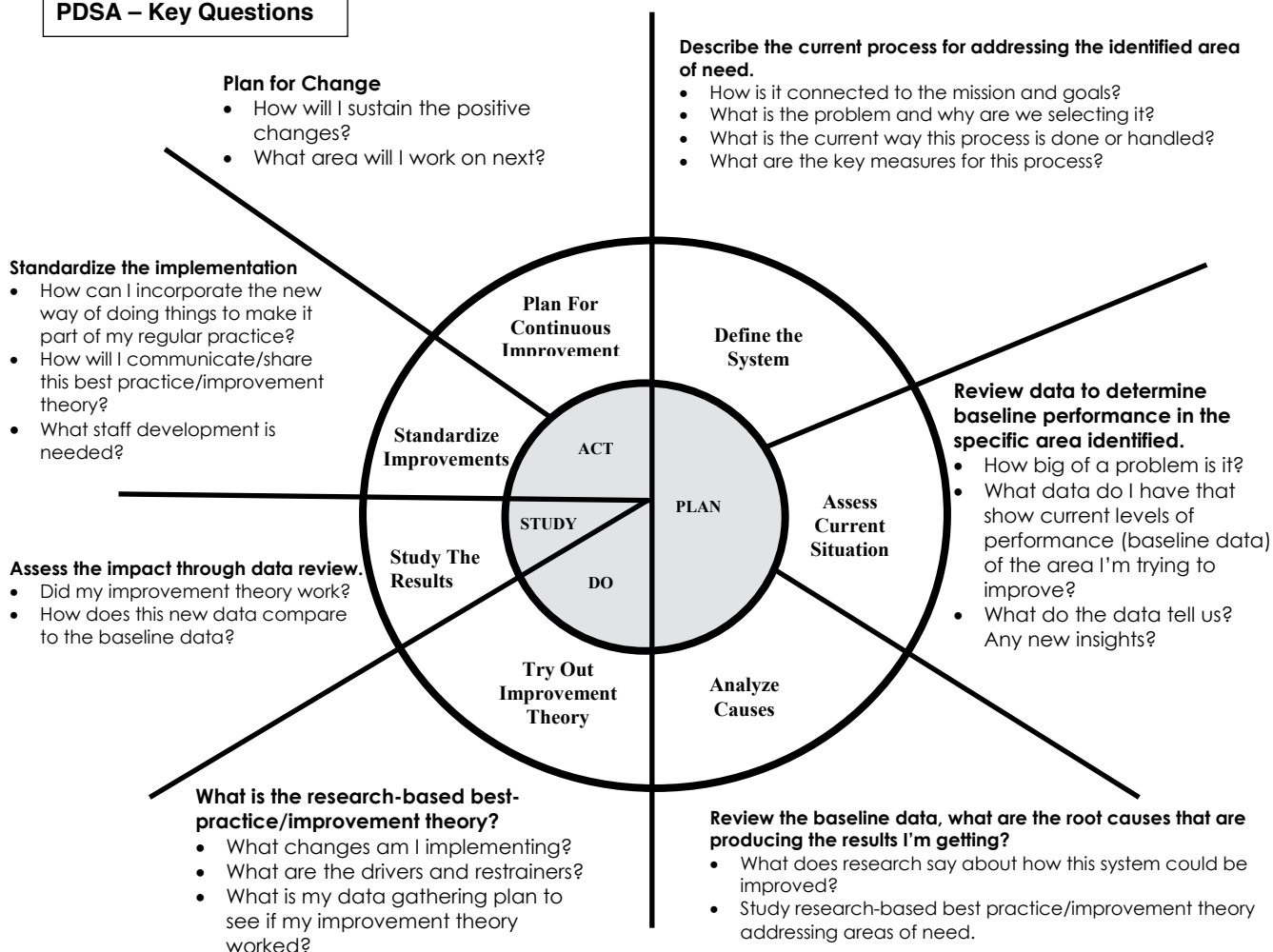
and they take ownership and pride in their role.

Throughout the year, students in Kim Reagle's 5th grade classroom at Antioch Elementary School have acquired ownership of this role, and established their forum for student-led discussions. “It has allowed the class to decide on changes they would like to see made in our day-to-day operation, as well as allow every student the opportunity to provide feedback to me, their teacher, on how I can strengthen and improve our classroom community. The meetings are entirely facilitated by the students, as a weekly leader guides us through our agenda while I take notes of the decisions they make. This empowerment fosters our belief that every person has a voice, and their ideas truly matter.”

Class meetings play a crucial role in the development of students' emotional, social, moral, and intellectual



PDSA – Key Questions



development. Class meetings promote personal growth, leadership, organizational and public-speaking skills, thinking skills and cognitive gains, problem-solving skills, and interpersonal skills — creating a community of learners.

Students in Mrs. Rivera's fifth grade class find out a week before that they are leading the classroom meetings. Students take the task seriously and use an agenda to keep the meetings focused. They find it has created an even greater sense of community and a way to voice their opinions about the classroom.

Quality Tools & the Plan Do Study Act Cycle: Real World Problems Solving Tools and Strategies

21st century learners prepare for creative problem solving in the world ahead by learning and applying quality tools and the Plan Do Study Act cycle of continuous improvement. These tools and processes keep classroom productivity at its peak!

Students play a unique role in continuous improvement driven systems. They are not only served by the system,

but are active workers and participants in the system. The product they produce is learning, through a dynamic interchange between and among students and their teachers.

Quality tools are key mechanisms in the systematic problem solving approach within the CLC model. Quality tools provide a method for students to communicate and resolve issues that arise during the school day. In addition using the tools to solve problems, students also use quality tools to collect and analyze data, identify patterns in either behavior or academic areas. Quality tools allow students to take ownership and responsibility for learning.

Learn more about District 34's continuous improvement model online at <http://www.antioch34.com>.



A New Paradigm for Organizational Change: Involving Customers and Stakeholders in the Improvement Process

J. Jay Marino

Education leaders around the country are focusing their schools on achieving results. Under the strict accountability and sanctions of the No Child Left Behind Act, educators are working diligently to find the right recipe of research-based instructional practices, effective professional development programs, and successful school improvement processes in hopes of increasing test scores. The battle and complexity of closing achievement gaps and increasing student learning is evident and so is the need for a paradigm shift in how leaders approach organizational change.

In a new paradigm of systems improvement, successful organizations are involving employees, stakeholders, and even the customers (the students) in the process of improving their schools through a continuous quality improvement approach to organizational change. In hopes of harnessing the efforts of everything and everyone in the system, educational leaders are encountering promising results through the implementation of powerful approaches to systemic leadership including:

- Shared leadership.
- Clear vision and precise direction.
- Alignment of the system and its parts.
- Measurement of results.
- Broad-based participation in the improvement process.

Share the Privilege and Responsibility of Leadership

The old paradigm of school leadership called for the principal or superintendent as “the boss” or primary decision maker. Decisions were often made in isolation according to the whim of the highest ranking administrator. Today, at the heart of successful school leadership is a representative group of dedicated, front-line employees who are personally committed and involved in the improvement of the system in which they work.

By establishing a community of leaders, administrators can collectively harness the talent of a diverse group of individuals and benefit from their multiple perspectives. Effective leadership teams participate in

the establishment of group norms and collaboratively establish a clear mission, vision, goals, and core values, which direct improvement efforts in their system. This new paradigm of school leadership calls for collaboration, teamwork, consensus building, and a trusting environment that involves others in the leadership responsibilities of shared decision making.

Establish Clear Vision and Precise Direction to Guide Improvements

Many school systems create popular guiding documents (often referred to as strategic plans or improvement plans) that include components such as: vision, mission, core values, goals, and guiding philosophies. In the old paradigm, these components were nothing more than words on a piece of paper that made the people who created them feel like they were doing “something” about the problems they were trying to solve. Think about your system for a minute...can you recall the mission statement? Does it have meaning to you? Does it provide guidance and focus to your daily work? Are you passionate about it?

Effective leadership teams in today's new paradigm create a shared vision, mission, core values, and goals to serve as the compass that guides the improvement journey. To ensure consensus and buy-in from users, leadership teams are implementing methods that include stakeholders' input in identifying a clear direction and focus. Obtaining input from various groups and individuals can be a daunting task, which is why it is often excluded from the process. However, feedback can be collected through a variety of quality tools that are designed to ensure equal voice and effective participation in the process. For example, the brainstorming tool can be used to gather broad input on key mission and goals. Ideas can be generated for future use in planning by allowing individuals the opportunity to share their thoughts or ideas. The affinity diagram can help put like-ideas together and establish common themes from the feedback. The nominal group technique can narrow the focus to the “critical few” concepts that the leadership team incorporates into its improvement planning process.

Once direction is set and is based on input from stakeholders and customers, it's the responsibility of the leadership team to ensure that everyone clearly understands the improvement effort and how each person's work contributes to its accomplishment. Effective leadership teams know that in the absence of clear focus and direction, people will determine for themselves what is most important. When ambiguous and diversified direction exists in the system, success happens only by chance in what's referred to as *random acts of excellence*. The new paradigm of organizational change demands clear vision and well articulated goals that guide continuous improvement efforts through *intentional acts of excellence*.

Align the System and Its Parts

How do successful organizations maximize results? They align their resources, budgets, and people to their vision, mission, goals, and core values. Effective teams operating in the new paradigm of educational change incorporate a systems-thinking approach to ensure that improvement efforts are aligned horizontally (in the system itself) and vertically (in the various parts of the system in which it interacts). Without an approach that incorporates systems alignment, the efforts of individuals may have little impact on the bottom line. There is nothing less motivating than people working hard yet not producing results.

In the new paradigm, effective leadership teams ensure that every part of the system is directly connected to the identified improvement areas. One way teams promote alignment is through the establishment of SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound) goals of individual employees and support departments that directly align to the improvement goals of the system. When all employees and departments clearly understand the direction and focus identified in their SMART goal, alignment becomes a natural occurrence. Systemwide results are experienced

when all the efforts of the front line are aligned to clear and specific goals.

Measure What's Important

The cliché "the proof is in the pudding" holds true for continuous improvement efforts today. In the old paradigm of improvement, leaders would rely on the lagging high-stakes, once-a-year indicators to determine progress and goals. Decisions were based on the results of these assessments and often resulted in organizations chasing a data point generated from work that occurred the previous year. This type of "autopsy" left education leaders scratching their heads as they tried to determine how to change the trajectory of the next data point.

Today's leadership teams are measuring and monitoring progress frequently to determine the impact and effectiveness of strategies deployed by front-line employees. A measurement concept referred to as a dashboard can help educators observe real-time results using leading indicators. These measures allow teams to make in-process adjustments in their

strategies and improvement efforts. Like the dashboard of a car, educators can monitor key indicators of achievement in their system and keep an eye on warning lights or areas in need of attention. Dashboard measures provide a process for early detection of progress (or lack of) through a public display of data in graphical formats for easy interpretation by stakeholders. The days of waiting until next year to determine current performance are remnants of a past paradigm. Implementing a streamlined, in-process mea-

surement system that connects everyone's work to expected targets and results is how organizational change occurs. Effective leadership teams know that what gets measured *frequently*—gets done!

Involve Everyone in Continuous Improvement Efforts

The responsibility of involving everyone in organizational improvements is the duty of today's leadership team. Effective teams utilize the collective effort of

Effective leadership teams in today's new paradigm create a shared vision, mission, core values, and goals to serve as the compass that guides the improvement journey. To ensure consensus and buy-in from users, leadership teams are implementing methods that include stakeholders' input in identifying a clear direction and focus.

the system (and its parts) to achieve results. A question that leadership teams need to ask is, "Should anyone be excused from our improvement efforts?" Absolutely not!

Traditionally, most of the emphasis with improvement efforts was placed on certified teachers, administrators, and the work done in classrooms and schools. The new paradigm of continuous improvement encompasses all parts (and people) of the system. In today's new paradigm of inclusion and participation, educational support service departments such as: food and nutrition, technology, human resources, custodial/maintenance, transportation, and payroll all play important roles in contributing to the improvement of systemic results. The niche role played by these support systems impacts the learner and the learning environment, which can greatly contribute to the teaching and learning process. Effective organizations ensure that all employees, regardless of their position or rank, understand how their work directly contributes to the vision, mission, core values, and goals of the system.

In the new paradigm of organizational change, leadership teams strategically connect students to the improvement effort. When teachers assist students in setting individual goals, they begin to understand how their daily work connects to the goals of the classroom, which are aligned to school improvement efforts, which, in turn, are aligned to district strategic improvement efforts. Effective leadership teams know

that the work of continuous improvement is too important to leave just to the adults in the system.

Successful organizations are aligned from the district office, to the school, the classroom, and all the way to the individual student. The power of organizational change is realized when every employee, stakeholder, and student understands how his or her work contributes to improving student learning. Continuous quality improvement can have a tremendous impact on student achievement results when leaders use a

systemic approach and implement key strategies such as: sharing the privilege and responsibility of leadership, establishing clear vision and precise direction to guide improvements, aligning the system and its parts, measuring what's important, and involving everyone in continuous improvement efforts. This new paradigm of organizational change can have a profound and lasting

effect on the results of the educational system. Is your system operating under this new paradigm?

The power of organizational change is realized when every employee, stakeholder, and student understands how his or her work contributes to improving student learning.



Jay Marino is associate superintendent for organizational effectiveness and accountability, Cedar Rapids Community School District in Iowa. He has delivered keynote presentations at local, state, and national conferences and has been involved actively in state quality award programs as an applicant and as an examiner. Marino co-authored *Quality Across the Curriculum*; *Integrating Quality Tools and PDSA With Standards*, and serves as the K-12 chair of ASQ's educational advisory committee. You can reach him at jmarino@cr.k12.ia.us.

Plan on a Page

Maybe you refer to it as your “district strategic plan” or the “comprehensive school improvement plan.” It’s intended to bring about change and improve the organization, but does anyone really know what’s even in it? It’s time to simplify. Get your entire plan on one page by following these steps.

☒ **Embrace shared leadership.**

The foundation of any effective plan is selecting the right process and people to work on it. By establishing a community of leaders, administrators can collectively harness the talent of a diverse group of stakeholders and benefit from their multiple perspectives. When a cohesive team is empowered with leadership responsibilities, it is more likely that their decisions will be supported and acted on by colleagues.

☒ **Establish a clear and common focus.**

Leadership teams need to ensure that plans incorporate explicit and agreed-upon focus. To ensure group consensus, get input. It’s essential to make certain that the values of stakeholders are represented. Only the most important or “critical few” focus areas should be included to keep the effort centered and manageable.

☒ **Clearly set and communicate direction.**

The leadership team must ensure that each person clearly understands the plan and his contribution to it. Post your Plan on a Page where it can be referenced and used in decision-making. Large posters of the plan should be displayed in high traffic areas and can even be reproduced on smaller note cards for easy distribution to stakeholders.

☒ **Establish measurable goals and monitor progress.**

Leadership teams need to measure and monitor progress frequently to determine the impact and effectiveness of strategies. A concept known as “dashboard” helps educators observe results and make in-process adjustments. Like the dashboard in a car, educators can monitor key indicators of achievement and keep an eye out for “warning lights.” Dashboard measures provide a process for “early detection” of progress through a public display of data in graphical formats for easy interpretation by stakeholders.

☒ **Make the plan theirs!**

One way to increase ownership, responsibility, and accountability for the plan is to have everyone create their own version.

Through a collaborative process of shared leadership; the establishment of common and shared focus with input from stakeholders; the setting of clear direction at all levels; the creation of measurable goals; the monitoring of goal progress in a dashboard; and the involvement of everyone creating their own Plan on a Page, school leaders can involve everyone in the process of continually improving the educational system.

—By J. Jay Marino

J. Jay Marino is the associate superintendent for organizational effectiveness and accountability in Cedar Rapids Community (IA) School District. He is also the coauthor of *Quality Across the Curriculum*; *Integrating Quality Tools and PDSA with Standards*, American Society for Quality (2004), and the K–12 Chair of the American Society for Quality’s Educational Advisory Committee.