Implementing the Classroom Learning Community Supporting Research and Planning Materials





https://jaymarino.me/

Ground Rules created by Students	Classroom Mission Statement	Classroom & Student Measurable Goals
Quality Tools & PDSA used regularly	Classroom Learning Community	Classroom Data Center
Classroom Meetings Facilitated by Students	Student-led Conferences	Student Data Folders

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Dr. J. Jay Marino - Biography

Dr. Jay Marino serves as an international transformational change consultant assisting American and European educational organizations in their continuous improvement efforts. He is also a Regional Educational Consultant for the Consortium for Educational Change (Chicago, IL) and a Senior Consultant with Klasse.Pro, an educational consulting firm in Europe (Netherlands and Lithuania). Dr. Marino's primary international work is focused in the Netherlands where Jay has made 22 tours since 2009 working with over 200 schools in the implementation of continuous improvement practices.

Dr. 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, Director of Research, Data and Accountability, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of Schools.

Jay has delivered multiple keynote 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); a book titled Leading Continuous Improvement; Inspiring Quality Education Worldwide (2011) published by Magistrum (Amersfoort, Netherlands); 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 also contributed and wrote the forward to a Dutch publication titled Continu Verbeteren in Het Onderwijs (2020).

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 Decatur, Illinois, USA 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-https://www.jaymarino.me, LinkedIn-https://www.linkedin.com/in/jmarino747 or follow on Twitter-https://twitter.com/jmarino747.

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

The Classroom Learning Community





he 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.

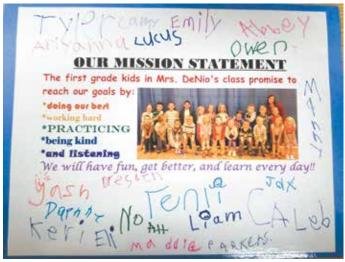
Next, students decide which ground rules (or norms) are most important to help provide the foundation for a successful school year. To prioritize key ideas, students use a tool called Nominal Group Technique to rank order preferred themes and narrow the focus to the critical few (verses the trivial many). 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

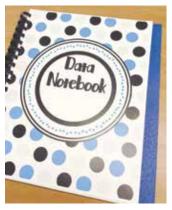


Once goals have been created in student-friendly language, it is important that students participate in the collection and monitoring of progress toward the goals. The data center is the collection point to monitor

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

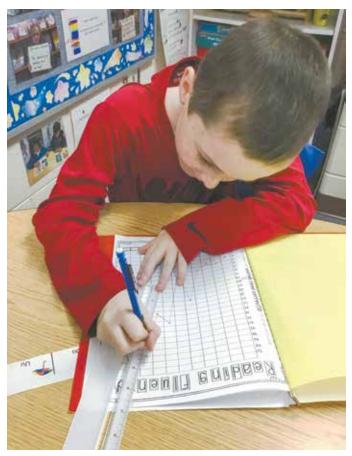


To connect every learner to the classroom goals, students maintain a data folder that tracks and measures their individual progress toward their goals. Data folders are a 'tool' utilized by the students in the CLC model.

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 Koczorowski, 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

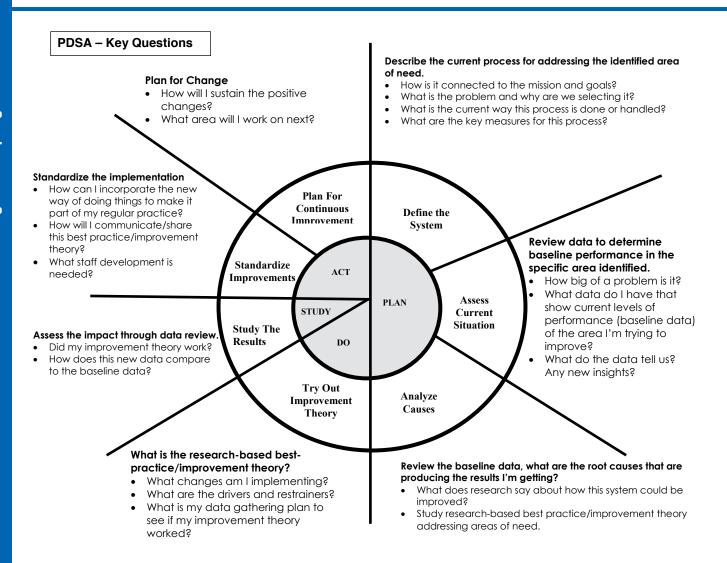


and they take ownership and pride in their role.

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





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.

Research Supporting *The Classroom Learning Community* Model

	What Works In Schools- Translating Research/Action (Marzano)	Classroom Instruction That Works; Research Based Strategies (Marzano)	Results- The Key To Continuous School Improvement (Schmoker)	School Leadership That Works- From Research To Results (Marzano)	The 90-90-90 Schools: 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/Monito ring of progress	P. 187 Focus on academic achievement; P. 187 Frequent assessment of student progress; P. 196 Value of feedback; P. 197 Action Research

If someone visited a Classroom Learning Community...

They Would See...

- Student-created ground rules
- The District and School mission statements and the school improvement goals
- 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 (Such as morning routine, turning in homework, lab procedures, etc.)
- Regular class meetings at which 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

They 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

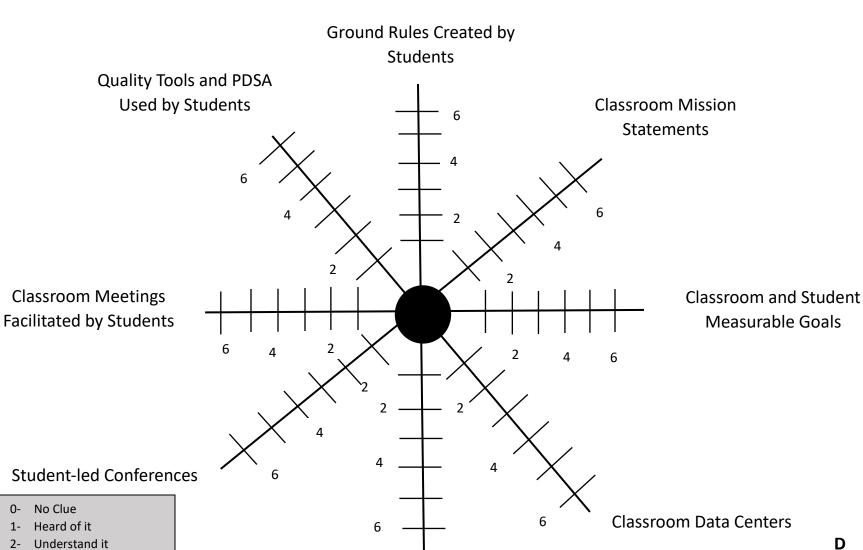
They Would Feel...

- Synergy
- A sense of a learning community
- Shared accountability, responsibility and ownership toward achieving class and personal goals
- Excitement 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

The 8 Components of the CLC Model

Classroom Classroom & Student **Ground Rules** Mission Statement Measurable Goals created by Students Classroom Quality Tools & Classroom Learning PDSA used Data Center Community regularly Classroom Meetings Student Student-led Facilitated by Data Folders Conferences Students

8 Components of the Classroom Learning Community



Student-led Conferences

- 0- No Clue
- Heard of it
- Understand it
- Used it in my classroom
- Can apply it
- Can explain it
- 6- Can teach it

Student Data Folders

Ground Rules Overview

Establishing Ground Rules is one of the first activities of classroom and team building. Ground rules are created by the team which facilitates an atmosphere of open communication, teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership. A climate of trust and comfort is essential for candid discussion. These ground rules are the standard for behavior by which all agree to operate while in the group.

WHY?

- Ground rules are guidelines that a team/class/group set together.
- This process emphasizes the importance of listening to each other in an environment of respect and acceptance.
- To increase communication, risk-taking, productivity and effectiveness.

When?

- They should be established as one of the first orders of business and remain in effect through all team meetings – changed only as a group decision.
- Try reviewing ground rules before:
 - o Class Discussion
 - Working in cooperative groups or teams
 - Class meetings
 - Lab activities
 - Field trips
 - o Attending an assembly

What do they look like?

Examples:

- Everyone participates
- Listen to each other
- Stay on topic
- What is said here, stays here
- Only one person speaks at a time (no side conversations)
- Take turns
- Attack problems not people
- Agree to disagree
- Treat others as you want to be treated.

How many? No more than 4 or 5



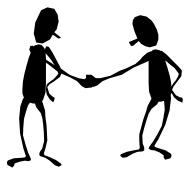
How? Steps for Creating Ground Rules

Tools: Brainstorming, Affinity Diagram, Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

- 1.) Discuss what ground rules will be necessary in order to accomplish the goals and expectations for the year/activity.
- 2.) The group leader/teacher/facilitator leads a brainstorming session regarding ways to get everyone's ideas.

Ask: Think about what you, as an individual, need to ensure a safe environment to discuss possibly difficult and/or controversial issues.

- 3.) Brainstorm: Group members write their suggestions on a card/post-it. When all have finished either share individually or group in an affinity diagram.
- 4.) Affinity Diagram: Group like items Each student shares his/her ideas and a classroom affinity diagram is made which combine like ideas.
- 5.) Nominal Group Technique: Once the Affinity Diagram has been constructed, the NGT tool is used to narrow down the ideas to the "critical few"
- 6.) *Consensus*: All students need to be able to "support" the ground rules. Consensus is achieved through discussion.
- 7.) Discuss the ground rules and have each student sign them. Post them publicly in the classroom and refer to them each morning
- 8.) Continue to discuss how the ground rules will help the class achieve the agreed upon goals and mission statement

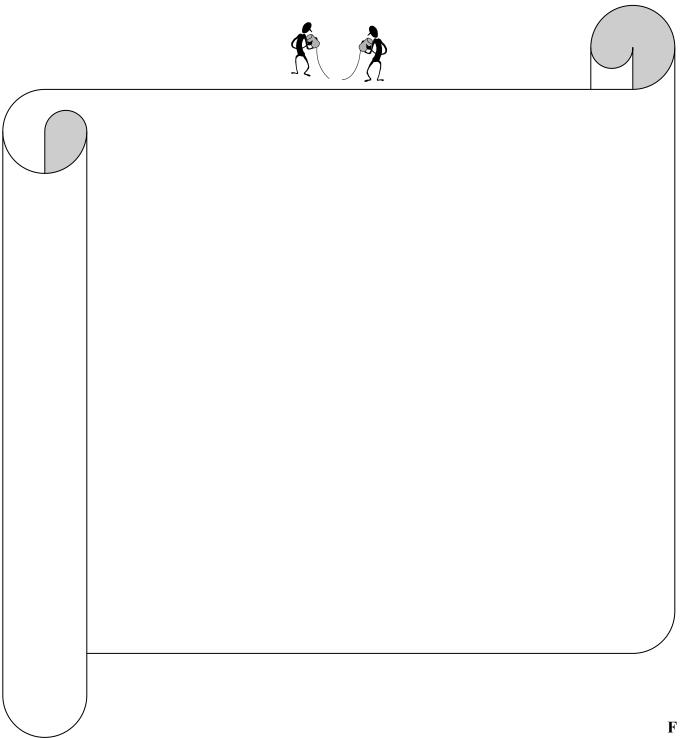


Ground Rules Created by Students

Key Concepts	Best Practices
Student ownership and	Begin as soon as possible or at the
accountability	very beginning of the school year
Clear expectations	(or term)
Consensus (buy-in)	Student signatures provide
First step in creating a culture of	evidence of their commitment to
student-centered focus	each other
Student ideas (not the teacher	Should be written in a positive
alone)	manner
	No more than 5
	It is effective to start the day with
	a review of the ground rules
	(resets expectations)
	Post in classroom data center
	Each student has a copy of the
	ground rules in their data folder
	Use Quality Tools (Brain storming,
	grouping, charts, etc.) to create
	them.
	Student can self-evaluate how
	they are following the ground
	rules (radar chart)

Our Ground Rules

Establishing Ground Rules is one of the first activities of team building. Ground rules are created by the team group and facilitate an atmosphere of open communication. A climate of trust and comfort is essential for candid discussion. These ground rules are the standard for behavior by which all agree to operate while in the group. They are collective commitments the group makes to each other.



Mission Statement - Brainstorming Questions

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER	MY THOUGHTS
WHO?Who are we?Who is our classroom/school?What is unique about us?	
 WHAT? What are we trying to accomplish? What are we here to do? What's our purpose together? 	
HOW? How do we go about our work? How will we accomplish the "what"?	
WHY? Why will we do this? For what reason?	

Mission Statements:

- Answers the questions: 1.) Who are we? 2.) What are we here to do together? and 3.) How will we go about doing it?
- A broad definition that differentiates the class from others
- Should be reviewed regularly
- An effective mission statement should be able to tell your story in less than 30 seconds.
- Everyone in the classroom/school should know it and live it!

Mission Statement Process – Summary

Mission statements define a purpose for the teacher, students, parents, and other key stakeholders of the learning environment. It directs the focus of students, parents and teacher to the learning goals.

Tools: affinity diagram, nominal group technique

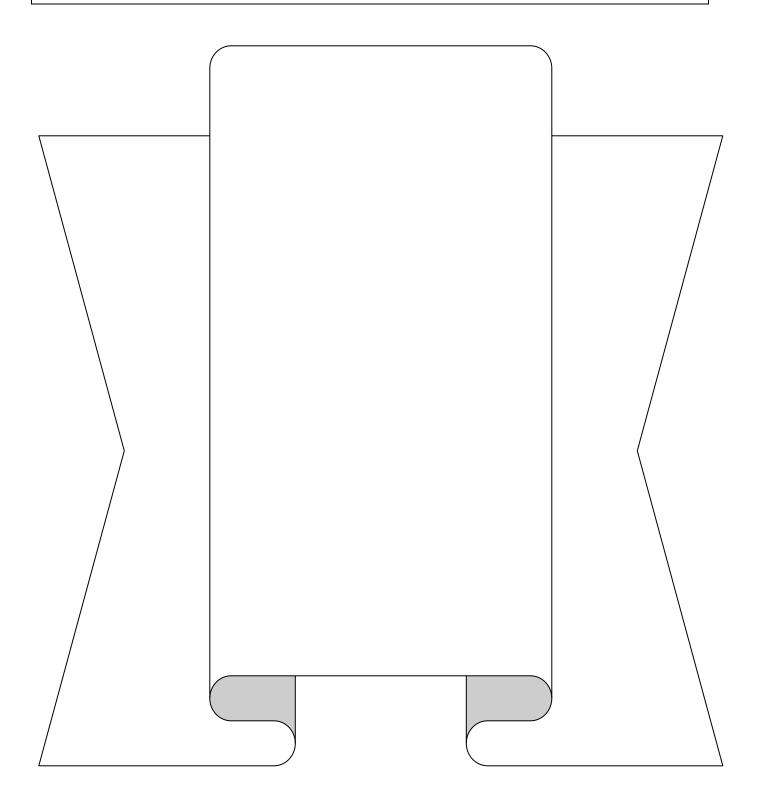
- 1. Review goals building/district
- 2. What is a mission?
- 3. Questions (don't use all of these!)
 - Who are we?
 - What are we going to do?
 - Why are we here?
 - How are we going to do things?
 - □ How will we measure progress?
 - Who, What, How, For Whom and Why...
- 4. Affinity diagram & Summarize
- 5. **Nominal Group technique** to select *critical few* ideas and/or rank order
- 6. Construct/create statement
 - include both academic and behavioral/social-emotional concepts
- 7. Examine for changes/consensus (may skip this step for classroom)
- 8. Post Mission Statement
- 9. All students sign statement
- 10. **Drivers and Preventers** (Force Field Analysis Quality Tool)
 - discuss
 - □ list
 - post

Classroom Mission Statement

Key Concepts	Best Practices
Defines the group and their	Student input is valued equally
purpose	Provides for ownership
• Creates a vision for future	Keeps it in simple-language
outcomes	Should be modified per grade
 Keeps classroom focused on 	level, department and content
what is most important	area
• Creates a positive learning	Should refer to and review it
environment	often (start the day)
 Includes key stakeholders in the 	Make it visible
development	Use Quality Tools in the
 Align with the District and 	development
School Plans on a Page	Connect to the common core
	standards whenever possible
	Post it in the classroom data
	center

Our Mission Statement

Mission statements define a purpose for the group. It answers the questions: who are we? what are we here to do? & how will be do it?



SMART Goals

Goals should be SMART - specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time-based.

The acronym SMART has a number of slightly different variations, which can be used to provide a more comprehensive definition for goal setting:

- S specific, significant, stretching
- M measurable, meaningful, motivational
- A agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented
- R realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented
- T time-based, timely, tangible, trackable

SMART Goals

Specific

- Well defined
- Clear to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the project

Measurable

- Know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is
- Know when it has been achieved

Agreed Upon

• Agreement with all the stakeholders what the goals should be

Realistic

• Within the availability of resources, knowledge and time

Time Based

- Enough time to achieve the goal
- Not too much time, which can affect project performance

PRACTICE WRITING SMART GOALS

Generic Goals Rewrite to SMART Format

S=Specific	M =Measurable	A = Achievable	R =Results-Oriented	T =Timebound
1. Stud	dents will increa	se their reading	skills.	
2. 85%	of 4 th graders to	ested on NWEA	MAP will improve.	
3. In m	athematics, the	percentage of p	proficient 8 th graders v	will increase.
4. Stud	dents will demor	strate responsi	ble behavior and effe	ctive citizenship

Classroom SMART Goal

Practice writing a SMART goal. Write a SMART goal for your classroom. Make sure that it aligns to your school's improvement plan and meets the criteria below.

☐ SPECIFIC ☐ MEASURABLE ☐ ATTAINABLE ☐ REALISTIC ☐ TIME-BOUND		
Classroom SMART Goal:		

Team SMART Goal

Practice writing a SMART goal for your team. As a group, write a SMART goal that relates to your efforts this week in learning to implement the Classroom Learning Community model in a few weeks. Make sure that it meets the criteria below:

Make suff that it meets the criteria below.	
☐ SPECIFIC ☐ MEASURABLE ☐ ATTAINABLE ☐ REALISTIC ☐ TIME-BOUND	
Our SMART Goal:	

Data Center Template

Classroom Data Center Sample Template

District Strategic Plan School Improvement Plan Goals

Ground Rules

Classroom Mission Statement

Student Feedback (Plus/Delta or Quality Quadrant)

Classroom SMART Goals

Charts & Graphs

Charts & Graphs

Charts & Graphs

Charts & Graphs

Data Folder

Tool Used by Students to Track their Learning Progress

WHAT IS IT?

- •A tool used by students to keep track of their progress
- •Build a sense of responsibility for own learning
- •Incorporates Goal setting and Data Collection
- •Perfect-tool to enhance student-led conferences

WHEN & HOW IS IT USED?

- •ESTABLISH "QUALITY CLASSROOM" THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL
- •Goal Setting
- •In-Process Measures Daily/Weekly data measures
- •Periodic Evaluation of Progress (trimester quarter monthly)
- Adjust or Reset Goals
- Adjust classroom instruction strategies

DATA FOLDERS

- Aligned with classroom goals
- •Students focus on these questions:
 - 1) What will I measure?
 - 2) How will I measure it?
 - 3) How will I improve?
 - 4) How often will I chart my progress?

WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

•	Mission Statements	•	Ground Rules
•	Expectations	•	Class Goals
•	Student Goals		
Steps to Achieve Goals			
•	 Student display of progress towards goals 		

MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

•Histograms	•Pareto Diagrams	•Radar Charts
•Check Sheets	•Run charts	•Bar Graphs
•Line graphs	•Flow chart	•Fishbone

Things to Consider about Student Data Folders

- •Will students set individual benchmarks or use a class benchmark?
- •Students need to be able to know how to improve and set an appropriate benchmark.

Student Goal and Action Plan

SMART Goal:	
Action Plan: (What things will y	ou do to reach your goal?)
	
•	
How is my Progress?	
•	
	



Home >> Administrators >> Student-Led Conferences: A Growing Trend

■ Print

Teacher Essentials Lesson Plans

Admin

Tech

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Worksheets & Printables

Tools & Templates

For years parent-teacher conferences have been the primary means of parent-teacher communication. But now, many schools are trying something new-student-led conferences that communicate not only how a student's doing but also why.



Parent-teacher conferences—we all know how they go. Parents

troop into classrooms to talk with teachers about their children's progress in school. Often, the process feels rushed, and parents leave feeling vaguely dissatisfied, as if they didn't really get what they came for.

For years that process has been the norm, but now it is changing. In more and more schools, students are leading conferences, and, overall, the word is that they're doing a fine job.

Many teachers themselves speak enthusiastically of the advantages of student-led conferences over teacher-led ones. "We found the [student-led] conferences most beneficial," said Keith Eddinger of the Marcus Whitman Middle School in Rushville, New York. "From a teacher's perspective, we were able to get a better picture of each child. It forced us to sit down with each student and review strengths and weaknesses. This conversation often told us the students learned more than perhaps we had measured through conventional assessments."

Eddinger added, "Our post-conference reviews with parents and students were overwhelmingly positive."

John Osgood, of C. L. Jones Middle School in Minden, Nebraska, found that "comments [about student-led conferences] from parents and board members were very positive."

Another staff member, Dick Philips, said, "Most parents listened to their child. It was interesting listening to [children] explain low grades to their parents. It did open the lines of communication."

"Several parents really liked it because it gave them an opportunity to see their child's work," said Sue Yant, another staff member. Yet "some [parents] said they hoped we [would hold] the traditional conference once a year."

Student preparation

"The format is important, but I believe the success of a student-led conference is most determined by how well students are prepared," wrote Laura Hayden, a seventh-grade communications teacher at Derby Middle School in Derby, Kansas, in Letting Students Lead Parent Conferences, an article published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals in *Middle Matters*.

The conference format at Hayden's school had students show parents some of their work and explain their grades in a student-led conference. Each team could conduct conferences a bit differently. Hayden's team used an open house arrangement in which students and parents visited all team members' classrooms, but other teams held the entire conference in one classroom.

The significance of format aside, Hayden focused her students on preparation. At the beginning of the school year, she had students set up a binder to contain a portfolio as well as graded work. She explained that students had to keep their binders orderly because they would use them to lead their conferences.

A week before the conferences, Hayden's team sent home a letter informing parents of the conference and the fact that their child would lead it. About three days before conferences, she had students prepare portfolios of their work to date, including a special project, a quiz, a homework assignment, and one assignment from which they felt they had learned the most. Students also wrote a reflection on their grades and study habits. They set goals for the next semester and organized their graded work section.

The day before conferences, teachers role-played, pretending to be the student, with the student playing the teacher or the parent. Teachers modeled, for example, how to explain a poor grade to parents, and they gave students a checklist of what to cover in the conference.

Student responsibility

"The preparatory time is worth it," Hayden wrote, "especially when you hear a struggling student explaining what he or she learned from an assignment and taking responsibility for the score he or she achieved."

"[Students] need to understand that they are in control of their own efforts to learn the material," said Barbara Rommel, superintendent of the David Douglas School District in Oregon. (Source: "New Method Puts Student in Charge," an article published in the *Oregonian* newspaper.)

The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century requires students to meet higher standards. By having students assess how they are progressing toward those standards, educators say, students will know how far they've come and how far they have to go to meet the standards.

"It helps them accept responsibility for their learning," said Patti Kinney, principal of Talent Middle School in Oregon.

"I like being able to tell my side of the story," Josh Whitney-Wise of Milwaukie, Oregon's, McLoughlin Middle School told the *Oregonian*.

Advantages and disadvantages

Educators acknowledge that there are disadvantages as well as advantages to student-led conferences. Although parent attendance seems higher for student-led conferences than for teacher-led ones, a parent's failure to attend a student-led conference leads to a great deal of disappointment for a student who has worked hard to prepare.

Another disadvantage is that some parents want to spend more time with their child's teacher, receiving his or her viewpoint. Nearly all schools with student-led conferences will let parents make separate appointments to confer with teachers.

For the most part, parents support the concept of student-led conferences, though some support them with slight reservations. "My daughter was in a class that did student-led conferences a couple of years ago," said one parent of a child at Jones Middle School. "I think the object was to make the child feel a part of the whole process, to get them in tune with their own progress. As a parent, I felt like I still needed some info from the teachers and wanted more. But I do think the student gets a new perspective on their grades. Personally, I don't think it would be good to do this often, but once a year is good. When you ask if they were 'beneficial,' I can say yes and no. They were more beneficial to the student than to the parent."

But the advantages, say most teachers who have participated in student-led conferences, outweigh the downside. Student accountability is mentioned again and again by educators as a plus for student-led conferences. Another plus is the way even a struggling student can produce something positive for a conference, an art project or an essay, perhaps, that wouldn't show up in a report card grade. Overall, talks with educators indicate, student-led conferences are a growing trend.

Additional resources

Student-Led Conferences Hold Kids Accountable

Would you like to find a way to actively engage students in their learning process and increase parent attendance at conferences? Student-led conferences can accomplish those two objectives. Included: Highlights of research about student-led conferences.

Student-Led Conferences Successful in Elementary, Middle Grades

As student-led conferences grow in popularity, educators are finding ways to improve their flow and productivity. Preparing students and parents for what's involved and practicing before "going live" can help. Included: Descriptions of student-led conferences at different grade levels.

Student-led Conferences Interdisciplinary Project

This site describes a detailed plan for student-led conferences at Frisbie Middle School in Rialto, California.

Books

A School-Wide Approach to Student-Led Conferences: A Practitioner's Guide

By Patti Kinney, Mary Beth Munroe, Pam Sessions; National Middle School Association

Student-Led Parent Conferences

By Linda Pierce-Picciotto, Scholastic, Inc.

Student-Led Conferencing Using Showcase Portfolios

By Barbara Benson and Susan Barnett, Corwin Press, Inc.

Article by Sharon Cromwell

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Student-Led Conference Formats

	Format	Description	Advantages	Shortcomings
1.	Individual or Student-Involved Conferences	Teacher meets with parents. Teacher controls conference. Student is present for only a portion of conference.	 Good format for very young student. Allows teacher and parents to privately share concerns about student. Helps teacher develop relationship with parents while still involving child. 	 Students are not heavily involved in preparing for conferences or in reporting to parents. Takes more time to meet with parents and then involve student.
2.	Simultaneous Student-Led Conferences With Multiple Families	Four or five groups conduct conference in the classroom at one time, usually in one-half-hour time blocks. Students are responsible for leading parents through a discussion of student work organized in a portfolio. Teacher visits with each family group for a short time.	 Students take major responsibility for preparation and for conducting conference. Students see direct relationship between quality of daily work and report to parents. Efficient use of time; teacher can see four families in one-half hour. Format is easily adapted for unique scheduling concerns. Parent participation is essential and often increases. 	 Teacher is not in total control of what is reported to parents. Careful preparation is essential; involves preparing students in addition to normal teacher work. More difficult to schedule in traditional, 6- or7-hour daily schedule common to secondary schools.
3.	Presentation or Showcase Conferences	Students lead conference to present collection of work to a group or panel that includes teachers, parents, administrators, and other adults such as business or community leaders. Student is questioned by panel on all facets of student work.	 Excellent model for providing a culminating experience after a long period of time (semester or year of study). Provides opportunity to showcase student growth over time. Reinforcing to students to have adult interest and involvement. Promotes quality work on part of students as they prepare for panel conference. Can be very effective with special needs students or in arts-oriented or career-technical education settings. 	 Somewhat difficult to schedule due to number of people involved and time necessary for all students to complete a conference. Format does not lend itself to frequent reporting. Panel format may be intimidating to some students.

Student-Led Conference Formats

	Format	Description	Advantages	Shortcomings
4.	Portfolio Night	Families of entire classes gather in the school building at the same time on one night to view student portfolios.	 Effective way to let parents know what students are working on in school. Excellent way to celebrate student successes as a school community. Promotes parent involvement and a school-family partnership approach to student learning. 	 No opportunity for teachers to conference with all families of individual students. May be difficult to schedule depending on space available in school facility.
5.	At-Home Student-Led Conference	Teacher visit with student and family in their home so that the student may conduct conference while teacher is present to provide comments	 Sometimes used when parents are unable to travel to school to be part of regular student-led conferences. Provides excellent adult attention to individual students. Promotes parent partnership. Increases teacher knowledge of family situations and needs. 	 Parents do not have access to public displays of student work. Parents not able to see student in daily school environment. Time consuming for teacher.
6.	Electronic Student-Led Conference	Student prepares a digital portfolio and e-mails to parent. Student and parent and teacher then conduct an on-line conversation regarding student progress toward learning goals.	 Unique way to integrate technology into the reporting process. Convenient; can be conducted anywhere there is access to proper technology. Teaches student how to use technology in addition to other academic learning goals. Good format for parents who may live apart from their children due to extenuating circumstances. 	Requires good access to all technology needed to create digital portfolio. Opportunity for face-to-face communication is limited by availability technology. Requires students, teachers, and parents to be proficient and comfortable with technology.

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Before Student-Led Conferences

- Inform parents about the concept.
- o Provide staff development and support for interested teachers.
- Work with co-curricular teachers to plan for portfolio and conference involvement.
- Talk with students about the concept and their responsibilities.
- Set clear learning objectives for students.
- Work with students to create a portfolio (collection and selection).
- Build in time for frequent reflection (for students and teachers).
- Rehearse and role-play with students (consider videotaping).
- Set up a committee (teachers, secretary, counselor, principal, parent, etc) for scheduling.
- Create a "family-friendly" schedule.
- Attend to details such as:
 - Child care
 - Refreshments
 - Parent invitations
 - Special scheduling considerations
 - Location (consider alternative locations such as churches, community center)
 - Translators
 - o Special displays of student work

Rehearsal Sheet

Name:				
Partner:				
	1st Run		2 nd Run	
	Yes	Not Yet	Yes	Not Yet
Looks at Listener				
Speaks Slowly				
Speaks Loudly				
Speaks Clearly				
Good Posture				
Other				

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Comments:

Conferences!

Dear Parents,

I am planning a different type of conference for you and your child. I am very excited about this innovative approach called the student-led conference. During this conference your child will share with you the projects and work he has been doing not only this past grading period but also throughout the school year. We're sure that you will see tremendous growth in your child.

Your conference will be scheduled for a 30 minute period. Your child will be sharing and talking with you for most of that time. Of course, I will be available to talk with you too; however, I do not want to dominate or "upstage" this special time for which your child has planned and anticipated. If, at the end of the conference time you wish to talk with me further, I will be very happy to schedule additional time when we can talk privately.

After the conference I will be asking for your opinion about this type of conference.

If you have any questions, please call me either at school or home.

(teacher's name)

My Student-Led Conference Organizer

A. Introduction

- 1. Introduce parents to teacher
- 2. Find portfolio and lead parents to available area.
- 3. Discuss purpose of student-led conferences.

B. Portfolio Organizer

- 1. Go over "Linger Over Learning" sheets.
- 2. Show examples of quality work.
- 3. Explain what makes it quality.
- 4. Tell what makes you especially proud.
- 5. Discuss what you need to work on and what you can do to improve.
- 6. Explain, if needed, why there are no samples of quality work.

C. Behavioral Self Evaluation

- 1. List things you do well behaviorally.
- 2. Point out areas you need to improve.

D. Goal Setting

- 1. Review goals you have set.
- 2. Explain how you intend to meet those goals.

E. Parent Input

- 1. Show parents questions for which you have prepared answers.
- 2. Answer other questions parents have for you.
- 3. Encourage parents to ask teacher questions.

F. Teacher Input

1. Hear teacher's comments to parents and students.

G. Self Evaluations

- 1. Hand parents Parent Letter/Conference Evaluation sheet to complete.
- 2. Ask them to sign the class book.
- 3. Relax and know that you did a GREAT job!

Conference Organizer

While you look at my work with me, I was Math Goal:	Science Goal:
Matil Goal.	Science Goai.
Work Samples:	Work Samples:
1.	1
2	2
3	3
Reading Goal:	Writing Goal:
Work Samples:	Work Samples:
1	1
2.	2.
3	3
Social Studies Goal:	Other Goal:
Work Samples:	Work Samples:
1	1
2.	2.
3.	3.
These are the things I think I do well:	
These are the things my teacher thinks I d	lo well:

Conferences During Student-Led

- Welcome and greet families.
- o Circulate among family groups to make individual student comments.
- Observe and record:
 - Pertinent student comments
 - Attendance
 - Questions from parents
 - o Family dynamics
- o Write notes to students during "down time."
- o Keep a list of "things to do" that come up during conferences.
- Facilitate when needed.
- o Express appreciation to parents and others who attend conferences.
- o Treat parents as partners
- Provide resources or materials (such as booklets) that families can use at home to help students.

After Conferences

- o Schedule appointments with any parents who request extra time.
- o Follow up on a "to do" list made during conferences.
- Contact other staff where issues discussed during conferences involve them.
- o Read and process evaluations from parents, students.
- o Process the activity with students via discussion or written reflection.
- Keep parents informed about any changes in steps taken with students as a result of agreements made during the conferences.
- Share opinions and non-confidential information about the conferences with colleagues.
- o Evaluate the process as a faculty.
- o Celebrate successes.

After the Conference – Student Reflection

Name: D	ate:
The best thing about my conference was	
Things would have gone better if	
One thing I chose not to share with my parents is	
As I look back on my conference and the preparat	ions for it, I feel I gained
I think my parents learned	
Additional comments:	

Parent Response

I came expecting	I learned
	ıdent-Led
Co	onferences
I would suggest	Our comments
Parent Signature:	
Date:	

Class Meeting Agenda Flow Chart

Meeting Leader: _____ Date: ____ **Destination (Mission Statement)** "I am going to review our mission statement." Rules of the Road (Ground Rules) "I am going to review our classroom ground rules." Are We There Yet? (Data Board) "Let's visit the progress we have made on our journey to continuous improvement." Pit Stop (Plus/Delta Chart) "It is time to check in and see what systems are working well and where we might need a tune up." On the Road Again (Close Meeting) "Travelers, it's time to get back on the road again!"

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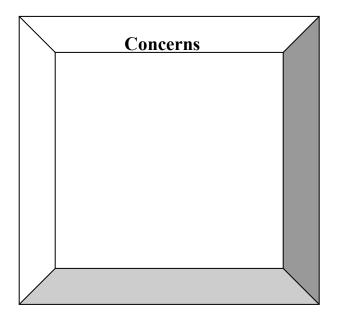


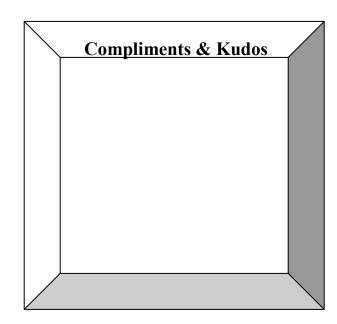


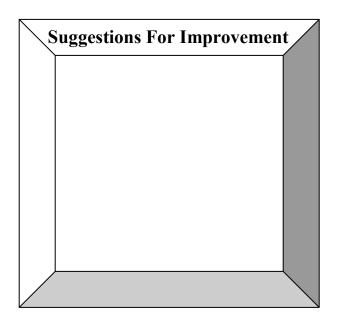
PLUS Things done well	DELTA Things to change
PARKING LO	T / ISSUE BIN

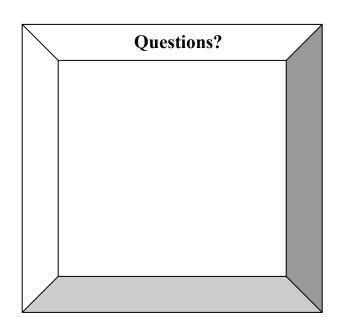
Quality Quadrant

Date: _____ Activity: _____











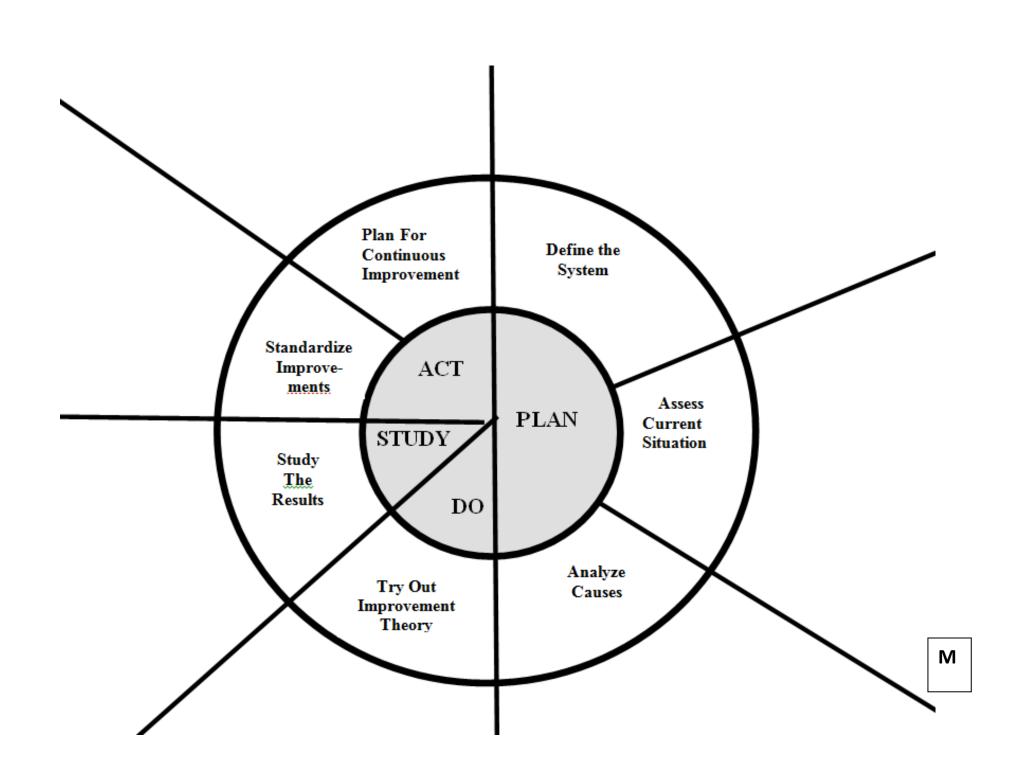
KUDOS		CONCERNS	
SUGGEST	IONS	QUESTIONS	

Date:	Name:	

Fast Feedback

	Fast Feedi	Jack	
Instructions:	Circle the number tha thoughts on today's le	•	_
I understood t	oday's lesson.		
1	2	3	4
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I could take w	hat I learned today and	use it in real	life.
1	2	3	4
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Next time you	teach this lessson, co	uld you do thi	s instead?
The pace of to	day's lesson was (circ	le one)	
Too slo	ow Just Right	Too Fa	st
l'd like some additional help, please. Signed:			

+	Δ	
PLUS	DELTA	
Things done well	Things to change	_
		_
		L-4



My Plan-Do-Study-Act: Behavior

lame:	Date:	Teacher:
PLAN Define/explain the current situation		
Focus: Quality Behavior Goal: To get% Green d	lays a month.	
Assess the Current Situation Last month I had	% Green days	ò.
Analyze Causes - Root cause Here are the reasons I do not ge	•	
2		
3		
4		
Improvement Theory: To meet remonth, I am going to: 1		
Study the Results After days of trying my im My situation: has changed	•	, ·
I know this because	_	
Act To continue to improve, I am go	oing to	
Student Signature: Parent signature:		

My Plan-Do-Study-Act : Reading Fluency

Name: Date:	
PLAN Define/explain the current situation:	
Focus: Read fluently Goal: To read wpm.	
Assess the Current Situation I read wpm.	
Analyze Causes - Root cause Check all that apply I don't read at school as much as I could I don't read at home as much as I could I don't know what to do when I come to a word I don't kn I read too fast I don't use expression when I read Other:	ow.
Improvement Theory: To improvement by reading fluency I am solution. 1	
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:	

My Plan-Do-Study-Act: Reading Comprehension

Name:	Date:
PLAN Define/explain the current situation:	
Focus: Reading Comprehension Goal: To comprehend reading mate	rial with% accuracy.
Assess the Current Situation I comprehend reading material with	
Analyze Causes - Root cause - Checce I don't read at school as much a lidon't read at home as much a lidon't know what to do when I lidon't ask my self questions white I don't reread confusing parts. Other:	as I could as I could come to a word I don't know. le I read.
DO Improvement Theory: To improve by to: 1 2 3 4	
Study the Results After days of trying my improve My situation: has changed	
I know this because	
<u>Act</u> To continue to improve, I am going to	
Student Signature: Parent signature:	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: <u>Ground Rules/Norms</u>

	,
"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
about	
Areas in	
which I need	
more	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
this	
component	
Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection

CLC Component: <u>Mission Statements</u>

// -	
"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
about	
Areas in	
which I need	
more	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
this	
component	
12.2	
Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: Goal Setting/SMART Goals

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
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excited	
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Areas in	
which I need	
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Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
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component	
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Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: <u>Data Centers</u>

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
about	
Areas in	
which I need	
more	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
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component	
Questions	
still have?	
Sum mave!	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: <u>Student Data Folders</u>

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
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Areas in	
which I need	
more .	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
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component	
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Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: <u>StudentLedConferences</u>

"Take a	
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key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
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Areas in	
which I need	
more .	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
this	
component	
-	
Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: Class Meetings

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
about	
Areas in	
which I need	
more .	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
this	
component	
-	
Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection CLC Component: QualityTook&PDSA

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
excited	
about	
Areas in	
which I need	
more .	
support	
Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
this	
component	
-	
Questions	
still have?	

Journal/Reflection

CLC Component:

"Take a	
ways" and	
key learnings	
Aspects	
that I'm	
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which I need	
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Steps I will	
take to	
implement	
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Questions	
still have?	
Juli Have:	