



Sustaining Continuous School Improvement and Standards-based Learning through Professional Learning Communities

Professional learning communities (PLCs) provide a collaborative culture where educators work together to ensure higher levels of collective teacher efficacy and learning for every student. PLCs are committed to the continuous school improvement (CSI) cycle which uses data analysis and professional learning to drive staff engagement for improvement. As part of the CSI process, standards-based learning (SBL) articulates the vision for teaching and learning, referring to integrated systems of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and the learning environment that are based on students demonstrating proficiency of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn.

Resources:

[Continuous School Improvement Digital Workbook](#)
[Standards-based Learning Digital Workbook](#)

Bernhardt, V. L. (2017). *Data analysis for continuous school improvement*. New York, NY: Routledge.

DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., Many, T. W., & Mattos, M. (2016). *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Heflebower, T., Hoegh, J. K., Warrick, P.G., & Flygare, J. (2019). *A teacher's guide to standards-based learning*. Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research.

Overview

1	PLC – Committing to a Common Purpose How do we get started?	
Phase	CSI – Data Analysis and Problem Solving Where are we now? How did we get to where we are?	SBL – Purpose What are the basic elements of standards-based learning?
2	PLC – Building a Team How do we support team development?	
Phase	CSI – Mission and Vision Where do we want to be?	SBL – Plan What are the basic elements of year-long and unit planning?
3	PLC – Creating a Results Orientation How do we focus the work?	
Phase	CSI – Development and Implementation of CSI Plan How will we get to where we want to be?	SBL – Practice What teaching and learning practices align with standards-based learning?
4	PLC – Looking Forward How do we structure PLC discussions?	
Phase	CSI – Evaluation of the CSI Plan Is what we are doing making a difference?	SBL – Product How can assessment and instructional cycles further refine unit planning?

PLC Cycle

1 Phase	PLC – Committing to a Common Purpose • Begin with the end in mind by reviewing EbD Framework • Identify common purpose ○ Complete self-efficacy documents ○ Consider self-efficacy in the context of collective-efficacy • Build shared knowledge ○ Present synthesis of research on PLCs ○ Complete CSI data analysis (CSI Phase 1) ○ Identify basic elements of standards-based learning (SBL Phase 1) ○ Identify standards for consensus Resources • EbD Framework • Self-efficacy Documents ○ Personal Inventory ○ Finding your Hedgehog ○ Your Individual Identity • Fist to Five Consensus Strategy
2 Phase	PLC – Building a Team • Build culture through communication and collaboration ○ Complete culture documents • Support team development ○ Develop or review purpose, processes, and procedures • Build shared knowledge ○ Develop or review mission and vision (CSI Phase 2) ○ Identify basic elements of year-long and unit standards-based planning (SBL Phase 2) • Make time for collaboration • Develop calendar of meetings Resources • Culture Documents ○ Team Trust Survey ○ Stages of Team Dev ○ State of the Team • Processes and Procedures ○ Agendas ○ Roles ○ Norms
3 Phase	PLC – Creating a Results Orientation • Translate one or more goals from the CSI Plan (CSI Phase 3) into S.M.A.R.T goals to guide the work of the team ○ Break S.M.A.R.T goals into short-cycle goals • Build shared knowledge of standards-based teaching and learning practices (SBL Phase 3) • Establish questions that will guide collaboration • Maintain engagement Resources • School CSI Plan • S.M.A.R.T Goals Template • Guiding Questions • Engagement Strategies
4 Phase	PLC – Looking Forward • Ground discussion around one or more guiding questions ○ Where are we going? ○ Where are we now? ○ How do we move learning forward? ○ What did we learn today? ○ Who benefited and who did not benefit? • Complete data analysis protocol • Build shared knowledge ○ Conduct data literacy survey ○ Review best practices for data conversations ○ Identify assessment and instructional cycles (SBL Phase 4) • Review progress of S.M.A.R.T goals (CSI Phase 4) • Review progress of PLC Resources • Guiding Questions • Data Analysis Protocol • Data Literacy Survey • State of the Team

CSI Cycle

1 Phase	CSI—Data Analysis and Problem Solving • Begin with the end in mind by reviewing EbD and CSI Frameworks • Complete Continuums • Where are we now? ○ Complete data profile by aggregating data • How did we get to where we are? ○ Problem solve to identify causes ○ Complete process inventory ○ Flow chart processes Resources • EbD Framework • CSI Framework • CSI Continuums • Aggregation of Strengths/Challenges/Implications Templates • Program Evaluation Template • Problem Solving Cycle • Flowchart Example • Process/Program Inventory • School Data—Demographic, Survey, MAP, Processes
2 Phase	CSI—Mission and Vision • Where do we want to be? ○ Develop or review core values and beliefs ○ Develop or review mission statement and outcomes (7Cs) ○ Develop or review vision statement and outcomes (curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning environment aligned with SBL) Resources • School Core Values and Beliefs • School Mission and Vision Statements • Missional Outcomes (7Cs) and Rubrics • Visional Outcomes and Rubrics
3 Phase	CSI—Development and Implementation of CSI Plan • How will we get to where we want to be? ○ Determine the difference between needs identified in data analysis and the vision ○ Develop and implement the CSI Plan Resources • CSI Plan Template and Example • Aggregated School Data • School Vision
4 Phase	CSI—Evaluation of the CSI Plan • Is what we are doing making a difference? ○ Complete a Program Evaluation for each CSI goal ○ Flowchart to describe implementation of a program or process ○ Compare the Process Inventory with data analysis to identify programs and processes for improvement ○ Use Continuums to assess the system Resources • Program Evaluation Template • Flowchart Example • Process/Program Inventory • Continuums

SBL Cycle

1 Phase	SBL — Purpose		
	Teacher Outcomes - Define and provide rationale for SBL - Identify how SBL aligns with the EbD Framework and the visional outcomes - Explain construction and purpose of p-scales - Explain the central role of p-scales in all aspects of SBL - Identify the role of content in SBL - Explain DOK levels in relation to p-scales - Identify the 3 phases of planning (year-long, unit, lesson) - Introduce p-scales to learners - Develop communication plan	Learner Outcomes - Explain purpose of p-scales - Explain the meaning of the levels on a p-scale	Documents EbD Framework Visional Outcomes DOK Wheel P-scale Examples
2 Phase	SBL — Plan		
	Teacher Outcomes - Map standards (p-scales) and 7Cs across the school year - Develop a standards-based unit - Explain why p-scales are the basis of unit planning - Identify standards for unit and relevant p-scales - Identify desired outcomes - Explain purpose of 7Cs (transfer) - Explain purpose of big ideas (BI)/essential questions (EQ) (meaning) - Explain purpose of standards, learning targets, and I Can statements (acquisition) - Determine collection of evidence (formative, summative) - Align assessment and instruction to learning targets - Introduce I Can statements, 7Cs, and BI/EQ to learners - Communicate with BOE	Learner Outcomes - Explain that I Can statements describe what they need to know and to do to be proficient in the learning targets on the p-scale - Explain what is meant by the 7Cs - Tell the difference between BI/EQ	Documents Unit Planning Template 7Cs P-scales Instructional Taxonomy Assessment Taxonomy - P scale(s) for Unit
3 Phase	SBL — Practice		
	Teacher Outcomes - Implement the standards-based unit through daily lesson plans - Share p-scale(s) with learners, using exemplars of levels and displaying in the classroom for reference throughout the unit - Use instructional and assessment strategies as noted in the unit plan - Explain and use grading and reporting practices for SBL - Identify p-scale scores for activities and assessments using success criteria - Compute an overall grade at the end of the unit, converting p-scale levels to letter grades - Explain when it is appropriate to average scores - Explain the 3 criteria to include on a report card: product, process, progress - Complete assessment data profile, identifying instructional support for all students based on data - Evaluate student tracking of their progress - Communicate with parents	Learner Outcomes - Explain learning target for lesson using I Can statement - Identify how assignments and assessments relate to the p-scale - Reflect on p-scale to determine current level of performance - Set goals via the p-scale - Track progress on goals using success criteria	Documents - Unit - P-scale(s) for Unit - Exemplars Grading Philosophy Scoring Flowchart Conversion Chart Assessment Data Protocol Goal Setting Template Tracking Template
4 Phase	SBL — Product		
	Teacher Outcomes - Explain a balanced assessment system - Distinguish between formative and summative assessments - Recognize the role of feedback in the formative assessment cycle - Define learning targets and success criteria - Refine assessment and instructional activities in unit - Provide learners with multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency - Adapt or modify activities for exceptional learners - Distinguish between accommodations and modifications - Develop and use individual p-scales for exceptional learners	Learner Outcomes - Participate in the feedback cycle: Where am I going? Where am I now? Where to next? - Use individualized p-scales if needed	Documents Assessment Taxonomy Instructional Taxonomy Guidelines for Exceptional Learners Accommodations or Modifications