

Music Teacher PLCs

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What is a PLC?

- ❖ A PLC, or professional learning community, is a small group of educators who meet regularly to engage in collaborative discussion and inquiry work designed specifically to enhance their professional work in the classroom. The success of a PLC depends largely on the collaboration and effort of all teachers involved to establish a safe and positive sharing environment.
- ❖ Music PLCs consist specifically of music educators. They can focus on anything from how to efficiently assess large numbers of students to how to design curriculum maps or lesson units. The beauty of PLCs that are led by the participants is that together you can choose a topic or focus that best serves the needs and interests of that particular group.

How often do you meet?

- ❖ PLCs for music teachers can be tricky since you have to meet outside of your school's daily schedule, which can also include additional after school rehearsals and concerts and lessons, etc. Teachers participating in PLCs in NYC meet once a month to share ideas and develop materials for their classrooms throughout the school year. This time seems to be both manageable for scheduling purposes and sufficient time for implementation between meetings.
- ❖ A great thing about PLCs is that you can meet as often as you need according to the participants. Meetings could be informal and take place over dinner, at a coffee shop, or at a library. You could rotate your meeting place and visit other music classrooms for each session. You could even meet online in a message group or Skype session! Think outside the box and don't let finding a common day of the week or month stop you!

How to Connect with Others to Start a PLC

- ❖ Ask your district for a list of the other music teachers in your area
- ❖ Send an email to an arts coordinator in your area as a request
- ❖ Send flyers to local schools if you can't get emails of music teachers
- ❖ Have a sign up sheet at your next local Orff workshop
- ❖ Take to social media to invite people in your area to participate
- ❖ Start small and grow

Benefits of Participating in a Music PLC

- ❖ Let's face it. No one in our building understands the ins and outs of our jobs quite like another music teacher. There are so many facets to our jobs that are vastly different from the regular classroom teachers in our building. By leaning on the shoulders of other music teachers who are doing what you do every day, you can share best practices, discuss local resources, create learning materials based on your district's standards or curriculum, support one another through the often convoluted teacher evaluations systems in your school system or state, and help each other problem solve all those little day-to-day issues that come with teaching music.
- ❖ Participating in a Music PLC allows you to peek into the lives of other music teachers. Visit their classrooms. Share concert repertoire and teaching materials. Learn how other schools deal with behavior management. See how other schools schedule music classes and rehearsals. There are so many ways to build a successful music program. Why not keep adding to your list?
- ❖ By collaborating and helping one another throughout your sessions, you are building a trustworthy and knowledgeable support system on which you can rely when the going gets tough. That feeling of isolation starts to disappear as your network of music colleagues grows.