Collier County Public School District

Principal Mentor Handbook

"Masterful mentors inspire people by helping them recognize the previously unseen possibilities that lay embedded in their existing circumstances."   Robert Hargrove

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Code of Ethics for Leadership Mentors

1. I will conduct myself in a manner that serves the goal of doing what is best for students.

2. I will coach my protégée with the goal of supporting the development of leadership aligned with accepted professional standards.

3. I will build trust in my coaching relationships by consistently being sincere in my communication, reliable in meeting my commitments, and by operating within my areas of competence.

4. I will, at the beginning of each coaching relationship, ensure that my coaching protégée understands the terms of the coaching agreement between us.

5. I will respect the confidentiality of my protégée's information, except as otherwise authorized by my protégée, or as required by law.

6. I will coordinate with and support the goals of my protégée's employer, while guarding confidentiality and nurturing collaboration between all parties.

7. I will be alert to noticing when my protégé is no longer benefiting from our coaching relationship and thus would be better served by another mentor or by another resource and, at that time, I will encourage my protégée to make that change.

8. I will avoid conflicts between my interests and the interests of my protégées. Whenever the potential for a conflict of interest arises, I will discuss the conflict with my protégée to reach agreement with my protégée on how to deal with it in whatever way best serves my protégée.

Standards for Mentor Principals

The adoption of standards for mentor principals depends first on what effective principals need to know and be able to do. Effective mentors must be successful principals. The Florida Department of Education has endorsed the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC Standards), and the components of each, as the primary measure of effective mentor principals.

Florida Principal Leadership Standards

Instructional Leadership A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community:
  • developing the vision
  • communicating the vision
  • implementing the vision
  • monitoring and evaluating the vision

Managing   A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.
  • making management decisions to ensure successful teaching and learning
  • developing procedures to ensure successful teaching and learning
  • allocating resources to ensure successful teaching and learning
  • creating a safe, healthy environment to ensure successful teaching and learning

Vision A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
  • valuing students and staff
  • developing and sustaining the culture
  • ensuring an inclusive culture
  • monitoring and evaluating the culture

Family and Community Partnerships A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with all families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
  • understanding community needs
  • involving members of the community
  • providing opportunities for the community and school to serve each other
  • understanding and valuing diversity

Ethical Leadership A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
  • developing a personal and professional code of ethics
  • understanding one's impact on the school and community
  • respecting the rights and dignity of all
  • inspiring integrity and ethical behavior in others

Diversity A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context.
  • operating schools on behalf of students and families
  • communicating changes in environment to stakeholders
  • working within policies, laws, and regulations
  • communicating with decision-makers outside the school community

Collier District Mentor Standards

1) A mentor principal is an effective leader who engages in reflective practices and provides thoughtful, candid and constructive feedback in a manner that supports individual protégé learning. The mentor must be organized and have the ability to assess the protégés strengths and needs in thoughtful ways and target opportunities for growth.
A mentor must:

• Be able to step reflect, evaluate, process, assess and articulate protégé learning and consider the implications of that learning for future action.

• Provide timely feedback. Make it usable and realistic. Offer concrete practical steps and options. Ask reflective questions without solving the problem.

• Have the ability and be willing to spend the time necessary to provide regular face-to-face contact and written reflections and assessments.

2) A mentor principal is an educational leader who builds and maintains a learning relationship with an individual protégé that involves respect, trust, support, and effective communication. A mentor must:

•Take the time to establish guidelines and protocols for effective communication (i.e. relationship ground rules, confidentiality safeguards, boundaries)
•Identify and use multiple venues for communication.
•Set a regular meeting schedule.
•Provide appropriate, relevant, and adequate support and assistance to facilitate effective learning.

3) A mentor principal is an educational leader who allows the protégé to assume a real leadership role, that is, make independent decisions, and own the responsibility for the results. A mentor must:

•Have the ability to share the work of implementing a personal and school vision.
•Provide protégés with every opportunity to be involved in and take a leadership role in all decision-making
•Accept that there are multiple alternative solutions not just one right way… the mentor's.

4) A mentor principal is an educational leader who has passion for learning and believes that mentoring is a mutually enhancing professional development opportunity in which both partners benefit. A mentor must:

•Recognize that mentoring is a vehicle for job enhancement, professional development and personal satisfaction.
•Model the principles of continuous learning and reflection.
•Understand that reading books, attending conferences and participating in institutes together provide valuable learning opportunities for both.
•Gain a renewed enthusiasm for the principalship and leadership in general.
•Provide the protégé with information about professional development opportunities and introduce the protégé into professional networks.

5) A mentor principal is an educational leader who displays emotional maturity as evidenced by personal and professional interactions both with protégés and the school community. A mentor must:

•Make sure the protégé's work is showcased for the school, district and the school community at large.
•Possess high standards and expectations for own abilities and that of colleagues.
•Have confidence in own abilities.
•Understand own strengths and weaknesses.
•Take pride in seeing the protégés grow and learn, even when they are able to do some things better than the mentor.
•Have a well-developed sense of humor

ADDENDUM: NAESP PALS

Baseline Survey

The following survey questions are intended to establish a baseline for discussion and the development of actions plans in an effective mentoring program. These are not intended to be all-encompassing, nor are they intended to limit the discussion between mentor and protégé. Completed surveys should be retained and become part of the mentor's summary document.

1. Prior to becoming a principal, what position(s) did you hold? Please check all that apply.
___Classroom or Subject Teacher
___Specialist
___ Assistant Principal
___Other, Please Specify

2. How many years of teaching experience did you have prior to becoming an administrator?
___3-5
___6-8
___9-14
___15
___Other

3. Who had the GREATEST influence on you in your decision to become a principal?
___Fellow Teacher
___Former Administrator
___Active Administrator
___Spouse
___College Professor
___Other, Please Specify_____

4. What is your gender (for research purposes)?
___Female
___Male

5. What is your age?
___25-30
___31-35
___36-40
___40-50
___Over 50

6. Standard Two for School Administrators deals with "Ensuring MANAGEMENT of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment". Please check all of the following topics that you would like to explore.
___Preparing a budget with short-term and long-range goals
___Designing a crisis intervention plan for your school
___Developing student and teacher schedules that work
___Conducting effect meetings that build teams and consensus
___Developing data-driven decision making skills
___Other, Please Specify

7. Standard Two deals with "Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district VISION OF LEARNING that is shared and supported by the school community". Please check all of the following topics that you would like to explore.
___Creating a Vision for your school
___Developing a Strategic Plan for your school
___Using Action-Research Projects in your school
___Other, Please Specify

8. Standard Three deals with DIVERSITY by "understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. Please check all of the following topics that you would like to explore:
___Understanding and Managing Change
___Working WITH your School's Community
___Other, Please Specify

9. Standard One deals with INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP and it being conducive to student learning and Please check all of the following topics that you would like to explore.
___Creating and nurturing an environment for teachers to collaborate for increased student achievement
___Promoting innovative and effective instructional strategies
___Other, Please Specify

9. Standard One deals with HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT and staff professional growth.
___Assisting all staff in professional improvement plans
___Implementing effect teacher supervision and evaluation programs
___Current theories on Motivation and Adult Learning
___Fostering a peer observation program
___Other, Please Specify

10. Standard Five for LEARNING, ASSESSMENT deals with "the use of multiple sources of data to improve instruction. Please check the areas you would like to explore.
___Analyze data using multiple strategies
___Use data as a tool to identify barriers to success
___Create a school environment that is comfortable using data
___Other, Please Specify

11. Standard Six for School Administrators deals with "Collaboration with FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community RESOURCES. Please check all of the following topics that you would like to explore.
___Positive PR – Promoting your School
___Forming Community Partnerships
___Forming Business Partnerships
___Other, Please

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
___An Update on Legal Issues for School Administrators

12. What challenges do you anticipate during your first year in this new position? Explain:
Other challenges include:

PROTÉGÉ ACTION PLAN

Name: **School:**

Date: **Position**: Principal

School Phone: (239) 377-

Vision:

Goal:

Plan:

Timeline:

Anticipated Problems:

Preventions:

Baseline:

Satisfactory Outcome:

Excellent Outcome:

Proof:

Celebration:

Mentoring Feedback

Feedback for Mentors from Protégée

In what areas of your principalship are you feeling most successful?

What are your greatest concerns and challenges?

What mentoring/coaching strategies do I use that are most helpful to you?

What additional ideas or suggestions do you have to help me be a better mentor?

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS FOR THE MENTOR

The following concepts were summarized and presented by Dr. Richard Kerr for a presentation at the annual convention for the National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2006.

"A coach is someone who tells you what you don't want to hear, so that you can see what you don't want to see, so that you can be what you always want to be." Tom Landry

What does effective mentoring look like, sound like, feel like?

What kind of support do you wish you would have had as a new administrator?

As an educational leader and mentor to new administrators, what activities are you involved in to encourage aspiring administrators or new administrators?

How knowledgeable are you about the administrator leadership standards?

Think about:
- Reflections on professional practice
- Verbal or non-verbal communication
- Questioning
- Listening
- Observation
- Feedback
- Self-assessment

What is principal mentoring?
- A teaching and learning activity
- A method to support and guide new building administrators to establish and reach goals
- A means of providing strong collegial support through the day-to-day activities required of a building administrator

An effective administrative mentor .. ..
- Is a successful principal trained in mentoring skills
- Is ready and willing to commit the time and energy required to mentor effectively
- Is willing to participate in ongoing training focused on effective mentoring
- Communicates effectively
- Is able to consider differing viewpoints and new ideas
- Builds a trusting, confidential partnership with a colleague
- Enhances the self worth and supports the professional growth of the protégé
- Shares ideas, reflections, stories and successes – in a balanced and appropriate manner
- Provides support and encouragement
- Guides the protégé in using problem solving techniques
- Connects the new building administrator with professional organizations and other administrators
- Is interested in actively supporting the professional development of other principals
- Is a lifelong learner

Mentoring new administrators…
- Supports the professional growth of the new building administrator
- Directly supports the new administrator's work
- Supports accountability for the new building administrator
- Supports the new building administrator as the educational leader
- Builds collegiality through networking
- Expands the expertise of all through networking

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The role of the administrative mentor is to…
  • Build a trusting relationship
  • Be an attentive listener
  • Assist in reflection
  • Model and guide
  • Observe and give feedback
  • Recommend developmental activities
  • Focus on mutual learning
  • Invest time, experience, and expertise
  • Respond to the needs of the protégé
  • Use appropriate mentoring methods

The role of the protégé is to……
  • Build a trusting relationship
  • Reflect on experiences and ideas
  • Share needs and concerns
  • Articulate needs clearly
  • Communicate honestly
  • Choose to develop and change as needed
  • Recognize mutual learning as a goal
  • Strive to achieve goals and objectives

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Information from
the National Association of Elementary School Principals'
"PALS" Mentor Training

OBSERVATION
  • View the protégé in multiple situations demonstrating a variety of skills
  • Be sensitive to the culture and climate of the protégé's environment
  • Observe how others (colleagues, subordinates, superiors) respond to the protégé
  • Use observable actions and products as your basis for feedback and discussion
  • Rely on objective information versus personal "opinion" or "style"
        Observation techniques:
                Be patient, slow down and watch
                Be attentive to your physical surroundings: *Who, What, Where, When,*
                    and How
                Be aware of people's reactions, emotions, and motivations
                Be yourself – act natural
                Be optimistic and curious
                Be ethical

FEEDBACK
  • Sharing your perceptions of a protégé's behavior and/or performance based on
        objective observation and analysis.
  • An avenue for improving performance and to provide self correction for the protégé.
  • Critical in supporting the protégé's growth.
  • Needs to focus on learning.
  • Needs to be a dialogue where mentors and protégés can discuss the observation
        and both can share opinions.
  • Should focus on both positive and negative.

- Guidelines for the feedback process:
  - Build rapport
  - Set clear expectations about the feedback you provide
  - Be authentic and candid
  - Focus on behaviors, not personality
  - Ask for feedback from your protégé on your feedback to him/her
- Most helpful to the protégé when it is:
  - Provided in a timely manner
  - Provided regularly
  - Honest
  - Clear and descriptive
  - Specific
  - Relevant to the performance

VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL FEEDBACK
- Provide clear, direct verbal comments in a manner that supports the protégé to grow and learn
- Tone of voice, volume, pacing, and time spent contribute to verbal and non-verbal feedback
- Non-verbal feedback communication includes facial expressions, physical gestures, and body language
  - Impact of non-verbal communication (from R. Flesch, the Odyssey Group):
    - Words – 7% ; Tone of voice 42% ; Body language – 51%
- Listening is essential to effective feedback – and effective communication (information from Brownell):
  - Hearing messages
  - Understanding messages – comprehending
  - Remembering messages
  - Interpreting messages
  - Evaluating criteria (critical listening)
  - Responding to messages

QUESTIONING
- May use a variety of techniques:
  - Open-ended questioning
  - Probing questions
  - Linking questions
  - Summarizing questions
  - Closed questions
  - Leading questions
  - Multiple choice questions
  - Hypothetical questions
- Use to seek clarification on the purpose and goal of the interaction (e.g., the visit, discussion, e-mail, phone call).
- Use to clearly identify the goal the protégé desires to accomplish and assess its relevance to his/her growth
- Use to discover the protégé's perception of his/her progress
  - Examples include:
    - Tell me more about… What do you think about…?
    - What was the response of …? What was the result of…?

Questioning Continued

What aspects of this innovation would you repeat?
What might you change in the future?
What additional resources might you refer to?
Who else would you involve?
˙ How did you feel?

• Effective questioning is non-biased and invites reflection and self-assessment
• Allows the mentor and protégé insure they are clearly communicating
• An opportunity to investigate and discuss a variety of approaches and the associated positives and drawbacks
• Prompts future oriented thinking and planning – for the protégé and mentor
• Creates opportunities to introduce new ideas and further discussions

REFLECTION

• Time for the protégé to focus on their professional growth
• Opportunity to focus on goals, standards, and levels of accomplishments
• May be used to target a single activity or multiple activities
• Writing or journaling often enhances the process of "reflective thinking" which may result in more productive discussions and ultimately expanded understanding
• Reflective questions may support the thinking and growth process (see questioning)

Sample questions may include:
˙ As you reflect on your approach, what are the most positive aspects?
What would you do differently when you repeat this type of activity in the future?
What did you learn about the "process" through this activity?
What did you learn about yourself and your approach through this activity?
˙ Who were the most important "stakeholders" you involved? Who might be others you would involve in the future?
Can you identify components of our work that contributed to the development of your processes?
˙ What were the best sources of data you used to support your activity?

• Reflective questions are:
Single focused
Honest questions
Designed to foster thought and reflection
Stated in non-judgmental language
Open ended and stated in the present or future tense

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Principal Leadership Standards
Key Indicators

1.0 Vision – High Performing leaders have a personal vision for their school and the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop, articulate and implement a shared vision that is supported by the larger organization and the school community.
1.1 Describes how to develop and implement a shared vision and strategic plan for the school
1.2 Works with staff, students and families to achieve the school's vision
1.3 Describes how instructional objectives, curricular goals and the shared vision relate to each other
1.4 Allows time for the achievement of goals
1.5 Identifies needs that will be targeted in the shared vision and strategic plan
1.6 Communicates the school's vision, mission and priorities to the community
1.7 Understands the basic concepts of the change process
1.9 Is aware that external influences have impact upon the school
1.10 Establishes plans to accomplish goals
1.11 Relates the vision, mission, and goals to students
1.12 Understands the effect of having a community of learners working together
1.13 Articulates and reinforces the vision in written and spoken communications

2.0 Instructional Leadership – High Performing Leaders promote a positive learning culture, provide an effective instructional program, and apply best practices to student learning, especially in the area of reading and other foundational skills.
2.1 Sets annual learning gains, school improvement goals and other targets for instructional improvement
2.2 Uses data as a component of planning for instructional improvement
2.3 Includes provisions in the instructional program for students with special needs
2.4 Engages staff in ongoing study of current best practices
2.5 Reads research, applied theory, and informed practice related to the curriculum
2.6 Works to create high expectations and standards among the staff, teachers, and community members
2.7 Relates content and instruction to the achievement of established standards by students
2.8 Provides instructional leadership
2.9 Is aware of research on instructional effectiveness and will use it as needed
2.10 Demonstrates knowledge of student performance evaluation
2.11 Has identified skills necessary for the planning and implementation of improvements of student learning
2.12 Assesses the curriculum needs in a particular setting
2.13 Works to relate state standards, the needs of the students, the community and the school's goals
2.14 Understands the effect that a positive school culture has on student learning
2.15 Recognizes differences in the staff's desire and willingness to focus energy on achieving educational excellence
2.16 Identifies teaching and learning needs among the staff and teachers
2.17 Communicates the instructional program to the community, the staff, and district personnel
2.18 Models professionalism, collaboration and continuous learning
2.19 Understands and recognizes the benefits for students in:
- balanced reading instruction
- curriculum integration
- active teaching and learning strategies
- standards-based instructional programs
- the use of technology for instructional purposes
- aligning classroom assessments to standards

3.0 Managing the Learning Environment – High Performing Leaders manage the organization, operations, facilities and resources in ways that maximize the use of resources in an instructional organization and promote a safe, efficient, legal, and effective learning environment.
3.1 Administers policies that provide a safe school environment
3.2 Plans for the accomplishment of strategic goals
3.3 Manages the daily operations of the school
3.4 Is aware of the various fiscal and non fiscal resources for the school including business and community resources
3.5 Manages the school to promote and encourage student learning
3.6 Uses financial resources and capital goods and services to support school priorities
3.7 Uses an efficient budget planning process
3.8 Uses school resources to achieve curricular and instructional goals
3.9 Understands techniques and organizational useful in leading and managing a complex and diverse organization
3.10 Plans and schedules one's own and others' work so that priorities and goals can be met
3.11 Conforms to legal and ethical standards in the management of the learning environment

4.0 Community and Stakeholder Partnerships – High Performing Leaders collaborate with families, business, and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs, work effectively within the larger organization and mobilize community resources.
4.1 Understands how student and family conditions affect learning
4.2 Identifies opinion leaders in the community and their relationships to the school
4.3 Communicates the school's vision, mission and priorities to the community
4.4 Understands the effect that school image caused by impressions created by the students and staff and its use in promoting the school
4.5 Uses shared leadership and decision-making model in the operation of the school
4.6 Identifies resources of families, business, and community members that could support the school
4.7 Understands the benefits of having and using a variety of partnerships, coalitions, and networks
4.8 Is establishing relationships within and external to the school
4.9 Actively engages the community to promote student and school success
4.10 Identifies other agencies to connect students to the health, human and social services they need to stay focused on learning
4.11 Provides opportunities to involve family and community in a broad range of school activities

5.0 Decision Making Strategies – High Performing Leaders plan effectively, use critical thinking and problem solving techniques, and collect and analyze data for continuous school improvement.
5.1 Is developing a set of problem solving techniques and decision making skills
5.2 Understands that events and problems can have a variety of explanations
5.3 Explains and defends decisions made
5.4 Uses data to inform decisions
5.5 Uses others to assist in the accomplishment of organization goals
5.6 Supports student learning when making curricular and instructional decisions
5.7 Has a problem-solving model to use when confronted with unsettled questions or undesirable situations
5.8 Conforms to appropriate legal standards
5.9 Makes decisions in a timely fashion using the best available information
5.10 Provides opportunities to involve family and community in a broad range of school activities

6.0 Diversity – High Performing Leaders understand, respond to, and influence the personal, political, social, economic, legal, and cultural relationships in the classroom, the school and the local community.
6.1 Has skills necessary for interactive and interpersonal situations

6.2 Understands how multicultural awareness, gender sensitivity, and racial and ethnic appreciation affect an educational organization
6.3 Is able to interact with the various cultural, ethnic, racial, and special interest groups in the community
6.4 Is aware of how the teaching staff provides for the diverse perspectives appropriate to the student population and school community
6.5 Provides opportunities to involve school community in a broad range of school activities
6.6 Interacts effectively with diverse individuals and groups
6.7 Conforms to legal and ethical standards related to diversity
6.8 Is perceptive and tactful in dealing with diverse populations
6.9 Recognizes when crisis communications are necessary and is building a repertoire of skills to deal with them
6.10 Arranges for students and families whose home language is not English to engage in school activities and communication through oral and written translations
6.11 Has a plan for the hiring and retention of a diverse staff
6.12 Has a plan to develop ways to improve relations with various cultural, ethnic, racial and special interest groups in the community

7.0 Technology – High Performing Leaders plan and implement the integration of technological and electronic tools in teaching, learning, management, research, and communication responsibilities.
7.1 Is aware of the technology, telecommunications and information systems and their uses to enrich curriculum, instruction, and assessment
7.2 Communicates and gets feedback on a plan for technology integration for the school community
7.3 Works with tech-savvy staff to plan for increased technology usage
7.4 Models the use of technology as a tool in support of both educational and community activities
7.5 Develops an effective teacher professional development plan to increase technology usage
7.6 Has assessed and analyzed the extent to which technology has been integrated throughout the teaching and learning environment
7.7 Within the available resources, increases access to educational technologies for the school
7.8 Has a plan for the provision of support to increase the use of technology already in the school/classrooms
7.9 Uses technology to support the educational efforts of staff and teachers

8.0 Learning, Accountability, and Assessment – High Performing Leaders monitor the success of all students in the learning environment, align the curriculum, instruction, and assessment processes to promote effective student performance, and use a variety of benchmarks, learning expectations, and feedback measures to ensure accountability for all participants engaged in the educational process.
8.1 Uses data to assess and monitor school improvement
8.2 Uses multiple sources of data to inform decisions and improvement processes
8.3 Monitors and assesses student progress
8.4 Monitors and assesses the progress of activities
8.5 Demonstrates an understanding of the methods and principles of program evaluation
8.6 Develops and demonstrates skills in evaluating instructional strategies and materials
8.7 Understands how to use diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement
8.8 Works with staff to identify strategies for improving student achievement appropriate to the school population
9.0 Human Resource Development – High Performing Leaders recruit, select, nurture and, where appropriate, retain effective personnel, develop mentor and partnership programs, and design and implement comprehensive professional growth plans for all staff – paid and volunteer.

9.1 Uses multiple data sources as they work with teachers to plan for individual professional development
9.2 Utilizes a variety of supervisory skills to use to improve teaching and learning
9.3 Understands adult learning strategies useful for assisting staff in professional development
9.4 Demonstrates an understanding of the methods and principles of personnel evaluation
9.5 Operates within the provisions of each contract as well as established enforcement and grievance procedures
9.6 Sets high expectations and standards for the performance of all teachers and staff
9.7 Empowers others to achieve personal, professional and organizational goals
9.8 Connects professional growth plans and professional development to individual teacher and school learning goals
9.9 Understands the processes necessary for use in the hiring and retention of high quality teachers
9.10 Sets expectations that will ensure that all students are engaged in active learning
9.11 Provides opportunities for teachers to think, plan, and work together
9.12 Pursues improvement of his/her own professional development

10.0 Ethical Leadership – High Performing Leaders act with integrity, fairness, and honesty in an ethical manner.
10.1 Manifests a professional code of ethics and values
10.2 Makes decisions based on the legal, moral and ethical implications of policy options and political strategies
10.3 Creates, models and implements a set of values for the school
10.4 Develops well-reasoned educational beliefs based upon an understanding of teaching and learning
10.5 Understands ethical and legal concerns educators face when using technology throughout the teaching and learning environment
10.6 Develops a personal code of ethics embracing diversity, integrity, and the dignity of all people
10.7 Acts in accordance with federal and state constitutional provisions, statutory standards, and regulatory applications
10.8 Demonstrates ability to make decisions within an ethical context

Professional Learning Community

Adapted from "Critical Friends Groups as Professional Learning Communities, Southern Maine Partnership, 7/3/02.

A Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a powerful vehicle for collaborative, job-embedded professional development. A PLC consists of a group of four to twelve teachers and/or administrators who meet on a regular basis to share instructional practices, student work, and observations of classrooms within a supportive environment in order to improve teaching practice and student learning.

A PLC consists of 4-12 educators who:

1. Place improving student learning and successes as the center of their work;

2. Meet regularly for a sustained and focused period of time to work and learn together;

3. Observe each other's practice and give feedback to each other on a regular basis;

4. Build trust by engaging in significant work while providing a safe environment for taking risks;

5. Make their work public; collaboratively examine and give usable feedback on work done by their students and on their own work (e.g. teaching practices, curriculum, school culture issues);

6. Value diversity of thought, experience and perspective;

7. Draw on their own expertise, as well as on the expertise of "outside" resources;

8. Engage in reciprocal learning (everyone learning from everyone);

9. Share leadership within the group;

10. Hold themselves accountable for continuous improvement toward helping everyone learn;

11. Are facilitated by a "coach" who has received high quality training and on-going support;

12. Continuously challenge one another to adapt practice toward fostering educational and social equity; and employ an action research cycle of inquiry as a framework for its activities and learning