

Turning Points Vision for Effective Learning Communities



Practice	What it looks like...	What it does NOT look like...
<p>Emphasize Professional Development as Essential Component of School Day</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers, administrators, and support staff see meetings (team, content-area, faculty) as an important source of professional development and they engage in the following activities: Looking At student and teacher work (LASW and LATW), LAB classrooms (peer observations), curriculum mapping, inquiry groups and lesson/unit planning 2. Teachers, administrators, and support staff engage in the reading of professional articles/books and identify ways to implement new learning in classrooms 3. Teachers, administrators, and support staff engage in writing as a way to reflect upon their teaching practice and experience in the classroom 4. Teachers, administrators, and support staff have <i>powerful conversations</i> with colleagues around important questions/topics/problems related to improving teaching practice and student learning. Teachers use a variety of formats: pair/share, small group, and whole group. The conversation has 3 features. They are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Related to teaching and learning</i>. All staff focus their conversation upon how to improve teaching practice 2) <i>Staff-led</i>—the sharing of ideas is not scripted or controlled by school administrators. Staff share their ideas and build upon the thoughts of others. 3) <i>Building collective understanding of effective teaching practices</i>—discussion helps every teacher to understand and wrestle with questions around how to improve teaching practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not see team meetings as a form of professional development. Professional development is seen as happening “outside the school” and/or during “professional days” ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff primarily deal with a “laundry list” of issues that do not deal with improving teaching practice or student learning. Logistical and/or trivial conversations are the trademark of most discussions: field trip planning, dances, etc ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not have substantial time to have important conversations around teaching and learning. Conversations happen primarily on the fly or in the corridor ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff engage in meetings where there is no clear focus and conversations tend to meander rather than support the collective learning of the group.
<p>Provide Appropriate Structures to Support Effective Teaming</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Opportunities to meet</i>: All teachers, administrators, and support staff engage in common planning time at least 45 minutes, 3 to 5 times a week. 2. <i>Focused Agenda</i>: Teachers, administrators, and support staff utilize meeting time to improve teaching practice and student learning through a variety of ways: Looking at Student/Teacher Work; Lab Classroom (peer observation), inquiry groups, and lesson/unit planning 3. <i>Related to School-wide Vision and/or goals</i>: Teachers, administrators, and support staff understand how team discussion support school wide goals/initiatives and engage in regular goal setting 4. <i>Shared Norms</i>: Teachers, administrators, and support staff are vigilant upon following agreed upon norms and create a safe space where teachers can engage in risk-taking, asking important questions, and seeking thoughtful resolutions to problems 5. <i>Document Meetings</i>: Teachers, administrators, and support staff have a note-taking process to summarize meeting discussions and identify clear next steps. 6. <i>Communicate discussions and decisions</i>: Teachers, administrators, and support staff share discussions and decisions to the entire staff in multiple ways: word of mouth, use available meeting time to communicate in person, electronically (e-mail), and/or hard copies. Communication is also two-way—recipients of communication have opportunities to give feedback and share their priorities, questions, and concerns 7. <i>Shared Roles</i>: Teachers share the role of planning, facilitating, and planning meetings 8. <i>Action Oriented</i>: Teachers have a clear plan of action to address questions/dilemmas around student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not have common planning time and/or opportunities to meet on a regular basis. ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not have a planned agenda and meetings tend to be reactive rather than proactive. ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not share roles— the planning, facilitation and recording of the meeting is the responsibility of one or more individuals ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff do not have a clear system to communicate important discussions/decisions to staff. When notes are taken, they are collected in a binder and are not actively circulated ❑ Teachers, administrators, and support staff engage in meetings that are not action-oriented but are rather “complaint/venting sessions” that do not yield clear resolutions to questions/problems. ❑ Communication tends to be ONE way: decisions are communicated to staff, students, and their families but there is little opportunity for feedback and dialogue

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<p>Engage in Democratic and Shared Decision-making</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">C</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An <i>Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)</i> consisting of teachers, administrators, and support staff meet monthly to lead the school improvement process: make significant decision concerning school structures (scheduling, common planning time), professional development, school improvement/strategic planning, and allotment of resources 2. Teachers, administrators, and support staff have regular opportunities to be involved in decisionmaking: Leadership team, faculty meetings, team meetings, and subject area teams 3. School has a <i>Student Leadership Team</i>: students are involved in the school improvement process and make significant decision around school policy, teaching practices, curriculum, and school events 4. Families and the community members have opportunities to be part of the school's decisionmaking process 5. School leadership (Instructional leadership team, administrative team, student leadership team, faculty committees) communicate regularly with the whole school community and maintain strong effective relationships with students, families, faculty, support staff, and community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The school principal and/or administrative team are primarily responsible for generating policies around teaching practices, school structures (scheduling, common planning time), professional development, and budgeting <input type="checkbox"/> School improvement and/or school-wide strategic plans are developed by principal/administrative team and do not reflect the input of teachers, support staff, students, and the community <input type="checkbox"/> Families and the community are not involved in significant decisions concerning student learning and performance <input type="checkbox"/> Decisions and policies are not clearly communicated to the entire school.
<p>Demonstrate Ownership of Turning Points Vision through Shared Vision and Ongoing Assessment</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">D</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers, administrators, and support staff demonstrate ownership of the Turning Points vision. The principles and practices are evident in all documents (handbooks, policies, curriculum guides), meetings, decisions, instructional practices, and strategic planning 2. Instructional Leadership Team, academic teams, and subject area teams engage in benchmarking process: determine progress of school in relation to Turning Points practices outlined in the <i>Turning Points Benchmarks</i> 3. As part of the benchmarking process, school staff engage in <i>data-based decisionmaking</i>: collecting multiple sources of data (attendance, classroom-based assessments, standardized test scores) to determine problem/challenge areas in student performance. Based upon available data, school staff create goals and action plans to address problem areas 4. School uses benchmarking process to inform school improvement or strategic plans, school-wide initiatives, and professional development 5. Students, families, and the community are involved in the school's assessment of progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A school-wide vision is not apparent in school documents (handbooks, policies, curriculum guides), meetings, decisions, instructional practices, and strategic planning <input type="checkbox"/> School is not involved in a benchmarking/assessment process and will only engage in process if mandated by a state, district, and/or regional office <input type="checkbox"/> Academic teams, subject area teams, and faculty committees do not use data to inform decisions and/or goals are not measurable