

## Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Hamilton, L., Halverson, R., Jackson, S., Mandinach, E., Supovitz, J., & Wayman, J. (2009). Using student achievement data to support instructional decision making (NCEE 2009-4067). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/>.

Walton-Verona Middle School will be using the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with an emphasis on data as a part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement, as part of our evidence based practices for our turnaround plan. The study cited above was reviewed by the school leadership team who made the recommendation to select this as part of the evidence based practices of the Walton-Verona Middle School turnaround plan. The recommendations reflect both the expertise of the panelists and the findings from several types of studies, including studies that use causal designs to examine the effectiveness of data use interventions, case studies of schools and districts that have made data-use a priority, and observations from other experts in the field. The research base for this guide was identified through a comprehensive search for studies evaluating academically oriented data-based decision-making interventions and practices. An initial search for literature related to data use to support instructional decision making in the past 20 years yielded more than 490 citations. Of these, 64 used experimental, quasi-experimental, and single subject designs to examine whether data use leads to increases in student achievement. Among the studies ultimately relevant to the panel's recommendations, only six meet the causal validity standards of the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) and were related to the panel's recommendations. PLCs will meet at least once weekly during common content planning. PLCs will collaboratively develop standards-based unit plans. PLCs will also develop common assessments and analyze the results from these assessments. PLCs will also participate in professional learning activities related to their standards and appropriate high-yield instructional strategies. These sessions will occur beyond the contract day outside of regular PLC meeting times. PLCs will also be provided time beyond their contract day to meet as vertical content teams to ensure alignment with standards, planning and assessment. To do this the PLC protocol will utilize the Plan, Do, Study, and Act cycle format using the DuFour four questions. The monitoring of this activity will be completed by the admin team which will be a team member within all PLCs, through classroom walkthroughs, assessment data, and lesson planning docs that are submitted weekly.

Based on our review of the evidence and the data for our school we believe this would be level III evidence because it does meet Evidence Standards for randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity studies that provide the strongest evidence of causal validity and it meets Evidence Standards with Reservations for all quasi-experimental studies with no design flaws and randomized controlled trials that have problems with randomization, attrition, or disruption.

### LEGEND

Study citation

A discussion of the study and its findings

A discussion of the local context

A discussion of stakeholder input

An estimation of the ESSA evidence level