

# Professional Learning Communities

Supporting teachers  
for student gains.



# Defining a Professional Learning Community

## *Professional learning community (PLC)*

*An ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.*

~DuFour. "All Things PLC." *About PLCs*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Aug. 2015.

# Teachers at CHS commit to:

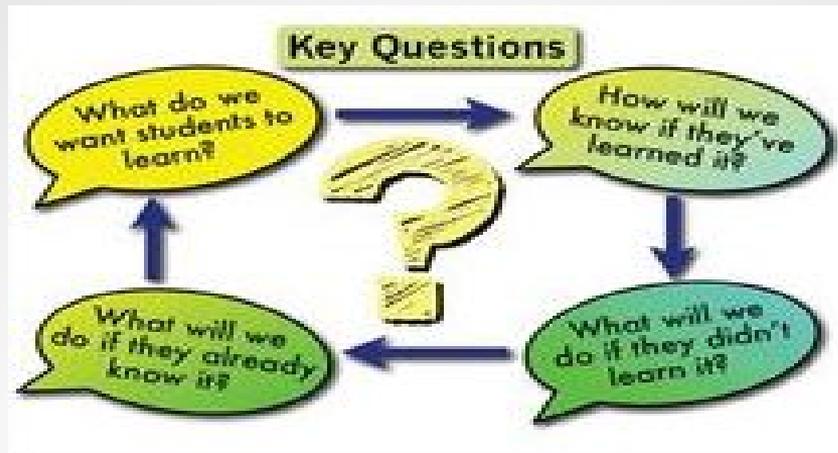
- A Collaborative Culture With a Focus on Learning for All
- Collective Inquiry Into Best Practice and Current Reality
- Action Orientation: Learning by Doing
- A Commitment to Continuous Improvement



# Why PLC's?

To provide time for CHS educators to transfer learning into practice, develop shared expertise, and refine practice through continuous improvement by:

- Studying content standards and curriculum to plan lessons
- Analyzing student learning progressions



- Solve problems related to student learning
- Calibrate student performance expectations
- Support peer professional growth
- Reflect on and assessing practice
  - Killion, Joellen, and Stephanie Hirsh. "Investments in Professional Learning Must Change." N.p., n.d. Web.

# How it will work

- Teachers have set PLC goals to increase student engagement and achievement
- Teachers will use protected PLC time to:
  - Ensure all students are learning at high levels
  - Promote ongoing teacher collaboration
  - Focus on student results

# How it will work

- Analyze student learning and solve problems related to learning
- Calibrate student performance with the use of focused and purposeful Essential Questions
- Create systems for intervention and enrichment



# How to measure success

- Teachers will submit PLC meeting minutes and formative data to Department Chairs
- Leadership team will review all PLC meeting minutes and calibrate instructional supports and needs as indicated by student outcomes.
- Student engagement will rise as evident by improved formative assessment data

# School Divisions in VA using a Delayed Start

- Winchester Public Schools
  - Has one 2 hour delayed start once a month with the exception of Nov, Dec, March and June.
- Henrico County Public School
  - Either a monthly ½ day or full day staff development with the exception of August, December, and May

“The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is developing the ability of school personnel to function as a professional learning community.”

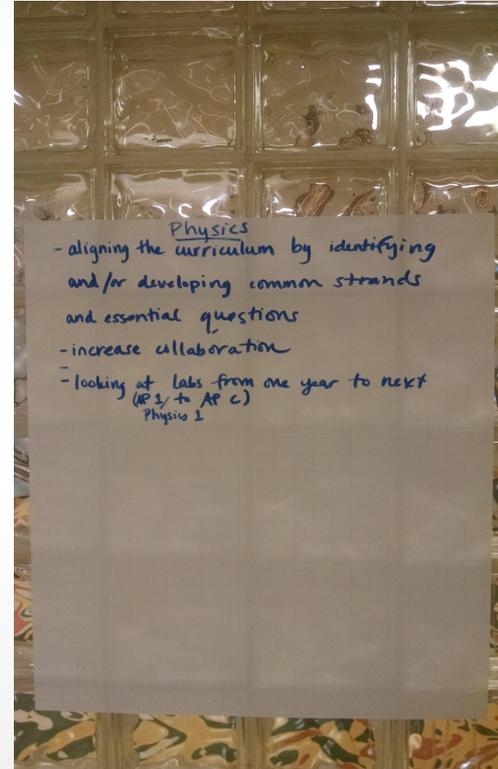
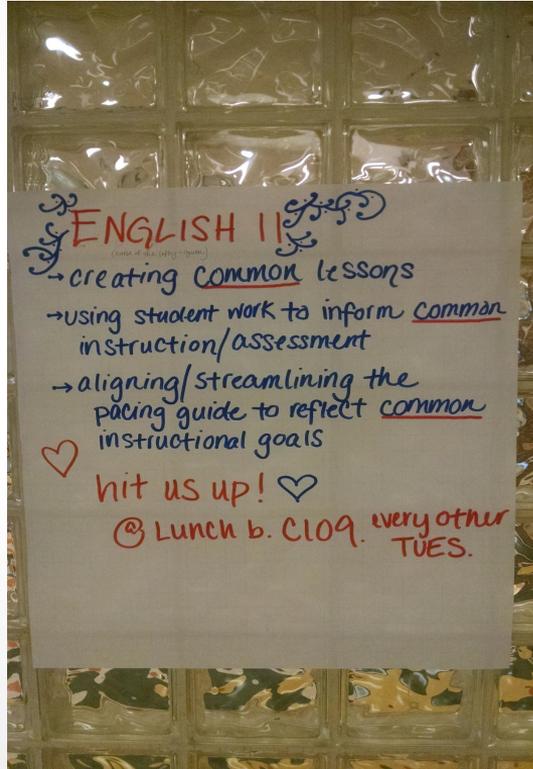
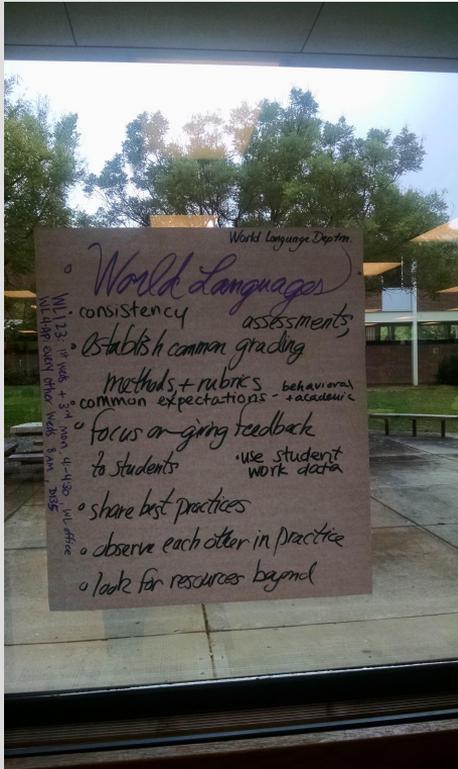
~DuFour and Eaker (1998)



# Supported by CHS Staff

- 87% of responding staff are in support of a delayed start.
- Here are some reasons why:
  - I teach art only part time and I do not have any common planning time with the other art teachers. I am also new to the school, so not being able to meet with them regularly has made it a somewhat difficult transition.
  - As a new teacher at CHS, I have found the team effort amazing. However, all the meetings take place during planning time and, even though PLC meetings are very helpful for my planning, there are specific tasks, especially as a science teacher (such as preparing lab stations), that must be done in my classroom. Also, I need to participate in two teams (I teach 2 subjects, chemistry and biology). I often meet with my chemistry colleagues because our rooms are adjacent but it is often difficult to meet with my biology colleagues who are not in the same hallways. Before and after school time is always busy for tutoring, dept/school wide/counselor meetings. Emails help but are not always as efficient as meeting in person. Adding even one hour during which we will all be available will help and I hope you will consider Principal Dahl's proposal. Anne Pfister/ Science
  - Common evaluation and assessment of student work, teachers will be able to teach their peers new skills and content, book study, common planning.

# Next steps as Defined by CHS Staff



# CHS Proposal

- Starting January 2016
  - 1 delayed start on the 2nd Thursday of the month
  - Teachers meet in PLCs from 8:30-9:45 with classes starting at 10:00 AM. There will be no Early Morning classes on these days.
- We have 4.5 hours to use for 8 of the 9 months.
- 2016-2017 Would build the monthly delayed start into the school calendar.

# Additional Information

## Supporting Facts:

- Code of Virginia Title 22.1-79.1 Opening of the school year; approvals for alternative schedules - the gist: you can approve an altered schedule if working to meet the needs of students.
- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/heather-wolpertgawron/the-case-for-collaboratio\\_b\\_7960390.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/heather-wolpertgawron/the-case-for-collaboratio_b_7960390.html)
- <http://www.allthingsplc.info/articles-research>