

Chapter 2

A Clear and Compelling Purpose

Part One The Case Study: Clarifying Our Purpose

Principal Cynthia Dion left the Professional Learning Communities Institute with the zeal and fervor of a recent convert. She was convinced that the PLC concept was the best strategy for improving student achievement in her school, and she was eager to introduce the concept to her faculty at the Siegfried and Roy Middle School (nickname: The Tigers).

On the opening day of school she assembled the entire staff to share both her enthusiasm for PLCs and her plans for bringing the concept to the school. She emphasized that she was committed to transforming the school into a PLC and that the first step in the process was to develop a new mission statement that captured the new focus of the school. She presented the following draft to the staff and invited their reaction:

It is our mission to ensure all our students acquire the knowledge and skills essential to achieving their full potential and becoming productive citizens.

The moment Principal Dion presented the statement a teacher challenged it, arguing that any mission statement should acknowledge that the extent of student learning was dependent upon their ability and effort. Another teacher disagreed with the reference to “ensuring” all students would learn because it placed too much accountability on teachers and not enough on students. A counselor felt the proposed mission statement placed too much emphasis on academics and not enough on the emotional well-being of students. Soon it became difficult to engage the entire staff in the dialogue as pockets of conversation began to break out throughout the room. Principal Dion decided to adjourn the meeting to give staff members more time to reflect on her mission

The very essence of a professional learning community is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student.

statement and promised to return to the topic at the after-school faculty meeting scheduled for the next month.

In the intervening weeks fierce lobbying took place among teachers as they argued for and against different variations of a mission statement. When the staff convened for their next faculty meeting, a group of teachers proposed a compromise, a mission statement they felt would be more acceptable to the staff. It stated:

It is our mission to give each student the opportunity to learn according to his or her ability and to create a school that is attentive to the emotional needs of every student.

Principal Dion expressed concern that the statement did not convey a commitment to helping all students learn; instead, it merely promised to give them the *chance* to learn. The ensuing discussion revealed significant differences of opinion, and the respective parties became more entrenched in the defense of their positions. Finally, as the time to end the meeting approached, an impatient staff member proposed a show of hands to determine support for the two different mission statements. Fifty-five percent of the staff preferred the compromise statement, 25% supported the mission presented by the principal, and 20% were indifferent. Principal Dion acknowledged the decision of the majority and said the compromise statement would become the new mission statement of the school.

Principal Dion remained hopeful that this mission statement would inspire new effort and commitment from the staff. As the year wore on, however, she was disappointed to see the staff had returned to business as usual. She became increasingly disenchanted with the PLC concept. After all, she had engaged the staff in clarifying the mission of the school, just as she had been advised to do at the PLC Institute. There was virtually no evidence, however, that this new mission had impacted either teacher practice or student achievement. She resolved to find another improvement model during the summer.

Reflection

Consider Principal Dion's efforts to develop a clear and compelling purpose for the school with her staff. What advice would you give Principal Dion if you were called upon to mentor her as she was beginning to initiate this process with her staff?



Part Two Here's How

Despite her good intentions and initial enthusiasm, Principal Dion struggled with two significant factors that adversely impacted her efforts:

1. The process she utilized in attempting to build consensus
2. Her failure to move the dialogue beyond the philosophical debate about the mission of the school

A Failure to Build Consensus

How would a PLC work to build consensus, and what steps would it take to move from dialogue to action? Leaders of a PLC recognize it is a mistake to launch an improvement initiative without the support of a guiding coalition. As John Kotter (1996) of the Harvard Business School concluded in his definitive study of the change process:

No one individual is ever able to develop the right vision, communicate it to large numbers of people, eliminate all obstacles, generate short-term wins, lead and manage dozens of change projects and anchor new approaches deep in an organization's culture. A strong, guiding coalition is always needed—one with a high level of trust and shared objectives that appeal to both head and heart. Building such a team is always an essential part of the early stages of any effort to restructure a set of strategies. (p. 52)

The challenge Principal Dion faced was not “selling” staff on *her* version of the school's mission, but rather engaging in a process that would help the staff co-create a mission (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994). A guiding coalition is a powerful tool in that process. It could be composed of existing structures in the school such as a school improvement committee, department chairpeople, or representatives of the teacher's association. Alternatively, she could create a new structure such as a task force convened for the specific purpose of leading an improvement process. In any case, a principal benefits by working through the issues with a small group of key staff members and securing them as allies before engaging the entire faculty. In fact, a comprehensive study of effective school leadership concluded the creation of a guiding coalition or leadership team is a critical first step in the complex task of leading a school (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

In presenting the proposal to the entire staff at one time; Principal Dion used a forum—a large group—that was ill-suited to the dialogue that facilitates consensus. Most people will have questions when significant change is



The creation of a guiding coalition or leadership team is a critical first step in the complex task of leading a school.



Build consensus
one small group
at a time.

proposed, and they will want those questions answered before they are willing to give their consent for moving forward. The large-group forum she used in the case study allowed those skeptical of the proposal to dominate the discussion before the idea had been fully considered. A more intimate venue with a small number of staff would have been more effective. Principal Dion might have asked teachers to meet with her in small groups during a preparation period to engage in this dialogue, particularly if she was willing to cancel an after-school faculty meeting to compensate teachers for their lost time. She might have hired enough substitute teachers to free small groups of teachers to meet with her during the school day. Had she done so, she would have found it easier to build consensus one small group at a time rather than in an entire faculty.

The biggest *process* mistake Ms. Dion made was her failure to build shared knowledge among the staff. Although she had apparently learned of concepts and strategies at the PLC Institute that convinced her of the benefits of a PLC, she did nothing to share that learning with her colleagues in the school. When a school functions as a PLC, staff members attempt to answer questions and resolve issues by building shared knowledge. Members of a *learning* community learn together. When all staff members have access to the same information, it increases the likelihood that they will arrive at similar conclusions. Without access to pertinent information, they resort to debating opinions or retreating to a muddled middle ground.

Working with her guiding coalition, Ms. Dion might have presented information to help the staff assess the current reality of the school. For example, she could have presented data to help paint a picture of the school's current reality. The data picture worksheet (A Data Picture of Our School, pages 17 and 18) assists in the gathering and presentation of information to help clarify the existing conditions of the school. Anecdotes and stories about students who were not being successful could also help establish what the school experience was like for some students. The coalition could have also presented staff with a synthesis of research on topics such as professional learning communities, improving schools, clear academic goals for every student, and high expectations for student achievement to support the premise that schools are most effective when staff members define their purpose as helping students learn rather than ensuring they are taught. The staff might have heard testimonials from other schools that had adopted PLC concepts or conducted site visits to see a PLC in action. Time spent up front building shared knowledge results in faster, more effective, and most importantly, more committed action later in the improvement process (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2002).



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A Data Picture of Our School

Student Achievement Results

Indicator	Year 20__-20__	Year 20__-20__	Year 20__-20__	Facts About Our Data
Based on Our School Assessment Data				
Based on Our District Assessment Data				
Based on Our State Assessment Data				
Based on Our National Assessment Data				

Student Engagement Data

Average Daily Attendance				
Percentage of Students in Extra-Curricular Activities				
Percentage of Students Using School's Tutoring Services				
Percentage of Students Enrolled in Most Rigorous Courses Offered				
Percentage of Students Graduating Without Retention				
Percentage of Students Who Drop Out of School				
Other Areas in Which We Hope to Engage Students, Such as Community Service				

Discipline Data

Number of Referrals/Top Three Reasons for Referrals				
Number of Parent Conferences Regarding Discipline				
Number of In-School Suspensions				

(continued)



A Data Picture of Our School (continued)

Discipline Data (continued)

Indicator	Year	Year	Year	Facts About Our Data
	20__-20__	20__-20__	20__-20__	
Number of Detentions/Saturday School				
Number of Out-of-School Suspensions				
Expulsions/Other				

Survey Data

Student Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				
Alumni Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				
Parent Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				
Teacher Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				
Administration Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				
Community Satisfaction or Perception Assessment				

Demographic Data

Free and Reduced Lunch				
Percent Mobility				
Percent Special Education				
Percent English as a Second Language				
Ethnicity				
Other				



Confusing Mission With Action

The biggest mistake made by Principal Dion and her staff was confusing *writing* a mission statement with *living* a mission. No school has ever improved simply because the staff wrote a mission statement. In fact, we have found no correlation between the presence of a written mission statement, or even the wording of a mission statement, and a school's effectiveness as a PLC. The words of a mission statement are not worth the paper they are written on unless people begin to *do* differently.

What could Principal Dion have done to bring the mission to life in her school? First, after engaging staff in building shared knowledge on the specific practices and characteristics of schools where all students were learning at high levels, she might have asked them to describe in vivid detail the school they hoped to create. For almost 30 years, beginning with the Effective Schools research, those who have examined the practices of improving schools have cited the same characteristics again and again:

- A safe and orderly environment
- Clear and focused academic goals for each student
- Frequent monitoring of each student's learning
- Additional opportunities to learn for those who struggle initially
- A collaborative culture
- High expectations for each student
- Strong leadership
- Effective partnerships with parents

For each of these characteristics, she might have asked the staff to describe specific practices that would embed the conditions in their school, such as creating systems to monitor each student's learning of key concepts every 4 weeks, developing an intervention plan to give struggling students extra time and support for learning during the school day, organizing teachers into collaborative teams based on common courses or grade levels, and designing a schedule that provides teachers with time to collaborate.

Once the staff agreed on the school they hoped to create, the principal and her guiding coalition could have then led the staff in a discussion of the specific commitments each member would need to honor in order to become the school they had envisioned. Principal Dion might have modeled a willingness to make commitments by identifying the specific things she was prepared to do to support the effort to transform the school. She could have shared her commitments with the staff and asked for their reactions, revisions, and additions.



The words of a mission statement are not worth the paper they are written on unless people begin to *do* differently.

- common assessments

Members of the guiding coalition could have then led the staff in a process to clarify their collective commitments.

Principal Dion might also have asked the faculty to identify the indicators that should be monitored to assess the progress they made in creating their agreed-upon school. Benchmarks could have been established for what they hoped to achieve in the first 6 months, the first year, and the first 3 years. Each team of teachers could have been asked to establish specific team goals that, if accomplished, would have contributed to achieving school-wide goals and to moving the school toward the ideal the staff had described.

Of course, all of this dialogue would impact the school only if purposeful steps were taken to demonstrate that creating the school of their hopes, honoring their commitments, and achieving their goals were the collective responsibility of every member of the staff. How is that message best communicated? The most powerful communication is not a function of what is written or said, but rather, once again, what is *done*. As James Autry (2001), author of *Servant Leadership*, wrote, “Those around you in the workplace—colleagues and employees—can determine who you are only by observing what you do . . . the only way you can manifest your character, your personhood, and your spirit in the workplace is through your behavior” (p. 1). Or to paraphrase Ralph Waldo Emerson, what you do stands over you all the while and thunders so loudly that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary.

Consider some of the specific actions the principal and staff might have taken to convey their commitment to improving their school:

1. **Initiating structures and systems to foster qualities and characteristics consistent with the school they are trying to create.** When something is truly a priority in an organization, people do not hope it happens; they develop and implement systematic plans to ensure that it happens. For example, if the staff was committed to creating a collaborative culture, steps could be taken to organize teachers into teams, build time for collaboration into the contractual workday, develop guidelines and parameters to guide the work of teams, and so on. True priorities are not left to chance but are carefully and systematically addressed.
2. **Creating processes to monitor critical conditions and important goals.** In most organizations, what gets monitored gets done. A critical step in moving an organization from rhetoric to reality is to establish the indicators of progress to be monitored, the process for monitoring them, and the means of sharing results with people throughout the organization. For example, if the staff agreed student learning was the priority in their school, procedures to monitor each student’s learning on a timely and systematic basis would be imperative.



3. **Reallocating resources to support the proclaimed priorities.** Marshall McLuhan observed, “Money talks because money is a metaphor.” The actual legal tender may have little intrinsic value, but how it is expended, particularly in times of scarcity, reveals a great deal about what is valued. Money, however, is not the only significant resource in an organization, and in contemporary public education, time is even scarcer than money. As Phil Schlecty (1990) wrote:

The one commodity that teachers and administrators say they do not have enough of, even more than money, is time; time to teach, time to converse, time to think, time to plan, time to talk, time to go to the restroom or have a cup of coffee. Time is indeed precious in schools. (p. 73)

Decisions about the spending of precious resources are some of the most unequivocal ways organizations communicate what is important. Had Principal Dion created a schedule that provided teachers with time to collaborate and students with time for additional support for learning when they experienced difficulty, she would have sent the message that teacher collaboration and student learning were viewed as priorities in the school.

4. **Posing the right questions.** The questions posed by an organization—and the effort and energy spent in the pursuit of answers—not only communicate priorities but also direct members in a particular direction. In too many schools the prevalent question is, “What is wrong with these kids?”—a question that typically has little impact on improving student achievement. Principal Dion and her staff could have conveyed their commitment to student learning by devoting time to the pursuit of critical questions aligned with that goal, questions such as:

- What knowledge and skills should every student acquire as a result of this unit of instruction?
- How will we know when each student has acquired the essential knowledge and skills?
- How will we respond when some students do not learn?
- How will we respond when some students have clearly achieved the intended outcomes?

5. **Modeling what is valued.** Example is still the most powerful teacher. In his study of effective leadership, Daniel Goleman (2002) found that a leader’s emotions are contagious. If a leader resonates energy and enthusiasm, an organization thrives; if a leader spreads negativity and dissonance, it flounders. If Principal Dion hopes the staff will make a

Four Questions



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Co-Develop Skills as well

commitment to high levels of learning for all students, she must demonstrate her own commitment by focusing on learning with laser-like intensity and keeping the issue constantly before the faculty. If she hopes to build a culture in which teachers collaborate, she must engage the staff in collaborative decision-making and provide the time and support essential for effective collaboration. As one study concluded, "The single most powerful mechanism for creating a learning environment is that the leadership of the organization be willing to model the approach to learning they want others to embrace" (Thompson, 1995, p. 96).

6. **Celebrating progress.** When an organization makes a concerted effort to call attention to and celebrate progress toward its goals, the commitments it demonstrates in day-to-day work, and evidence of improved results, people within the organization are continually reminded of the priorities and what it takes to achieve them. Furthermore, this provides real-life models by which they can assess their own efforts and commitment. If Principal Dion devoted a part of every staff meeting to a celebration of steps forward on the journey of school improvement, the faculty would soon learn what was noted, appreciated, and valued in their school.
7. **Confronting violations of commitments.** If Principal Dion hopes to convey what is important and valued, she must be prepared to confront those who act in ways that are contrary to the priorities of the school and the commitments of the staff. Leaders who are unwilling to promote and defend improvement initiatives put those initiatives at risk.

Part Three Here's Why

*"To truly reform American education we must abandon the long-standing assumption that the central activity is teaching and reorient all policy making and activities around a new benchmark: student learning."
(Fiske, 1992, p. 253)*

Given the many demands on teachers and principals, why should they take the time to consider and build shared knowledge regarding the questions posed in this chapter? What evidence is there that reflection upon and dialogue about these issues will be beneficial?

Engaging members of an organization in reflective dialogue about the fundamental purpose of the organization, as Principal Dion attempted to do, can be a powerful strategy for improvement. In fact, the first question any organization must consider if it hopes to improve results is the question of purpose (Drucker, 1992). Why does our organization exist? What are we here to do together? What exactly do we hope to accomplish? What is the business of our business? (Bardwick, 1996; Champy, 1995; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994)



Research has repeatedly found a correlation between clarity of purpose and effective schools (Lezotte, 1991). As one study concluded, “There is no point in thinking about changes in structure until the school achieves reasonable consensus about its intellectual mission for children” (Newmann & Wehlage, 1996, p. 295). Lickona and Davidson (2005) found that:

Great schools “row as one”; they are quite clearly in the same boat, pulling in the same direction in unison. The best schools we visited were tightly aligned communities marked by a palpable sense of common purpose and shared identity among staff—a clear sense of “we.” By contrast, struggling schools feel fractured; there is a sense that people work in the same school but not toward the same goals. (p. 65)

Educators who believe that merely clarifying or reaffirming their mission will somehow improve results are certain to be disappointed. In fact, in many schools, developing a mission statement has served as a substitute, rather than a catalyst, for meaningful action. Merely drafting a new mission statement does not automatically change how people act, and therefore writing a mission statement does nothing to close the knowing-doing gap (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000).

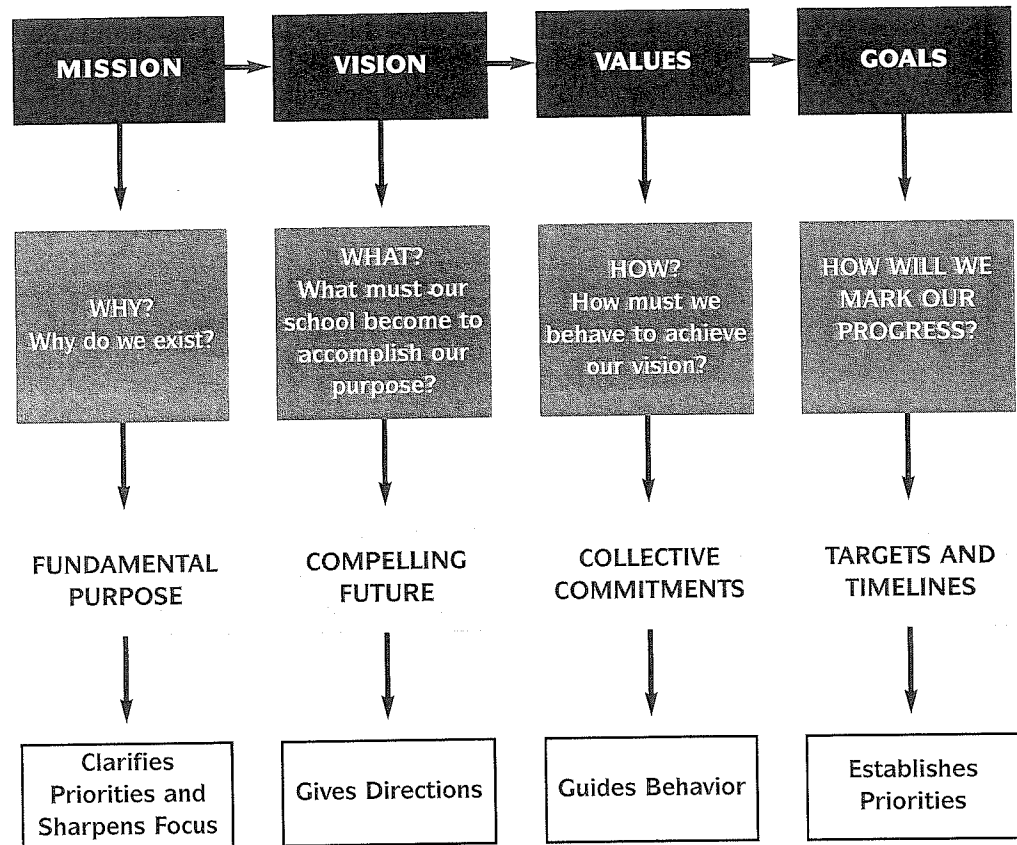
Engaging staff members in a dialogue to reaffirm their mission can be an important step in the improvement process, but transforming schools also requires that educators become clear about the vision, values (that is, collective commitments), and goals that drive the daily workings of the school.

Imagine that the foundation of a PLC rests upon the four pillars of mission, vision, values, and goals (see the chart on page 24). Each of these pillars asks a different question of the educators within the school. When teachers and administrators have worked together to consider those questions and reach consensus regarding their collective positions on each question, they have built a solid foundation for a PLC. Much work remains to be done, for these are just a few of the steps in the thousands of steps that must be taken in the never-ending process of continuous improvement. But addressing these questions improves the likelihood that all subsequent work will have the benefit of firm underpinnings. If staff members have not considered the questions, have done so only superficially, or are unable to establish common ground regarding their positions on the questions, any and all future efforts to improve the school will stand on shaky ground.

Mission

The mission pillar asks the question, “Why?” More specifically, it asks, “Why do we exist?” The intent of this question is to help reach agreement regarding the fundamental purpose of the school. This clarity of purpose can help establish priorities and becomes an important factor in guiding decisions.

“Why do we exist?”



Vision

“What must we become in order to accomplish our fundamental purpose?”

The vision pillar asks “What?”: “What must we become in order to accomplish our fundamental purpose?” In pursuing this question, a staff is attempting to create a compelling, attractive, realistic future that describes what they hope their school will become. Vision provides a sense of direction and a basis for assessing both the current reality of the school and potential strategies, programs, and procedures to improve upon that reality. Researchers within and outside of education have routinely cited the importance of developing shared vision (Autry, 2001; Blanchard, 1996; Eastwood & Louis, 1992; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1996; Schlecty, 1997; Senge, 1990; Tichy, 1997). The conclusion of Burt Nanus (1992) is typical: “There is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward excellence and long-range success than an attractive, worthwhile and achievable vision of the future, widely shared” (p. 3). The very first standard for school administrators drafted by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (1996) calls upon educational leaders to “promote 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” (p. 10).



Values

In their study of high-performing organizations, Collins and Porras (1997) found that although creating a vision can be a helpful step in the improvement process, it is never sufficient. Teachers and administrators must also tackle the collective commitments they must make and honor in order to achieve the shared vision for their school or district. The third pillar of the foundation, the values pillar, is an attempt to clarify these collective commitments. It does not ask, "Why do we exist?" or, "What do we hope to become?" Rather, it asks, "How must we behave to create the school that will achieve our purpose?" The focus shifts from philosophical musings regarding mission or the shared hopes for the school of the future to commitments to act in certain ways—starting today. Clarity on this topic guides the individual work of each member of the staff and outlines how each person can contribute to the improvement initiative. When members of an organization understand the purpose of their organization, know where it is headed, and then pledge to act in certain ways to move it in the right direction, they don't need prescriptive rules and regulations to guide their daily work. Policy manuals and directives are replaced by commitments and covenants. As a result, members of the organization enjoy greater autonomy and creativity than their more rigidly supervised counterparts.

Leaders benefit from clearly defined commitments as well. When leaders in traditional hierarchical structures address an employee's inappropriate behavior and demand change, their rationale tends to be, "Because the rules say we have to do it," or, "Because I am the boss, and I said so." If, however, the members of the organization have specified collective commitments, leaders operate with the full weight of the moral authority of the group behind them. Inappropriate behavior is presented as a violation of collective commitments and the leader moves from the role of "boss" to the promoter and protector of what the members have declared as important or sacred.

Finally, achieving agreement about what we are prepared to start doing, and the *implementation* of that agreement, is one of the most effective strategies for closing the knowing-doing gap. Those who "do" develop deeper knowledge, greater self-efficacy, and a stronger sense of ownership in results than those who talk about what should be done.

Shared values (or, as we prefer, collective commitments) have been described as the "vital social glue that infuses an organization with passion and purpose" (Bolman & Deal, 2000, p. 185). Creating a community of shared values has been described as one of the most crucial jobs of a leader (Lezotte, 1997; Tichy, 1997). For over 2 decades both organizational and educational researchers have cited the importance of attention to this crucial element of organizational effectiveness (Champy, 1995; Collins & Porras, 1997; Fullan, 2001; Heskett & Schlesinger,

"How must we behave to create the school that will achieve our purpose?"

Trust & Creativity

positional authority \Rightarrow moral authority

← Very Constructivist statement

1996; Kanter, 1995; Kouzes & Posner, 1996; Marks, Doanne, & Secada, 1996; Mandl & Sethi, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1996; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994; Sergiovanni, 2005; Steele, 1996). We believe that attention to clarifying collective commitments is one of the most important and, regrettably, least-utilized strategies in building a PLC.

Goals

“How will we know
if all of this is
making a
difference?”

The final pillar of the foundation asks members to clarify the specific goals they hope to achieve as a result of their improvement initiative. The goals pillar identifies the targets and timelines that enable a staff to answer the question, “How will we know if all of this is making a difference?”

Goals provide staff members with a sense of their short-term priorities and the steps to take to achieve the benchmarks. Effective goals foster both the results orientation of a PLC and individual and collective accountability for achieving the results. They help close the gap between the current reality and where the staff hopes to take the school (the shared vision).

Furthermore, goals are absolutely essential to the collaborative team process. We define a team as a group of people working together *interdependently* to achieve a *common goal* for which members are held *mutually accountable*. In the absence of a common goal, there can be no true team. Effective goals generate joint effort and help collaborative teams clarify how their work can contribute to school-wide or district-wide improvement initiatives.

Perhaps most importantly, measurable, results-oriented goals are essential to sustaining the momentum of any improvement initiative. We are often asked how a school can support and nourish the effort to build a PLC over time. Experts on the process of organizational change offer very consistent advice regarding that question (see the feature box on page 27).

When schools create short-term goals and routinely celebrate as those goals are achieved, they foster a sense of confidence and self-efficacy among the staff. Confidence is merely “the expectation of success” (Kanter, 2005), and when people expect to be successful they are more likely to put forth the effort to ensure it. Thus, goals play a key role in motivating people to honor their commitments so the school moves closer to fulfilling its fundamental purpose of learning for all students. We will have more to say about goals in chapter 6, but, once again, educational researchers and organizational theorists consider measurable goals as a key element in improvement (Champy, 1995; Consortium on Productivity in Schools, 1995; Drucker, 1992; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Klein, Medrich, & Perez-Ferreiro, 1996; Kotter, 1996; Marzano, 2003; Nanus, 1992; Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000; Schlecty, 1997; Schmoker, 1999; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994; Symonds, 2004; Tichy, 1997).

What will it look like?



**What the Experts Say . . .
How Can a School Support and Nourish
the Effort to Build a PLC Over Time?**

“Complex change strategies risk losing momentum if there are no short-term goals to meet and celebrate. Most people won’t go on the long march unless they see compelling evidence . . . that the journey is producing expected results. Without short-term wins, too many people will give up. But creating short-term wins is different from hoping for short-term wins.”

—John Kotter (1996, p. 11)

“Milestones that are identified, achieved, and celebrated represent an essential condition for building a learning organization.”

—John Thompson (1995, p. 96)

“The most effective change processes are incremental—they break down big problems into small, doable steps and get a person to say ‘yes’ numerous times, not just once. They plan for small wins that form the basis for a consistent pattern of winning that appeals to people’s desire to belong to a successful venture. A series of small wins provides a foundation of stable building blocks for change.”

—James Kouzes and Barry Posner (1987, p. 219)

“Specific goals should be designed to allow teams to achieve small wins as they pursue their common purpose. Small wins are invaluable to building members’ commitment and overcoming the obstacles that get in the way of achieving a meaningful, long-term purpose.”

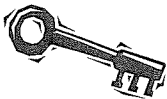
—J. Katzenbach and D. Smith (1993, p. 54)

“When people see tangible results, however incremental at first, and see how the results flow from the overall concept, they will line up with enthusiasm. People want to be a part of a winning team. They want to contribute to producing visible, tangible results. When they feel the magic of momentum, when they begin to see tangible results—that’s when they get on board.”

—Jim Collins (2001, p. 175)

“[Leaders build momentum] by encouraging participants to savor the joys of successive small accomplishments that signal milestones along the way toward achieving more ambitious goals.”

—Dov Eden (1990, pp. 186–87)



Leaders must realize that the most important element in communicating is congruency between their actions and their words. It is not essential that leaders are eloquent or clever; it is imperative, however, that they demonstrate consistency between what they say and what they do.

The Importance of Effective Communication

Marcus Buckingham (2005) contends that the one thing leaders of any organization must know to be effective is the importance of clarity: communicating clearly and consistently the purpose of the organization, the primary clients it serves, the future it is creating, the indicators of progress it will track, and the specific actions members can take immediately to achieve its long-term purpose and short-term goals. Michael Fullan (2001) agrees effective leaders provide clarity for those in the organization and lists the ability to create coherence as one of the five core components of leadership. Effective communication is indeed an “essential prerequisite” of great leadership (Tichy, 1997).

Powerful communication is simple and succinct, driven by a few key ideas, and is repeated at every opportunity (Collins, 2001; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000; Tichy, 1997). Leaders must realize, however, that the most important element in communicating is congruency between their actions and their words. It is not essential that leaders are eloquent or clever; it is imperative, however, that they demonstrate consistency between what they say and what they do (Collins & Porras, 1997; Drucker, 1992; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Maxwell, 1995; Ulrich, 1996). When leaders’ actions are inconsistent with what they contend are their priorities, they overwhelm all other forms of communication (Kotter, 1996).

One of the most effective ways leaders communicate priorities is by what they pay attention to (Kouzes & Posner, 1999; Peters & Austin, 1985). In subsequent chapters, we will provide specific examples of leaders communicating what is valued by creating systems and structures to promote priorities, by monitoring what is essential, by re-allocating time, by asking the right questions, and by the way in which they respond to conflict. In this chapter, we present a powerful tool for communication that is often overlooked and underutilized: celebration.

Celebration

Celebration is a particularly powerful tool for communicating what is valued and for building community (Deal & Key, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 1999). When celebrations continually remind people of the purpose and priorities of their organizations, members are more likely to embrace the purpose and work toward agreed-upon priorities. Regular public recognition of specific collaborative efforts, accomplished tasks, achieved goals, team learning, continuous improvement, and support for student learning remind staff of the collective commitment to create a PLC. The word *recognize* comes from the Latin “to know again.” Recognition provides opportunities to say, “Let us all be reminded, let us all know again, what is important, what we value, and what we are committed to do. Now let’s all pay tribute to someone in the organization who is living that commitment.”



Celebrations allow for expressions of both appreciation and admiration. Appreciation lets others know we have received something we value, something we are happy to have. Admiration conveys the message that we have been inspired or instructed by observing the work and commitments of others. When admiration and appreciation are repeatedly expressed, organizations create a culture of ongoing regard that sustains effort because such language is “like pumping oxygen into the system” (Kegan & Lahey, 2001, p. 102).

Celebrations also provide an opportunity to use one of the oldest ways in the world to convey the values and ideals of a community: telling stories. As Kouzes and Posner (1999) write: “The intention of stories is not just to entertain. . . . They are also intended to teach. Good stories move us. They touch us, they teach us, and they cause us to remember” (p. 25). Good stories appeal to both the head and the heart and are more compelling and convincing than data alone. Stories are a leader’s most powerful weapon in the arsenal for communicating priorities (Gardner, 1990), and the ability of an individual to weave vibrant stories that lead others to a shared understanding of a better future is the “ultimate hallmark of world-class champion leaders” (Tichy, 1997, p. 173). Good stories personify purpose and priorities. They put a human face on success by providing examples and role models that can clarify for others what is noted, appreciated, and valued.

Most schools and districts, however, will face a significant challenge as they attempt to integrate meaningful celebration into their cultures. The excessively egalitarian culture of schools (Lortie, 1975) makes it difficult to publicly recognize either individuals or teams. In most schools and districts, generic praise (“You are the best darn faculty in the state!”) or private praise (“I want to send you a personal note of commendation”) are acceptable—public recognition is not. Generic and private praise are ineffective in communicating priorities because neither conveys to the members at large what specific actions and commitments are valued, and therefore neither is effective in shaping behavior or beliefs. As Peter Drucker (1992) advises, “Changing behavior requires changing recognition and rewards. For over a quarter of a century we have known that people in organizations tend to act in response to being recognized and rewarded” (p. 195). Tom Peters (1987) put it this way: “Well-constructed recognition settings provide the single most important opportunity to parade and reinforce the specific kinds of new behaviors one hopes others will emulate” (p. 307).

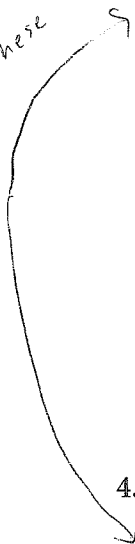
An excellent predictor of the future behavior of any organization is to examine the people and events it elects to honor (Buckingham, 2005). This is true of schools in particular. In his study of school culture, sociologist Robert Evans (1996) concluded, “The single best low-cost, high-leverage way to improve

performance, morale, and the climate for change is to dramatically increase the levels of meaningful recognition for—and among—educators” (p. 254).

We offer the following suggestions to those who face the challenge of incorporating celebration into the culture of their school or district:

1. **Explicitly state the purpose of celebration.** The rationale for public celebration should be carefully explained at the outset of every celebration. Staff members should be continually reminded that celebration represents:
 - An important strategy for reinforcing the shared purpose, vision, collective commitments, and goals of the school or district
 - The most powerful tool for sustaining the improvement initiative
2. **Make celebration everyone’s responsibility.** Recognizing extraordinary commitment should be the responsibility of everyone in the organization, and each individual should be called upon to contribute to the effort. If the formal leader is the sole arbiter of who will be recognized, the rest of the staff can merely sit back and critique the choices. Every staff member should have the opportunity to publicly report when they appreciate and admire the work of a colleague.
3. **Establish a clear link between the recognition and the behavior or commitment you are attempting to encourage and reinforce.** Recognition must be specifically linked to the purpose, vision, collective commitments, and goals of the organization if it is to play a role in shaping culture. As we wrote in 1998, “Recognition will have little impact if a staff believes the recognition is presented randomly, that each person deserves to be recognized regardless of his or her contribution to the improvement effort, or that rewards are given for factors unrelated to the goal of creating a learning community” (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, p. 145). It is imperative, therefore, that clear parameters are established for recognition and rewards. The answer to the question, “What behavior or commitment are we attempting to encourage with this recognition?” should be readily apparent. Recognition should always be accompanied with a story relating the efforts of the individual back to the core foundation of the school or district. It should not only express appreciation to and admiration for the individual, but it should also provide others with an example they can emulate.
4. **Create opportunities to have many winners.** Celebration will not have a significant effect on the culture of a school if most people in the organization feel they have no opportunity to be recognized. In fact, celebration can be disruptive and detrimental if there is a perception that

Balance these



Four Keys for Incorporating Celebration Into the Culture of Your School or District

1. Explicitly state the purpose of celebration.
2. Make celebration everyone's responsibility.
3. Establish a clear link between the recognition and the behavior or commitment you are attempting to encourage and reinforce.
4. Create opportunities for many winners.

recognition and reward are reserved for an exclusive few (Dilworth, 1995; Peters & Austin, 1985). Establishing artificial limits on appreciation—such as, “We honor no more than five individuals per meeting,” or, “Only those with five or more years of experience are eligible”—lessens the impact celebration can have on a school or district. Developing a PLC requires creating systems specifically designed not only to provide celebrations, *but also to ensure that there are many winners.*

Frequent public acknowledgements for a job well done and a wide distribution of small symbolic gestures of appreciation and admiration are far more powerful tools for communicating priorities than infrequent “grand prizes” that create a few winners and many losers. An effective celebration program will convince every member of the staff that he or she can be a winner and that his or her efforts can be noted and appreciated.

Adlai Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, is often cited as a school that has used celebration to communicate purpose and priorities and to shape culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Kanold, 2006; Schmoker, 1999). Stevenson does not offer a “Teacher of the Year” program, but it has distributed thousands of “Super Pat” awards (small tokens of appreciation that represent a “pat on the back” for a job well done) to hundreds of teachers in the past decade. In fact, in the past 20 years Stevenson has *never* had a faculty meeting without celebrating the effort and commitment of individuals and teams. Stevenson also surveys its seniors each year to ask, “Which member of the staff has had the most profound impact on your life and why?” The heartfelt responses of the students are then published in an internal “Kudos Memorandum” and distributed to the entire staff each quarter. Staff members have read thousands of testimonials citing specific examples of how they and their colleagues are making a difference in the lives of students. Stevenson employees receive ongoing reminders of the priorities of their school and the commitments that are being honored in order to achieve those priorities, and every

Great Motivator

member of the staff feels like he or she has the opportunity to be recognized and celebrated as a winner.

Study after study of what workers want in their jobs offer the same conclusion: they want to feel appreciated (Kouzes & Posner, 1999). Yet Kegan and Lahey (2001) concluded that “nearly every organization or work team we’ve spent time with astonishingly undercommunicates the genuinely positive, appreciative, and admiring experiences of its members” (p. 92).

One of the most frequent concerns raised by educators who are wary of making celebration a part of their school or district is that if celebration is frequent, it will lose its impact to motivate. Yet research has drawn the opposite conclusion; it reaffirms that frequent celebration communicates priorities, connects people to the organization and to each other, and sustains improvement initiatives (Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 1999; Peters, 1987).

Can celebration be overdone? Absolutely. The criterion for assessing the appropriateness of recognition for a team or individual should be the sincerity with which the recognition is given. A commendation should represent genuine and heartfelt appreciation and admiration. If that sincerity is lacking, celebration can be counterproductive.

Part Four Assessing Your Place on the PLC Journey

The PLC Continuum

In each chapter of this handbook, you will be asked to reflect upon the current conditions in your school or district and assess the alignment of those conditions with the principles and practices of a PLC. The assessment will present a four-point continuum:

1. **Pre-Initiation Stage.** The school has not yet begun to address this principle or practice of a PLC.
2. **Initiation Stage.** An effort has been made to address this principle or practice, but the effort has not yet begun to impact a critical mass of staff members.
3. **Developing Stage.** A critical mass of staff has begun to engage in the practice. Members are being asked to modify their thinking as well as their traditional practices. Structural changes are being made to support the transition.



- 4. Sustaining Stage.** The principle or practice is deeply embedded in the culture of the school. It is a driving force in the daily work of staff. It is deeply internalized and staff would resist attempts to abandon the principle or practice.

District leaders may lead the entire administration through the survey or ask randomly selected representatives from each school to complete it. Principals would typically invite the entire staff to participate. Both district- and school-based groups will benefit from the perceptions of others (community members, parents, students, and support staff) as they engage in the process.

We recommend that all those participating in this endeavor work quietly and independently to make individual assessments before making comparisons. We also recommend that staff members be encouraged to be as objective and honest as possible in making their assessments. Each participant should be prepared to cite evidence and anecdotes to support his or her conclusions on each characteristic. Remember that if you are to move your school or district toward greatness, you must have “the discipline to confront the facts of your current reality whatever they might be” (Collins, 2001, p. 13).

Once they complete their individual assessments, participants should share their conclusions and engage in dialogue to clarify, as accurately as possible, the current status of their school or district. Discrepancies in assessment provide a rich opportunity for learning. Often groups have a tendency to gloss over disagreements. One person contends the school is in the pre-initiation stage while another thinks it is developing, and to avoid discussion, they might merely compromise and settle for the initiation stage. Avoid this temptation. Delve into one another’s thinking to see if you can clarify discrepancies and establish common ground.

Where Do We Go From Here?

You will complete this phase of the process by turning to the “Where Do We Go From Here?” planning worksheet that follows the continuum (page 36). Each worksheet presents a principle or practice of a PLC and calls upon participants to develop a specific plan for moving forward. *Beware of plans that call for study, training, discussions, or anything less than specific action to advance your school.* The plan should specify what needs to be done, by whom, a timeline for completion, and how both its implementation and impact will be monitored.

Consider each indicator of a professional learning community described in the left column of the Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet on page 36, and then answer the questions listed at the top of the remaining four columns.



Discrepancies in assessment provide a rich opportunity for learning. . . . Delve into one another’s thinking to see if you can clarify discrepancies and establish common ground.

What it will look like when in place

Have CD

The Professional Learning Community Continuum

Element of a PLC	Pre-Initiation Stage	Initiation Stage	Developing Stage	Sustaining Stage
<p>Mission: Is it evident that learning for all is our core purpose?</p>	<p>No effort has been made to engage faculty in identifying what they want students to learn or how they will respond if students do not learn. School personnel view the mission of the school as teaching rather than learning.</p>	<p>An attempt has been made, typically by the central office, to identify learning outcomes for all grade levels or courses, but this attempt has not impacted the practice of most teachers. Responding to students who are not learning is left to the discretion of individual teachers.</p>	<p>Teachers are clear regarding the learning outcomes their students are to achieve. They have developed strategies to assess student mastery of these outcomes, they monitor the results, and they attempt to respond to students who are not learning.</p>	<p>Learning outcomes are clearly articulated to all stakeholders in the school, and each student's attainment of the outcomes is carefully monitored. The school has developed systems to provide more time and support for students experiencing initial difficulty in achieving the outcomes. The practices, programs, and policies of the school are continually assessed on the basis of their impact on learning. Staff members work together to enhance their effectiveness in helping students achieve learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Shared Vision: Do we know what we are trying to create?</p>	<p>No effort has been made to engage faculty in describing preferred conditions for their school.</p>	<p>A vision statement has been developed for the school, but most staff are unaware of or are unaffected by it.</p>	<p>Staff members have worked together to describe the school they are trying to create. They have endorsed this general description and feel a sense of ownership in it. School improvement planning and staff development initiatives are tied to the shared vision.</p>	<p>Staff members routinely articulate the major principles of the shared vision and use those principles to guide their day-to-day efforts and decisions. They honestly assess the current reality in their school and continually seek effective strategies for reducing the discrepancies between the conditions described in the vision statement and their current reality.</p>



Element of a PLC	Pre-Initiation Stage	Initiation Stage	Developing Stage	Sustaining Stage
<p>Shared Values: How must we behave to advance our vision?</p>	<p>Staff members have not yet articulated the attitudes, behaviors, or commitments they are prepared to demonstrate in order to advance the mission of learning for all and the vision of what the school might become. If they discuss school improvement, they focus on what other groups must do.</p>	<p>Staff members have articulated statements of beliefs or philosophy for their school; however, these value statements have not yet impacted their day-to-day work or the operation of the school.</p>	<p>Staff members have made a conscious effort to articulate and promote the attitudes, behaviors, and commitments that will advance their vision of the school. Examples of the core values at work are shared in stories and celebrations. People are confronted when they behave in ways that are inconsistent with the core values.</p>	<p>The values of the school are embedded in the school culture. These shared values are evident to new staff and to those outside of the school. They influence policies, procedures, and daily practices of the school as well as day-to-day decisions of individual staff members.</p>
<p>Goals: What are our priorities?</p>	<p>No effort has been made to engage the staff in setting and defining school improvement goals related to student learning. If goals exist, they have been developed by the administration.</p>	<p>Staff members have participated in a process to establish goals, but the goals are typically stated as projects to be accomplished or are written so broadly that they are impossible to measure. The goals do not yet influence instructional decisions in a meaningful way.</p>	<p>Staff members have worked together to establish long- and short-term improvement goals for their school. The goals are clearly communicated. Assessment tools and strategies have been developed and implemented to measure progress toward the goals.</p>	<p>All staff pursue measurable performance goals as part of their routine responsibilities. Goals are clearly linked to the school's shared vision. Goal attainment is celebrated and staff members demonstrate willingness to identify and pursue challenging stretch goals.</p>
<p>Communication: How do we communicate what is important?</p>	<p>There is no clear, consistent message regarding the priorities of the school or district. Initiatives are changing constantly and different people in the organization seem to have different pet projects.</p>	<p>A small group of leaders in the school or district is declaring the importance of a program or initiative. Their efforts have yet to impact practice to any significant degree.</p>	<p>The school or district is beginning to align practices with stated priorities. New structures have been created to support the initiative, resources have been re-allocated, and systems for monitoring the priorities have been put into place. Evidence of progress is noted and publicly celebrated.</p>	<p>The priorities of the school or district are demonstrated in the everyday practices and procedures of the school and the assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors of the staff. The priorities are evident to students, parents, new staff members, and even visitors to the school or district. Stories of extraordinary commitment to the priorities are part of the lore that binds people together.</p>



Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet Effective Communication

Describe one or more aspects of a professional learning community that you would like to see in place in your school.	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
<p>The school communicates its focus on learning consistently and persistently. It develops specific plans to improve levels of learning.</p> <p>The school monitors learning on a timely basis. Staff members model a personal commitment to learning. The driving questions of the school focus on learning.</p> <p>Resources are allocated to promote learning.</p> <p>Evidence of learning is celebrated. There is a systematic response to students who are not learning.</p> <p>Staff members who are inattentive to student learning are confronted.</p>				



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Part Five Tips for Moving Forward: Building the Foundation of a PLC

1 **Move quickly to action.** Remember that you will not progress on the PLC continuum or close the knowing-doing gap until people in the school or district begin to “do” differently. We have seen educators devote years to studying, debating, rewording, and revising different elements of the foundation, thereby giving the illusion of meaningful action. In most instances a staff should be able to consider and resolve all of the questions of the foundation in a matter of weeks. They may need to return to the foundation in the future to make changes as the vision becomes clear, the need for additional commitments arises, or new goals emerge. Perfection is not the objective: action is. Once again, the school or district that actually does the work of a PLC will develop its capacity to help all students learn far more effectively than the school or district that spends years preparing to be a PLC.

Trust & Risk

2 **Build shared knowledge when asking people to make a decision.** Asking uninformed people to make decisions is bound to result in uninformed decisions. Members of a PLC resolve issues and answer important questions by asking, “What information do we need to examine together to make a good decision?” and then building shared knowledge regarding that information. Learning together is, by definition, the very essence of a *learning* community. Furthermore, giving people access to the same information increases the likelihood that they will arrive at the same conclusions. All staff should have direct access to user-friendly information on the current reality in their school or district as well as access to best practices and best thinking regarding the issue under consideration.

3 **Use the foundation to assist in day-to-day decisions.** Addressing the foundation of a PLC will impact the school only if it becomes a tool for making decisions. Posting mission statements in the building or inserting a vision statement or goals into a strategic plan does nothing to improve a school. When proposals are considered, the first questions that should be asked are:

- Is this consistent with our purpose?
- Will it help us become the school we envision?
- Are we prepared to commit to do this?
- Will it enable us to achieve our goals?

An honest assessment of these questions can help shorten debate and lead the group to the right conclusion.

4 Use the foundation to identify existing practices that should be eliminated. Once your foundation has been established, use it to identify and eliminate any practices that are inconsistent with its principles. As Jim Collins (2001) wrote:

Most of us have an ever-expanding “to do” list, trying to build momentum by doing, doing, doing—and doing more. And it rarely works. Those who build good to great companies, however, made as much use of “stop doing” lists as “to do” lists. They had the discipline to stop doing all the extraneous junk. (p. 139)

5 Translate the vision of your school into a teachable point of view. Effective leaders create a “teachable point of view”: a succinct explanation of the organization’s purpose and direction that can be illustrated through stories that engage others emotionally and intellectually (Tichy, 1997). They have a knack for making the complex simple in ways that give direction to those in the organization (Collins, 2001). They use simple language, simple concepts, and the power of common sense (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). Develop a brief teachable point of view that captures the vision of your school in a message that is simple, direct, and jargon free.

6 Write value statements as behaviors rather than beliefs. “We believe in the potential and worth of each of our students” is a morally impeccable statement; however, it offers little insight into what a staff is prepared to do to help each child realize that potential. Another difficulty with belief statements is their failure to assign specific, personal responsibility. A staff may agree with the statement, “We believe in a safe and orderly environment,” but feel it is the job of the administration to create such an environment. Simple, direct statements of what we commit to do are preferable to the most eloquent statements of our beliefs. For example, “We will monitor each student’s learning on a timely basis and provide additional time and support for learning until the student becomes proficient” helps to clarify expectations far more effectively than assertions about the potential of every child.

7 Focus on yourself rather than others. In our work with schools, we have found that educators rarely have difficulty in articulating steps that could be taken to improve their schools, but they call upon others to do it: Parents need to be more supportive, students need to be more responsible, the district needs to reduce class size, the state needs to provide more funding, and so on. This external focus on what others must do fails to improve the situation and fosters a culture of dependency (Sparks,



2005). Furthermore, we cannot make commitments on the behalf of others. We can only make them for ourselves. Members of a PLC have an internal focus that acknowledges that there is much that lies within their sphere of influence that could be done to improve their school. They create a culture of self-efficacy and optimism by concentrating on what is within their collective power to do (Goleman, 2002, p. 87).

8 Recognize that the process is nonlinear. Although we present the four pillars sequentially, the process of clarifying purpose, vision, collective commitments, and goals is nonlinear, nonhierarchical, and nonsequential. Working on the foundation is cyclical and interactive. Writing purpose and vision statements can help shape commitments and goals, but as those commitments are honored and goals are achieved, purpose and vision become more real, clearer, and more focused.

9 ^{it} That is what you do that matters, not what you call it. When concepts take on a label, they accumulate baggage. People get the impression that a proposal represents the latest fad, or they settle for a superficial understanding rather than really engaging in an assessment of the underlying ideas. There are schools and districts throughout North America that call themselves professional learning communities yet demonstrate none of the characteristics of a PLC. There are schools that could serve as model PLCs that are unfamiliar with the term. We are not advocating that faculties be asked to vote to become a PLC or take a PLC pledge. In fact, it may be more helpful to never use the term. What is important is that we first engage staff members in building shared knowledge of certain key assumptions and critical practices and then call upon them to act in accordance with that knowledge.

(continued)

Part Six

Questions to Guide the Work of Your Professional Learning Community

For Clarifying the Mission of Your School or District, Ask:

1. What is our fundamental purpose?

2. Why was this school built? What have we been brought here to do together?

3. Does the concept of public education for all children mean that all students shall learn or merely that they will be required to attend school?

4. What happens in our school or district when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

For Clarifying the Vision for Your School or District, Ask:

1. Can you describe the school we are trying to create?

2. What would our school look like if it were a great place for students? What would it look like if it were a great place for teachers?

3. It is 5 years from now and we have achieved our vision as a school. In what ways are we different? Describe what is going on in terms of practices, procedures, relationships, results, and climate.

4. Imagine we have been given 60 seconds on the nightly news to clarify the vision of our school or district to the community. What do we want to say?



For Clarifying the Collective Commitments (Values) of Your School or District, Ask:

1. What are the specific commitments we must honor to achieve our purpose and vision?

2. What are the specific behaviors we can exhibit to make a personal contribution to the success of our school?

3. What commitments are we prepared to make to each other?

4. What commitments or assurances are we prepared to make to every student in our school?

5. What are the "must dos" and the taboos for this staff?

6. What agreements are shared among all of us?

For Clarifying the Goals of Your School or District, Ask:

1. How will we know if we are making progress toward achieving our vision?

2. How will we know if we are more effective 3 years from now than we are today?

3. If we achieve our shared vision, what will student achievement look like in our school?

4. What are the most essential conditions and factors we must monitor on an ongoing basis?



For Clarifying How Effective You Are at Communicating Priorities, Ask:

1. What are the most important factors that drive the day-to-day decisions in our school or district?

2. What are the priorities in our school or district?

3. What systems have been put in place to monitor progress in our priority areas?

4. What gets paid the closest attention in this school or district?

5. How do we celebrate short term successes?

6. How well do celebrations reinforce our mission, vision, values & goals?

Final Thoughts

The consideration of these questions can help a staff lay the foundation for a professional learning community, but important work remains to be done. A staff that embraces the premise that the very purpose of the school is to help all students learn will face the very challenging questions of, "Learn what?" and, "How will we know if each student has learned?" We turn our attention to these critical questions in the next chapter.

