It is acknowledged that schools are at different points in their school PLC journey and implementation. Whilst the focus of a PLC may be different in each school, or even in each learning area in the secondary setting, the overarching focus of the Professional Learning Community in a Catholic school is the same... collaboration, learning and growth (as demonstrated by results).
The purpose of a PLC in our Catholic schools

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) is built on the foundation of a shared moral purpose for school improvement. The PLC in the Catholic school is underpinned by shared vision, values and goals. Collaborative teams are the key components within the PLC. Catholic schools are learning communities based on strong partnerships that connect, challenge and collaborate.

The Principal’s Role

"Isolation is the enemy of learning. Principals who support the learning of adults in their school organise teachers’ schedules to provide opportunities for teachers to work, plan, and think together."

NAESP, Leading Learning Communities

The Principal will:

- Take responsibility for each student’s learning progress.
- Demonstrate leadership in the work of each collaborative team through developing and enacting school policy and procedures.
- Model and create a PLC culture of challenge and support with a results/improvement orientation.
- Lead and manage innovation through the PLC so that the educational vision and school strategic plan are realised.
- Foster trust and develop leadership in others through teamwork and collaboration.
- Ensure the time allocation for teacher collaboration explicitly reflects the value and importance placed on the work of school-wide improvement.

Key Structures

- Staff meetings for information
  Updates for staff on current and future events for the purpose of delivering information and securing support in the interests of good communication.
  Once a term (K-12) (suggested)

- Staff meetings for curriculum pedagogy development as a PLC
  All staff gather for a particular purpose intended to develop the school’s shared beliefs, understandings and agreed practices regarding the teaching of a discipline area.
  Twice a term (K-12)

- PLEs
  Agreed small groups of staff with shared interests in student cohorts meet regularly for the purpose of addressing the 4 critical questions of learning.
  Once a week (K-6) on a fortnight (P-12)

- Stage, KLA Faculty, Pastoral Care or Year meetings
  Meetings of staff to plan and agree on common objectives within the year, KLA faculty or cohort. May include meetings for curriculum purposes where the matters are not directly related to the 4 critical questions of learning.
  Once a fortnight (K-6) twice a term (7-12) twice a term (7-12) inter-disciplinary meetings (K-6) before/after the teaching day

- Collaborative meetings
  Informal small groups with shared interests in student learning. Meet from time to time according to school need.
  As required

In the early phases...

the work is harder because people’s understanding is growing. As teachers develop understanding, greater clarity brings better direction.

Expectations for the PLT

- The team is resourced with the key documents that support the work - syllabus documents, literacy/numeracy continuums K-10, visible school data both electronic and visual, CLF, key research/readings/books. The space is an important central area where staff can collaborate and share learning.
- Dedicated collaborative team time is ideally structured into the day and is often supplemented by additional time.
- The school leadership team work alongside and with each team on a consistent basis. This is structured into the daily work of the leadership team.
- Agendas, minutes, resources, artefacts and the work of the teams are shared in an online space with the leadership team.

Non negotiables

(what we are tight on)

- Educators work in collaborative teams and take collective responsibility for student learning rather than working in isolation.
- Collaborative teams implement an agreed curriculum.
- Collaborative teams monitor student learning through ongoing common formative assessments.
- Educators use the results of common assessments to improve their individual teaching practice and build the team’s adaptive capacity to achieve its goals.
- The school provides a systematic response to intervention and extension.

Diocesan PLC Terminology

| Scope & Sequence | What the terms are not exactly synonymous, the Scope & Sequence can contain a pacing guide if the school believes it supports a stronger Scope & Sequence document. |
| Essential Learning | The critical knowledge, skills and understandings each student acquires as a result of each course or study. Key Learning/Power Standards and Proficiency Scales are not used in the diocese. |
| Agreed Curriculum | How the syllabus outcomes and content will be taught. The agreed curriculum is taught by all members of the learning team. The ‘Governing curriculum’ is not used in the diocese. |
| Curriculum Design | A process to design curriculum by beginning with the end in mind and designing toward that end. |
| Norms | In a PLC/PTL norms are a set of protocols and commitments developed by each team to guide members in working together. Norms clarify expectations regarding how they will work together to achieve their shared goals. |
| Rubric | A rubric is a scoring guide that enables the teacher/student to make reliable judgements about student work and for students to self-assess. Proficiency Scale is not used in the diocese. |
| Marking Guide | A rubric is a scoring guide that enables the teacher/student to make reliable judgements about student work and for students to self-assess. Proficiency Scale is not used in the diocese. |
| Assessment for Learning | How the rubric outcomes and content will be taught is included in the agreed curriculum. The agreed curriculum is taught by all members of the learning team. The ‘Governing curriculum’ is not used in the diocese. |
| Summative assessment is used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period—typically at the end of a project, unit, course, semester or school year. |
Curriculum Design that inspires Powerful Learning

A rich curriculum which is developed and reviewed in a planned way will prioritise what students are to know, understand, and be able to do (agreed curriculum). Some knowledge is important to know, and some knowledge is worth being familiar with. The syllabus is the definitive guide to what is taught. The curriculum must meet the needs of all learners.

1. The PLT uses all the available documents: Syllabus, Stage Statements, Literacy/Numeracy Continuums and the Mathematics/English skill charts. The Essential Learnings (ELs) are decided by collaborative teams. These ELs will have a spotlight focussed on them as part of the full teaching program, critical question 1 (CQ1) and the design of rich differentiated learning CQ3.

2. The PLT designs common formative assessments for the aspects that will have a spotlight focussed on them. They determine the acceptable evidence that will be shown by students as part of CQ2. These targets (SMART goals) can be expressed as percentages or a particular level on a marking rubric.

3. Formative assessment is undertaken as part of the full teaching program and results are analysed by the learning team. Teachers celebrate the achievements and identify students requiring additional time and support - this includes teacher professional learning and student intervention as part of CQ4.

What should students know and be able to do? ( CQ1)

Deciding on Essential Learnings helps to prioritise the learning and therefore allows the collaborative team to target the formative assessment. This better assists the team to determine if students have met their target or personal best.

In NSW, the outcomes and the associated ACARA content statements are the Essential Learnings for all students. Teaching teams make the professional judgement about the learning depth/breadth.

Start with the Big Idea/Guiding Questions

This conceptual understanding is the lens through which we determine the depth/breadth. All children are entitled to experience the intellectual rigour of each syllabus, including the overarching concepts and big ideas.

Additional Information

K-6

• The identified work of the PLT is determined by the school data. Choose one ambitious goal based on Mathematics or English as a starter. When teams are confident, stretch the goals.

• Planning in a PLT requires consideration of the 4 critical questions. More detailed work on programming is done outside of the PLT.

7-12

• Leaders of Learning may benefit from a Leader of Learning collaborative team on a whole school shared goal – eg writing across the school. This may assist in understanding the strong link between assessment and learning.

Useful Documents

For mapping student learning progression:

• Literacy and Numeracy Continuums (K-10)

• Stage Statements (K-10)

• English and Mathematics skill charts (K-6)