

The MCPS Professional Learning Communities Institute (PLCI)

The Focused School Improvement Team

Executive staff, employee organization presidents, department representatives, and staff members from case study schools. Developed the PLCI to provide ongoing professional development to leadership teams from a selected number of MCPS schools.

Publicizes opportunity to all elementary and middle schools

Reviews submitted applications

Selects cohort

PLCI Staff: Director and Instructional Specialists

Based in Office of Organizational Development. Responsible for all PLCI activities. Periodically updates Focused School Improvement Team on institute progress.

Structured PLCI Professional Development Sessions

Leadership Teams attend full-day sessions held every two months.

Morning session involves reviews of case studies of businesses and schools. Case study review includes small group discussion, whole group debrief, and reflection in school teams. Morning sessions also include professional development specifically related to establishing and supporting a professional learning community culture.

During the afternoon, school teams meet to engage in reflection, self-assessment, and action planning. PLCI staff members circulate to facilitate discussions, answer questions, and support teams.

Ongoing Direct Support to Schools

In between structured professional development sessions, PLCI team members provide ongoing, school-specific support to all PLCI client schools through school visits, via e-mail and phone conversations, by meeting with the principal and staff development teacher, participating in school improvement team meetings, presenting at staff meetings, attending data review sessions, working with instructional teams, and presenting at parent and community functions.

PLCI staff members also coordinate with other MCPS staff to provide targeted professional development through open workshops that are available to all staff members from PLCI schools.

Additional Baldrige-Guided School Improvement Plan Funding

All PLCI schools are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 in additional Baldrige-guided School Improvement Plan (SIP) funds.

Budgets must be developed by the school improvement team and must align with the school's SIP goals. Budgets must be approved by the director of the PLCI and the school's community superintendent.

Schools are expected to use these budget funds to support academic intervention, teacher collaboration, instructional quality, and community outreach.

Results

- Improved academic achievement for all students in PLCI schools
- Evidence of professional learning community characteristics in each PLCI school
- Survey results indicating improving staff perceptions of professional learning community beliefs, strategies, processes and practices
- Participant satisfaction with professional development and school support