

Building School Success Through Effective Collaboration

A No Excuses University Exceptional System



Presented

By

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Three-Tiered Collaboration

A Los Pen Example



Daily Collaboration: Collaboration that involves the work that teachers do directly with students. Creative grouping from one class to another, student rotations, and subject responsibility are examples of daily collaboration.

Weekly Collaboration: Time held sacred for team planning. Instructional planning, curriculum mapping, and data analysis are examples of work that is done during this time. Weekly collaboration is best done on a school-wide level. This is not time for individuals to work alone.

Monthly Collaboration: Time set aside for growing professionally as a school. This time is also used for articulation from one grade level to another. Monthly collaboration is best done when it is simplified and focused.

(All collaboration should involve clear and tangible outcomes. Talk is cheap!)



“We are committed to creating a school that knows no limits to the academic success of each student.”

No Excuses University Pledge

Los Pen Collaboration Commitment

As staff members of Los Pen, we are committed to collaborating with one another in a variety of ways. We understand that the greatest academic and social gains for our students come as a result of *quality instruction* from the classroom teacher and highly effective measures of *collaboration* among team members. Los Pen staff members work interdependently with their teams in many ways. The following are examples of individual commitments that we are all willing to make as we collaborate as a staff:

Clarity of Purpose: Team members remain driven by our one goal to ensure that each student is proficient or advanced in reading, language, and math. They meet with a purpose and devise agendas and timelines to ensure success at every collaborative meeting. They take the time to decide upon meeting topics in advance. After meeting, they follow through with collective agreements as a team.

Respectful of Time: Los Pen staff members are action-oriented professionals who value one another’s time. They are prompt to staff and team meetings. They make the most of their time by collaborating during the school day with colleagues as they creatively group students in an effort to meet every learner’s needs.

Wednesday Time-Banking: Every Wednesday afternoon from 2:15–3:40, we set aside time for teams to work closely as they design instruction that translates into academic achievement for all. This time is held sacred by all members of the team and should not be used for personal appointments or individual work time.

Professional Growth: Los Pen staff members are open to learning new methods, ideas, and strategies that will lead to greater academic success for all. They participate in on-site Tuesday Collaboration workshops. They seek ways to learn from one another, and are committed to growing professionally together.

Building Strong Professional Relationships: Los Pen staff members are committed to developing strong professional relationships with each other. They praise one another during times of individual, team, and school-wide success. They are honest with one another as they respectfully confront concerns through “Candid Collaboration”. They support one another during times that are challenging both professionally and personally. They celebrate with one another as friends and colleagues outside of the school community.

Tuesday Collaboration

Every Tuesday, two grade levels collaborate together during the last hour of the day. Students are gathered on the playground or gym for a comprehensive PE rotation or assembly. While students are outside of the classroom, staff members are inside growing professionally on a variety of topics. Below is an example of what the Tuesday Collaboration schedule looks like.

K / 1 Tuesday Collaboration Schedule	
<p>September (K-1st): 9/5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vertical Articulation Topic: Rigby PM Plus Assessment Kit (Location: Keri's Room)</p> <p>K-1 teachers will use this time to articulate about our new reading assessment. We will discuss the new guidelines for administering and analyzing a running record.</p>
<p>October (K-1st): 10/3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade Level Teams Topic: Progress Reports (Location: K- Sara's Room 1- Jackie's Room)</p> <p>As we approach parent-teacher conferences, it is important for us to find clarity on the new progress report, how to use it, and how to align our assessment practices with it. In addition, time should be spent developing clear talking points to go over with each parent about the progress report.</p>
<p>November (K-1st): 11/7</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vertical Articulation Topic: Special Ed and At-Risk Panel <i>Gail Adams, Tiffani Kline, Laura Hulsey, Tiffany Grover</i> (Location: Margaret's Room)</p> <p>All of the above will offer strategies to support our special ed and at-risk learners within the classroom. (more info to come)</p>
<p>January (K-1st): 1/9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vertical Articulation Topic: Writing (Location: Keri's Room)</p> <p>K and 1 teachers will discuss effective writing strategies, how they are using the <u>Units of Study</u> writing program as well as share writing activities for literacy centers.</p>
<p>February (K-1st): 2/6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vertical Articulation Topic: Reading (Location: Dawn's Room)</p> <p>K and 1 teachers will discuss effective reading strategies and share reading activities for literacy centers. *K-1 teachers would like Pam to attend.</p>
<p>March (K-1st): 3/6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vertical Articulation Topic: Natural vs. Logical Consequences in the K-1 Classroom (Location: Fran's Room) -Karin and Theresa will help facilitate</p> <p>This workshop will address the various ways that we can promote appropriate behavior through the use of appropriate consequences. All strategies offered will align with our current plan to maintain a single-school culture for our students as we expect exemplary behavior based on the six character traits.</p>
<p>May (K): 5/1 (1st): 5/8</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade Level Teams Topic: Curriculum Mapping (Location: K- Keri's Room 1-Margaret's Room)</p> <p>As we end the year, we want to take the time to refine our plans for next year though well-thought out curriculum mapping. This time is set aside for teams to continue to map out their curriculum for the coming year.</p>



OUR GOAL: Every student, without excuse and without exception will be proficient in reading, language and math.

Staff Meeting Agenda

October 25, 2006

8:00

LRC

Items for Information:

- **5th Grade Students in Math:** I just received data showing that Los Pen sent over 21% of our 5th grade students on to pre-algebra in middle school. This is second in the district. Creekside was first with 25%. Great job!
- **Math Boosters and Tutoring Clubs:** There is money for your grade to have a Math Booster or after school tutoring club. Each intervention must be taught by someone at your grade level. Please talk to your team and determine which type of club you would like to have and who will be teaching it. Once you have identified your teacher, see me for details on funding.
- **Questionable T-Shirts:** The latest style for kids is to wear t-shirts with negative and/or rude slogans written on them. I have recently seen shirts like "100% Brat and Proud of it" or "Top 10 reasons I forgot my homework". Los Pen does not have a uniform dress-code but I find it contradictory to have our kids wear NEU shirts every Monday just to have them wear these kinds of shirts on other days of the week. I will be talking with kids about this in the future and sending out info to parents about this via the NEU News. This is not a mandate, it is simply a strong encouragement that kids not wear these shirts to school. I hope you are supportive.
- **Reading Olympics:** If you have not read Sheri's email about next year's program, please do so. If you have questions, be sure to ask them at our next staff meeting.
- **Discipline Data:** The discipline at our school continues to go down. The results of a school-wide management plan, lots of support services, and superb teaching of the character traits is paying off. Three years ago we had 191 office referrals to this point, today we have only 71. We continue to be data driven in this area and it is obviously making a huge difference. Great job everyone!

Items for Presentation:

- **Whatever it Takes Award:** Diane will pass on the award to another worthy staff member.
- **Principal's Meeting Share Out:** Lots of good information was shared with me at my last district principal's meeting. I will pass this info on to you.
- **No Excuse U Share Out:** Chris and Diane will share out about ways that they are promoting college readiness in 5th grade.

Items for Action:

1. CPR Certification: 10 members of the staff are not certified. Do we want to organize a training on site?
2. Visitation Schedule: As more educators find out about our school, more want to visit. Lets work together to create an exceptional system for managing visitations so as to maintain the integrity of our learning environment.

The next staff meeting will be on November 15th at 8:00



GROUP or TEAM?

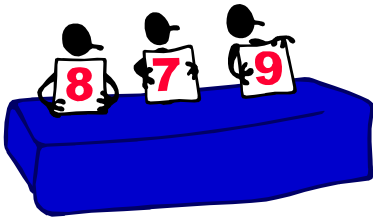


TRIANGLE #1	TRIANGLE #2

LEARNINGS

Rate Yourself as a Team Player

Adapted with permission of the South Carolina State Department of Education.



Effective school improvement teams are made up of individuals who respect each other and work well together. Your behavior has an enormous impact on the team's ability to do its work efficiently and effectively. The following is a series of questions about your behavior in your work group. Answer each question honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. Describe your behavior as accurately as possible.

1. I offer facts, opinions, ideas, suggestions, and relevant information during my team's discussions.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
2. I express my willingness to cooperate with other group members and my expectation that they will also be cooperative.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
3. I am open and candid in my dealings with the entire group.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
4. I support team members who are on the spot and struggling to express themselves intellectually or emotionally.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
5. I take risks in expressing new ideas and current feelings during a team discussion.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
6. I communicate to other team members that I am aware of and appreciate their abilities, talents, capabilities, skills, and resources.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
7. I offer help and assistance to anyone on the team in order to improve the team's performance.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
8. I accept and support the openness of other team members, supporting them for taking risks and encouraging individuality.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
9. I share materials, books, sources of information, and other resources with team members in order to promote the success of all members and the team as a whole.
Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always
10. Three things I might do to increase the effectiveness of our team include:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____



Tuesday Team Meeting Agenda

Date: _____ Location: _____ Facilitator: _____

Meeting Topics:

Collective Agreements:

Items for Follow-Up at Next Team Meeting:



Rate Your Team Meetings

(Tools For Schools: NSDC)

We start our meeting on time.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We review and develop the meeting's agenda/goal before the meeting begins.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We set time limits for the meeting.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We identify a recorder to compile notes of the meeting.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We encourage participation by all members.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We summarize what we have accomplished in each meeting before concluding the meeting.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

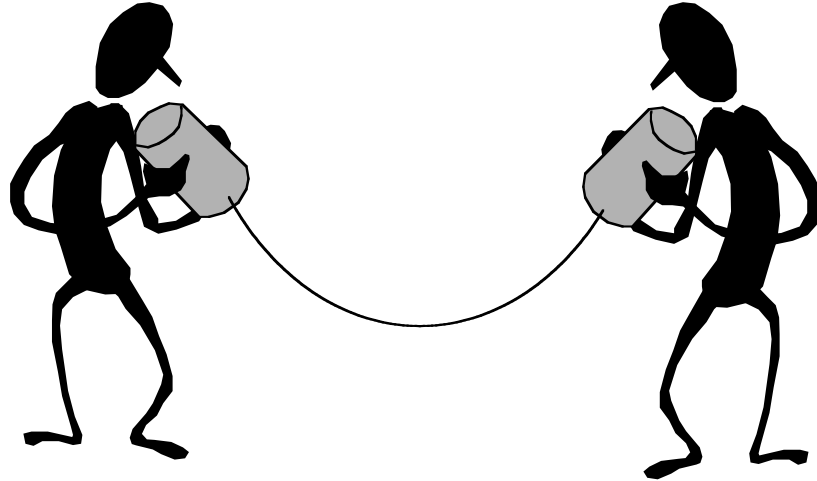
We briefly evaluate each meeting in terms of efficient, productive use of time and each members concerns.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

We end our meeting on time.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Always

Candid Collaboration

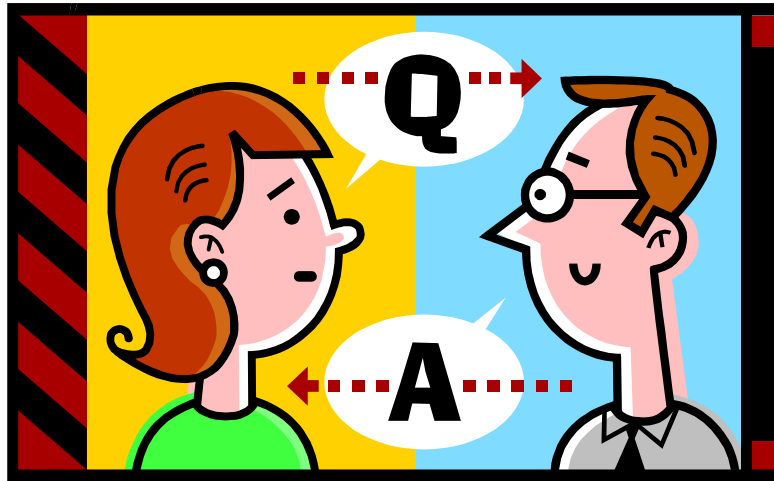


What is Candid Collaboration?

- Honest communication with a purpose.
- An endeavor to empower staff to actively participate in collaboration that is solution focused.
- Addresses two aspects of collaboration: **instructional** and **relational**.
- Four levels of conversation: **Supporting, Accountability, Intervention, and Resourcing**.

What is the common vocabulary?

- **Crucial Conversation** – A discussion between two or more people where stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions run strong.
(see book Crucial Conversations by Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler)
- **Dialogue** – The free flow of meaning between two or more people.
- **Shared Pool of Meaning** – The act of making a conversation safe enough for everyone to add meaning in order to create a pool of information.



Candid Collaboration Levels

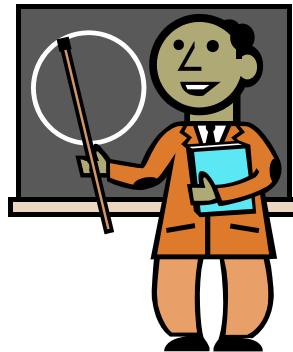
Level 1: Supporting

Level 2: Accountability

Level 3: Intervention

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Opens the door | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identifies problem | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviews | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct / timelines |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seeks to understand | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcome driven | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposeful plan |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proactive | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Candid |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not attacking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Two or more |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One on one | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not attacking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facilitated by one |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Happens when calm | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One on one | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Respectful of time | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calm | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Genuine | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results driven | |

Instructional Scenarios

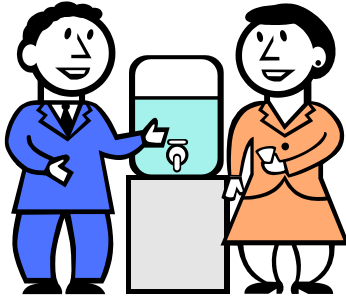


Assessment scores are due to Cathy in 3 days. Like everyone you have been working tremendously hard to get all assessments done on time. As you share your stress with a colleague, you overhear another colleague talk about their decision to “blow off” certain portions of the assessment plan. This raises obvious concerns to you.

For several weeks now you have noticed a new staff member looking confused during collaboration. You have thought to yourself of how it reminds you of your first year and the overwhelming responsibility that you felt. You also reflected on some of your lost opportunities in that first year. You have two choices. First, do nothing and let the teacher find their way the same that you did. Or second, participate in candid collaboration. Knowing that as a staff we’re working on being candid collaborators, what would you do?

In the staff room, you overhear a colleague from a grade level above yours talking about a specific student in a negative way. Parents are making copies and OASIS tutors are being given a tour of the staff lounge. You realize that the child being discussed is one of your former students. In addition, you are privy to some pertinent background information that the current teacher may not be aware of at this time.

Relational Scenarios



It's Tuesday collaboration and a member of your team is not in attendance. After talking to the team, no one is aware of the reason for their absence. In short conversations with your colleague they have shared that they are going through some "personal" issues. How might you carry on a supportive conversation.

When in dialogue with a colleague, you perceive their communication to be condescending and judgmental. On one occasion, after giving input during a team meeting, this colleague laughs and says, "You're kidding right?". Other times, after making suggestions, they correct you and tell you *their* way to accomplish the objective you are discussing. This is happening on a regular basis and is impeding your ability to speak honestly about academic priorities and planning.

After being in school for several weeks you notice that a parent exhibits frustration while working in your class. This is evident by remarks that she/he makes to students and other parents about curriculum, instruction, assessment etc. While you have overheard these remarks, they have never directly spoken to you about them. How will you carry on a candid conversation with this parent?



Collaboration: Where are we now, where are we going?

<i>How are you currently collaborating in these three areas?</i>		
<i>Daily</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>
<i>What ideas do you have to collaborate in these three areas?</i>		
<i>Daily</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>