Professional Learning Communities – Advantages Part 2

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: PLCs provide the opportunities for colleagues to inform each other of classroom expectations or curriculum needs that may or may not have been talked about before.

Teacher: Also if you’re looking at assessment, remember our purpose is to allow these students access to general education curriculum. So when you’re thinking about what your mastery criteria is for our students, we don’t really care if they make A’s or C’s. We’re happy if they get credit. We want them to get credit.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: See now, we don’t know that in CTE very often. We are worried that we have to pass them.

Teacher: Here’s the basic thing that they need to do to get credit for this assignment.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: Excellent, which is why clarifying that IEP goal is so important. You know, because the IEP goal talks about credit. It tells you exactly what the ARD committee needs you to accomplish for that one student. It may be that your student doesn’t need to get their license exam, and then maybe that the student doesn’t need to get all of the skill sets they would need to become an auto mechanic. However, they can get enough skill sets to go out and be the oil technician or be the person who collects the cash. However you can train them, so they have a realistic job opportunity when they leave. Okay? So excellent, great.

During a PLC, ideas can be generated for further collaboration and avenues for continued discussion.

So that’s why I recommend consulting on all of these sheets, but at the end of the day make sure it’s individual enough that anybody who’s speaking for you or you when you’re speaking for yourself, it’s representing your version of your classroom because, again, rules change when they come into your classroom and that’s what we need our ARD committees to know. But that’s a very valid question. I’m envisioning each teacher taking this and doing it on their own and then using this community of practice session, talking to each other, and asking for help.

Teacher: Put it on Google drive. What happens with me is schedule changes come up, and I’ve got to make a schedule change. And I need a seventh period that I’m like, “Hey, take graphic design.” They just need something. Then I get a call back from the teacher, “They don’t have the prerequisites.” I don’t know what graphic design is. I don’t have time. This kid needs a class and I’ve got a million other things I’ve got to do. There’s an opening, so I put them in.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: However if you had it on Google drive, what you could do is go and search for graphic design, pull it up, see their sheets, and say, “Oh hmm yes.” Or “Oh
yeah of course, it’s still going to work. He has an interest. He has the skill sets. She’s going to do great and not be set up for failure.” So that’s why it’s kind of important. The other thing I really like on Google drive you can organize it in folder. But if you want a physical one, I also recommend color coding this stuff. So you sit down and color code it by academy or you can color code it by program of study. However makes sense to your school district, so that in the ARD committee when they’re sitting there and making a decision, they just flip straight to graphic design, look at it and say, “Alright can work, cannot work.” And that’s what’s very helpful for something like this. Worse case, the student has already been in graphic design for six weeks; it can still inform them about what’s wrong and what we can fix. And that’s the other way to use something like Google drive. That’s a great idea.

Teacher: Another thing to put on this sheet is the prerequisites like they need to have had principles of AV before they take the audio visual course. You know, that’s the kind of thing that I’m going to admit that I’m dumb about. It just doesn’t enter my mind.

Teacher: If you’re not in it every day, then you’re not going to know it. We know those.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: And it’s completely reasonable not to know and ask. That’s the other thing is who to ask and know we know who to ask. Yes?

Teacher: You know, you’re talking a lot about ARD, but I’m thinking about the LPAC committee and how valuable this information would be for the LPAC committee.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: See this is exactly why. I don’t even think about the LPAC committee, I always think about the individuals like people like you and the ESL coordinator. However, I can see this being very beneficial.

Teacher: There’s only one coordinator for 55 schools, but then the LPAC chair is at each campus. So if they had access to that Google drive could see the appropriate class and program.

Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan: Absolutely, and I love the idea, the work, and the linguistic accommodation. And that’s very important for our students, and parents, and teachers to know about.