**Characteristics of Professional Learning Communities**

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| Shared vision and values | Collective commitment of school and district staff, which is expressed in day-to-day practice across teams |
| Working teams with active communication structures | Collaboration to achieve common goals |
| A culture of actively seeking solutions | Openness to new ideas |
| Norms of collegiality | Allowing trust needed for effective discussion, sharing and problem-solving |
|  Reflection | Allowing for collaborative process to study the operation and impact of actions taken. |
| Questioning of the status quo | Ongoing quest for improvement and professional learning |
| A willingness to change | Improved practice based on reflective and collaborative use of a variety of data. |
| A culture of accountability | Team goals, decisions, and who’s responsible are recorded and tracked |

**Necessary Ingredients to Create an Effective PLC**

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| Alignment | A clearly articulated vision for our school/district that focuses on educational achievement for all students. What does our school look like? What should it look like? |
| District Support | Systematic embedding of PLC practice at the District level in both leadership and district teams.  |
| Purposeful Collaboration | Systematic embedding of collaboration into the routine practices of the school, “Teachers work in teams, engaging in an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep team learning.” *DuFour On Common Ground, p. 37**.* |
| Time | Collaborative team time that is ‘sacred” to the school’s schedule; Dedicated Team Time  |
| Culture Committed to Improvement and Growth | Creating a culture that focuses on improving learning of adults and students. Enhancing that culture by creating and honoring “norms” of collaborative behaviors that allow team members to decide what will be discussed, the manner in how it will be discussed and the openness with which they offer and absorb various perspectives. |
| Clear Objectives | Clarification of essential learning outcomes (What do we want each student to know and be able to do?) and of formative assessments of learning progress (How do we know they have learned what we intended them to learn?). |
| Distributed Leadership | A shift from Principal/Superintendent as sole leader to the development of a vibrant leadership team and teacher leaders.  |
| Space | A secured place free from distraction where professional learning can take place. |