

Leading Model Teams

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"Principals can no longer lead instructional reform alone: The voice and expertise of teachers are essential to improve teaching and learning."

Wilhelm, 2013

Mastery Moment: Describe the best leadership experience you've had. What conditions were present to make this experience memorable?

THE WHAT: LEADING FOR CHANGE

Contrary to common belief, school leadership is not just one person, not just the principal. Rather, it is a collective commitment by the adults in the school to make a difference in the lives of all students. Fullan (2010) argues that truly effective educational leadership creates working conditions in which professional growth, commitment, engagement, and "constant spawning of leadership in others" are fostered. It is leadership that develops collective capacity and builds student and teacher efficacy.

When it comes to leading, school change is created through the collective, by people interacting, trying things out, testing the waters, improving their practice, reflecting on their impact, adjusting to better practice, and sharing their learning. We call this *collective leadership*.

Any educator who has been in the profession for more than a few years knows that all-school change takes time, perseverance, and unrelenting commitment. As Ringo Starr sang, "*It don't come easy, ya know, it don't come easy.*" After working together with schools in their change efforts and carefully observing those who make progress and those who

do not, so much, we have developed a change strategy for implementation of the Impact Team Model that has had remarkable results. It's called the Model Teams Approach (MTA). This change model is based on the gradual release model that builds capacity from within through coaching, practice, and feedback. This process accesses the four sources of efficacy and builds collective efficacy.

The MTA is based on the common sense notion of working with what you've got—strategic resourcing (time and people), working out the kinks before all-school implementation. The Model Team becomes the unit of change and a resource for other teams in the change process. This avoids the pitfalls of all-system change:

- Not enough time to learn and practice gradually
- Not enough coaching to improve the practice
- Not enough expertise to use the protocols effectively
- Lack understanding of the research or value of the practice
- Lack of opportunity to differentiate the process to meet the needs of each team
- Lack of administrative support since they are trying to implement full system

In our experience, when systems try to implement this model with everyone, they are not able to leverage the four sources of efficacy. Whether the initiative is worthy or not, it now has a bad rap in the school and *this too has passed*.

By starting small, with one or two teams, and developing leadership and facilitation skills in the process, abundant support is provided, missteps are welcomed, feedback flows, and collaborative practices are enhanced. The MTA is built around the four sources of efficacy.

The Goal is Efficacy—Teacher, Student, and Team

Leading Impact Teams is about leading for efficacy, designing a system, and building structures and processes that strengthen the four sources of efficacy:

1. Mastery moments
2. Models of success
3. Feedback
4. Safety

The MTA is based on the old-school wisdom of *start small to go far* and requires three ingredients:

1. Collective leadership: The principal and the leadership team's active involvement in promoting and participating in the learning process
2. A team (or two) willing to learn—to try it on for size
3. A belief in the power of the formative assessment process to strengthen student efficacy

Using the MTA, in 4 to 6 months school leadership has developed the expertise to build capacity across the system. They have learned to

- Facilitate an effective team meeting;
- Use protocols to guide collaborative inquiry;
- Determine quality evidence to understand impact;
- Analyze quality evidence; and
- Agree upon collective actions that have high impact.

These Model Teams also serve as a viable resource to move the practice out to other teams in the school. In fact, some of our clients have termed this practice Adopt-a-Team.

Going back to the *it don't come easy* notion, the MTA makes all-school change doable from within and sustained high-impact collaboration an embedded school practice.

THE WHY: RESEARCH AND REASONS

There is a strong causal relationship between instructional leadership, teacher collaboration, teacher efficacy beliefs, and student achievement (Goddard, Goddard, Kim, & Miller, 2015). Collective leadership is an intersection of all four components and is a systemic process that ensures school-wide progress.

Reason 1: Contributes to building collective efficacy. Collaboratively learning and leading builds the belief that together they have the expertise to do great things. When teachers share responsibility for leading, they feel empowered. When they feel empowered, they feel confident that they can make a difference. When they believe they can make a difference, they do! These lead to mastery experiences that not only build collective efficacy but also serve as models of success for others (Eells, 2011).

Reason 2: Improves the quality of learning. Engaging all teachers in relentlessly and collaboratively focusing on improving student learning reaps great rewards (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Changing the paradigm from accountability (test scores) to ensuring all students are making *progress* empowers teachers to be responsive to student learning, to be a key part of the collective to make a difference. “The more willing principals are to spread leadership around, the better for the students” (Harvey & Holland, 2012).

Reason 3: Improves the quality of teaching. Learning together, taking action together, analyzing the impact of those actions, and responding strategically improves instruction. The quality of teacher collaboration positively influences the quality of teaching and student achievement (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). Accepting their role as key contributors to and leaders for student success, teachers engage in identifying problems of practice, successes, and challenges. They are continuously engaged in a learning cycle, developing effective practices that result in increased student achievement.

Reason 4: Builds and sustains collective commitment. Sharing a common purpose within a collaborative culture leads to ongoing experiences that present challenges, successes, dilemmas, and frustrations, but ultimately result in improved learning for all students. Operating from a strength-based mindset and committed to collaboratively learning, teachers become leaders, leaders are learners, and change in practice evolves. These mastery experiences interspersed with challenges and failures strengthen the resolve of the collective to make a difference for all students, the bedrock belief of the school.

School improvement is simply not a one-man band. “In fact, if test scores are any indication, the more willing principals are to spread leadership around, the better for students Principals may be relieved to find out, moreover, that their authority does not wane as others’ waxes. Clearly school leadership is not a zero-sum game” (Harvey & Holland, 2012).

THE HOW: THE MODEL TEAMS APPROACH

1. Lead from within—commitment of the principal and leadership team
2. Invite a team(s) to learn and model effective collaboration
3. Redefine formative assessment

The MTA is an implementation model that operationalizes the four sources of efficacy by building expertise through practice that results in mastery experiences for teams. These teams then become models for other teams.

If we have learned anything from the past two decades of school reform, it is that trying to do all-school change in one fatal swoop is risky business. Trying to implement change takes tremendous resources regarding time and people, and schools rarely have access to enough resources to ensure fidelity of practice for the entire school. Then when things go awry and the practice does not result in the advertised outcomes, teachers become disenchanted and back away from the desired change. “This too shall pass,” and it does, leaving a bad taste from whatever the initiative was.

To prevent this negative experience, we follow Viviane Robinson’s (2011) advice and use “strategic resourcing” to ensure the new practice results in success. That is, we deal in reality and wisely use what resources are available to support the change.

We begin with the principal and the leadership team (John Kotter [1996] calls this the “guiding coalition”) who have committed to learn and practice the Impact Team Model. They start by doing the Impact Team pre-assessment (see Appendix F) to see where their school is in

- understanding and implementing the formative assessment process, and
- understanding and practicing effective teaming.

The principal and leadership team then use the Evidence • Analysis • Action (EAA) meeting protocol to analyze the pre-assessment and to determine next steps. Typically the leadership team begins with engaging interested teachers and teams in going deeper into student-centered learning around the formative assessment process. There are 4 steps to the Model Team Approach:

1. Lead from within
2. Invitation to team
3. Redefine formative assessment
4. Execution as learning

(1) Lead From Within

We’ve known for years that school improvement takes all hands on deck. Barth (2013) posits that a school should be a community of

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leaders—not just a principal and a lot of followers. Witness the past decade of school reform where principals were replaced to improve the school yet rarely did that process result in improving student performance.

A school's greatest resource for improvement is its teachers. Under the roof of every school is a wealth of expertise. The challenge is to create ways for teachers to reveal themselves as innovators, experts, champions of student learning, and passionate professionals.

The Principal

The principal is the critical driver in the wheelhouse of the MTA. Without the principal's unwavering commitment to develop capacity and improve practice through the Impact Team Model, there may be pockets of teachers and some teams who will embrace and practice the process, but there will never be all-school change.

The principal's role is clearly defined. She or he must understand what it is to build a culture of efficacy, why it is key to student-centered learning, and how to go about creating the conditions to build student, teacher, and collective efficacy. With that commitment comes a call to action. That action is a commitment and concomitant actions to lead the Model Team, that is, to walk the talk.

The most powerful way that school leaders can make a difference to the learning of their students is by promoting and participating in the professional learning and development of their teachers. (Robinson, 2011)

Peer Facilitator

Trained peer facilitators guide their teammates through inquiry, investigation, and collaborative learning. The peer facilitators are provided additional training in the eight purposeful protocols and are models for investigative practice, risk taking, and knowledge sharing. They are uniquely positioned to both guide the team as well as learn with the team. As members of the Impact Team, they walk in the same shoes—trying out the lessons, partnering with the students, and focusing on understanding their impact.

Impact Teams choose a teammate who is interested in learning facilitation skills and guiding the process. The peer facilitator is responsible for ensuring the team operates with efficiency and effectiveness. The role of the facilitator is to

- establish roles and norms;
- facilitate the meeting—adhering to time frames, topics, and outcomes;

- prompt robust dialogue and discourse through appreciative inquiry; and
- stimulate new learning.

Peer-facilitators are uniquely positioned to model “a leap of faith,” frame the work as an investigation, help the group “stick with it,” and guide protocol use as a full participant in the inquiry process. Teacher-facilitators are trying out in their classrooms the same lessons as everyone else in the group. (Gallimore, Emerling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009)

See Appendix D-3 for peer facilitator question stems to guide teachers through the analysis of student work for the EAA Team Meeting Protocol (analysis of student work).

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)

Schools typically have in place a building leadership team representing the various grade levels, subject areas, and specialists in the school. We recommend using what already exists, with the caveat that all members are on board with the two key ingredients of collective leadership:

1. a commitment to building teaching expertise school-wide
2. activating change through effective teaming

If there are those who cannot commit, choose teachers who can and will. Perhaps the leadership team (guiding coalition) will be a subgroup of the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). Even two or three representative teacher leaders are enough initially to implement the MTA. These teachers are not a part of the model team itself; rather, they are teacher leaders interested in learning the process to share with their cohort later, down the road.

(2) Invitation to Become a Model Team

Through the pre-assessment (see Appendix F), the principal and leadership team identify one or two teams that might be interested in improving their collaborative practice and invite them to join in learning the MTA. Find a team that can be successful and become shepherds of the work. The commitment is to use their existing team time to learn the Impact Teams' process. With this commitment and the formative assessment background (above), they're ready to go.

(3) Redefining Formative Assessment

Based on the evidence from the Impact Team pre-assessment (see Appendix F) the principal, leadership team, and model team cocreate a plan to address the learning needs of the team around the formative assessment process (see Chapter 4).

Focusing on an upcoming unit, the team unpacks the standard (see Chapter 5) to create a rubric-bound assessment. The team begins the process of learning how to partner with students. At this point, they are learning how to:

- Prioritize standards for a unit of study
- Collaboratively understand the expectations of the focus standard(s)
- Create rubric-bound assessments based on the key competencies
- Engage students in the formative assessment process
- Calibrate their evaluation of student work

(4) Execution as Learning

The MTA uses the gradual release of responsibility model (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

Gradual Release

Essentially, modeling, practice, and feedback are the way the MTA works. This is an execution-as-learning process in which teams learn protocols as needed through coaching and modeling. This implementation process is authentic, organic, and develops a variety of skills and knowledge in context, such as how to:

- Facilitate a meeting
- Enhance the formative assessment process in the class
- Use protocols for specific purposes
- Determine and use quality evidence
- Do critical analysis to the root cause of student learning
- Determine the highest impact strategies to address root cause
- Understand impact

In the MTA, the Impact Team consultant works directly with the model team, the principal, and the peer facilitator, going through four short

formative assessment cycles to learn and practice the Impact Team process. We typically focus on two protocols first:

1. EAA Team Meeting (Analyzing Student Work)—Appendix A-1
2. Check-In and Case Study—Appendix A-2

Over the course of four meetings the principal, peer facilitator, and team learn how to use protocols to understand their impact on student learning.

- **Time 1:** *Consultant facilitates* the Impact Team meeting using the team's first round of formative assessment data using the three-step Impact Team protocol EAA. After the meeting, the principal, peer facilitator, ILT, and consultant debrief the process based on the EAA team rubric.
- **Time 2:** *Consultant co-facilitates with the principal using the three-step Impact Team protocol EAA based on* the second round of formative assessment data. After the meeting, the principal, peer facilitator, ILT, and consultant debrief the process based on the EAA team rubric.
- **Time 3:** *The principal and peer facilitator facilitate* this Impact Team meeting using the third round of formative assessment data. Consultant, principal and ILT observe the peer facilitator and provide feedback based on the EAA team rubric.
- **Time 4:** *The peer facilitator facilitates* this Impact Team using the fourth round of formative assessment data. Consultant, peer facilitator, and ILT observe and give feedback based on the EAA team rubric.

At the end of this chapter, read a complete case study of how one large urban school implemented the Impact Team Model through the MTA. Also please see the companion site for video footage of the MTA in action.

Next Steps: Sharing the expertise

Now that your school has at least one team that is proficient at the Impact Team process and at least two facilitators who can guide the teams, what next? Since the Impact Team Model is all about identifying and leveraging the expertise in the building, many of our schools move to what we call the Adopt-a-Team model where the functional Impact Team

models the process for other interested teams. Teams and leaders then have the opportunity to observe and practice with the Model Team(s) in a variety of ways:

- Using video of the Model Team, the peer facilitator and/or principal teaches and coaches other interested teams
- Using the fishbowl set up, teams observe the Model Team in action and debrief with the team using the Impact Team implementation rubric
- Members of the Model Team mentor other teams using the Impact team implementation rubric
- The trained peer facilitator takes on another team and coaches them to proficiency using the Model Team approach (release of responsibility over four meetings)

The point is you now have the resources to share the collaborative expertise. It is not a perfect process, it's a learning process. Some teams take to it quickly and are relieved and excited to finally experience efficient and focused meetings that result in actions that have impact. Other teams take a bit more time to practice. But as with all learning, practice with feedback moves the teams to a level of collaborative expertise that builds collective teacher efficacy school and system-wide.

NUTSHELL

Educators are professional learners. We like to learn, we know how to learn, and with the complexity of our profession, we need to constantly learn to meet the challenging needs of our students. However, putting our new learning into practice is where the rubber hits the road and where we encounter the challenges of implementation. Our MTA is designed to mitigate the support demands required in all-school change by starting with one or two teams and developing leadership and facilitation skills through the execution-as-learning process.

CHECK-IN

Use the checklist below to guide leadership in implementing the MTA. Determine next steps based on your results.

Action Steps	Not Yet	In Progress	Next Steps
(1) Lead From Within			
Principal commits to promoting and participating in the Model Team Approach.			
The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) commits to activating change through effective teaming.			
Principal and ILT use the Impact Teams Pre-Assessment to determine learning strengths and next steps.			
(2) Invitation to Become a Model Team			
Based on pre-assessment, interested teams volunteer to learn the MTA.			
Framework for MTA is communicated to the team.			
Model Team coconstructs the cycle to ensure ownership.			
(3) Redefining Formative Assessment			
Based on pre-assessment, the Model Team unpacks focus standards for a unit of study.			
The Model Team develops rubric-bound assessments based on key competencies.			
(4) Model Teams in Action: Four Meetings			
Time 1: Consultant facilitates Meeting 1.			
Time 2: Consultant and principal co-facilitate Meeting 2.			
Time 3: Peer facilitator facilitates Meeting 3.			
Time 4: Peer facilitator facilitates Meeting 4.			
Video may be used to build capacity across the district.			



CASE STUDY

Katherine Smith, Coordinator of Testing and Research at Lyons Township High School, described how her school used the Model Team Approach to build capacity with the Impact Team Model. Read how this large comprehensive high school participated in this process.

Lyons Township High School District 204

4000+ Students

- 74% White
- 18% Hispanic
- 4% Black

In 1888, Lyons Township High School District 204 (LTHS) was founded in the suburbs of LaGrange and Western Springs, Illinois, 16 miles southwest of downtown Chicago. Spanning across two campuses, the one high school district presently educates over 4,000 high school students from the communities of Brookfield, Burr Ridge, Countryside, Hodgkins,

LaGrange, LaGrange Highlands, LaGrange Park, McCook, Western Springs, and Willow Springs. Dedicated to affirming the school's century-old motto, *Vita Plena*, the quest for the fulfilling life, Lyons Township High School is proud to offer its students over 300 courses and opportunities including (but not limited to) 26 Advanced Placement courses, 9 dual credit courses, 6 language programs, an automotive program, Cisco Networking Certification, Deep Diving Certification, and pilot licensure.

The Context

During the 2009–2010 school year, the staff of Lyons Township High School established professional learning communities (PLCs) in an effort to ensure all students were learning more. Following the work of Rick and Rebecca DuFour, PLCs attempt to answer the questions:

1. What should all students know and be able to do?
2. How will we know when all students have learned?
3. What will we do when a student hasn't learned?
4. What will we do when a student has learned or reached proficiency?

However, when confronted with changing state standards and assessments, a deeply rooted system of course leveling, and a traditionally private teaching culture, collaboratively answering these questions

proved to be problematic for LTHS's PLCs. The four PLC questions did not provide an efficient protocol or structure for scaling up collaborative inquiry across LTHS. In addition, it was important to the leadership at LTHS that we had a focus on developing assessment capable learners. We wanted our students to be independent learners, who could self-regulate.

Curricular Work:

An Easy Place to Get Stuck

For 4 years, teams worked diligently identifying their course level Enduring Understandings/Big Ideas and content-based Essential Outcomes/Learning Intentions, and designing common summative assessments aligned to course-level Essential Outcomes. Biweekly PLC meetings were consumed with curricular work. As membership on the PLCs changed annually with new teaching schedules, curricular work was often repeated to incorporate the voice of new PLC members. While staff was making every effort to answer Questions 1 and 2 (as listed above), conversations were predominantly focused on teaching as opposed to student learning.

A New Plan

To effectively shift the conversation from teaching to learning, we needed to

- identify that with which all students must demonstrate proficiency, prior to completing a particular course (regardless of the level of the course);
- establish common formative assessments as opposed to summative assessments;
- conduct meaningful and focused conversations around student performance during the units of instruction;
- conclude PLC meetings with an instructional action plan to implement prior to the next team meeting; and
- facilitate structured follow-up conversations to determine where students were performing after the instructional action plans were implemented.

"My PLC has struggled with balancing the work load of what the district is asking us to do vs. what PLCs are actually supposed to do. With my time working with the Bloomberg team, I have realized that we should be analyzing student learning, discussing success criteria, looking at where our students struggle and why, and using this information to inform our instruction."

—Bridget McGuire, Math Teacher

Getting Back on Track

Step 1: Identify the Common Denominator

To move forward, we identified the common denominator concerning student academic expectations. The Illinois State Standards (an adapted version of the Common Core State Standards [CCSS]) clearly articulate student English, math, and disciplinary literacy expectations at each grade level. Relying on state and national standards alleviates internal disputes and places the focus on the academic skills with which all students in a grade level are expected to demonstrate proficiency.

Step 2: Establish a Job-Embedded Professional Learning Plan with Articulated Outcomes

When developing a professional learning plan, LTHS consulted studies on adult learning. Studies conducted by Learning Forward (2011), Jim Knight and Jake Cornett (n.d.), and Doug Reeves (2010) concluded high quality professional learning is aligned to state standards and local goals, facilitated frequently in teams as part of an ongoing learning cycle, and involves goal-setting, action planning, and the application of research-based instructional strategies.

AUGUST 12, 13	All 10 Teams				
OCTOBER 20		OCTOBER 21		OCTOBER 22	
Periods 1 & 2	English II	Period 1	Geometry	Periods 1 & 2	World History
Periods 3 & 4/5	English III	Period 2 & 3	Health	Periods 3 & 4/5	U.S. History
Periods 7/8 & 9	Algebra	Period 4/5 & 6/7	Biology	Periods 7/8 & 9	Consumer Education
Period 10	Geometry	Period 9 & 10	Chemistry	Period 10	Planning Period with Administrators
JANUARY 20		JANUARY 21		JANUARY 22	
Periods 1 & 2	English III	Period 1	Health	Periods 1 & 2	U.S. History
Periods 3 & 4/5	Algebra	Period 2 & 3	Biology	Periods 3 & 4/5	Consumer Education

Periods 7/8 & 9	Geometry	Period 4/5 & 6/7	Chemistry	Periods 7/8 & 9	English II
Period 10	Health	Period 9 & 10	World History	Period 10	Planning Period with Administrators
MARCH 25		MARCH 26		MARCH 27	
Periods 1 & 2	Algebra	Period 1	Biology	Periods 1 & 2	Consumer Education
Periods 3 & 4/5	Geometry	Period 2 & 3	Chemistry	Periods 3 & 4/5	English II
Periods 7/8 & 9	Health	Period 4/5 & 6/7	World History	Periods 7/8 & 9	English III
Period 10	Biology	Period 9 & 10	U.S. History	Period 10	Planning Period with Administrators
MAY 11		MAY 12		MAY 13	
Periods 1 & 2	Geometry	Period 1	Chemistry	Periods 1 & 2	English II
Periods 3 & 4/5	Health	Period 2 & 3	World History	Periods 3 & 4/5	English III
Periods 7/8 & 9	Biology	Period 4/5 & 6/7	U.S. History	Periods 7/8 & 9	Algebra
Period 10	Chemistry	Period 9 & 10	Consumer Education	Period 10	Planning Period with Administrators
June 3, June 4	All 10 Teams				

As a result of the research, LTHS developed a professional learning plan that allowed 10 teams and an administrative team to meet with an external consultant six times throughout the course of the school year. While the work, during the first year, continued to be curricular, it was aligned to the CCSS, skill-based, formative, and common for all levels of the course.

By the end of the first year, all involved teams

- aligned their course curriculum (map) and Essential Outcomes/Learning Intentions to the CCSS;
- developed common formative assessments concerning transferable skills aligned to specific CCSS;

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- developed a common summative assessment aligned to specific CCSS; and
- selected and implemented research-based instructional literacy strategies to use when teaching course Essential Outcomes and the literacy-based CCS.

Step 3: Target Teams and Invite Participants

2014–2015: Targeted Teams	
Department	Team
Language Arts	English II English III
Math	Algebra Geometry

To provide teams appropriate levels of support, LTHS had to focus the professional learning efforts on a limited number of teams. The 10 courses that establish foundational skills and impact the greatest number of students early on in their high school career were targeted to be the first teams that would receive support. A staff member from each level of the course (prep, accel, honors) was asked to participate on the team, as well as the special education cross-categorical teacher and a literacy team member. This structure allowed for a smaller-subset of the course teachers to set equitable expectations for students in the course.

Step 4: Locate the Right Help

The work that LTHS needed to do involved literacy, common core alignment, and assessment development and would eventually involve team structure and dynamics. To find a well-rounded consultant, we contacted Corwin and were put in touch with Dr. Paul Bloomberg. To ensure Dr. Bloomberg had the appropriate expertise and an ability to establish and expand relational trust personality across our school, we invited him to facilitate a workshop before signing a year-long contract. It was important to LTHS that we found a consultant who could maintain a focus on the formative assessment process, which we had begun to study in 2012. We wanted to continue this process through the lens of CCSS implementation because of its impact on student learning.

Step 5: Ask for Feedback and Invite Continued Participation

After 1 year of work with Dr. Bloomberg, all 10 teams achieved the curricular outcomes. These curricular outcomes had to be met before the conversation could shift to what students were learning. Before embarking on a second year of targeted professional learning, all 10 teams were

consulted about the next steps and all team members were asked to continue. For LTHS, 96% of the staff volunteered to continue. The two staff members opting not to continue were replaced with two of their coworkers.

IMPACT Teams: A Simple Structure to Refocus PLCs

To develop assessment capable learners, paradigm shift had to occur at LTHS; we had to refocus our existing PLC structure. Educators had to abandon their traditional teacher talk concerning what they were teaching and had to begin to discuss what was being learned and how it was being learned by their students. The leadership at LTHS desired traditionally private teachers to publically share their craft and meaningfully discuss their students' performance; they had to be provided continual support and be provided an efficient structure to learn together resulting in the development of professional capital. LTHS discovered this support and structure in the IMPACT Team Model.

IMPACT Teams are teams of educators that collaborate on behalf of students. For LTHS, the 10 targeted teams that worked with Dr. Bloomberg in 2014–2015 to develop rigorous formative assessments aligned to the Common Core transitioned to IMPACT Teams in 2015–2016. Together, the educators on these teams are building their professional capacity by scaling up their expertise. Through the use of seven protocols, they are operationalizing the formative practices that yield the highest rates of learning.

LTHS's 10 teams are currently focusing on implementing the EAA protocol with fidelity. This is a three-phase protocol that has provided a framework to our teams to have a meaningful discussion centered on student learning demonstrated through a formative task. The protocol begins with team members sorting student work into the quality levels identified by the rubric, which is associated with their performance task. For each level of work, the team

- examines the evidence by asking: What success criteria were the students able to achieve? What criteria do they still need to demonstrate to achieve the next level of proficiency?;
- analyzes the evidence by determining what skills and abilities allowed the students to demonstrate proficiency, and what skills and proficiencies potentially prohibited the students from reaching the next quality level; and
- creates an action plan (relevant to the needs of each quality level) to implement by their next meeting.

"This Evidence • Analysis • Action Protocol gives us a process to look at student work, analyze and take action on how we will go about helping our students achieve the skill or target of our focus. So often our PLCs are given a directive for what to accomplish and the ultimate goal has always been to get to analyzing student work but the HOW we do that has been missing. The Evidence • Analysis • Action Protocol provides that plan and structure so that real progress and teaching can take place."

—Virginia Condon,
English Teacher

release model (The Model Teams Approach) with our consultant, Dr. Bloomberg. During the first academic quarter, Dr. Bloomberg facilitated the EAA Protocol with each IMPACT Team. During the second quarter, the Principal or a Division Chair facilitated this protocol with each IMPACT Team. Dr. Bloomberg provided on-the-spot coaching to our administrative facilitators. By providing effective feedback and job coaching, the expertise of the consultant was scaled out to LTHS administrators. During the third quarter, a teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with coaching from the consultant. During the fourth quarter, a second teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY: Evidence-Analysis-Action Protocol		
Quarter	Facilitator	Coach (Providing Feedback to the Facilitator)
Qtr. 1	Consultant	NA
Qtr. 2	Principal or Department Chair	Consultant
Qtr. 3	Teacher 1	Consultant
Qtr. 4	Teacher 2	Principal or Department Chair

When implementing this protocol, team members leave their meeting with a plan that is instructionally differentiated. The next time they meet, they engage in the Check-In Protocol to ensure student growth is being achieved or they engage in the Microteaching Protocol as a means of learning an instructional practice focused on the formative assessment process and implemented by one of their team members.

Building Capacity: The Model Teams Approach

At LTHS, we wanted IMPACT Teams to consistently focus conversations on student learning. To guarantee this end, our team members are participating in a gradual release model (The Model Teams Approach) with our consultant, Dr. Bloomberg. During the first academic quarter, Dr. Bloomberg facilitated the EAA Protocol with each IMPACT Team. During the second quarter, the Principal or a Division Chair facilitated this protocol with each IMPACT Team. Dr. Bloomberg provided on-the-spot coaching to our administrative facilitators. By providing effective feedback and job coaching, the expertise of the consultant was scaled out to LTHS administrators. During the third quarter, a teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with coaching from the consultant. During the fourth quarter, a second teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with coaching from the Division Chair or principal, who was receiving feedback on coaching from the consultant.

By providing education, opportunity for practice, effective feedback, and additional opportunity to apply the feedback to their practice, the ten teams have been thoroughly supported in implementing this protocol. They not only understand the purpose of their IMPACT Team meetings, but also have demonstrated that they can collectively carry these meetings out on behalf of students.

Next Steps

After intense practice with the EAA Protocol, the team members, who have worked with the consultant for the last 2 years, will collaborate with an assigned administrator to teach their larger course team the protocol. They will apply this protocol quarterly throughout the 2016–2017 school year, thereby facilitating a structured conversation around student learning that results in a differentiated instructional action plan.

During the 2016–2017 school year, LTHS will begin the process again with eight new targeted teams. During their initial year of work with the consultant, they will align their curriculum to the Common Core, develop aligned and appropriately rigorous formative and summative assessments, and select and implement research-based instructional practices.

2016–2017: New Teams	
Department	Team
Fine Arts	Spanish I Spanish II
Language Arts	English I IPC
Math	Algebra II
Science	Physics
Social Studies	Psychology
Special Education	PSD
IMPACT Team Focusing on New Protocols	
Science	Chemistry
Social Science	World History

"Every successful initiative that I have been a part of during my 13 years as a school leader has involved a methodical and gradual approach to implementation. In approximately six months, we have evolved from the beginning stages of learning the Impact Team model (and associated protocols) with Dr. Bloomberg, to now having 15 LTHS faculty members from a variety of content areas who can effectively facilitate the Evidence-Analysis-Action protocol. Utilizing a gradual release approach, we will be able to have 8 self-sustaining Impact Teams during the 2016–17 school year, which will continue to build capacity with the model and protocols as we move forward at LTHS."

—Dr. Brian Waterman, Principal

Finally, LTHS will support continued work with two current IMPACT Teams. These teams will spend the year learning and applying four additional protocols with Dr. Bloomberg: Calibration/Collaborative Scoring, Lesson Study, and Evidence Walks, and Microteaching. The two Model Teams will then serve as internal experts, who will be able to teach these remaining protocols to all teams in the future.