

Professional Learning Communities – Benefits for All

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” ~ Henry Ford

Jackson High School

- ▶ Grades 10–12
 - ▶ 1180 students
 - ▶ 97% White
 - ▶ 275 students free/reduced
 - ▶ 7%–10% IEP
 - ▶ Additional 10%–12% at risk
 - ▶ 24 students per teacher
 - ▶ 390 students per administrator
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- ▶ One of the largest districts covering 200sq. Miles
 - ▶ Busses travel 3742 miles daily.
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History

- ▶ Began collaboration 2005
 - ▶ Started looking at the advisory process 2006
 - ▶ Developed a Leadership Team and began PLC training 2008
 - ▶ Completed 3rd year PLC training with SE RPDC 2011
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Why PLC

- ▶ Increased rigor without increased supports
 - ▶ Needed to change from top down to collaborative leadership
 - ▶ Needed to build better relationships with students/parents
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Major Structural Changes

- ▶ Late start every Wednesday for collaboration
 - ▶ Extended the school day to allow for advisory
 - ▶ Use of leadership team and collaborative teams for decision making
 - ▶ Four guiding questions
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Critical Questions

- ▶ What do students need to know and be able to do?
 - ▶ How will we know when they have learned it?
 - ▶ What will we do when they haven't learned it?
 - ▶ What will we do when they already know it?
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PLC Components

▶ Collaboration

- Special education teachers meet bi-monthly with designated content area groups
- Meet as a special education team bi-monthly
 - Adjusted for content area and special education demands (MSIP, Formative/summative reviews, etc.)

Leadership Team

- ▶ Provides opportunity for increased knowledge of special education issues as they relate to the school environment:
 - Confidentiality (Yearbook)
 - Legal issues (IEP compliance)
 - Accessibility (SFR)
 - Safety Procedures
 - Grading

Advisory

- ▶ An inclusive “homeroom on steroids”
 - Focus on team building and academic success
 - Student assignments
 - Implementation of level system
 - Builds long term student/teacher relationships

Advisory – Student Benefits

- ▶ Advisory teacher becomes additional member of the team
 - ▶ Encourages social and academic support from non disabled peers
 - ▶ Provides opportunity for data collection/observations
 - ▶ Benefits from full participation in school wide activities, teambuilding, etc.
 - ▶ Allows student diversity in authority figures
 - ▶ Provides opportunities for additional self advocacy/self determination skills with peers/staff
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Advisory – Staff Benefits

- ▶ Increases communication between general education/special education staff
 - ▶ Increases level of understanding and awareness of disabilities for teachers and administrators
 - ▶ Increases parent communication
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Advisory – Parent Benefits

- ▶ Additional IEP team member can provide much needed social observations
- ▶ Enrollment Conferences
 - Driven by individual post secondary plans for ALL students
 - Allows for most beneficial class selection
 - Clearly communicates each student's post secondary plans

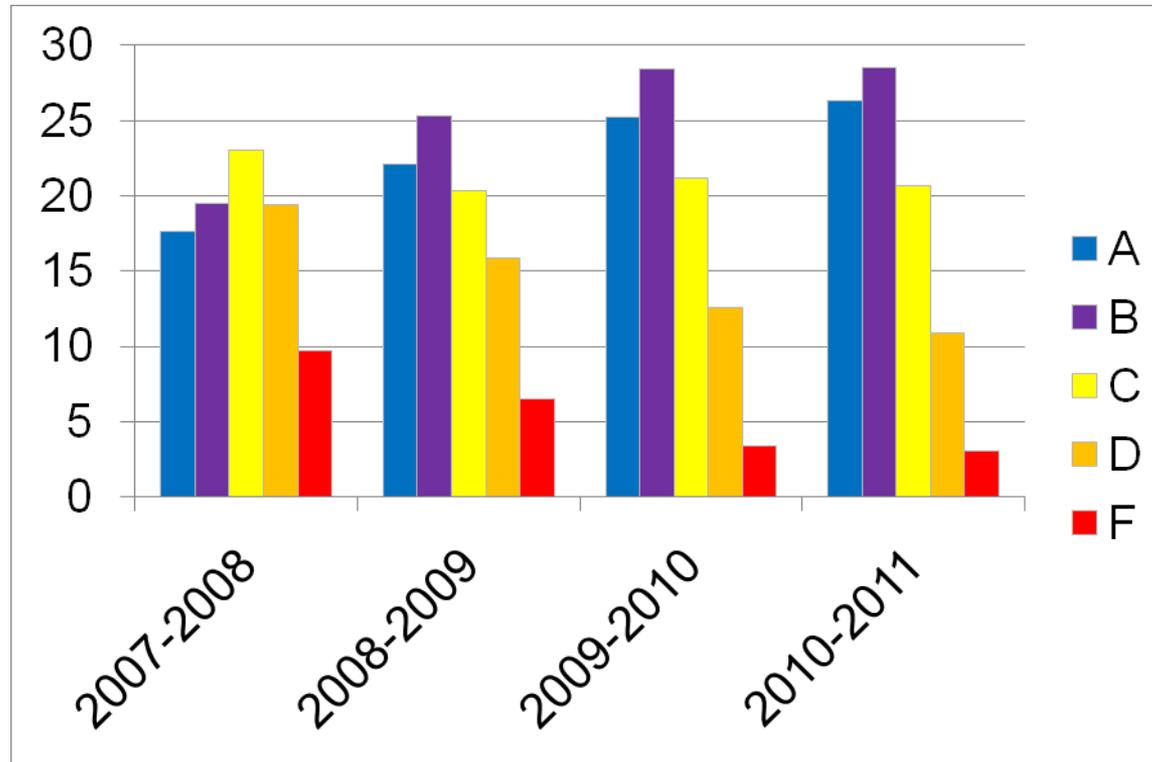
Parent Benefits, Cont.

- ▶ Increased communication
 - Constant grade checks
 - Allows everyone to be “on the same page”
 - Allows for a “full court press” if needed
 - ▶ Provides an additional point of contact
 - ▶ Advisory teacher and parent develop a long term relationship
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Advisory – Peer Benefits

- ▶ Increases awareness of disabilities
 - ▶ Provides educational and social mentoring opportunities
 - ▶ Removes “stigma” of special education
 - ▶ Increases social relationships outside the academic setting
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PLC Effects on Special Ed. Grade Distribution



PLC Effects on Special Ed. AYP



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